1915

Sermons and Discourses Delivered by Rev. H. B. Altmeyer
Principally on the Gospels, Feasts of the Church and the Lives of the Saints During the Last Ten Years

Henry B. Altmeyer

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SERMONS AND DISCOURSES

DELIVERED BY

REV. H. B. ALTMEYER

PRINCIPALLY ON

THE GOSPELS, FEASTS OF THE CHURCH
AND THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS

DURING THE LAST TEN YEARS

SWAN PRINTING & STATIONERY COMPANY
HUNTINGTON, WEST VIRGINIA
Nihil Obstat;  

OSCAR H. MOYE, V. G.,  
Censor Deputatus

Imprimatur;  

PATRICK J. DONAHUE,  
Episcopus Whelingensis

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1915
PREFACE.

The Writer of these sermons deserves the gratitude of the general public, but especially of the hard-worked clergy of this country. The average citizen knows little of the teaching and practices of the Catholic Church, and often finds it difficult to get sources of information simple enough to be understood by the common mind. The learned may read Thomas Aquinas or the theologies written in Latin; but the ordinary citizen needs something easier and simpler. The American priest has little leisure for study. In the country he has often many miles of a parish; he is often far from the large city and a good library. He needs a book with ready answers to the questions put to him by the farmer, the grocer, the mechanic, the laborer, and often by the lawyer and the doctor whose information on Catholic doctrine is hazy, indefinite and erroneous. Father Altmeyer knew this when he first thought of writing his book of sermons. He had seen and studied the needs of the priests and people with whom he had come into relations during his ministry in city, town and country. He knew what they needed and he gave some of it to them in his first book of sermons which has had a large sale throughout the country. Sometimes an old Catholic prayer-book found by a farmer who was brought up in hatred of the Catholic Church has converted him to the faith; and a book accidentally left by a Catholic peddler in a farmhouse has sometimes been the means of converting a whole family some of whose members have afterwards become prominent members of religious orders. How many cases of this kind could the senior members and the old missionaries of the Church relate.
The simplest books do the most good and often have the largest sale. Cardinal Gibbons' "Faith of Our Fathers" has had a greater sale and made more converts than scores of Latin theologies or volume of metaphysical essays.

This is Father Altmeyer's second venture as a writer in the missionary field. His first book has become very popular especially among the clergy, many of whom have asked him to print a new book of sermons. They are often called on to preach when they have had no leisure or opportunity for serious preparation. They are away from their books, or those that they have often contain long and learned disquisitions which they cannot simplify to suit the taste or the capacity of their hearers. The people want short, plain sermons, instructions on the Commandments, the Sacraments, the doctrines of the Church, and the meaning of Her feasts; not long, learned, metaphysical discourses.

Twenty-two of the sermons in this book are on the Gospels of the Sundays,—homilies written in a plain, easy style. Ten are on the lives of saints whose example will stimulate to piety and virtue those who read them. From the study of their sayings and their doings, all will receive great spiritual benefit. Many of the discourses are on the festivals of the Church, which the people all know by name without always knowing the meaning of them and the special lessons which they inculcate or the motives which the Church had in instituting them.

The preacher appropriately blends the study of the dogmatic with the ethical teaching of the church. Thus in three discourses on "God", "Christianity", and "The Church", he exposes the basic reasons of Christian faith. Then there is a sermon on the "Priesthood" and one on
the "religious life", in which he clearly explains the respective missions of the clergy and of the "sisterhoods" so as to refute the errors, remove the prejudices of non-Catholics and promote respect and admiration for the holy states in the children of the Church. The clergy, no doubt, will welcome this volume of sermons as they were pleased with the other. In any case, the zeal and industry of the writer are as praiseworthy as his application and research. He has spent the leisure hours of his ministry in hard and beneficent work for his fellow-priests. Instead of devoting his leisure time to the reading of books not directly in the line of his priestly duty, as he might without blame have done, he has applied the faculties that God gave him to the zealous aim of helping his clerical brethren in the great work of the pulpit, and the people on the way to salvation. We may point to him and his books, and say to the many other clever priests who are able to by their writing to aid in enlightening the non-Catholic community and their own faithful flocks: "Respice et fac secundum exemplar."

His information is correct. His style is clear, terse, and plain; showing that his mind is bright; for "the style is the man" as the French have it; or as Boileau in his "Art Poetique" concisely says in a couplet which we may thus translate "That which is well conceived is clearly expressed, and the words to say it come to us easily." (I)


(I) "Ce qui se concoit bien s'enonce claivenent
Et les mots pour le dire srrivent aisement."

Art Poetique de Boileau.
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GOD AND THE SOUL.

MY DEAR YOUNG GENTLEMEN:—Before beginning my first instruction I wish to say to you, in the presence of the Faculty of Duquesne University, what great pleasure it affords me and what a privilege I consider it, yea what an honor I deem it, to come back, after nineteen years' absence, to my "Alma Mater" not simply as a guest, but to preach a "Retreat" although unfit and unworthy I may be for such work. I wish to express publicly to the Fathers of the Holy Ghost and especially to your very Reverend and most worthy President, Father Hehir, my sincere thanks for and appreciation of this mark of honor and distinction.

A "Retreat" as I understand it, is a time when we should cast aside all worldly matters and be occupied entirely with the affairs of eternity. It is a time when we should enter within the solitude of our souls and hold converse and communion with our Maker. It is a time, young gentlemen, when we should shut out, as far as possible, all distraction, and meditate seriously and deeply upon the great truths of Creation, Redemption and Salvation; and consequently it should be a time of silence and prayer. May the Holy Ghost, the eternal Love of the Father and the Son, and the Spirit of Light and Sanctity illumine our dark minds with His heavenly rays and warm our cold hearts with His heavenly fire, that we spend most profitably together these few days of "Retreat".

When babies, over our heads was poured the saving and cleansing water of Baptism in the name of the
Blessed Trinity. At that moment, there was imparted to us a new life, and we received from the Creator, the gifts of Faith, Hope and Charity. At our mother’s knee we were taught about God—the Great and Supreme Being—and about our soul and its being made to the image and likeness of this great God—and about Heaven and Hell and sin. In Catholic schools we were taught more about these truths. By the virtue of faith we believed most firmly this teaching on the word of our parents and preceptors. By the virtue of charity we were able to love God, and by the virtue of hope, we had a firm confidence that one day we should possess Him in heaven. Passing from boyhood to young manhood we began to reason about things—to ask ourselves the “whys and the wherefores.” We then looked out upon life and contemplating the great universe, looking up into the heavens and there beholding the moon, the sun, and the stars, and casting our eyes down towards this earth, and there beholding the rivers and plains and hills and mountains and seas, and the animals and the birds and the fishes and the reptiles, and the various kinds of trees and plants with their manifold fruits, and seeing in all displayed marvelously unity and wisdom and power and goodness—we asked ourselves how did it all happen?—did these things make themselves and do they guide and direct themselves? And the answer came—absurd to say they made themselves—contradiction;—absurd to say that they govern and direct themselves—the height of madness; they are only a part of a great universe—the answer came to us as it came to Saint Augustine—they were made by God—they are guided and directed by God—God—that Being about whom our parents and preceptors taught us—that most perfect and infinite Being. And then we look-
ed within ourselves and discovered therein a thinking, willing and loving principle, and we were conscious, too, that it was this inward principle which moved and directed our material body:—In other words it was its soul—its life. From our little experience and observation we saw that that which we designate as matter is inactive of itself, passive, extended and limited, that it does not think and reason and love, and consequently, between it and the soul there must be an impassable difference in nature. And we now remembered what our parents and teachers told us—that our soul was a spirit made to the image and likeness of God, because it had understanding and free will. At last we reached man's estate. We began the works treating on God and the Soul, and took up the study of Christian Philosophy, and there we read and studied, the simple but irrefutable proofs about the existence of God and the spirituality and immortality of the Soul. We reasoned from cause and effect—which were matters of every day observation—to a supreme and first Cause; from contingent and relative beings—which we saw around us—to a necessary and absolute Being; from the movements of bodies in the universe to a first Mover: and from the grades of perfections found in creatures to a perfect Being. From the study of our soul we found that it was able to contemplate itself, and itself acting: we found that it could understand immaterial things: we found that it was more borne toward the spiritual, than the material, and that it could understand sensible things in a universal and immutable way: and we therefore concluded that it was a spiritual principle. We also reasoned from the fact that the soul being a spiritual substance, unextended and simple and not composed of parts, could come to naught only by God's withdrawing His conserving power.
But seeing that good deeds are not sufficiently rewarded nor wicked deeds sufficiently punished in this world, and that we all desire to be perfectly happy, and stand appalled at the thought of ceasing to exist, we concluded that the soul is immortal, or will continue to live on in the next world. Then came the question of God’s attributes, and pure reason again confirmed our early teaching and faith. A necessary being must be eternal, and an eternal being must be infinite, and an infinite being must be all-knowing and all powerful, and so on.

Dear Young Gentlemen, with God’s grace working in our souls and through meditation and reflection, reaching middle age our conviction grew stronger and stronger concerning these truths, at least as regards the firmness of our assent. They became as real to us as our material bodies or the sun in the heavens. Everything now speaks to us of God and our soul. When we behold beauty in creatures the mind spontaneously rises to its source—God. When we see a manifestation of power our mind immediately rises to its source—the Omnipotent One. When we meet a holy and virtuous man we think of God—the all-holy One. The more we study the more we become convinced, that there is a being who possesses knowledge in an infinite degree, a being in whose mind are the prototypes of all actual and possible things, a being who is their cause, their exemplar, their reason, their explanation. And the more we study the activities of matter and the activities of the soul, the firmer becomes our conviction that there is an impassable gulf between them, that in their nature they are contrary and opposed, and that they differ essentially and radically. In fact, we almost begin to intue these things. We cease to reason upon them. They become almost evident to us like the light from the sun or the air we
breathe. The brightest minds and noblest souls in every age have firmly believed in the existence of a Supreme and Perfect Being and in the Immortality and Spirituality of the Soul. Without the acceptance of these truths, man and the universe become a riddle; but in their belief all things can be explained, and the soul finds rest and peace, and life is filled with purpose and becomes one grand, beautiful, harmonious whole.

Dear Young Gentlemen, we were taught at our mother's knee and in school that we were made for God and put in this world to work out the salvation of our immortal souls. We were taught about sin and how it changed the plans of God, so to speak. We were taught about Revelation, about the Messiah, about Christ and about the Church. Reaching manhood we began to realize that human nature, in the beginning, must have received a deadly wound, must have fallen from a high state. So much sin and error and misery in the world! We found ourselves inclined so strongly to evil. We saw what an effort and struggle it required to find truth unclouded. We saw that, notwithstanding the efforts of statesmen and philanthropists, misery abounds. We desire perfection. It is to be found. It must be within our reach. We need light, we need strength, we want to be taught from on high. We have been made by God and for God. Like unto God in our soul, coming forth from God, a breath of God, as it were, we must return to Him as the rain that fertilizes the earth returns again to the sea from whence it came. Man has been made for God, and the earth and the fullness thereof for men. Creatures are but the stepping stones by which we are to mount up to God. They are only means to this end:—"Whether you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all things for the glory of God", says St. Paul. If creatures are used
otherwise we change the plan of God. We invert the order of reason and grace, and must reap the penalty. We may then be compared to a painter who is so taken up with his brush and paint as to forget to make the picture, or to a tourist who is so taken up with the intervening country as to forget the end of his journey—his destination. As we would consider the painter and tourist unwise and unphilosophical, so also must we look upon ourselves in such a light, if we forget God and our soul in the enjoyment of creatures. How wrong are the standards of the world! The world considers that man successful who has become rich or who has risen to some high post of honor, though his soul be as black as Erebus. God considers that man successful who has brought out the life of Christ in himself, overcome sin and practiced virtue, though he be as poor as Job or as unknown as the red man who roamed our forests hundreds of years ago. We can take nothing to the grave except good works. We were all born equal, and we shall die equal. The rich and the powerful and the distinguished shall likewise become the food of worms, shall return to dust, shall mingle with mother earth. In the words of the prophets, we cry out:—"I will stand upon the watch, fix my feet upon the tower, and I watch to see what will be said to me."; "For Thee hath my soul thirsted in a desert land where there is no way nor water."; "To Thee have I lifted up my eyes who dwellst in the heavens as the eyes of servants on the hands of their masters, as the eyes of the handmaid towards her mistress."; "O that Thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down!—the mountains would melt away at Thy presence."
CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH OUR TEACHER

MY DEAR YOUNG GENTLEMEN:—In our opening instruction we saw that we were created by God, and that our soul was made to God's image; and that as we came forth from God we must return to Him. We saw that we had been placed in this world for one principal end, namely, to work out the salvation of our souls to which all else must be subservient; consequently creatures are to be used simply to help us in this work. We saw, on account of the darkness of our minds and the weakness of our wills—the effect of sin—we are incapable of doing this work without special assistance from heaven. And we were left standing on the watch-towers like the prophets of old looking out and up for light and strength.

In our little catechisms we were taught that Adam and Eve were our first parents and that God, to try their obedience, forbade them, under punishment of death, to eat of a certain fruit which grew in the Garden of Paradise. But, tempted by the Devil, through the instrumentality of a serpent, they broke this command and did eat. By this act of disobedience they sinned, and immediately they lost that innocence and holiness in which they had been constituted in the moment of their creation by Almighty God. They were driven out of Paradise; their intellects became dark, their wills weak and there was left in them a strong inclination towards evil; they became subject to sickness and death and misery. If they had remained faithful to God, after having spent some years on this earth in the enjoyment
of all natural happiness, they would have been taken up into Heaven. As we would have shared in their great blessings and gifts and prerogatives, if they had remained faithful to God, so also do we share in their fall, in the punishment of their sin and all its evil consequences. I may say, by way of passing, that this high state in which our first parents were constituted was not owed to them, and is not owed to us. The nature of man does not demand it; consequently God could lay down any condition for the retaining and transmission of it without doing man the least injustice. We are born into this world deprived of original justice and sanctity. Our minds, too, are dark, and our wills are weak, and we are inclined towards evil. We have to earn our bread in the sweat of our face. We have many crosses and trials, and we finally grow weak and sickly and die. But God did not forsake our first parents. He promised to send them a Redeemer, who would satisfy for sin, and by, and in, and through Him, mankind could regain more than was lost through the "Fall." Young gentlemen, let me tell you that this teaching of early faith is found in that book called the "Bible," and in that part of it called the "Old Testament," which for these many hundred years has been the object of the attacks of infidels and scientists in every conceivable way to make it false. But its authority stands unshaken, and it is recognized as the only book which contains true history until a few hundred years before Christ.

From the historical scriptures and the traditions of the nations, we learn that God, from the beginning, often appeared to man, conversed with him and made known to him His counsels. Hence, among the most remote nations who had no intercourse with one another, we find doctrines and precepts and sacred rites. After
the deluge, with the wonderful increase of the human race and its great growth, mankind had lost the certain knowledge of the Primitive Religion. To prevent the universal shipwreck of faith, and to preserve on earth a knowledge of the future Redeemer, God made a covenant with Abraham. He chose him and his seed to be the elect people; and to their guardianship He committed the true religion and the faith in the future Messiah. When, therefore, the posterity of Abraham had become multiplied like the stars, God, through Moses, unfolded more the doctrines of the Primitive Religion, promulgated the moral law, instituted a religious and civil society, and promised that it would last until the "fullness of time." It is needless to remind you, young gentlemen, that God, at divers times, worked miracles to confirm this teaching.

Although the Jews had been guided and protected in a wonderful manner by God, still, as the years rolled by, on account of their sins, He permitted them to be scattered throughout the Roman Empire. Everywhere they spoke of the one true God and the Messiah whom He was to send. Thus in their wanderings, by the providence of God, they raised the hopes and aspirations of the nations. The time had now arrived for the Redeemer to come; the Pagan world had been taught the insufficiency of itself; mankind was now prepared to receive the "Expected of Nations." Christ was born. He was born at Bethlehem of a Virgin. He had been miraculously conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, and the Virgin brought Him forth into the world painlessly and without effort, as a ripe fruit plucked from the branch, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger.
To certain shepherds who were guarding their flocks and keeping watch through the night, an angel of the Lord appeared, enveloped in light and said: "I am come to announce good tidings of great joy unto you, and unto all your people. Today in the city of David is born to you a Saviour, the Christ, the Lord, and behold! the sign by which you shall know Him; you shall find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

While their hearts were all aglow, and while their eyes were still drinking in the celestial radiance, they saw that the angel was not alone, but was surrounded by a multitude of heavenly spirits, who intoned that chant which has been re-echoed throughout the world during these nineteen hundred years: "Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of good will." When this rapturous song had faded away in the far depths of the sky, and the messengers of God had gone from their sight, they cried: "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this which has happened, see this which the Lord has made known."

On the eighth day the child was circumcised and called Jesus; a name which was brought from Heaven and spoke salvation to the Jews and which bears upon the heart the impress of love and celestial sweetness. The child is presented in the Temple, and the Magi come from the East to adore Him. Herod seeks the life of the Child, and Joseph departs into Egypt with Him and His Mother. At the age of twelve, He visits Jerusalem, and there astonishes the doctors in the Temple by the wisdom of His questions and answers. He returns to Nazareth and remains subject to Joseph and Mary until He begins His public life.
John the Baptist, the last and greatest of the prophets, points Him out. He goes before Him pointing Him out: "Do penance for the kingdom of Heaven is nigh unto you; I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord;" "I baptize with water but there cometh after me One who is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to loosen. He it is who shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire."

Christ comes to the banks of the Jordan where John was baptizing unto penance. He descended into the water with the penitents, but lo! a sign is given from Heaven; John recognizes the Christ and cries out: "I ought to be baptized by Thee and dost Thou come to me?" "Suffer me to do this now," said Jesus, "thus it behooveth us to fulfill all justice." John resisted the Christ no longer but baptized Him. At the moment the Lord arose from the water, the heavens opened and the Holy Ghost descended upon Christ in a form of a dove, and a voice rang out from the heights of the heavens: "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

Christ begins his public mission. He gathers around Him twelve men, who are to become His associates in the great work. They travel up and down the country of Judea with Him, partaking of the same sorrows and of the same joys. They saw Him perform all kinds of miracles, and relieve all kinds of distress. They heard the doctrines which He came from heaven to reveal and to make known. He came to establish the Christian religion, and they are to continue the work after Him. And before He ascended into heaven Christ sent them into the whole world to preach the gospel to every creature. To them and their successors, He entrusted the whole deposit of revealed truth: "All
power,'" said He, "is given to Me in heaven and on earth; going therefore teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." And in order that they would be able to fulfill this great commission and forget none of His teachings, He said to them: "And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete that he may abide with you forever. But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, he will teach you all things whatsoever I shall have said to you." And to strengthen the faith of all believers in the indefectibility of the Church, and to show them in all controversies where to look for sound faith He said to Simon, one of the twelve: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it."

The world was soon changed. It was now moved by new ideals and forces. In the humble birth of the Saviour, it received its first great lesson. Christ taught the existence of one God, Who is supreme, absolute, perfect and infinite, and in Whom there are three divine persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. He taught that He, Himself, is both divine and human. He taught the immortality of the soul; the existence of a future life, where man will be rewarded or punished according to His works; promulgated anew, the Ten Commandments, and taught the Eight Beatitudes; established a new form of worship, of which the Old Law was but a shadow; instituted seven channels of grace, and established a Church to continue His work, until the consummation of the ages. And He put upon that Church,
four marks, namely, unity, sanctity, apostolicity, and Catholicity, by which it might be known, and which would be of themselves, an invincible proof of its divinity. Christ, His doctrines and the Church, changed the face of the earth. The nations in their turn became converted and Christian principles and sentiments ruled them. Light and purity shown out everywhere.

From then, on down through the centuries, the Church has been found among all nations, races and people, and mankind has followed and believed in Jesus Christ. It is true that heresies have arisen in every age, but they served a purpose, and after having purified the Church, and made it stronger, they came to naught of themselves. Infidels have been found in every age, but their number has been most insignificant. Their number to the number of Christians, may be compared as the number of the blind, to those who have sight. And just as the wanting of sight in the blind does not affect the existence of the sun, so, neither does the unbelief of a handful of infidels affect the divinity of the Christian religion. Christ has been King for nineteen hundred years, and the Church has existed and flourished everywhere. Not by the sword, not by pandering to sensuality, not by money, not by temporal advantages has Christ's kingdom been advanced, yea, in spite of these and by the very opposite, and yet it is universal and supreme!
SIN.

MY DEAR YOUNG GENTLEMEN:—In our second instruction we saw that God did not forsake man after the "Fall" but promised him a Redeemer who in the "fullness of time" came; that this Redeemer was Jesus Christ, a God-man, whom the nations, for many hundred years, longed and looked for; that when He came He proved by His miracles—the seal by which God stamps a work divine—that He was sent from Heaven; and that He founded a Church, which likewise bears upon itself marks of divinity, and which is to continue His work until the end of time, teaching and guiding men in their journey on toward eternity. Therefore, as reasonable beings, we must listen to Christ and His Church. They are to be our teachers in all that concerns the salvation of our immortal souls.

Only one thing can keep us out of Heaven, can prevent us from reaching the end for which God Almighty created us, and that is sin. In this instruction, we shall therefore, meditate upon sin. O, Holy Spirit, enlighten our minds!

Again we shall follow, for a few moments, the little catechism, which teaches us that sin is an offense against God, or any thought, word, or deed contrary to the law of God. And it divides sin into two kinds, namely, mortal and venial. It tells us that mortal sin is a serious offense against God, and to make a sin mortal, three things are necessary—a grievous matter, sufficient reflection and full consent of the will. It tells us that venial sin is a slight offense against the law of God, or in other
words, it is an offense in which some one of the three conditions requisite to make a sin mortal, is wanting. As, for example, I tell a "white lie". It is a venial sin, because the matter is not serious. Again, a very immodest thought passes through my mind, which I, in a sort of a half or indeterminate way entertained. It is a venial sin, because, although a serious matter, and I knew it was such, I did not entertain it with full consent of my will. Or again, I fly into a passion. The matter is serious and there has been full consent of the will, but it all happened so quickly, that there could scarcely have been sufficient reflection. But what is sin in its essence? St. Thomas, the prince of Catholic philosophers and theologians, tells us in his "Summa", where every question concerning God, the Soul and Eternity is treated so masterly, where reason reaches its summit, and when it can soar no longer upon its own wings, mounts those of revelation and is lost in twilight of infinity,—St. Thomas, says that sin is a turning away from God towards creatures, or it is the placing of our beatitude in creatures instead of in God. And the difference between a mortal and a venial sin, according to the same luminous doctor, consists in this; that a mortal sin is the complete and total turning away from God towards creatures, whilst a venial sin is but a partial and incomplete turning away from God towards creatures. To carry out the idea, I would say a mortal sin places our whole beatitude in creatures, whilst a venial sin places only our partial beatitude in them. In other words, I would say, by a mortal sin we say to God, absolutely and irrevocably, "I will not serve you" whilst by a venial sin we say to God, "I will try to serve both you and creatures at the same time".
Dear Young Gentlemen, let us now consider what a great evil mortal sin is. It is true no creature, none but God, Himself, can comprehend fully what an evil it is. Since sin is opposed to the infinite goodness of God, and as none but God can comprehend fully His own infinite goodness, so none but God can comprehend fully the infinite enormity that is found in this opposite evil—sin. But with the help of revelation, we can get such knowledge of it as to convince us that it is the greatest of all evils; and consequently, that we should prefer the loss of everything in this world—health, wealth, honor, even death itself, to deliberate sin.

It was only one sin, and that of thought, that changed in an instant millions of most beautiful angels into hideous devils, cast them out of heaven, and condemned them eternally to hell. It was but one sin, and that of disobedience, that stripped our first parents of that original justice, sanctity and innocence in which they had been constituted by God, in the beginning. It was this sin that wounded so seriously the powers of their soul, drove them out of Paradise, gave them over to the slavery of Satan, and condemned them to both a temporal and an eternal death. It is this sin, too, that has robbed us of their wonderful privileges, gifts and prerogatives, and let loose upon mankind a whole army of evils both in soul and body. It is sin that has blasted the whole creation, and subjected it to so many evils, which St. Paul calls "the servitude of corruption", by which God and creatures are abused by men and angels and made subservient to sin and vanity.

Young Gentlemen, consider what a sad havoc sin wrought in the soul. O, what a frightful metamorphism takes place when a soul falls from grace into sin! The transformation is like to that which befell the angels in
heaven, when, from bright, beautiful, supernal spirits, they were changed into the very devils of hell. When the soul is in a state of grace it is the loving child of God, the spouse of Jesus Christ and the temple of the Holy Ghost; but in the moment it commits mortal sin, it forfeits therewith, this great dignity, becomes the slave of Satan and the habitation of unclean spirits. O, The incomprehensible beauty of a soul adorned with heavenly grace! The beauty of it is so ravishing that God, Himself, delights to look upon it. But sin works in the soul, a more dreadful deformity and hideousness than leprosy does in a healthy and beautiful body. Sin makes it most loathsome and repulsive. In its great deformity and ugliness, it resembles the devils in hell. The value of a soul in the state of grace is the eternal kingdom of God. But when it falls into mortal sin, it loses at once all the store of virtue and merit, and becomes most poor and miserable and wretched, and instead of possessing the kingdom of God, it is, itself, possessed by the devil.

All the evils we can possibly incur, either here or hereafter, there is none to be compared to the evil which we bring upon ourselves by mortal sin. If all men on earth, and all the devils in hell, were permitted by Almighty God, to conspire together and inflict upon us all the torments they could invent, they would not be capable of doing us half as much hurt, as we do ourselves, when we commit a wilful mortal sin. Their evils could affect only our bodies, and could not touch our souls. Whereas mortal sin goes directly to the soul, and brings upon it a dreadful death. Yea, mortal sin does kill the soul. Just as truly as the soul is the life of the body, just so truly is God’s grace, the life of the soul. The moment the soul leaves the body a great change immediately comes over it. While sitting with one hand on the
forehead of the dying, and the ritual in the other, and commanding the soul to depart in the name of God, its Creator, and Jesus Christ, its Redeemer, etc., I have been struck by the great change that immediately comes over them as soon as they have gasped their last breath. A few minutes before, although in pain and misery, yet the countenance was lit up by a light coming from the soul, which diffused about it animation and attractiveness—a something indescribable—which made us feel akin to them and drew us to them. But now, after that vital principle has departed, they become, in a way, repulsive; we care not to be near them nor to touch them; they become as a piece of marble, or lump of clay—no light there, no animation, no attractiveness, nothing now akin to us. When the grace of God is driven out of the soul by sin, no doubt, the same transformation takes place, and the soul becomes in the sight of God as that body does in our sight. Spiritually dead, spiritually hideous, spiritually repulsive!

My Dear Young Gentlemen, one more consideration and we have done with this meditation. From the manifold judgments, which God executes upon sin in this world, we may see what hatred He must bear to it. The Deluge, by which God swept off the earth mankind, and hurled all the sinners at once into Hell, was a punishment of sin. The fire that came from heaven and destroyed Sodom and the neighboring cities, was a punishment of sin. The many judgments which God inflicted upon the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness, especially the opening of the earth and the swallowing alive of Kore and his companions, was a punishment of sin. What is the hurrying away of millions in every age by violent and untimely deaths when least expected, but a punishment for their crying sins! What is the sudden destruction
of flourishing cities and whole nations by war, pestilence, famine and earthquakes, but a punishment for their crying sins! Is not the delivering over to a reprobate sense and blindness of heart of those who abuse God’s grace, but a punishment of sin? It was thus God did by the Jews, according to the prediction of the royal prophet: ‘‘Letting their eyes be darkened that they may not see and bowing down their back always—adding iniquity upon iniquity.’’ Could a greater evil befall anyone than to be delivered over to final impenitence, with no fear or thought of God’s judgments, and no concern for the soul and its salvation and eternity? Great God! Who shall not fear Thy wrath which always looks towards and visits wilful sinners?

Great God! Who shall not fear the dreadful evil of mortal sin which thus provokes so Thy avenging justice? Resolve to wage a continual war against the world, the flesh and the devil, which are the enemies of thy soul and lead thee into mortal sin. Pray to God, that He will not suffer thee to fall into wilful sin—rather ask Him to take thee out of the world before such a great evil overtake thee!
THE PASSION.

My Dear Young Gentlemen:—In our third meditation, we discoursed on sin, its nature and malice, in order to deter us from it in the future, as it alone can keep us from reaching our last end—Heaven. We saw what a great evil it is, from the sad havoc it has wrought in the world and the judgments an infinitely merciful God was compelled to mete out against it. In this meditation, we are going to view it from the standpoint of the Passion of Jesus Christ, wherein, in the most practical and demonstrative way, we shall be convinced of the enormity of its malice, since God, the Father, to satisfy His own justice, had to sacrifice His Son on the Cross. We shall likewise see in the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, God's love for us and His desire for our salvation. Our catechism says that Jesus Christ, suffered a bloody sweat, a cruel scourging, was crowned with thorns and was crucified. And it further says, that He suffered all this to teach us the heinousness of sin, God's love for us, and the necessity of our satisfying for sin.

Young Gentlemen, come with me and we shall follow Jesus Christ, from the Garden of Gethsemani, to the heights of Calvary, and we shall behold and contemplate one of the most awful, sacred dramas ever enacted—the Passion and Crucifixion of Jesus Christ, our God, our Saviour, our Lord, our King!

After having instituted the Blessed Eucharist, Jesus Christ wended His way to the Garden of Olives. Hardly had He entered it when he felt the pangs of His agony coming upon Him. "Sit ye here," said He to His dis-

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ciples, "while I go yonder and pray". Into the thick-
est, darkest part of the Garden where the light of the moon did not penetrate, Christ retired. He takes with Him, Peter, James and John, for they are to drink with Him the cup of His sorrow. And now terror and dejection are written on His countenance: something like a death stupor comes over Him; the three Apostles are frightened; for never before had they seen their Master, plunged in such sadness. "My soul," cried He, "is sorrowful unto death! wait here, watch and pray!"

Then withdrawing about a stone's throw, He fell upon His knees, bowed His head and prayed that, if it were possible, this chalice might pass from Him. "Father, all things are possible to Thee; take away this cup from Me". Yes, this cup of anguish, wherein He tasted beforehand, all the bitterness of His Passion—this cup so full of woe—the Christ shrank from enduring any more; and He remained motionless for a long while, asking the Father for strength. His prayer was heard; and He immediately said: "Let thy will, not Mine, be done."

He returns to the three disciples, to find some com-
fort and relief; but they are asleep. There was not one human heart to sympathize with Him. Peter the bold, James the courageous and John the beloved, are fast asleep. They slept, while their Master, only a few steps away, was racked with anguish. Not one of the chosen three, whom He had brought with Him to uphold and sustain Him, had offered Him any consolation.

The disciples saw Him withdraw for the second time and cast Himself in the dust, and writhe in the throes of agony, whilst His lips kept muttering the self same prayer: "Father, if this chalice cannot pass except I drink it, Thy will be done." Weariness overcame the
Apostles for the second time, and upon returning, Christ found them asleep, and they had no answer to make.

For the third and last time Christ leaves the chosen three to begin the mightiest of all conflicts with the powers of darkness. Hell was let loose upon the soul of that innocent Lamb! Sin came near Him! Before His eyes passed the whole empire of sin! All sinners, from the beginning of the world to the end of time, passed before Him that night! Before Him passed that night the drunkards with their thick, stammering lips and filthy brains! Before Him passed that night the impure men revelling in their lechery! Before Him passed that night, the blasphemers uttering their awful impreca­tions! Before Him passed that night, the murderers, reeking in the blood of their victims! Yes, before Him passed that night, you and I, young gentlemen, in all the dark ways of our iniquity! That night Christ realized that, notwithstanding all He was about to suffer, His passion would not avail some—that some souls would be lost. Oh! It was this thought—the thought of the fruitlessness of His passion—that bruised and crushed His Sacred Heart, and caused the blood to ooze from out the pours of His body and run trickling to the ground! But Jesus prayed the more ardently, ever repeating: "Father, if this chalice cannot pass except I drink it, Thy will be done."

Ah! these tears! This suppliant cry! That blood! pierced the highest heavens—and His Father sent an angel to comfort Him; and Christ rose up strengthened and consoled. And He goes to His slumbering disciples and addresses them in words breathing forth tenderness, mingled with reproachfulness:—"Sleep on now and take your rest."
Whilst Christ was still speaking, down at the foot of the Garden, there appears an armed band made up of Roman Soldiers, Jews of every rank and condition, officers of the Sanhedrim, Temple-guards and servants of the High priest. Judas Iscariot is leading them. They come with their staves and swords, with their flaring torches and glimmering lanterns to ferret out the meek and harmless Christ. "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is He; seize Him": Thus spoke Judas to the rabble. And coming forward, he pressed his hypocritical, impure lips to the flushed, chaste cheek of Jesus Christ, and said: "Master, Master hail!" Meekly but admonishingly the Saviour replied: "Friend, is it for this thou art here to betray the Son of man with a kiss?" Immediately the soldiers advance and seize Jesus; whereupon Simon drew his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus the servant of the High-Priest. Perceiving the members of the Sanhedrim, coming out against him, Christ protested against their violence: "You have come against Me as against a thief, to seize Me with swords and staves. I was every day in the midst of you teaching in the Temple and you did not hinder Me; but, lo! this is your hour and the power of darkness."

The Apostles now take to flight. They forsake their Master; they leave Him in the hands of the rabble, and they flee in the darkness of the night. They forsake Him and leave Him in the hands of those who are thirsting for His blood; who rush upon Him as the tiger upon his prey; who seize Him, bind Him and drag Him on to Jerusalem and conduct Him into the presence of Pilate, the Roman Governor of Judea.

The Sanhedrim had hoped that their eagerness, and the moment at which they presented themselves, would have prevailed with Pilate. Their disappointment found
its utterance in bitter terms: "If this man were not a malefactor we would not have delivered Him up to you."

This answer incensed Pilate, and he responded ironically: "Take Him yourselves and judge Him according to your laws." "We no longer have the power of putting anyone to death," replied the Jews, disclosing thus, how far they wished to proceed.

The charges brought against Jesus were three: exciting the people; forbidding the people to pay tribute to Caesar; and calling Himself, the Christ-king. Only the last charge had any interest for Pilate. After a private interview with Christ, wherein he was half convinced of His Messiahship, he turned away from Him to escape the influence which Jesus was exerting over him. And he said to the Jews, "I find nothing worthy of death in this Man". At this answer to their appeal, the cries of rage burst out more wildly than before. The priests and ancients persisted with great violence, besieging his ears with accusations which grew ever more vague and contradictory. Hearing Him called a Galilean, he remanded Him forthwith to the Tetrarch of the country.

The prince's suite was quartered in the ancient residence of the Machabees. Thither the legionaries conducted Jesus surrounded by His enemies. We shall not attempt to follow the Saviour over this portion of His sorrowful journey. Suffice it to say that they insulted and maltreated Him in every conceivable manner.

Inclining towards the skepticism of the Sadducees, Herod took very little interest in religious questions; and further by condemning Jesus might there not arise a popular movement in His favor? At any rate He was not going to endanger his own comfort. But to show his disdain for Christ, he ordered Him to be clothed in a
THE PASSION

white robe—the garment of a fool—whom he considered on account of weakness of mind incapable of crime. Thus robed, he remanded Jesus back to Pilate. Again they hurried Jesus along the road to Antonia Attica in this dress of a buffoon. Pilate is touched with pity at the sight of Jesus, and to appease the mob he said, "I will chastise Him therefore and let Him go". But this did not satisfy them and he hit upon another expedient. On this day there were to be executed two notorious criminals, and it was the custom of the Governor in honor of the feast-day to release one. Surely, thought Pilate when Jesus and Barabbas are presented and they are asked which of the two they wish released, with one accord they will cry out, Jesus. Ascending the steps of the Tribunal he asked: "Whom do you wish me to deliver to you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" "Release Barabbas and give us Jesus," came the response. "Do you wish me to deliver up to you Jesus, the King of the Jews?" asked Pilate again. "Rid us of Him and release Barabbas," shouted the surging multitude. "What shall I then do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?" replied the Governor. "Crucify Him! crucify Him!" came the unanimous response.

Jesus is seized by the mob and dragged over the road which leads to the city of Jerusalem by the Southern gate. He is finally presented before the Sanhedrim, who go through a mock trial. Caiphas is presiding, and when Jesus, in response to the question whether He was the Son of God, answered yes, the pontiff rent His garments and exclaimed, "What further need have we of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy. How seems this matter unto you?" "He is worthy of death," they all shouted, and now began another series of diabolical outrages. These judges of Israel, in cap and ermine,
rise from their judgment seat and come forward, not to administer justice, but to insult Christ in the most malicious way. They come forward, and after spitting in His face, strike Him in the mouth, saying at the same time in derision and mockery, "Christ, prophesy who struck you?" and when their fury had spent itself, they handed Him over to the servants of the Court who received Him with a shower of blows and drove Him before them, maltreating Him in every way.

During this night there happened the three-fold denial of Peter. Seated in the court-yard, warming His trembling hands, he is recognized by the portress. To her question whether he was with Jesus of Nazareth, he answered no, twice. And for the third time He was protesting that he did not even know Jesus and with a string of oaths and curses, when he heard the cock crow for the second time. He remembered now what the Master had said, "Before the cock crows twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice," and over-whelmed with despair, he rushes, through the crowd, out from the place and gives vent to great grief, shedding copious tears.

Jesus is delivered over to the Jews by Pilate. And the people receive Him with the wildest shouts,—"Let His blood be upon us and upon our children." Then began the scourging.

He is stripped of His garments and bound to a low column so that His back will receive the full force of the blows. Roman soldiers, who are selected for their strength and endurance, come forth with leathern thongs which are armed with balls of lead. Up go their lusty arms high in the air over the bended form of Christ, and they bring them down with all their force upon the bare flesh of Jesus! The skin rises in rugged furrows and the blood gushes forth! But the blows are not limited: so up
again their arms go and they tear and rend and lacerate that sacred body! They continue their scourging, until overcome by fatigue; and Christ stands all bruised and mangled—stands with the blood gushing from the wounds and trickling to His feet, until it was almost literally true that He stood ankle deep, in His own blood.

A red mantle is thrown over His shoulders, and He is made to mount a throne. A crown of thorns is woven and placed on His head, and a reed is put in His hand. In this attitude of a mock-king, they pass before Him and salute Him, "King of the Jews," at the same time striking Him and spitting in His face. During this series of outrages the reed slips from His hand. They seize it, and with it strike Him over the head until the crown of thorns is driven fast into His sacred brow.

Pilate now appears upon the square of Gabbatha and says: "Behold, I bring Him out hither to you, that so you may know that I find no crime in Him." Jesus thereupon comes forward with the crown of thorns upon His head, and the red robe hanging about His blood-stained body, and in this pitiful, heartrending condition, is made to mount the steps of the Tribunal. "Behold the Man!" cried Pilate to the mob. But, like ferocious beasts, at the sight of Christ's blood, they shout, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" "This then is your King", Pilate began again. But his voice was drowned by the cries of the mob:—"Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" "This is your King! Shall I crucify your King?" "We have no King but Caesar!" shouted the priests. Vanquished at last, Jesus is delivered into their hands, and then began the journey towards Calvary.

The instrument of torture is produced. It is a Latin cross and it is placed upon His lacerated shoulders. The
procession moves rapidly towards Golgotha. Jesus drags that heavy badge of infamy across the streets of Jerusalem, stared at by an insolent crowd of sight-seers. Up the road leading to Calvary they move. But before they reach the gate, Jesus falls from exhaustion. With gibes and curses and blows from pike and javelin, they try to spur Him on. It is useless, and they compel Simon, the Cyrenean to carry the cross for Him. Arrived at the place of execution, Jesus is bereft of all strength. They offered Him a drink of wine mixed with myrrh and poppy which would produce a sort of lethargy, and lighten somewhat the pains of crucifixion. He tasted it: but would not drink; He willed to suffer all the bitterness and anguish which should accompany His execution. And He fixed His gaze upon the Cross, which was driven into the ground, upon the hammer and nails, which were now ready, upon the ladders which were raised aloft, and the cords which were knotted and prepared. His body shudders, but His soul remains steadfast, watching the approach of death.

They now seize Him and strip Him of His garments. They put the cords around His body and pull it up to the protruding spikes, and there they fastened Him. They stretch out his arms and feet so as to make them reach the holes made in the Cross. And then they began the nailing. See how they drive those cruel, blunt spikes through the hands and feet of our Saviour! Blow after blow they give those nails until they pierce and penetrate and pass through the flesh and bones and enter into the wood of the Cross!

For three hours, Christ hangs there, suspended between earth and heaven—hangs there with the weight of His body upon the bruised and torn and lacerated flesh of the hands and feet—hangs there amid the scoffs and
jeers of the rabble. At last he utters a cry: "Father, into Thy hands I restore my spirit." Christ is dead! Your and my sins, it was, young gentlemen, that made Him sweat blood, that scourged Him, crowned Him, and crucified Him! The veil of the Temple is rent in twain! The earth shakes! The graves open! The rocks are cloven asunder! Bodies of the saints arise from the tomb! Darkness envelopes the earth! Heaven is opened! Man is redeemed!
THE MORAL LAW.

MY DEAR YOUNG GENTLEMEN:—In our fourth medita-
tion we dwelt upon the "Passion and Death of Jesus
Christ", and we saw our divine Saviour sweating blood
in the Garden of Gethsemani, which was caused by the
great mental pain and anguish there endured; we saw
Him forsaken by all, even the chosen three; we saw high
priests and the rabble spitting in His face, striking Him
and insulting Him in every conceivable manner; we saw
Him crowned with thorns and placed upon a throne as
a mock-king; we saw Him scourged in the court-yard
by soldiers until His body was one bleeding mass; we
saw Him bearing the cross upon His shoulders to Cal-
vary and falling under its weight, but still whipped and
lashed on like a beast of burden; we saw them almost
disjointing His arms and legs, and driving the spikes
through the flesh and bones of His hands and feet; we
saw Him hanging on the Cross for three hours, sus-
pended between earth and heaven, amid the scoffs and
jeers of the rabble, and we heard His last cry there.
I ask, is any other consideration necessary to teach us
what a great evil sin must be, and how much the Saviour
loves us and desires our salvation?

Sin is the cause of all the evils in this world; sin
crucified Christ; and sin is the only thing that can sepa-
rate us from God. Now there are many ways in which
we can sin. And vincible ignorance does not excuse us.
This morning we are going to consider the Command-
ments of God, which are summarized in the Decalogue;
and the Decalogue will be the law by which Almighty God shall judge us after death.


These Commandments, as you know, were given by Almighty God to Moses on Mt. Sinai, and through Him, to the Jewish people. But from the beginning they had been written on the hearts of men. In time, owing to the sins of men, this teaching of conscience concerning them became less and less distinct, until finally it became necessary for God to reveal and enforce them in a supernatural manner. The Ten Commandments comprise all our duties and obligations, and are founded on the relations which necessarily exist between man and his Creator, and between man and man. Hence they are immutable and unalterable, and will remain obligatory until the end of time. They are as binding under the New as under the Old Law. Therefore, when Christ came He simply re-affirmed them.

"I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before Me." By this Commandment we are commanded to believe in God, to hope in Him and to love Him. And by it we are forbidden to give to creatures the honor which belongs to God, or to worship God in a false manner, or to attribute to a creature a perfection which be-
longs to God alone. These are some of the more common ways by which we break the First Commandment: It is broken when we deny publicly some truth of our religion, or do not openly profess it; as for example, a Catholic would sin in this way by being present at Protestant worship, outside of grave necessity, or by taking part in it no matter how serious the reason may be, or by denying his Catholicity when questioned concerning it. It is broken by exposing our faith to danger; as for example, we should sin in this way by habitually associating with those of a different faith or no faith at all. It is broken by presumption, that is, by hoping to be saved without making use of the means of salvation; as for example, that Catholic who neglects to go to the Sacraments or frequently misses Mass on Sundays and yet expects to be saved. It is broken by despair, that is when on account of the number and greatness of our sins, we believe that God will not pardon us. It is broken by consulting fortune-tellers, mediums and spiritualists to find out the future, or by believing in dreams, or making use of spells or charms. Finally it is broken by doubting some article of faith, by habitually missing our prayers, and by not trying to learn what God has revealed; as for example, the Catholic who does not know the Apostles’ Creed, the Commandments of God, the Precepts of the Church, and the Lord’s Prayer, sins against the First Commandment.

The Second Commandment is:—“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.” By it we are commanded always to use the name of God with great reverence, and not to invoke it except for a serious reason. And by it we are forbidden to blaspheme, and to take rash or false oaths. It is broken when we take the name of God, or the name of Jesus Christ, or the
name of some Saint outside of prayer, or when we take these names, not for the purpose of inducing others to do something good, or not for the purpose of stimulating their devotion and love towards God and holy things, but simply in vain. But it would not be wrong to say—"I beseech thee in the name of Jesus Christ, to amend thy evil ways," or, "I beseech thee, through St. Peter and Paul, to go to Confession." It is broken when without a sufficient reason we take an oath or swear to a falsehood. However it is permitted us, when called upon by the civil authority to give testimony in a law-suit, to confirm it with an oath. It is broken, when we fail to keep our vows or solemn promises; as for example, if some spiritual favor were granted me by God, I promised to give a certain sum of money in charity. That promise is binding in the sight of God. Or again, for some temporal favor granted me by God, as for example, restoration to health, I vowed to make a pilgrimage to some sacred shrine. That vow is obligatory, and we would sin against the Second Commandment by not fulfilling it. It is broken when we imprecate evil upon ourselves or others; as for example, if I should say, "May God strike me dead if I am not speaking the truth, or may God damn thee for having done that." And finally, it is broken by blasphemy, as when we impute to God any imperfection; as for example, should we say that God is cruel or unjust, or God has forsaken us, or has grievously tormented us we sin by blasphemy.

The Third Commandment is:—"Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day." Instead of the last day of the week in commemoration of the completion of the work of creation and our eternal rest, which was kept under the Old Law, we keep holy, under the New Law, the first day of the week in commemoration of the begin-
ning of the work of creation, the Resurrection of Christ, and the Descent of the Holy Ghost; and also to teach us that the ceremonial part of the Old Law is no longer obligatory. To a Catholic there is very little difficulty about the meaning of this precept. He knows from the teaching of the Church, if he attends Mass on Sunday and is present at the evening service, and does a little spiritual reading, he is keeping the positive part of the Commandment. On the other hand he knows that if he refrains from unnecessary servile work on the Lord’s day, he is keeping the negative part of it. He likewise knows that when he has performed his religious duties towards God, he may give some part of the day to innocent and healthful recreations; for Sunday was made for man, and not man for Sunday.

“Honor thy Father and thy Mother”, is the Fourth Commandment. By it, we are commanded to reverence, honor and obey our parents. We reverence our parents, when we acknowledge their dignity. We honor them, when we acknowledge their pre-eminence by words and acts. We obey them, when we follow their behests in all that pertains to the regulation of the home, good morals and the salvation of our souls. By this Commandment, servants, pupils and the faithful are commanded to honor, respect and obey their masters, teachers and spiritual superiors respectively, the same as their parents, with some limitations however, as for the time being they hold the place of parents. And especially must we show the greatest respect and reverence for our ecclesiastical superiors, for St. Paul says:—“Obey your prelates and be subject to them. For they watch as being to render an account of your sins; that they may do this with joy and not with grief.”
The Fifth Commandment, "Thou Shall Not Kill," although it is negative in form it nevertheless includes many positive duties. To fulfill it, we must love, with a true internal love, all men. Nationality, language, race or creed is to be no barrier. We must love all, not in word and with the tongue, but in truth and deed, as St. John says. Hence we must give to them the accustomed marks of respect, and when in extreme want, we must assist them even to the giving up of some of our superfluous food and abundant clothing. As regards the negative part of it, we are commanded to preserve our own and our neighbor's life. We should sin against this part of the Commandment, if we neglected to make use of the ordinary means of health, or tried to shorten our life in any way, or exposed our life to danger without a grave reason. We sin against this part of the Commandment by flying into a passion, by quarreling with our neighbor and by striking him, and by all means if we should take his life.

The Sixth and Ninth Commandments, both treat on impurity, and are so closely connected and running into each other that we shall say a few words on them together. The Sixth Commandment, forbids us to commit adultery, and the Ninth Commandment, forbids us to covet our neighbor's wife. It is not necessary for me to go into details concerning these Commandments, as you all know when you break them. Just one or two general remarks. Young Gentlemen, there are no sins which carry in their train so many evils as those against purity. Sins against purity strike a deadly blow against the human race. Drunkenness is a great sin, because it tends to destroy the individual; but impurity is a greater sin, because it tends to destroy the human race. The drunkard sins against himself, but the impure man sins
against society. It is hard indeed, to overcome the habit
of drunkenness, but let impurity get a hold on man, and
it takes almost a miracle of grace to release him from its
grasp. We hear much from public reformers, about
drunkenness, but never a word about impurity. Drunk-
erness is a great sin, because it puts a man on a level
with the brute creation; but impurity is a greater sin
because it puts man below the brute creation. An im­
pure man, in his lusts, will do things which the instincts
of the animals prevent them from doing. Drunkenness,
is slaying its thousands, but impurity its hundreds of
thousands. For every one sin committed against intem­
perance there are a hundred or more committed against
purity, either in thought, word or action. Impurity is
the sin of the human race at the present day, and espe­
cially of the American people, into whose very vitals it is
eating as a canker.

The Eighth Commandment is—“Thou shalt not bear
false witness against thy neighbor.” According to the
letter, we are forbidden to tell lies about our neighbor,
and, consequently, must speak the truth about him.
But it comprises a great deal more than this. By it we
are forbidden to lie, to equivocate, to inquire into se­
crets, to reveal them, to suspect our neighbor, to lessen his
reputation, and to insult him. I believe these words are
self explanatory, and need no comment. Just one or two
general remarks. Young Gentlemen, the peace and sta­
bility of civil society depend, to a great extent, on the
keeping of the Eighth Commandment. Business is
founded on faith and confidence; and without truthfulness
we cannot have faith and confidence. Quarrels,
strifes and murders to a great extent are caused by the
disregard of this precept. Our perfection too, in a great
measure, depends upon the keeping of it. “If any
man,” says St. James, “think himself religious, not bridling his tongue but deceiving his own heart, this man’s religion is vain.” And yet we have to confess that there is no Commandment which is broken oftener, and by religious people too, in some way or other. If the Eighth Commandment were kept in spirit, this earth would become a veritable Paradise. Many of the heartaches, crosses, trials and afflictions come from the non-observance of it. “Judge not, lest you shall be judged:” and, “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,” says Jesus Christ.

The Seventh Commandment is:—“Thou shalt not steal,” and the Tenth is:—“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s goods.” These two Commandments, as the Sixth and Ninth, go together. One regulates our actions, the other our desires. For from desires, proceed actions. And before we take our neighbor’s goods we must first desire them. However, oftentimes we desire our neighbor’s goods, without taking them; which is a grievous sin; for sin lies in the will. The only difference is, if we take our neighbor’s goods we are bound to restore them. Young Gentlemen, you know when you have really desired your neighbor’s goods, and when you have been guilty of theft. Instead of explaining these points, I shall therefore speak briefly upon the foundation of this precept, and its necessity, and then we shall have finished this meditation.

The Seventh and Tenth Commandments, are clearly founded upon the law of nature. God, in the Decalogue, simply makes them clearer and confirms them. The ownership of movable or stable goods is necessary to the life and progress of men. Therefore, among all civilized nations and people from the creation of man down to the present time, this right has been recognized.
To preserve our physical life, we need food, clothing and shelter; and nature gives us the right to these things. To provide for ourselves and those who are depending upon us with any degree of stability and certainty, we must own land and the means of production. Therefore nature gives us the right to these things. We are commanded by the law of conscience, to do unto others, as we would have them do unto us, to render to everyone his due, and not to distress, unnecessarily our neighbor's mind. By not respecting our neighbor's property, we sin in this way.

Young Gentlemen, we are living in an age when people make light of these Commandments; and in a country where one would judge that they did not exist. And yet there are no Commandments, upon the keeping of which, God, through the inspired writers, insists so strongly. The rich break them and the poor break them. The rich by their unjust exactions, and the poor by their envy and avarice. The rich are the stewards of God and will have to render a strict account of their stewardship. The poor are the wards of God, His friends and intimates, and He considers as done unto Himself what is done unto them. Let them realize their true dignity. "Woe to you that are rich," says Christ, "for you have your consolation."; and again He says, "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Christ did not come in affluence and power. He came in poverty and humility. His life was one of toil, suffering and privation. Envy not the rich, seek not wealth, "The desire for money," says St. Paul, "is the root of all evil; which some coveting have erred from the faith and have entangled themselves in many sorrows." God knows what is best for each one of us. Seek not the
things of the body; but seek after the things of the soul. Aim at the higher life. We are not beasts. That man is happiest and most blest, who is in moderate circumstances, and possesses virtue. Allow no false teacher to deceive you. Earth is not our heaven. We are here on trial and probation. Inequalities in wealth, position and talent, must and will exist. The life of predestined souls is to be one of conflict and suffering. Those who have no trials and crosses forget God, their soul and eternity. "I am the Way, the Truth and the Light." "If any man will be My disciple let him take up his cross and follow Me." Thus spoke infinite Wisdom.
OUR LAST END.

My Dear Young Gentlemen:—In our last meditation, from a hasty glance at the Ten Commandments, we saw the many ways in which we may sin. And we dwelt a little at length on the effects of the sin of untruthfulness, impurity and theft, because truthfulness, purity and honesty, the opposite virtues are so necessary even in this world. We shall now consider death and judgment.

Our catechism enumerates death and judgment as two of the last four things we should remember, if we wish to keep from sinning and to save our souls.

"It is appointed for all men once to die, after this the judgment," thus wrote St. Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews.

No one of sound mind, doubts the certainty of death. Experience brings the truth home to our minds constantly—thousands are dying every day. Everything around us cries out that we too must die. The birds and the animals, the plants and the flowers are born to-day, are full of life and beauty; to-morrow they grow sickly, fade and die. Death is certain. We all believe it. Infidels, as well as Christians. The rich and the poor, the powerful and the weak, the scholar and the rustic, the nobleman and the plebeian—all must die—all are children of Adam.

But the time of death? There's the question! No one knows except God. It shall come suddenly. Death is always sudden even to those lying for months on a bed of sickness. In the midst of life there is death. We
lie down to sleep in health, we are found dead in the morning. We start out in the morning full of hope and life, and we are carried home dead. Death seeks out its victims everywhere, among all classes and at all times. No place is too sacred, no man too important, no time too precious. God’s priest is struck down in His own temple, at the foot of the altar, in the confessional, or whilst attending the sick. The lawyer is struck down whilst pleading, the physician hastening to a sick call, the business man selling his wares and the mechanic with uplifted tool. Death strikes down its victims at all hours; at the break of day, at the noon-day splendor, at the setting of the sun, at midnight and in the silent still hours of the morning. It goes into the gilded palace, the plain dwelling and the humble cot. It visits the nestling babe, the young, in the flush and hope and beauty of youth; the middle-aged, in the midst of cares and seriousness of life; and the old, broken down in health and hopes, feeble and tottering. Yes, young gentlemen, the time of death is very uncertain. Those who expect to live longest, often die first. No one, when he awakens, knows whether he shall see the sun set. No one knows when he retires at night, whether he shall see the sun rise. God in His infinite wisdom has concealed the time from us. But He warns us to be always ready. To have our lamps burning, for He shall come as a thief in the night—suddenly, and when least expected!

How much physical pain the dying suffer, we cannot say, with certainty. But before they lose consciousness, we know the pain is by no means slight or trifling. Most men experience a sense of abandonment, apprehension, and suffocation. They feel that they are parting with all things which they prized and loved—money, honors, friends and relatives—are drawing away from them
gradually, but surely! They are filled with apprehension. When the soul is about to leave the body what a state of commotion and revolution within the kingdom of man! Some great catastrophe they know, is about to overtake them. They are like a man standing on the brink of a rocky precipice, or on the edge of a fierce volcano, about to be hurled over and downwards! What a feeling of suffocation! When the heart trebles its number of beats and the respiration grows faster and shorter, Oh, what a sense of smothering and suffocation comes over the dying! Only they themselves can truly tell the physical pain endured!

But the mental pain of most Christians, far surpasses their bodily suffering. We cannot meet death as the Pagans, who believed death ended all. We cannot meet it as the Saints, whose whole lives were a preparation for it. We cannot meet it with a "Te Deum", as St. Aloysius or the Blessed John Fisher. Our past life, our sins, the uncertainty of our repentance, the dangers of the last moments, the terrible interests at stake—these are the things which will fill us with regrets and remorse, with anxiety and fears. Time is ending, eternity is beginning. The moment has come when we must meet our judge. There were many times during life when we thought upon it; and it terrified us. But we soon rid ourselves of it. We said it is a long way off. It is different now. We are meeting the stern reality. We are caught. There is no escape. We must face death within the next few hours.

I am unprepared. The time is short. Besides I am in no fit condition for this all-important, momentous work. My nerves and brains are worn out. The stupor of death is coming upon me, and will soon wrap me in quiet forgetfulness. Why did I not prepare myself
when I had ample time and was in good health? I had time for everything else—business, pleasures, fortune and reputation. I prepared myself for this mortal life—for this brief, fleeting unsubstantial life. I neglected the immortal life—the everlasting, eternal life. It is true, at times when God's grace visited me, I thought of death. I began to get ready for it. I repented of my sins. I took firm resolutions to serve God with my whole heart and soul; but my resolutions were short-lived. The world was near and imposing, and I was swept along and downward in the mad current. I see my folly now—I must give up the world—I must meet my Judge—Heaven or Hell! Are my sins forgiven? Are there not some dark spots upon my soul? Have I repented of all my sins? Have I repaired all the scandal which I gave and the injustices which I committed? Shall I be saved? Shall I be lost? Oh! These are the anxieties and fears which will chase each other through our troubled brain when we are standing on the portals of the grave!

But, my dear young gentlemen, it is not death itself which causes us to tremble and to be filled with remorse and regrets. No; it is that which comes after death— judgment. It is this which strikes terror into our dying souls. I am to be judged; judged by an all-seeing, all-just, all-holy God; judged through and through, all my thoughts, words, actions and omissions; my whole life from the dawn of reason to death.

Let us enter the room of the dying; the heart has ceased to beat. Relatives and friends are still kneeling around the dead and sending forth their lamentations and prayers. The soul is being judged! Its Maker is there! Right there and then, in the twinkling of an eye, the light of God's countenance shining in upon that soul
will pierce it through and through, revealing to itself its true state. There will be no discussion of the case. God knows its merits and demerits. He pronounces sentence. The soul acquiesces in it, seeing the justice of it. The soul executes the sentence upon itself. Its merits or demerits, or need of purgation, according to St. Thomas, carry it to its own place, as gravity carries the stone to the earth.

We shall be judged through and through. The light of God's countenance shining in upon our souls in a moment of time will reveal all our thoughts, words, actions, omissions and the motives which prompted them. We shall be seen and see ourselves just as we have been and are in reality. There will be no diminution, no palliation, no exaggeration. For once our souls will be laid bare.

All my secret thoughts will be laid bare; thoughts which if I knew should be divulged, would fill me with so much shame and confusion, as to make me hide my face forever;—all my uncharitable thoughts, envious thoughts, proud thoughts, adulterous thoughts, will appear before me and stand out in all their nakedness.

Every evil word spoken by me will be flashed before my mind. Words which for these many long years have been forgotten will come back to my memory in all their vividness. Blasphemous words, impure words, calumni ous words; all of them will come before me. All my actions; actions which were done in secret and in public; actions which were committed during my childhood, during my manhood and during my old age will rise up in judgment against me. Not only my thoughts, words and actions, but my omissions will come before me. I shall have to answer for all the good which I could have done and did not do. I shall have to answer for wasted and misspent
time. I shall have to answer for all the graces which God bestowed upon me, and which I did not turn to profit. How many occasions for doing good have I not allowed to slip by! They have been as numerous as the hairs of my head. Almost every moment in the day presented an opportunity for doing good. At one time it should have been a kind thought, at another a kind word, and now a kind action. To-day, it was to instruct the ignorant, to counsel the doubtful or to comfort the sorrowful. To-morrow it is to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked or to bury the dead. Now it is to practice humility and meekness; next time to practice patience and gentleness.

We are to be judged, too, of the motives which prompted our various acts. And Oh, what a disappointment! We thought we were laying up treasures in heaven, but we received our reward on earth. Vanity, pride and self-love prompted our good works. We performed corporal and spiritual works of mercy, simply to acquire the name of being virtuous. Omissions and the absence of good motives, should cause those striving after the higher life much concern.

My dear young gentlemen, let me exhort you to begin this moment, to change your lives. You have been foolish and unwise in living for that which passeth away, for that which cannot help you on your deathbed. Begin this moment to live a life of prayer and of sacrifice; a life of watchfulness over your passions, a life of obedience, humility and innocence, a life of complete and total surrender of your being to God. Death, then, will have no terrors for you. You shall look upon the bright side only and welcome it. You shall meet it with a "Te Deum", for the time of trial and probation is over; and you have fought a good fight and kept the faith, and there
is laid up for you a crown of glory, which a just Judge
will give unto you.

Although our fate will be fixed by the Particular Judgment, which takes place immediately after death, we shall be judged again at the end of the world in the valley of Josaphat, as the Scripture says.

The angels will blow their trumpets and the bodies of the dead will arise, and their souls will re-enter them. Christ, in the clouds, preceded by the cross, and a heraldry of angels shall come. The judgment will begin. All our evil and good deeds will be seen by the human race. All our thoughts, words, actions and omissions will be gone over again. But this time all mankind will be present, and see us as God and we saw ourselves at the Particular Judgment. God judged us then, but now it is Christ. By this judgment, the justice, and mercy, and wisdom of God, in dealing with each individual soul, and with nations and people, shall be seen and acknowledged by the human race. Then will be seen the secret ways of His Providence. Then will be seen, why evil apparently triumphed over good.

The sentence of the Particular Judgment will be ratified. Christ shall pronounce sentence upon each one of us. To the good He will say:—‘Come ye blessed of My Father, possess ye the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’ To the wicked He will say:—‘Depart from Me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.’ Time is ended! Eternity has begun! There are only two places and two states! Heaven and Hell! The state of everlasting bliss, and the state of everlasting misery!
HEAVEN AND HELL.

My Dear Young Gentlemen:—In our Sixth meditation, we considered death and judgment, because, they are two subjects, which will ever be a powerful means, to keep us from committing sin and for urging us on to the practice of virtue. We are now going to consider Hell and Heaven, which are the completion of the subjects—Death and Judgment: and consequently, to my mind, there are no subjects which can so effectually make us reach the end of our existence.

We were taught in our catechism, that Hell is a place of eternal misery, where they go, who die in mortal sin; and that Heaven, is a place of eternal bliss, where they go, who die in a state of grace. In the gospel according to St. Matthew, we read that Christ will say to those that are on His left hand, "Depart from Me, ye cursed into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels," and to those that are on His right he will say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

We shall first, dear young gentlemen, consider the doctrine of Hell, and then the doctrine of Heaven, as taught us by Catholic theologians and philosophers, and it will be but the unfolding of the teaching of the catechism.

From the first text of scripture, which I have quoted, there are three things taught us by our divine Saviour: first, that there is a Hell; secondly, that the punishment is eternal; and thirdly, that it consists in the pain of loss and in the pain of the senses.
The pain of loss, which is the main and essential punishment of Hell, is the deprivation of God for all eternity. This truth when fully realized is most terrible and is enough to fill our souls with dread and fear.

Man has been made for God. The possession of God is his end. The soul longs after God, with almost infinite yearning. Hence it is that man is never truly happy here. Creatures can give a transient, partial happiness, but they can never satisfy the desires of man’s soul; they cannot fill up that infinite vacuum of the heart. Let us examine this truth more closely.

The intellect of man has been made for truth, and the will of man has been made for good. Truth is the object of the intellect, and good is the object of the will, just as light is the object of sight, and sound, of hearing. But the capacity of the intellect for truth is infinite, and the capacity of the will for good is infinite. That is, only the infinite can satisfy these faculties of the soul; because no matter how much truth the intellect possesses there is more to be possessed; and no matter how much good the will possesses, there is more to be desired. Therefore in this world we find men, ever searching for these objects with an insatiable longing. It is the search for, and possession of them, that constitutes earthly beatitude. The sciences and the arts are but the different avenues leading men’s souls to truth and goodness. And there are men, who become so wrapped up in them, as to be almost oblivious to everything else. But, notwithstanding this, there can only be relative and incomplete happiness on earth.

We are now in a position to grasp what the principal punishment of Hell is; namely, the loss of God, the loss of the infinite truth and beauty and for all eternity. In this world, whilst we are sojourners and in the state of
probation, we enjoy, as I said, finite truth and finite good, which we find in creatures. We do not realize our banishment, for we are united to God, in a way, through them. But in Hell our separation will be complete. Our intellects and wills shall be cut off entirely from all truth and good.

In Hell, too, we shall realize fully what the loss of God is. We shall see the ravishing beatitude of the blessed; we shall understand and comprehend what God is:—How the beauty and truth, goodness and harmony and grandeur found in Him surpass those found in creatures, in an infinite degree. No comparison can be instituted. Those perfections, the source of our happiness here, are always finite, limited, variable and inconstant, whilst in God they are infinite, immutable, and illimitable.

In Hell we shall realize that in losing God, we have lost all. We shall realize that we have lost all through our own fault. We, and we alone, are to blame. We could have turned to God at any moment, for His grace was ever ready, but we refused. One simple, sorrowing, repentant act of the will would have been sufficient, but we would not. We would not make the effort; we were too thoughtless, or too sluggish, or too much wedded to creatures. We are now lost! We are separated from everything that is lovable and desirable! Remorse! Remorse! We are filled with remorse! This is the worm of conscience, which is spoken of in the scripture, and which will torment us forever! Ever yearning after God with the infinite longing of the soul, but never being able to possess Him! Ever being drawn towards Him, but always constantly repelled! Ever flying towards Him, but being incessantly beaten back! And this for all eternity! No hope! Despair! Black despair!
Our memory in Hell will ever be recalling the graces conferred upon us; our many opportunities for conversion, and our woeful neglect of them. Confusion, disorder and anarchy will reign within man. No truth and no good for the intellect and will. They have turned away from their objects. No God to fill up the infinite cravings and yearnings of the soul. The soul may be likened, now, to a big powerful engine, with its piston rod, or driving shaft, or the fly-wheel broken. All things are intended to work smoothly and harmoniously together. But what disorder and destruction! The engine not only tears and rends itself, but destroys and scatters everything around in the wildest confusion. Hell, without corporal punishment, is dreadful enough. But, my dear young gentlemen, the damned shall suffer in all their senses. The five senses of the body, as the powers of the soul, have their objects. We know that light is the object of sight, sound of hearing, odors of smell, palatable things of taste, and touch of feeling. Now in Hell these five senses, since they have been the instruments of the soul, and have shared in its evil works, will be punished. In Hell, the Scripture tells us, there shall be eternal darkness, which will be the punishment for the eyes. In Hell, the Scripture speaks of the curses and the blasphemies and the cries of lost souls. Shall this not be the punishment for the ears? In Hell, the Scripture speaks of the sulphurous odors that will arise from the burning brimstone and ashes, and the stenching smell that will come up from the burning carcasses of the damned. Shall this not be the punishment for the sense of smell? In Hell, the Scripture speaks of the unquenchable thirst of the damned. Shall this not be the punishment for the sins of the palate? The Scripture speaks of the fire of Hell. And it is the common teach-
ing of the Fathers and theologians, that this fire is real and physical. The great Suarez says that the doctrine which holds that the fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels, is a true and material fire, is certain and catholic. Perrone, another great theologian, believes the doctrine to be so certain that it cannot be questioned without temerity. Doctor Hurter holds, that it is a common teaching of the Church, and that to depart from it in any way, would be rash and timorous. And finally when a certain priest wrote to Rome to find out what must be done with a penitent who believed the fire not to be real, but only metaphorical, the Sacred Congregation responded that such a penitent must be diligently instructed, and if he still perseveres in his obstinacy he must be refused absolution. Each one of the five senses of the body will, then, have its own special and proper punishment.

From the second text of Scripture, which I quoted in the beginning, Heaven, my dear young gentlemen, is both a place and a state. It is a place where Jesus Christ manifests His sacred humanity, and where the Blessed Virgin the Angels and Saints dwell. It is the state of everlasting happiness, which is possessed and enjoyed by God’s friends. The happiness of the blessed, consists principally and essentially, in the possession and enjoyment of God, just as the punishment of the damned consists principally and essentially in the deprivation of God and all that follows from the loss thereof.

On earth we see and possess God, mediately and indirectly, that is through creatures, who possess truth and goodness in a limited degree, and which flow from God their source. But in Heaven we shall see and possess God immediately and directly, just as we see and possess ourselves—intuitively. Consequently on earth our
knowledge of God is necessarily very obscure, and our possession of Him very imperfect. But in Heaven our knowledge of Him will be distinct and clear, and our possession of Him, quite perfect. And from this supernatural union of intellect and will with God, shall follow ecstatic bliss.

On earth we see God by reason and faith. In Heaven we shall see Him face to face. Let us try to illustrate. There are three ways of knowing an artist. First by his works; secondly, from the testimony of others, and thirdly, from personal contact with him. From his works we get some knowledge of him. The world and all that it contains is the work of God. Therefore, from the contemplation of the beauty and goodness, which we see displayed in the universe, we rise to their source—God. This is seeing God by reason. From the testimony of others who have seen and conversed with the artist, we get a better and truer knowledge of Him. The inspired writers of both the Old and New Testament have held converse with God, so to speak; for it was the Holy Ghost who moved them to write about God, and enlightened their minds while so doing. From them we get a clearer and more perfect knowledge of God. This is seeing God by faith. Finally, when we see the artist with our own eyes and converse with him, we get the best and most perfect knowledge of him. Now in Heaven, our knowledge of God will be in the last way, by direct sight and vision—"Not through a glass in a dark manner, but face to face," as St. Paul says. Certainly, it goes without saying, that we shall not comprehend God, although all earthly darkness and obscurity will have disappeared. For only God can comprehend Himself fully.

In Heaven the blessed, besides seeing God face to face, and being united to Him most intimately—which
is the essential happiness of Heaven—shall see many things pertaining to their state of life. They are in perfect happiness, and their desires have become but purified, therefore, they shall still wish to know much about the world, and those whom they have left behind. In Heaven, according to the teaching of Catholic theologians—and it is most reasonable—the blessed shall know all the mysteries of religion which they believed on earth and in a most perfect manner, and all the Saints, and especially those for whom and to whom, they had a fervent love and tender devotion. In Heaven, the blessed will know the arts and sciences most perfectly, and especially that branch of art or science for which they had a special fondness. In Heaven, the blessed will know whatever pertains to their state in life. Fathers and mothers will know what is happening in their families; superiors, what is happening in their communities; bishops, what is happening in their dioceses; priests, what is happening in their parishes; and kings, emperors and presidents what is happening in their respective governments and countries.

In Heaven, the blessed shall be so transformed into their beloved as to be almost perfectly oblivious to self. They shall be drawn towards God and be one with Him in thought, desire and affection, as to be almost dead to self, loving only God, and seeking nothing but His glory. Continually contemplating the infinite Truth, and unceasingly loving the divine Goodness, they shall become like the fishes of the sea, immerged, so to speak, and lost in the immeasurable and illimitable beauty and goodness of God. This ineffable joy and delight will be theirs forever. And when millions and millions of years shall have rolled by, they will still be experiencing in their souls, the same inexpressible, yea, inconceivable joy and
delight. After the last judgment the bodies of the Blessed will arise, take on spiritual properties and be united to their souls, to share in their glory and blessedness. Young gentlemen, when tempted to sin, cast your eyes down towards Hell, and contemplate there the eternal misery and suffering of the damned! And when duties become irksome and virtue difficult to practice raise your eyes up towards Heaven and contemplate there, the eternal glory and bliss of the blessed!
PERSEVERANCE.

My Dear Young Gentlemen:—During our “Retreat”, the whole burden, or the purpose, or the end of the instructions was to impress you with the importance of the salvation of your immortal souls; that it is the main and principal work of your lives; and that everything else, as a consequence, must be made subservient to it. Of yourselves, and through natural means, you cannot expect to do this. It is true that you, yourselves, must work and co-operate with God’s grace, and that natural helps are not to be frowned down upon, or disregarded. But it is principally through the use of supernatural means that you shall be able to succeed in this work.

Rome and Greece had at hand and offered to their sons all the natural means to make them good and upright citizens. Art and literature, and philosophy and the science of government, reached their highest development under Rome and Greece. But Rome and Greece became immoral, licentious, and corrupt, and Rome and Greece fell, and by that fall proved that natural means are not powerful enough to make man reach even the natural end of his existence.

Young gentlemen, our end is supernatural, and the effect cannot rise higher than the cause. To become stalwart, robust Catholic men, and true Christians, and to remain and die such, we must resort to, and depend principally upon the supernatural. What is the whole animus of the teaching of the present holy Pontiff Pius the Tenth? To go back to the simple gospel and
the sacramental system, if we wish to save mankind. I have had something to do with the various semi-religious, fraternal and social societies; but of themselves they accomplish very little. Their influence for good is mostly of a negative character. We must lay more stress upon the Mass, upon the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist, upon the Rosary, upon the Stations of the Cross, upon devotion to the Saints and Angels, upon spiritual reading, upon the Sacramentals too, and by all means, upon frequent and fervent prayer. In these things we are Catholics. It is these things that distinguish and separate us from our non-Catholic brethren. Is not this the meaning of the motto of Pius the Tenth?—"To restore all things in Christ." During the last fifty years, I believe the pendulum has swung too much to the side of natural means, and some teachers in Israel of the best intentions, have been partly to blame. The time has come to help to swing back the pendulum. We should never fear of unduly accentuating the supernatural in the spiritual life.

My dear young gentlemen, that you may appreciate these means better, I am going to speak briefly upon them. And first as regards the Mass. Do you really understand what it is and its importance in the salvation of souls? Without the Mass, Christ would have suffered and died in vain. It is through the Mass, that the merits of Calvary’s Cross reach individual souls. The Mass, in the salvation of souls, may be compared to the main aqueduct running from a reservoir, and the Sacraments as the smaller ones carrying the water therefrom to the homes of the people. The water is in the reservoir on the mount, bright, clear and sparkling. But in order to be of any avail, it must be conducted into the various houses of the city by aqueducts. Christ’s Death on Cal-
vary's Heights, merited sufficient grace for each and every member of the human race. Through the Mass principally and the Sacraments, do these graces reach souls. In that, does the Mass differ in one way from the Sacrifice of Calvary. Christ merits nothing new in the Sacrifice of the Mass, but He there applies to our souls the merits of the Sacrifice of the Cross. The Sacrifice of the Mass is the renewal, continuation and representation of Calvary's Cross. Every time Mass is offered up, there is given to God, infinite adoration and thanksgiving, and impetration of infinite value. Christ is the victim, and Christ is the great high priest. At the Mass He takes our acts of adoration and thanksgiving and impetration and unites them to His and offers them up to His Heavenly Father. In one Mass therefore we can truly say, that more praise and glory are given to God, than by the whole creation itself; yea, more praise and glory are given to Him, than by the unceasing canticles of the myriads of angels, and the united praises and thanksgivings of all the saints in heaven, and all just souls on earth. Without the Mass there cannot be true worship. In the Mass, Jesus Christ leaves the bosom of His eternal Father, robs Himself of His glory, takes up His presence on the altar under the humble appearance of bread and wine and there offers Himself up in adoration, in thanksgiving, in propitiation, in impetration. No recollection can be too deep, no reverence too great, during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass! With hushed voice, uplifted eyes, bowed heads and clasped hands does faith teach us to assist at the tremendous mysteries of the New Law! For it is the act of acts! and the grandest and sublimest thing that occurs on earth! — More awful and stupendous than creation itself!
The Sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist, are the two great means instituted by Jesus Christ to take away actual sins and impart holiness of life. And what goodness, mercy, love and wisdom are displayed therein! Can Catholics realize their importance in the salvation and sanctification of souls, and yet remain away from them, or receive them only three or four times a year? In the Sacrament of Penance, not only are our sins washed away, but there is given to us Sacramental grace, or a right to those supernatural helps, by which we may be able to overcome them in the future. By the sacrament of Penance, which supposes a thorough examination of conscience, we get a true knowledge of ourselves. Every time a Catholic goes to confession, there is a personal conversion—a turning away from sin, back to God. In the Sacrament of Penance, there sits a man, skilled in the ways of God, who knows all the devices of satan, and the weaknesses and frailties of human nature. He sits there as much a father and a physician, as a confessor and a judge. At that time, the soul of the penitent is like the soil that has been plowed and harrowed, and is ready to receive the seed of virtue which is to be planted, and God is then as lavish with His graces as He is with the fertilizing showers of Spring. How many innocent children are preserved in their innocence through the advice given in the confessional! How many boys and girls, young men and young women, as they begin to tread the paths of wickedness leading them to Hell, are saved through the advice given in the sacred tribunal! How many adulterers are made continent; how many drunkards, temperate; how many thieves, honest; how many lecherous men, pure, never, until the Day of Judgment, shall we know! The Sacrament of Penance, as many infidel writers have said, is
one of the greatest preservers of virtue in the world, and one of the most effective reformatory institutions in existence.

What shall I say about the Blessed Eucharist? The Blessed Eucharist is as necessary to the spiritual life of the soul, as food and drink are to the life of the body. That is the reason why our Blessed Redeemer and Saviour instituted the Blessed Eucharist under the appearance of bread and wine:—To impress us in the most forcible manner, of its absolute necessity. Just as food and drink must be partaken of often in order that the body may live and grow strong and robust; so also must the Blessed Eucharist be received often, if we wish the soul to live and grow strong and robust spiritually. Not once or twice or several times during the year, but monthly, weekly, yea, several times during the week. The reason why the early Christians were so dead to the things of this world and so alive to the things of heaven was, they communicated almost daily. This is the reason why priests and nuns in every century, by the hundreds of thousands, can live the lives of angels in the flesh:—can leave home and country and kindred—give up all—and live a life of prayer and mortification—a life entirely consecrated to the worship of God in the service of their fellowman.

Jesus Christ is with us in the Blessed Eucharist not only as a Sacrifice and a Sacrament, but He remains with us on the altar as a Prisoner of Love, night and day. There He hides and conceals His divine splendor and majesty, that we might not be afraid to approach Him. He invites us to come to Him, to draw close to Him, to speak to Him, to lay before Him our temptations and difficulties, our trials and our crosses. "Come to me all ye that are heavily laden and burdened and I will refresh
you,’ cries out Jesus from the Tabernacle. It is Jesus Christ on the Altar who makes the Church so sacred and so holy, forbidding anything profane to come near, and that causes that awful stillness within its sacred portals. What, in our spiritual troubles, would we do without Jesus in the Tabernacle! Where could we look for help! To whom could we go for relief!

We must be men of prayer. That man who does not, at least, say his morning and night prayers with devotion and recollection, and raise his mind and heart to God sometimes during the day, cannot hope to be saved in these latter days when we are surrounded by evil on all sides, when Satan has set up his kingdom in both high and low places, and the wicked spirits are most potent. Make friends with the angels and saints. Cultivate a tender devotion to the Mother of God—our sweet dear Mother—given to us as a Mother by Jesus Christ, in the person of St. John when about to expire on the Cross He said:—‘Mother behold thy Son, and Son behold thy Mother!’” Say the Rosary. Carry it about with you. The Rosary should be the divine office of the lay people. Say it at night before you fall asleep; at that time when the devil, the spirit of darkness, puts into your mind those impure and filthy imaginations with the hope that you will consent. Go to sleep with it under your pillow, and the Blessed Mother will watch over you. Do not neglect the Sacramentals. Of themselves, and by the prayers said over them in the name of the Church, they have power to keep down the attacks of the evil spirits and to render them almost harmless. Be enrolled in the scapulars by which you may become humble clients of the Blessed Mother. By the very fact that you wear them in her name and in her honor, she will take a special interest in you, and watch over you in danger. Love
the crucifix. Let it hold the first place of honor in your homes. You cannot look upon it without thinking of the sufferings and death of our Blessed Redeemer. The devil trembles at the sight of the crucifix. He fears to go near it. When tempted to some great sin, take the crucifix in your hands, press it to your heart, look into that face and kiss those wounds. You will not sin! You cannot sin! From that temptation you will come forth stronger and more beautiful in soul. Keep a little font of holy water, especially in your bed-room and sprinkle yourself, your bed and room before retiring. Besides lessening the power of the evil spirit, it will react upon your soul, and excite therein pious dispositions. By all means do not forget to pray every day to your guardian angel and patron saint;—those spirits whom God has commanded to watch over you and to help you to fight the battles of your soul; and who will remain with you and never forsake you until you appear before the judgment seat of God and hear your sentence. Try at least to make the way of the Cross once a week in the spirit of penance, and to show your love for Jesus Christ, and also to ever keep fresh in your memory His Passion and Death. You will reap much spiritual fruit thereby.

My dear young gentlemen, in conclusion, I wish to exhort you to try to find out as soon as possible your vocation, and then become serious and bend all your energies to prepare yourselves fittingly for it. No doubt some of you have a vocation to the priesthood or to the religious life. A child of predilection you are if such be the case. In America, we need priests of God. The harvest is ripe, the sheathes are laden, the vines are full, the branches are bending for laborers to go forth into the vineyard. No greater grace or honor could God bestow upon you than to call you to the priesthood, to make you
His associates and coadjutors, in the work of saving and sanctifying souls. We need more young men in the religious orders to become missionaries and educators. The religious order men are the missionaries and educators "par excellence." No one can do the work as well as they, and they are following most perfectly in the footsteps of Jesus Christ by the vows of chastity, obedience and poverty, and are waging a perpetual war against the three great sources of sin and evil. Give us the youth of the land—allow us to educate them—and we will answer for the future of America. Some of you will enter the learned professions. It is true that they are over crowded and the struggle among the professional men for a simple living, in some regions, is quite keen. But there is still some room at the top. We are surfeited with mediocre professional men. A young man who is dead in earnest, of average ability, honest and upright and who possesses application in a high degree, will succeed. The talented, lazy fellow doesn't succeed. As a rule it is the fellow with grit and push and determination and application that wins out in the race of life, and not the genius who carries off the class prize at the college, university or seminary. We do not go out from these seats of learning scholars (although some young men may think otherwise); no, we carry with us into the world only the means or instruments, I may say, of scholarship. I believe it is true in the natural order also, that when we make use of the ten talents, which the Almighty bestows upon us in the beginning, He adds to them fifty more; and on the other hand, if we do not use well the fifty talents given us in the beginning, He takes away not only the forty but the ten. A philosophical reason, too, is at the foundation of this truth.
Young gentlemen, if you cultivate a true spirit of prayer and be most constant and devout in your attendance at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, if you go frequently to confession and receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ often in Holy Communion, if you put yourselves under the protection of the Blessed Mother and the angels and saints and become their devout clients, if you avoid the near danger places of sin, and become studious and ambitious, and at all times listen, hearken to and follow the teaching of holy mother the Church, you will fulfill the end of your existence, and become successful men and accomplish much good in the world. And then after a few years of trial and probation, you will be received into the heavenly mansions above, where as St. Paul says, "The eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what God hath in store for those who love Him." This is the blessing which I wish you all!
MY DEAR BRETHREN:—To-day, we begin the sacred season of Advent. Instead of speaking on the Gospel, we shall, this morning, address to you a few words on Advent; on its origin, the motives for sanctifying it, and how it should be made and kept holy.

The English word, Advent, comes from the Latin word "Adventus," which means, "a coming to" or, "an approach." Hence from the derivation of the word, it signifies a period of time immediately preceding some important event. But in reality, Advent means those four weeks which precede Christmas, during which time the faithful are urged to prepare their souls in a fitting manner for the graces of this great feast.

My brethren, festivals are as old as the world itself, and were instituted by God under the Old Law to commemorate His mercies and benefits towards men. They were the means of making the people appreciate better those mercies and benefits, of ever keeping them green in their memories, of making them more grateful to God for them, and of urging them to prepare themselves, as these occurring feasts came round, to receive more abundantly their fruits. As the mysteries of the Old law were but types and figures of the New, whose graces and blessings almost infinitely transcend them, with how much more fervor and zeal should we not prepare for them! For this end the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, has appointed vigils or eves, as a preparation for them. Thus she has appointed Lent, as
A more solemn and a longer preparation for Easter, and Advent, as a preparation for Christmas.

The institution of Advent is as old as Christmas, and we find ecclesiastical laws concerning the regulation of it as early as the sixth century. However, the discipline of the Church as regards the time and manner of celebrating it, has varied in different places and at different times.

For several ages, Advent comprised a period of six weeks the same as Lent. For some time it was kept with a rigorous fast, in some places, of precept, in others, of devotion. The Church of Milan even today observes six weeks of Advent. From Benedict XIV, and others, we learn that formerly Advent was kept with a strict fast by the laity. But this fast being in some places simply of devotion, fell into disuse among the laity. At the present time Advent commences sometime between the twenty-seventh of November and the third of December and falls on the Sunday nearest St. Andrew's day, whether before or after, and the fast is kept only on certain days. However, in some religious orders, even at the present day, there are six weeks of Advent during which time there is a rigorous fast.

My brethren, the fountains of God's graces and mercies are open to us at all times; but especially are they open to us on great feast days, when we commemorate the principal mysteries of our redemption. On these days, God is more gracious and propitious to us because the whole Church, with one heart and soul, is sending forth prayers and sacrifices to God to move Him to renew in His servants the wonders of His mysteries. What feast day is greater than Christmas! What mystery more fruitful than the Incarnation! Christmas is the anniversary of the coming of Christ into this world,—
Christ our God, King, Redeemer and Saviour! The Incarnation of Jesus Christ is the root, the source, the foundation of all the graces and blessings which we can receive or hope for. Our own spiritual interests, then, should move us to prepare worthily for it.

The Eternal and Omnipotent God, whose presence the whole creation would not be able to bear, before whom, according to the Prophets, the world would tremble, the earth vanish out of sight and nature shrink into nothingness, if He should appear in the immense and incomprehensible glory of His majesty;—this immortal God has left the throne of His glory, clothed Himself with the weakness of our nature, humbled, debased Himself, yea, almost annihilated Himself for us—to deliver us from the bondage of Satan and everlasting death, and to exalt us to the dignity of His children, His brothers, and to make us heirs of His heavenly kingdom. All this the feast of Christmas is to commemorate. Can we remain insensible and ungrateful! Is there no gratitude and love in us at the presence of a mystery so adorable—at this infinite condescension and goodness of God!

The great summons of John the Baptist, to the Jews, is likewise intended for us during this season. Holy mother, the Church, ever tender and solicitous for our spiritual welfare, proclaims to us this same summons in a most solemn and impressive manner. Her ministers cry out to us in the words of the Prophets:—"Sound your trumpets, announce to all nations; behold God the Saviour will come; the Lord is near; the day is just at hand, prepare the way." The Church ceases not to repeat to us the exhortation of John:—"Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." During this season, to impress her children with this spirit, she uses purple
vestments, the altars are unadorned, the deacons lay aside their dalmatics, and the angelic hymn "Gloria in Excelsis" is omitted in the Mass.

My brethren, the first and important thing we must do in order to sanctify Advent and fit our souls for the blessings of Christmas, is to get rid of sin—mortal and venial—and all attachment to sin. Mortal sin entirely separates the soul from God, and banishes His spirit from her. Venial sin, if deliberate, obstructs the effusion of God's grace in our souls, and attachment to sin prevents the perfect reign of God's grace in them. Therefore, we must go to confession, and become thoroughly converted and repentant.

The second duty incumbent upon us is prayer and meditation—frequent prayer and frequent meditation. In order that we may pray and meditate properly we must cultivate recollection and retirement. Hence we should avoid that company, these circles, and those amusements which breathe the spirit of pride and vanity and love of pleasure and sloth. During this season we should say; every day, the Rosary and Litany of the Saints, should assist at Mass whenever possible during the week; visit our divine Lord frequently dwelling in the tabernacle; and by all means, to receive Him often in Holy Communion. In accordance with the spirit of the Church, let us meditate during this season on the four comings of Christ; the first when He was born in the flesh for us; the second when He invisibly visits our souls and is spiritually born within us; the third when He comes to us at death; and the fourth when He shall come at the Last Day in power and majesty to judge the world, and crown His servants.

And the third duty incumbent upon us if we wish to profit spiritually by Advent is to make satisfaction to
our neighbors for injury which we may have done to them, and to satisfy God’s justice by mortification for past sins. By mortification self inflicted, we likewise get better control of our weak nature and unruly passions. We also should give frequent and generous alms during Advent as a satisfaction for sins and to make God more propitious towards us; for He considers as done unto Him in a most special manner whatever is done unto the poor: “I was hungry and you gave Me to eat, naked and you clothed Me, in prison and you visited Me.”
ST. JOHN CLIMACHUS.

My Dear Brethren:—St. John Climachus whose feast falls on the 30th of March, was born about the year 525, most probably in Palestine, the country so dear to the hearts of all Christians. On account of the quickness of his parts he had mastered the arts and sciences at the early age of sixteen—at an age when most young men nowadays are just beginning to learn how to study. Notwithstanding the flattering promises which the world held out to one of his talents and ability, he renounced it, in order that he might dedicate himself to God in the religious state.

He retired to Mount Sinai—Mount Sinai where Moses, of old, had received from God Almighty amidst thunder and lightning the tables of stone upon which was written the moral law. Mount Sinai, from the time of the first anchorets had been a favorite retreat for all those who wished to give themselves up entirely to God in heavenly contemplation. But fearing the danger of relaxation and dissipation to which those living in communities are exposed, he did not enter the great monastery on the summit, but chose a little hermitage at the foot, which was inhabited by the holy Martyrius, under whose discipline he now placed himself. Here he labored with all his soul under the direction of a prudent guide to lay the foundation of a spiritual life.

He first labored to get perfect control of his tongue by keeping a strict silence, knowing what a continual itching learned men have of talking about everything, which usually springs from pride and self-sufficiency,
and also being aware that he, who can control perfectly that little instrument of speech, is on the way to perfection. He next labored to acquire the virtues of humility and obedience. Therefore he never contradicted anyone, nor entered into a dispute. And his submission to others was so perfect that he seemed to have no self will. From the visible mountain of Sinai, he raised his heart without interruption to God, who is invisible, being most attentive to all the movements of divine grace within his soul. Having spent four years in making trial of his spiritual strength, and learning the duties and obligations of the religious state, at the age of twenty, he made his vows to God, after having prepared himself immediately for this solemn consecration by special prayers and fasts. From this time his master, Martyrius, noticed that like a giant, he made mighty strides towards God by self denial, obedience, uninterrupted prayer and love.

In the thirty-fifth year of his age he lost his spiritual master, Martyrius, by death. He now embraced the eremitical life. His cell was situated five miles from a church, which had been built a little before, by order of the Emperor Justinian, for the use of the monks. Thither St. John went every Saturday and Sunday to assist with all the anchorets and monks of that desert, at the recitation of the holy office and at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and to receive Holy Communion. Prayer became almost his sole occupation, and he endeavored to keep himself always in the presence of God, to whom he directed all his thoughts, words and actions. By this habitual recollection, he acquired such a wonderful purity of heart that he could see God in everything. He assiduously read the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers of the Church, and became the most learned doctor of
that age. But his great humility made him conceal as much as possible from the eyes of men his acquired and endowed knowledge, and also the extraordinary graces with which the Holy Ghost enriched his soul. This secrecy enabled him to fly that danger of vain glory, which, like a leech, sticks to our best actions and sucks from them—yea, robs them of their choicest fruit—their eternal recompense. Frequently St. John would retire to the cavern which he had made in a rock that he might there alone, uninterrupted and undisturbed, give himself entirely to prayer and compunction of heart. And we are told that so ardent were his love of God and compunction of heart that his eyes seemed like two fountains, from which scarce ceased to flow tears, and that his sighs and groans to heaven under the weight of the miseries inseparable from his mortal pilgrimage, were not to be equalled by the vehemency of the cries of those who suffer from the burning flames of fire.

God bestowed upon St. John the extraordinary gift of healing the spiritual disorders of the soul. Among the many healed by him was a monk by the name of Isaac, who had been brought almost to the brink of the grave by most violent temptations of the flesh. St. John saw by the tears which he shed how severe must be the conflicts and struggles within his soul, “My Son,” said he to the monk, “let us have recourse to God by prayer.” And falling upon the ground in humble supplication they both prayed for a deliverance, and the infernal spirit left Isaac from that moment and molested him no more. The devil, seeing how many were coming to St. John for spiritual advice, stirred up against him the calumnious tongues of the envious and jealous, who asserted that he had lost much time in unprofitable admonitions and conversations. But St. John took the calum-
ny as a charitable admonition, and imposed upon himself a rigorous silence for nigh twelve months. His great humility and meekness conquered his enemies and they joined the monks in beseeching him to resume his function of giving spiritual advice to all who would resort to him.

At the age of seventy-five he was unanimously chosen Abbot of Mount Sinai, and superior general of all the monks and hermits of that country. During a great drought and famine, the people of Palestine and Arabia resorted to him for relief. They besought him to intercede with God to send them rain. After the Saint had recommended with great earnestness their petitions to God, the country was visited with abundant showers. That posterity might share in the benefit of his holy instructions the learned Abbot of Raith, a monastery near the Red Sea, entreated St. John to draw up some of the most necessary rules by which fervent souls might arrive at Christian perfection. Out of his great humility he was at first very reluctant to do so. But as the Abbot besought him in the name of obedience to an inferior to comply with his request, St. John finally consented. Those rules are found in that excellent work called the "Climax" or "The Ladder of Religious Perfection."

In teaching the necessity of obedience and humility he related the story of the Monk Isidore, who petitioning the Abbot of a monastery near Alexandria, Egypt, to be admitted into the house said, "As iron is in the hands of the smith, so am I in your hands." The Abbot ordered him to remain without the gate, and to prostrate himself at the feet of everyone who might chance to pass by, and to beg their prayers for the cure of the leprosy of his soul. Isidore told St. John that he passed seven years in this profound humility and obedience, however,
making use of a third person in speaking of himself. In teaching purity of intention and compunction of heart, he related the story of a brother, the cook in a large monastery, who seemed always recollected and bathed in tears. Upon St. John's asking him how he preserved such recollection and compunction in the midst of his continual occupations, he replied, "In serving the monks I try to behold in them, not men, but God in His servants; and in the fire always before my eyes, I behold the fire in hell which will burn souls for all eternity."

In teaching the necessity of penance he told how John the Sabaite, seeing himself much respected in the monastery, and knowing that this was no way to satisfy for his sins, besought the Abbot to allow him to repair to a more severe monastery. After three years of most rigorous penance he saw, in a dream, a schedule of his debts, which amounted to one hundred pounds of gold, only ten of which were cancelled. He therefore kept repeating to himself, "Poor Antiochus thou hast still a great debt to satisfy." After passing thirteen more years in the most fervent practice of penance, God vouchsafed to allow him to see in another vision that the whole debt was cancelled.

To teach us the necessity of having death always before our eyes, he related the story of a monk who in a grievous fit of illness fell into a trance for an hour or more. Upon recovering, he shut himself up in his cell for twelve years, and meditated continually on death, and when he was dying, all that his brethren could extort from him were these words:—"He who has death always before his eyes will never sin." And finally speaking on the excellence and effects of true charity, he thus beautifully and feelingly speaks:—"A mother feels less pleasure when she folds within her arms, the dear
infant, whom she nourishes with her own milk, than the true child of charity does when united, as he incessantly is, to His God, and folded as it were in the arms of his heavenly Father*** Charity operates in some persons so as to carry them almost out of themselves. It illuminates others, and fills them with such sentiments of joy that they cannot help crying out, 'The Lord is my helper and protector, in Him hath my heart confided, and I have been helped. And my flesh hath flourished again, and with my will, I will give praise to Him.' This joy which they feel in their hearts, is reflected upon their countenances; and when God has once united, or as we may say incorporated them with His charity, He displays in their exterior as in the reflection of a mirror, the brightness and serenity of their souls; even as Moses being honored with the sight of God was encompassed round by His glory."

St. John Climachus after having governed the monks and hermits of Palestine for four years, found means to lay down this burden, which he had taken upon himself with great reluctance. Heavenly contemplation and the exercises of divine love and praise were his delight and comfort during his earthly pilgrimage, and at the age of four score years his pure spirit took its flight to heaven there to be united to God in unceasing contemplation and love and ecstasy throughout the endless ages of eternity. Let us often repeat this prayer composed by St. John Climachus:—"My God, I pretend to nothing upon this earth, except to be so firmly united to You by prayer, that to be separated from You may be impossible; let others desire riches and glory; for my part, I desire one thing, and that is, to be inseparably united to You, and to place in You alone all my hopes of happiness and peace."
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

"ART THOU HE WHO SHOULD COME?"

My Dear Brethren:—When John the Baptist learned of the scandalous, incestuous conduct of Herod, he upbraided him severely. Imbued with the spirit of intrepidity which was strengthened and guarded by a life of austerity and self-denial, he feared not the countenance of the mighty and powerful Herod; so he went to him and told him that it was not lawful to live on terms of intimacy with his brother’s wife. For this reprimand John was thrown into prison and lingered there for more than six months. But from behind his prison walls he still followed the course of Him for whom he had prepared the way. This he could easily do, for his disciples were permitted to visit him, and thus keep him informed of all the doings of Christ. At this juncture therefore he selected two of them and sent them to the Saviour with this message: "Art Thou He Who should come, or must we look for another?"

My Brethren, what is the meaning of these words? Amidst the weariness and dejection of his confinement was John beginning to feel his courage sinking? Was he beginning to lose faith in the Christ? No; for us to harbor such a thought would be to misjudge John’s character altogether. It could not have proceeded from weakness; for greater than John “was not born among women;” nor from doubt; for John was “more than a prophet.” John had proclaimed Christ from his mother’s womb. He had witnessed the descent of the Holy
Ghost upon Him, and had heard the testimony of the heavenly Father proclaiming Him His beloved Son. And he, himself publicly bore testimony to Christ’s superiority, declaring himself unworthy to perform the least menial office for Him. John sent this embassy either to cure his disciples of jealousy and envy, or to direct them to the only Teacher, who could fully instruct them in the way of life. The Saviour must at once have fathomed John’s motives, for He began to work miracles in their presence;—and miracles in which His Almighty powers were manifested most strikingly:—“In that same hour He healed those who came to Him, curing them of all their diseases and wounds and of evil spirits; and to the blind man He restored his sight.” Then turning to these envoys He said: “Go and relate to John, what ye hear and see. The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the Gospel preached to them.”

My Brethren, our divine Lord here borrows the words of Isaiah, the Prophet, who had foretold that such marvels would mark the coming of the Messiah. It is true, indeed, that Isaias had not alluded to the resurrection of the dead as one of the marks. But how could Christ keep silent, concerning a marvel which all Naim was publishing abroad! By restoring the dead to life, He showed conclusively that He was the sovereign Master of the universe, who holds the powers of life and death in His hands. And he concludes by adding the other sign spoken of by the Prophet:—“The poor have the Gospel preached to them.”

My Brethren, in making this humble duty “of preaching the gospel to the poor” the culminating note in the enumeration of His miracles, Christ willed to place before the world, the true character of His mission,
which was not to do glorious deeds, but to teach, to comfort and to console all those whom the world frowns down upon, despises and avoids. But this marvelous blending of grandeur and humility shocked the disciples of the Baptist. And Christ seeing them withdrawing from Him, uttered this warning, "And happy is he who shall not be scandalized in Me." When the people saw the disciples of John departing in such an unceremonious manner, they began to conceive an unfavorable opinion of them and also began to suspect the fidelity and constancy of the Baptist, who had sent them to Christ. To remove such wrong impressions Christ immediately spoke out in defense of the great Precursor.

Along the banks of the Jordon, where John was baptizing, could be seen many reeds, waving and shaking with the slightest breeze. Taking these thin and tremulous stalks as symbols of inconstancy, Christ contrasted the strong, unshaken faith of John with these;—"What went you out in the desert to see? 'A reed, shaken by the wind?'" And in the crowd of onlookers were certain courtiers, clothed in splendid garments. Beholding these soft, luxurious courtiers, Christ contrasted their lives, with the penitential, austere life of John;—"But what went ye out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Behold they who are clothed in soft garments are in the palaces of kings!" Having shown what John was not, our Savior concludes by showing what he was;—"But what went ye out to see? A Prophet? Yea, I tell you, and more than a prophet; for this is he of whom it is written: Behold, I send My messengers before thy face who shall prepare Thy way before Thee."

My Dear Brethren, the first lesson to be learned from today's Gospel is firmness in reprimanding vice, no matter how powerful the subject of it may be, or what con-
sequences may follow from it. John the Baptist is placed before us as a model during this season of Advent. Behold him upbraiding King Herod for his incestuous conduct, and the punishment! "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife!" thundered forth John to Herod's face. He is thrown into prison, and after having been detained there for several months he is finally beheaded. In our rebukes and reprimands we must be prudent, and seize opportune times that good may result therefrom. But never should fawning or fear cause us to be silent, especially if we are placed in authority, else we shall become as Christ says "like dumb dogs unable to bark."

My Brethren, the second lesson taught is the confirmation of the Messiahship of Christ. Isaias, the Prophet, had prophesied long before that the Messiah, when He came, would give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, strength of limb to the cripple and cleanliness to the leper. Here, right before the eyes of John's disciples, does Christ work such wonders. Never before nor after Him did anyone in his own name and by his own power work these marvels.

My Brethren, the third lesson I would draw is that the Church, which makes the care of the poor and the outcast one of its special works, and in which you find the poor in great numbers, is the Church founded by Jesus Christ. Was that not to be one of the marks of the kingdom of Christ on this earth? "Go tell John the poor have the Gospel preached to them." To whom did Christ first preach the Gospel and who were His first disciples? Not to the rich and powerful did He first go. And not from among the learned and distinguished did He select His Apostles, the chosen twelve. They say the Catholic Church is the church of the poor. Yes, we
are, and we glory in the title and when we cease to be the church of the poor, we cease to be the church of Christ.

And finally, my brethren, besides several minor lessons of how jealousy and envy obscure the truth and prevent the mind from seeing it, and of how, when practical, we should correct wrong impressions, the fourth great lesson I would point out to you is the hearkening to the teaching of John and the imitation of him, during this season. According to the testimony of Christ, John was His messenger going before Him, preparing the Jewish people for His kingdom. John the Baptist holds the same office in our regard. He is the missionary to prepare us for the greatest of all feasts, Christmas. Unless we heed his message of penance and prayer, and try to imitate him, somewhat, we shall not receive the spiritual kingdom of Christ within us, and Christmas will be an empty and a meaningless feast-day for us.
THE DIVINITY OF CHRISTIANITY

My Dear Brethren:—We are going to continue tonight our subject—the conformity of Christianity with reason and its answering the legitimate aspirations of the soul—and to show that Christianity has strengthened and upheld the dignity of man, the family and civil society in a wonderful manner. Therefore, there will be three divisions:—first, that Christianity has freed man's intellect from error and his will from corruption; secondly that it has protected the rights of children, wives and slaves; and thirdly that it has fostered liberty, charity and the law of nations.

When Christ appeared on earth and began to preach, the whole world with the exception of a few philosophers, worshipped idols. This we learn from the writings of Cicero and Seneca. Grecian and Egyptian gods were gradually introduced into the Roman Empire and in time became universally worshipped. Seneca, although he derided the gods in private and ridiculed their vices, nevertheless worshipped them publicly, because the law commanded it, and the customs of the people sanctioned it. Most of the philosophers of antiquity doubted about the immortality of the soul, and fell into religious skepticism.—Christianity makes its appearance in the world. It is preached everywhere and to all classes of people. It was preached to the poor as well as to the rich, to the rustics as well as to the learned, to the slave as well as to the freeman. First it was preached to the house of Israel, then to the Gentile nations. The sound of the apostles' voice went forth into the whole
world, and men from every tribe and tongue heard the sublime and simple message. They heard from the lips of the Apostles that God is one, that He governs the world paternally, that the soul is immortal and that Christ redeemed the human race. The most ignorant became as enlightened and understood these truths as clearly as the greatest philosophers. The Romans after their subjugation of Greece and Carthage, became addicted to the worst vices. Their poets, historians and philosophers, especially Seneca, Tacitus and Cicero, tell us the state of their morals. These writers say that impurity and drunkenness were most prevalent, and that that terrible sin against nature, sodomy, which stamps and brands its victims, was universal; yea that the philosophers not only tacitly but openly approved it. But a wonderful change comes over their manners after the introduction of Christianity. Those who had formerly given themselves up to debaucheries, now became chaste and temperate; those who had formerly practiced the magical arts now consecrate themselves to the service of the one true God; those who had formerly gloried and revelled in their riches now share them with the indigent; and those who had formerly indulged in mutual hatred, strifes and slaughter now are loving friends. Justin the martyr, in his apology gives us these facts, and they are confirmed by Pagan writers, who in their attacks upon the Christians, did not charge them with the crimes of theft, impurity, etc., but simply condemned them on account of their religion. We do not say that Christianity has eradicated all vices, but we hold that it cured many and never sanctioned any.

We now pass over to the second division, that Christianity has upheld the rights of children, wives and slaves. Pagan antiquity gave to parents the power of
life and death over their offspring. Thus we find among the Greeks that children were pro-created not so much for the family as for the state; therefore it was determined by a statute of Lycurgus and approved by the philosophers that crippled children and imbeciles should be put to death. We find the same law among the Romans. In the Law of the "Ten Tables," the father was commanded to dispatch quickly as possible a deformed boy, and Seneca did not blush to write that an unnatural foetus should be crushed, and that weak and monstrous children should be drowned; not madness but reason, said he, dictated that the healthy and useful should be separated from the sickly and the useless.

Moreover the father during the lives of his children could thrust them into prison, could flagellate them, and could compel them to perform the most menial labor according to his caprice. Yea, it was permitted them to sell their children.

Contrast the teaching of Christ with this. "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven:" again "But he that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a mill stone should be hanged about his neck and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea"; and again, "See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I say to you that their angels always see the face of my Father, in Heaven." From the doctrine that children were the sons of God and the heirs of His kingdom, it was that Christian people treated them with great reverence and love. Lactantius therefore taught that it was the greatest evil to strangle or kill infants in any manner, because God breathed into them a soul that they might live and not die; and that it was as great a crime to expose them to
the danger of death as to kill them outright. The Christian religion, as a devout mother, has always upheld this doctrine. She has from the very beginning too opposed the pagan practice of abortion, and she denounced it then as she does now not only as inhuman but as definitely murder.

Nor has Christianity been less zealous in upholding the dignity of wives. Among the ancient Romans, wives were the chattels of their husbands. The husband could at the beck of his own will punish his wife with death if he thought her guilty of adultery or drunkenness.

We have an example of this in the case of Metellus who slew his wife, because she had indulged too freely in wine. He was not only not accused of murder but even was not reprimanded for it. Moreover shortly before the time of Augustus, when their condition had somewhat improved, the senate was compelled to make a law forbidding noble matrons to sell their bodies or to profess prostitution. In that time too, divorce was most common. Cato sold his wife to Hortensius for a big sum of money, and when Hortensius died he took her back again. The great Cicero in need of money gave his wife a bill of separation that he might with the dowry of a new wife satisfy his creditors. Augustus, although solicitous about checking adultery, was nevertheless the base corruptor of other men’s wives.

Free love and abortion became so prevalent that to prevent national decay a law was passed to compel men to marry. Bachelors were taxed, and a reward given to families with children.

But when Christ came and preached the unity, indissolubility and sanctity of marriage, recalling it back to its pristine state, yea raising it to the dignity of a
sacrament; when He preached that men must love their wives as He loved the church, and that wives must be subject to their husbands as to the Lord; when He held up virginity as the most perfect state; when He commended to widows and virgins the offices of charity; when He chose a virgin to be His mother; when He went down to Nazareth and became obedient to Joseph and Mary;—after that it was, that woman was elevated and took her lawful place in society. And now she sits, and has sat since the coming of Christ, as the helpmate of man, his companion, the queen of the household; and from the time of the coming of Christ, modesty and chastity have flourished among Christian maidens, chaste conjugal love among the married, and filial love and obedience among children.

Christianity has greatly ameliorated the condition of the servile classes. According to the old Roman law, slaves were not considered persons, but animals—chattels; and consequently the master could do as he pleased with them. Slaves were not allowed to contract marriage, and lived after the manner of beasts. Not unfrequently were they chained and after many labors, broken down by sickness or disease, they were either put to death or turned out in desert places to perish by hunger. Cato advised fathers to sell their old and sick slaves as they would their old oxen and worn out carts, etc. Suspected fugitive slaves had an iron collar put around their necks, and their foreheads branded with a note of infamy. Very often the maids of Roman ladies, for a trivial offense were reprimanded by their mistresses in a fit of anger; and sometimes they were condemned to crucifixion. It was a Roman law if a master were killed, all the slaves who were in the house at the time, were punished indiscriminately with death.
Christianity immediately diminished the rigor and severity of slavery and then gradually extirpated it. For Christ taught that all men were sons of the same heavenly Father, and likewise heirs of God; St. Paul openly taught that in the presence of God all men were alike—there was neither freeman nor bondman but all one in Christ Jesus; and he further exhorted the faithful not to look upon their converted slaves as slaves, but as most dear brothers. Such doctrine struck at the root of whatever was inhuman in the action of masters towards their slaves, and at the same time prepared the way for their gradual emancipation. Indeed, as soon as Christianity became dominant, decrees were enacted by the Councils of the church, all tending to better the condition of the slaves and to decrease their number. It was decreed that no one could kill a slave or inflict grievous punishment upon him without the sentence of a judge; and that those slaves who fled to the sanctuary for protection, could not be punished corporally. Moreover, enfranchised slaves had thrown around them the mantle of episcopal protection; captives were redeemed with the money realized from the sale of sacred things; Sundays were set aside for the manumission of slaves; and finally in the 12th century the nefarious business of buying and selling slaves was interdicted. Thus it was by these means that Christianity uprooted slavery among Christians not suddenly (for all great reforms must be brought about gradually), but little by little as the opportunity presented itself, and Leo XIII decreed that the last vestige of servitude must disappear from the face of the earth.

We have now reached the third and last division of our discourse; namely, that Christianity has renovated
civil society by fostering liberty, chastity and the law of nations.

Tyranny was most prevalent among the Pagan nations. Aristotle teaches that in nations it manifests itself in three ways; first in a monarchy where the laws serve but the interest of the monarch; secondly in an oligarchy where the interests of the rich alone are consulted; and thirdly in a democracy where the rights of the common people alone are considered. Under any of these three forms the good of the state was neglected.

For whoever was in power and ruled, prospered and enacted measures for his own selfish ends never giving a thought to the public weal, and trampling on the rights of others. Hence among Pagan nations, we find continuous factions, quarrels, seditions and abject tyranny. It was an axiom among them "whatever pleases the ruler has the force of law."

Christian nations upon the rights and duties of the state are governed by different principles. They are taught that there is no just power except from God, and that it is no more lawful to resist legitimate superiors, than to resist the divine will; as St. Paul says, "He who resists the powers that be, resists the ordinance of God." Therefore those who rule are admonished that they must rule with equity and paternal charity, that they must consult the interest of the citizens and not their own, and that they must imitate God who joins justice with mercy. In that way the majesty of empire and the liberty of the subject are preserved.

History bears witness to the fact that Christian nations have little by little acquired civil liberty, founded upon justice and dignity, which Pagan nations never attained; and in our days only those people are considered free who are either Christians or ruled by Chris-
tian princes:—"Two things stand out prominently, justice and liberty" says Peter Blesense, "for which everyone ought to be willing to shed his blood:" and the Apostles long before had said, "It behooves us to obey God rather than man." These words briefly contain that true liberty of conscience found among Christian people.

Pagan tyranny was followed by the most barbarous cruelty not only in the treatment of slaves, but in the public playhouses. At Rome there were gladiatorial schools, where captives were taught by their masters how to slay and be slain, and nothing was more pleasing and better relished than the contests of the gladiators—these inhuman spectacles, where thousands of men were killed, were witnessed even by the women and children.

The best of rulers were their patrons; thus we learn that Titus when he was still in Judea, did not blush to amuse his soldiers with gladiatorial contests; and in one day over three thousand captives were killed. Nor did Trajan relish less the shedding of human blood. By his order one of these contests was continued upward of a hundred days. None of their philosophers before Seneca condemned this savage amusement, and in the course of time not only servants but free citizens, yea, senators and women entered the gladiatorial arena.

But Christianity has always extolled the dignity and the sanctity of life based upon the immediate creation of the soul by God. We therefore find her from the very first condemning and forbidding the useless shedding of blood. She considers man so noble and life so sacred that she does all within her power to preserve both. And thus we find her too founding her institutions of charity everywhere. She has them for the orphans, for the waifs, for the old and for the infirm. To Christianity
do these institutions owe their creation. The Pagan na-
tions had none of them, nor had they so much as words in
their language to express them.

So wanting was the sense of humanity among the
Pagan nations that their relations were ruled by force
and not by justice. Therefore frequent wars, which
were inaugurated and carried on simply for greed and
conquest. They killed the defenseless, seized their prop-
erty and divided it among the victors; and their country,
they annexed to the Roman Empire. Christianity, lit-
tle by little, has lessened the horrors of war. The de-
fenseless are not killed; captives are treated humanely;
the laws of nations, in peace and in war, are generally
observed; and faith in international agreements is, as a
rule, kept.

In a word equity and moderation among the nations
have succeeded barbarity. Rightly therefore, we may
say that Christianity is the mistress of life, the extin-
guisher of vice, the perennial fountain of virtue, not on-
ly among individuals, but in the family and in society—
all of which she has gradually uplifted and perfected,
because she holds within herself, not only the things of
the present, but the things of the future.
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE MESSAGE OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

My Dear Brethren in Christ:—The inspired writer, St. Luke, following a custom of the prophets and other writers of the Old Testament, gives us the respective sovereigns, civil and ecclesiastical, when the Spirit moved John to begin his mission. It was in the fifteenth year of the joint reign of Tiberius Caesar, the seven hundred and seventy-ninth of the foundation of the City of Rome, and when John and Christ each was in his thirtieth year.

John the Baptist, as you know, dwelt from youth to manhood west of Jerusalem, preparing himself by prayer, fasting and kindred mortifications for his great work; which was to whip and to lash those stiff necked people into readiness for the coming of Christ. Tall and gaunt, with a frame almost reduced to emaciation by fasting and mortification, with a leathern girdle tied about his loins, and a camel's hair thrown over his shoulder, came John to the banks of the Jordan. The people, in great multitudes, from the surrounding countries, flocked to hear him, believing him to be the great Elias who was come back to earth. Let us this morning examine a little more into his message.

John the Baptist preached "The baptism of penance ****Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths. Let every valley be filled up and every mountain and hill laid low. Straighten what is crooked and make the rough way smooth. Let all flesh see the salva-
tion of God.'" This was John's sermon. Let us try to see the truth under those strong metaphors.

My Brethren, in those eastern countries when travel was by road, at the coming of the king, a herald went before him to prepare the way and announce his near approach. He saw that the roads over which his sovereign was to pass were made straight and smooth, so as to afford a safe and easy journey. The figure, then, was a familiar one to those people.

John the Baptist preached "The baptism of penance for the remission of sins." The baptism which John preached and administered, besides being a penitential work in itself was a sign and profession of the need and necessity of other works of penance. The ablution of the body, besides being a figure of the superior baptism which Christ was to institute, was also a sign of the remission of sins, which was to be one of the blessings of the New Kingdom. This was to be the first step in the preparation,—to do penance and to rid themselves of sin.

"Let every valley be filled up and every mountain and hill laid low." They must remove all obstacles to the perfect working of grace in their souls, if they are to profit fully by the doctrines of Jesus Christ. They must, therefore perform good works, must practice virtue and acquire good habits. In this way they are to fill up the valleys. They must bring their passions under control, must get rid of vice, they must avoid the occasions of sin. In this way they are to level the mountains and hills.

"Straighten what is crooked and make the rough way smooth." That is, they are to pray and fast and mortify themselves and do other works of penance as a satisfaction for past sins and as a preparation for future graces.
“And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” Yes; every man be he Gentile or Jew, Greek or Barbarian, rich or poor, proud or humble, a sinner or a saint, learned or illiterate, a nobleman or a rustic;—all men without distinction will either see in reality or by faith Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, the Saviour and Redeemer of the world. They will either see, or hear Him in person, or see or hear His Church. This Church will continue Christ’s work until the end of the world. She will teach the doctrines of Christ in all their fullness, for the direction and enlightenment of men’s minds, in the way of truth and holiness. She will administer those sacred ordinances instituted by Christ, for the strengthening and sanctification of men’s wills until He comes to judge the living and the dead. And thus their minds having been enlightened and their wills strengthened, they will be able to see and to walk in the narrow way that leads to eternal life. In this way all men will see the salvation of God.

My Brethren, on the last Sunday of Advent the Catholic Church preaches the same doctrines of John to prepare your souls for the salvation of the coming of Christ in the flesh. On this day, she preaches with the same firmness as John. She tells you and all the world, to prepare for the great feast of Christmas by penance and prayer. She cries out to you to do penance as a satisfaction for past sins, and as a preparation of the soul for the grace of God. She exhorts you to look within yourselves to see what imperfections and sins may still be there. She tells you that you must make special efforts during these last days to uproot evil inclinations, to control your passions, to avoid sin and to practice virtue. Only in this way, she tells you, can you hope to share in
the graces, the blessings and the joy of that most hallowed season.

My Brethren, if Christians, at all times should be zealous in the avoiding of evil and in the doing of good, how much more so on the eve of that feast, which celebrates our deliverance from the slavery of Satan and our adoption into the kingdom of God! The Church, ever solicitous, has prescribed one day of each week as a day of fast; but this last week she has prescribed three. And by every way possible, she tries to keep before our minds the necessity of works of penance and mortification; the "Gloria in Excelsis" is omitted, the altars remain unadorned and the priests still vest in purple to impress upon us these lessons.

My Brethren, on the Eve of Christmas, let me exhort you in all earnestness with the sanctification of your immortal souls in view, to bring forth fruit worthy of penance. "Now is the acceptable time. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths." How many of you are stiff necked and proud? How many of you are hypocrites? How many of you give God only a lip service? How many of you are triflers? How many of you are worldly sycophants? How many of you are given up to sensuality and lust? Look into yourselves this morning! "Now is the acceptable time!" Do you not find something in yourselves to condemn? Are you not in one of these several classes of sinners? If so "prepare the way of the Lord." Grace can accomplish wonders in your soul in ever so short a time. If, after a thorough examination you find yourself free from grievous sin thank God and pray for strength in the day of temptation, which shall surely come upon you. Only he who perseveres to the end will be crowned. If God
should not prevent us by His grace there is no sin, which we may not commit, says St. Augustine.

My Brethren, hearken to the voice of John, "Do penance, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths. Let every valley be filled up and every mountain and hill laid low. Straighten the crooked road and make the rough ways smooth. Let all flesh see the salvation of God." If you do this the season of Christmas will then be a happy and propitious time for you. The peace of God, which surpasseth all understanding, will be yours. You will be at peace with God, with yourself and with mankind. True happiness here, and the hope of everlasting happiness in heaven.
CHRISTMAS.

CHRIST IS GOD.

My Dear Brethren:—To-day is Christmas, the great Christian festival, the greatest feast day of the Church; yea, the greatest feast day of all time; for on this day, some nineteen hundred years ago, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Messiah, the long looked for of the Nations, the Alpha and the Omega of all things came—was born into this world.

In a cave on a cold winter’s night on the white chalked hills of Judea, Joseph and Mary retired. In the stillness of the morning, with no attendants, no bed, no fire, the Blessed Virgin brought forth Jesus Christ as a ripe fruit plucked from the branch, wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in the manger. How tenderly, lovingly and reverently, O Virgin Mother, thou must have embraced that Child! For thou didst know that that Babe was both human and divine, that those tiny hands that reached out to thee were divine, that those lips that touched thy chaste breast were divine, that that cry was divine! O Virgin Mother take that Child, fondle Him, and by the warmth of thy caresses and the fervor of thy faith make up for the coldness and unbelief of the world!

My Brethren, in Jesus Christ whose birth we celebrate to-day, all the Messianic prophecies were fulfilled, and especially the prophecies of David and Isaias. The princes and kings and the powerful ones of this earth were to contend, cry out and wage war against Him; but
He was to come out of the conflict victorious, and establish His rule over the nations, and His kingdom was to have no end. Not in David, not in any other Jewish king, but in Christ alone, were these things fulfilled. Was not Christ the Wonderful? Was He not the Counsellor? Did He not enlighten those who sat in the shadow of darkness and in the valley of death? Was He not the Prince of Peace? Did He not sit on the throne of David and strengthen it with justice and judgment? And has not His empire been established over the earth until the end?

My Brethren, when the Jews on Solomon’s porch asked Him whether He was the Christ He answered, “I and the Father are one”—“I am in the Father and the Father in Me.” He not only said that He was God, but He proved by His miracles that He was God. In contradistinction to the prophets and the apostles, Christ worked miracles in His own name and by His own power. And He called attention to the fact that His miracles were a proof of His divinity. Thus when He said that He and the Father were one, and his hearers doubted it, He told them if they would not believe His words, to believe His works:—“I speak to you and you believe Me not; the works that I do in the name of the Father, they give testimony of Me.” To confirm His divinity Christ worked not one or two miracles, not in one place alone, not before the same people and not under the same circumstances, but various miracles, in various places, under various circumstances and before people of all conditions, ranks, ages and sects; miracles of the moral, intellectual and physical order; miracles showing nothing unbecoming or undignified; and miracles in confirmation of a doctrine which has changed the world.
My Brethren, outside the Jewish people, whom God had set aside, guarded and directed in a most special manner, the ancient world had fallen into the grossest errors, both intellectual and moral. Down through the ages from the time of our first parents, there was a gradual departure from truth and holiness; and the more remote the people were from the primitive revelations, the more obscure and erroneous became their ideas about God, the Hereafter, the Soul and Morality. The state of the ancient world, as seen in the history of the Hindoos, the Persians, Greeks and the Romans, was most appalling. From the worship of the starry heavens they descended to the creatures of this earth—to man, to beasts and then to dumb idols. Their morality became so low that they performed the most obscene rites in the temples of their gods. So darkened had the minds of men become and so corrupt their wills that Socrates, a Greek philosopher, cried out four hundred years before Christ, "That unless some one came to put aside the mist, man could not know how to comport himself towards God and man."

The time was ripe for the coming of the Saviour. The Pagan world had been taught the insufficiency of itself and believed that no effectual, lasting help could come but from God alone. It was now prepared to appreciate the blessings and happy tidings which the "Expected of the Nations" would bring. Christ was born. He lived a retired life for thirty years at Nazareth, and then began His work.

The world was soon changed. It was moved by new ideals and forces. Christ taught the existence of one supreme, absolute, perfect, necessary, infinite Being; He taught that in this Being there were three divine Persons, perfectly equal but distinct; the Father, the Son
and the Holy Ghost; He taught that in Himself there were two natures, the divine and the human, united in the Person of the Word; He taught the immortality of the soul, and the existence of a future life, where the good would be rewarded and the wicked, punished; He promulgated anew the Ten Commandments; He taught the Eight Beatitudes; He established a new form of worship of which the old was but a shadow; He instituted seven great channels of grace; and He established a church to continue His work until the end of time, and endowed it with His own authority, infallibility and indefectibility. Christ, His doctrine and His church, changed the whole face of the earth.

The nations in their turn became converted and Christian principles and Christian sentiments ruled them. Light and purity shone out brightly everywhere. The future life became the dominant motive power. From then on down through the ages, until now, among all nations and peoples, in all countries and climes, true disciples and followers of Christ have been found innumerable. It is true that there have been some infidels in every age, but their number, to the number of believers, has been most insignificant. Their number, to the number of Christians, may be compared as the number of the blind, to the number of those who have sight. And just as the wanting of sight in the blind does not affect the existence of the sun, so neither does the unbelief of the handful of infidels affect the Divinity of Christianity. Christ has been king for nineteen hundred years. His sovereignty has been universal. Not by the sword, not by pandering to sensuality, not by money, not by temporal advantages, has Christ’s kingdom been advanced and maintained; yea, by the very opposite, and yet it is universal and supreme.
My brethren, for four thousand years the world was being prepared for the reception of Jesus Christ and His kingdom. This we see in a particular manner in the history of the Greek, Roman and Jewish people. In their wars, conquests, defeats, philosophy and theology, the people were being prepared for the full revelation of the truth in Christ Jesus. And since the Coming of Christ, in the march of kingdoms and empires, in the migration and intermingling of the Nations, in the advancement of the arts and sciences, God has been back of all, quietly, slowly but surely, advancing His kingdom and reign, until all men meet in the perfect knowledge and power of Jesus Christ;— "When the consummation of the Ages will come."
ST. MONICA.

MY DEAR BRETHREN:—St. Monica, whose feast-day falls on the 4th of May, was the mother of the great St. Augustine. She was born in the year 332 of pious parents, and was instructed from her youth in the fear of God. A discreet maid servant to whom her early education was intrusted, besides instilling into her maxims of piety, endeavored to teach her temperance and mortification. Outside of the hours for meals she would not permit her to drink even of water. One day finding her drinking water between her meals she thus reprimanded her:—"You are now for drinking water, but when you come to be mistress of the cellar, water will be despised, but the habit of drinking will stick by you." And thus it did happen that by continually sipping the wine when drawing it for the family use, that she acquired a fondness for it. But God was watching over His chosen servant, and made use of the maid servant to correct her. One day the maid servant followed Monica into the cellar, and upon beholding her drinking a cup of wine, humiliated her by calling her "a wine bibber."

As soon as Monica reached the marriageable age, she was engaged to one Patricius, a citizen of Tagaste, a man of honor and probity, but an idolater. She bore him two sons, Augustine and Navigius, and one daughter. She obeyed and served him as her master, and labored hard to win him to God. Her weapons of conversion were holiness of conduct, and an obliging and affectionate disposition. Whenever Patricius flew into a passion, she never crossed him, but remained
calm, and when the fit was over would give him the reasons for so acting. When other wives would come to her and complain of the rough treatment of their husbands and of their debaucheries, she would thus answer them:—

"Lay the blame rather on yourselves and your tongues."

Patricius at last became converted, was baptized, and until his death remained chaste, temperate and kind, and faithful in all his Christian duties.

St. Monica was most charitable to the poor, and she took great delight in supplying their wants herself. She assisted every morning at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and every evening at the public prayers, and kept always before her eyes eternity and the bliss of the saints in heaven. But this did not prevent her from watching carefully over the education of her children, in which God gave her great occasion of merit and suffering in the person of Augustine her elder son, who was born in November, 354.

Patricius and herself were ambitious that their son should become a distinguished scholar, they sent him to Carthage, at that time, famous for its schools of learning. Here he was seduced by the subtleties of the Manichees, and embraced their heresy. His mother when she learned this, wept most bitterly, and she would no longer live under the same roof with him. St. Augustine speaking of his mother at this period of her life, thus addressed God:—"You have heard her vows, and You have not despised her tears; for she shed torrents of them in Your Presence in all places where she offered to You her prayers."

God was pleased in a dream to give her assurance that her prayers in behalf of her son's conversion would finally be heard. She saw herself standing on a rule of wood very sorrowful, and a young man shining with light asked her the cause of her grief, and
bade her dry her tears saying:—"Your son is with you."
Then casting her eyes to the place he pointed, she saw Augustine standing on the rule of wood with her. When she told this dream to her son, and upon his inferring from it that she should come to his belief in religion, she answered him thus:—"No, it was not told me that I was with you, but that you were with me." Her quick answer made a great impression upon her son who after his conversion considered this dream as a divine premonition. She was so much comforted by the dream as to allow her son again to eat and to live with her.

St. Monica ceased not her lamentations to God for the conversion of St. Augustine, and she engaged several learned prelates to speak to him. Among the number was St. Ambrose. One of the holy prelates whom she had entreated so fervently to try to win over her son said to her:—"Go, continue to do as you are doing; it is impossible that the child of such tears should perish."

St. Augustine was now twenty-nine years old and he resolved to go to Rome with the view of teaching rhetoric. His mother did all in her power to divert him from such a design, thinking that it would delay his conversion, and she followed him to the seaside, determined either to bring him back or to sail with him. That he might rid himself of her importunities he feigned he had no intention of going. And whilst she passed the night in the chapel in prayer he secretly set out. St. Augustine speaking of this afterwards thus addresses God:—"I deceived her with a lie while she was weeping and praying for me; and what did she ask of You, my God, but that You would not suffer me to sail away? But You graciously heard her desire, namely that I might be engaged in Your service, and refused to grant what she then asked, in order to give her what she had always
asked." From Rome he went to Milan to teach rhetoric and here he fell in with St. Ambrose who convinced him of the errors of the Manichees. Still he did not come into the fold of the true church; but continued restless in his search after the truth. Finally in the year 386 St. Augustine was perfectly converted, and was baptized on Easter Sunday of the following year. St. Monica, St. Augustine and some other companions start for Africa. On the way St. Monica fell sick and died at Ostia. Before her fatal illness, conversing with her son concerning eternal happiness and the contempt of this world she said:—"Son, there is nothing now in this life that affords me any delight. What have I to do here any longer, or why I am here I know not; all my hopes in this world being now at an end. The only thing for which I desired to live was that I might see you a Catholic and a child of heaven. God has done much more in that I see you despising all earthly felicity and entirely devoted to His service. What further business then have I here?" Being asked if she did not dread being buried in a place so far from her own country she answered:—"Nothing is far from God. Neither do I need to fear that God will not find my body to raise it up with the rest." Five days afterwards, having swooned away, and her two sons running to her thinking her dead, when she came to, coming as it were out of a profound sleep, she said to them:—"Here you shall bury your mother." Augustine stood silent, but Navigius expressed a wish that she might not die abroad but in her own country. Checking him with her eyes, she said to both of them:—"Sons, lay this body anywhere, be not concerned about that. The only thing that I ask of you both is, that you make remembrance of me at the altar of the Lord wheresoever you are." On the ninth day of her illness after
having suffered much, in the fifty-sixth year of her age, her most religious and pious soul was loosed from its tenement of clay and entered into the realms of bliss. St. Augustine closed the eyes of his sainted mother, and when alone giving free vent to his tears, thus spoke:—

"If any one think it a sin that I thus wept for my mother some small part of an hour; and a mother who for many years had wept for me that I might live to thy eyes O Lord; let him not deride me for it; but rather if his charity be great, let him weep also for my sins before Thee."

My Dear Brethren, thus lived and thus died St. Monica, who gave to the world that masterpiece of intellectual creation, and one of the greatest saints in the church. She is the model Christian wife, and the model Christian mother. She is the special patroness of all those mothers who have wayward sons. In her cries to God for the conversion of her son, St. Augustine, she is symbolical of the church in her lamentations for the conversion of erring children. Catholic wives imitate her in her mildness, forbearance and consideration at home. You are to rule and can only hope to rule the home by the heart and the strings of affection. In that way you can become all-powerful.

St. Monica by her prudent and kindly remonstrances converted her lustful and pagan husband. St. Monica by her unwearied prayers, converted her son, a proud and wilful heretic. Whilst her son did not live to God, she considered his state infinitely worse than if he had no existence at all. One thing only she desired—his salvation. If the instructions and watchfulness of a St. Monica could not preserve St. Augustine from the snares and dangers of bad company, what precaution are parents bound to take now to keep their children from mak-
ing shipwreck of their souls on this fatal rock! O St. Monica, we beseech you to intercede with God for the conversion of any hardened sinner of this parish! We ask you and your son to watch over us, and especially when you perceive us departing in the least from holiness to intercede with Jesus Christ to turn us hastily back!
EPHANY.

OUR CALL TO THE FAITH.

My Dear Brethren:—Yesterday we celebrated the Feast of the Epiphany. Epiphany, according to the meaning of the word, signifies a manifestation or appearance. But in reality, it is the Feast which commemorates the three-fold manifestation of Christ’s glory. First, when the Magi, led on by the miraculous star, came from the East and adored Him; secondly, when the heavenly Father, at the baptism of Christ, exclaimed from the clouds, “This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him;” and thirdly, when Christ Himself, at the wedding feast, manifested His own glory by miraculously changing the water into wine. In the fourth century, the feast of the Epiphany ranked among the greatest of the Church’s solemnities. In the East, solemn baptism was administered on the eve of the Epiphany; and even at the present day, the Orientals bless the river where baptism is to be administered and the devout, despite the inclemency of the weather, plunge themselves into the hallowed waters. And St. Augustine tells us, that the Epiphany is that Feast, which commemorates in a solemn manner the manifestation which Christ made of Himself to the Magi. The Magi were wise men, who, by a particular inspiration of Almighty God came to adore the infant Jesus and to offer Him presents.

This Feast should be particularly dear to the hearts of all Christians; for the wise men were our fore-runners in the faith; we, the Gentiles were represented in their
person. The Epiphany, in truth, is the anniversary of our calling to the faith and worship of the true God. Should we not, therefore, venerate it and hold it with the utmost regard?

My Brethren, for many centuries, the Gentiles, who were our ancestors, had fallen into the worst spiritual degeneracy and had lain grovelling in the mire of moral wretchedness. So low and base had they become that there was no object, howsoever despicable which was not given some kind of divine honor, and no vice, howsoever detestable which was not sanctioned by some of their religious tenets. The philosophers despaired of the ancient pagan world, and taught that it must soon come to naught. And St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, thus describes our heathen ancestors:—"And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds and of four-footed beasts and of creeping things. Being filled with all iniquity, malice, fornication, avarice, wickedness, full of envy, murder, contention, deceit, malignity, detractors, hateful to God, contumelious, proud, haughty, inventors of evil things, foolish, dissolute, without affection, without fidelity, without mercy." Such were our pagan ancestors and such should we be, if God, in His great mercy and love, had not called us into His marvelous light.

Our call to the true faith had been foretold by the prophets many hundred years before it happened. David and Isaias in a special manner predicted it. But it was reserved for the Messias, the Christ, the Son of the eternal God to bring it to completion. For upon His birth there appeared in the eastern skies, a shining meteor, resembling a star, which was the divine messenger sent to announce to the Gentile world, that their deliv-
erance was at hand; for the long-looked-for-of-the-nations had come. The Magi, three in number see the Star and moved also by an interior light, they quit immediately their country, leave home and kindred and start on the perilous journey. Through deserts and over mountains infested by robbers, they follow the star into the very city of Jerusalem, in search of the new born King. It now disappears, and believing that the Messias is here, they inquire, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews, for we have seen His star in the East and have come to adore Him?" "Bethlehem, Bethlehem," is the unanimous voice of the Sanhedrin; and for Bethlehem they set out. But no sooner had they departed from the city of Jerusalem than the star again appears and goes before them, conducting them to the stable on the white chalked hills of Judea, and there in mute language it speaks, "In the crib you shall find the new born King."

The Magi following the custom of those eastern nations, bring with them the richest and most costly products of their country, and lay them at the feet of the new born King as a token of homage. They offer to the Christ some gold, frankincense and myrrh, which were both symbolical of His character and work, and of the dispositions of their souls. They offer Him gold, which was symbolical of Christ's kingship and of their charity towards Him; they offer Him frankincense which was symbolical of Christ's Godhead and of their devotion to Him; and they offer Him myrrh which was symbolical of Christ's redemption and of their will to sacrifice themselves for Him. Throughout the octave, yea, throughout the whole year, let us be animated with the same dispositions as the Three Wise Men, and which were beautifully symbolised by their offering.
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

CHRIST IN THE MIDST OF THE DOCTORS.

My Dear Brethren:—A Jewish boy at the age of twelve was in a certain measure, thought to be exempt from the family government. At this age He entered the Synagogue, became a Son of the Law and was subject to its prescriptions. And one of his most important duties was to visit Jerusalem during the Feast of the Pasch. Jesus Christ having reached the age of twelve, accompanies His foster-father, St. Joseph, and His mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, on such a mission.

The distance from Nazareth to Jerusalem, over the route taken by the Holy Family, was about ninety miles, and could be made, by traveling leisurely, in three or four days. Joseph, Mary and the Child Jesus at the break of day, start for Jerusalem. They travel southward, and stop, for the first night, at the springs and groves of En-Gammin. The next day, they cross over the hill-country of Manassah, and pitch their tent at even-tide near Jacob’s Well, at the foot of Mounts Ebal and Garizim. Beeroth with its fountains was the stopping place for the third night. And from thence to the Holy City was but three hours’ travel. On the fourth day before noon, they found themselves within the walls of Jerusalem.

The Holy Family remained at Jerusalem, during the seven days of the Passover. On the next day the caravan bound for Galilee, was gathered together. No doubt it comprised many thousands of persons; for Jerusalem
during this feast was often thronged with two or three million travelers. At night-fall Joseph and Mary miss Jesus.

They search for Him everywhere; among the women and the old men mounted upon the beasts of burden; among the middle aged men leading the way and chanting the sacred songs; and among His kindred and friends; but all in vain; Jesus is not to be found; and their anxiety becomes great for Judea was in an uproar of sedition.

Joseph and Mary return immediately to Jerusalem. For the space of two nights and two days all along the wayside and through the Holy City, they continue the fruitless search. On the third day they find Him in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions.

In this congregation hearkening to Him sat some of the most illustrious Jewish doctors. There sat Hillel, revered as a peer of Moses; the unyielding Shammai, who bound all that Hillel loosed; Jonathas, son of Vziel whose speech (as the Talmud said) was so fiery that the birds as they passed by were either burned or transformed into Seraphim; and Rabban Simeon who foretold to Mary her future griefs. Probably, too, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were there. He who thus far had sedulously concealed the Divinity within, now discloses Himself as a superior Being, overawing by His questions and answers these old men of consummate learning.

But the marvelous character of this scene could not make Mary quite forget what she had suffered, and in her sorrow with tremulous lips she gently reproached Him by saying: "Child, why hast Thou done so to us? Behold Thy father and I were seeking Thee sorrowing."

"Why did ye seek Me? Did ye not know that I must be about My Father's business?" Neither Mary nor
Joseph understood those words. And all that she could do was to engrave them upon her heart, and to ponder over all that she had seen and heard. As for Jesus, He accompanied His parents back to Nazareth, and there for eighteen years screened again the Divinity within Him; but all the time growing, as it were, in virtue, holiness and wisdom before God and men.

My Brethren, the first lesson which is taught us is obedience to the laws of the Church. Here we have Jesus Christ—God—obeying, I will not say a law of the Old Covenant, but simply a pious custom; journeying on foot for four days in order to be present at the Feast of the Passover. Secondly we are taught that nothing is to come between us and our duty towards God. Parents, wife, husband, brother, sister, the dearest friend must be given up when it is a question of them or God. Behold the conduct of Jesus Christ; there never lived a more dutiful and loving Son; and yet He hesitated not to cause His parents great sorrow, when it was the Will of His heavenly Father that He should remain at Jerusalem, and converse with the doctors in the Temple. Finally we are taught that as we grow in age, we must also advance in virtue and holiness. Jesus Christ was perfect from His very birth, yet for our example, He willed to manifest more virtue and wisdom as He grew in age. My brethren, examine yourselves as regards these lessons. Do you obey not only the laws of the Church, but also the pious customs which flow from the spirit of those laws? Remember the long journey of the Child Jesus to Jerusalem to be present at the Feast, although He was not strictly obliged by the law of Moses. To please a husband, a wife, a brother, a sister or a near friend do you neglect some duty towards God? Remember again the
Child Jesus remaining at Jerusalem, because it was His Father's will, although He thereby displeased His earthly parents. As the marks of age are coming upon you, are the marks of virtue also appearing? Remember time is short. Ere a few years at the longest, we shall stand before the judgment Seat of God to render an account of our whole life!
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS DIVINE.

MY DEAR BRETHREN AND CHRISTIAN FRIENDS:—Jesus Christ left the bosom of His Eternal Father, took flesh, lived on earth, suffered and died to redeem and save mankind. By original sin which was committed by our first parents, the gates of Heaven were closed. As we should have shared in the wonderful gifts and prerogatives of our first parents if they had remained faithful to God's commands, so also do we share in their fall. All the children of Adam inherit original sin, and come into this world with its stain upon their souls. Christ by His death and resurrection opened those gates, which had been closed against man for more than four thousand years. But by original sin man's intellect has become darkened and his will weakened, and there has been left in him a strong inclination towards evil. Hence man needs supernatural light and strength in order to save his soul. Christ therefore, by His death and resurrection, merited that light and strength for man. On last Friday—Good-Friday—we commemorated the ignominious death of Jesus Christ on the Cross. To-day, Easter Sunday, we commemorate His glorious resurrection from the grave.

My Brethren, Christ redeemed us without our co-operation, but He will not save us without it. So many people confuse these two ideas. Man is an intellectual and free being. Redemption is universal, but salvation is personal. Redemption was simply the work of Jesus Christ, but salvation is the joint work of Jesus Christ and man. We are to be saved by believing in all those
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS DIVINE

truths which Jesus Christ came down from heaven to reveal, and of which man stood so much in need. We are to be saved by making use of all those sacred ordinances, or means, which Jesus Christ instituted to give strength to our weakened wills, and thus enable us to overcome sin and our corrupt nature. That these doctrines may pass down through the centuries to all men, and that these sacred ordinances may be administered until the end of time amongst men it was necessary for Jesus Christ either to remain on earth and work continuous miracles, or accommodating Himself to the nature of man to leave after Him a visible institution to be guided and directed by His Holy Spirit. The latter method He chose. And thus we find Him, before His ascension into Heaven, instituting the Church, to continue His mission on earth until the consummation of the ages.

As Christ desires, all men to come into this Church, and thus partake of the means of salvation, it follows that the Church should not be a candle hidden under a bushel, but a light placed upon the mountain. We hold that Christ put upon His Church marks by which she might be known, and which also would be an evidence of her divinity. This morning we wish to address you on this momentous subject—for momentous it is if Christ established a Church to which He wishes all men to belong.

My Brethren and Friends, the marks which Christ placed upon His Church are Unity, Sanctity, Catholicity and Apostolicity. By Unity, we mean oneness of faith and worship, that is, that all members of the Church should believe in the same doctrines, assist at the same worship and make use of the same means of salvation. It could not be otherwise. God is the God of truth and
order and harmony. Truth is one, and cannot contradict itself. Division is opposed to harmony and order. God hates with an eternal hatred, all error and confusion. The Church founded by His Son, Who is the image of His likeness, and the glory of His substance, necessarily should possess this mark. Christ, as we learn from St. John in Chapter X and XI said: "And other sheep I have that are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice and there shall be but one fold and one shepherd;"***"And not for them only do I pray but for those also, who through their words shall believe in Me; that all may be one as Thou Father in Me and I in Thee; that they may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." Do not these words of Jesus Christ teach us that His followers are to be one in faith and worship? In a sheep fold we have many sheep grazing in a common pasture and obeying and following the same shepherd. In this prayer of Jesus Christ, the night before His sacred passion, we have our Divine Saviour and Redeemer praying for unity and harmony among His disciples. And surely His prayer did not remain unheard. Ignatius, a Greek Father of the Second Century wrote to the Church at Philadelphia concerning this unity:—"Do you then being children of light and truth flee division and corrupt doctrines." And Cyprian, a Latin Father of the Third Century, cries out:—"God is One, and Christ is one, and the Church is one, and the Chair founded by the Lord's word upon a rock is One."

The second essential mark of Christ's church is sanctity, that is, she must necessarily teach a most holy doctrine and invite and exhort all to a holy life, and shine pre-eminently by the holiness of many thousands of her children. This follows from the object and purpose of
Christ’s coming into the world. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, Chapter 5th, says:—“But you are a chosen generation, a kingly priest-hood, a holy nation, a purchased people; that you may declare His virtues, Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” And Tertullian, the great Christian Apologist of the first century wrote thus in defense of the Christians against their pagan adversary concerning holiness:—“We alone then are innocent. What wonder if this be so of necessity? Taught innocence by God, we both know it perfectly, as being revealed by a perfect Master, and we keep it faithfully, as being committed to us by an observer that may not be despised.”

Catholicity is the third mark of Christ’s church. Catholicity means universality—universality as regards time, place and numbers. In other words Christ’s Church must be found among all nations, races and people from the time of its establishment until the end. Christ came into the world to save all men—to save them by His doctrines and worship. Hence His Church must morally speaking, be within reach of all men. But unless it has been everywhere, is everywhere and will be everywhere, this would be impossible. “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony of all nations, and then shall the consummation come.” “And He said to them: ‘Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature.’” These words, taken from the holy gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, teach us that Christians, or true believers and followers of Jesus Christ are to be found among all nations, and that all men are to hear the genuine and true doctrines of Jesus Christ. Origin of the Third Century writing against Celsus, refers to this universality:—“For the word spoken with power has vanquished
the whole nature of man, and there is not a race of men
to be seen that has refused to receive the doctrine of
Jesus.'"

The fourth and last mark of Christ’s Church, is Apostolicity. And by it, we mean that the ministers of
Christ’s Church must teach the doctrines of Christ and
the Apostles, and must be able to trace their descent back
to the Apostles and Christ, and derive their powers from
them.

To most Christians, there can be no question that the
Church of Christ should teach the doctrines of Christ
and His Apostles. But how are they to know this? Few indeed would be the men who, in search for the
Church of Christ by their own efforts could discover
which among the many churches, teaches His doctrines.
This would require learning and ability, leisure and
study. Hence for the average man, Apostolicity of suc-
cession is to be the touch-stone of Apostolicity of doc-
trine. In other words, that Church, whose ministers can
trace their powers and commission back through the ages
in an unbroken line to the very Apostles and to Christ,
must teach their doctrines.

I think it will be admitted by all who have read the
"Gospels and the Acts," that Christ when He began His
public life called to Himself twelve men, whom He in-
structed in His Doctrines for three years, and then sent
them forth into the world to preach the truths which
they had learned from Him. And He promised to send
the Holy Ghost to assist them in this arduous work.
After a while they, too, assembled around them other
men whom they instructed, imposed hands upon and sent
forth. "And Jesus coming spoke to them, saying, All
power is given to Me in heaven and on earth. Going
therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing 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 ages." (St. Matthew).

"And how shall they preach unless they be sent as it is written; How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, of them that bring glad tidings of good things." (St. Paul to the Romans).

"And the things which thou hast heard of Me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also." (St. Paul to Timothy).

And anent this mark, Origen of the Third Century wrote:—"There being many who fancy that they think the things of Christ, and some of these think differently from those who had gone before, let there be preserved the ecclesiastical teaching which has been delivered by the order of succession from the Apostles, and which remains even to the present time in the Churches; that alone is to be believed to be the truth which, in nothing, differs from the Ecclesiastical and Apostolic tradition."

My dear Brethren and Christian Friends, in what religious body do we find these marks? Do any of the separate Protestant Churches possess them? Or does Protestantism, taken collectively, or as a whole, possess them? It does not require a learned research to answer these questions. All that is necessary is simply to look about and observe. They do not possess unity. There are at least a dozen or more great divisions, not considering the innumerable minor divisions in Protestantism. Mr. Morris, a great Protestant authority, tells us that there is no one sect whose Creed is accepted by all its members and clergy. Although there are good men and women in the Protestant Churches, yet their best men and women will not compare favorably with the least
of our canonized saints. There is a great difference between a saint and a good Christian. A saint, is one who takes literally to heart the counsels of Jesus Christ, and who walks most perfectly in His footsteps. A saint is one who lives simply for God and his fellow men, and is willing at any moment to lay down his life for Christ and His cause. A saint is one in whom meekness, gentleness, patience, humility, prayer, obedience, purity, sacrifice and mortification shine out most brightly. A saint is one in whom the life of Jesus Christ is so evident that all exclaim on beholding him, there goes another Christ. Protestantism is confined to certain countries and certain people, and is not universal in extent. As regards Catholicity of numbers it does not comprise over one-fourth the number of Christians. And the ministers of the oldest Protestant church cannot trace their descent farther back than a few centuries.

Glance now at the Catholic Church and behold how clearly and indelibly these marks are stamped upon her. Behold her wonderful unity! Go where you will over the wide world, visit the various countries and nations and races, and you will find the Catholics, although disagreeing on all other matters, firmly united in the profession of the same faith. The Church tolerates within her fold, sinners, but never heretics. Just as soon as one of her members questions an article of the Catholic Creed, he is ignominiously cast forth:—‘‘He that will not hear the Church let him be as a heathen and a publican.’’ She has the principle of unity—authority, vested supremely in a head, who is infallible in faith and morals:—‘‘Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’’

From the very beginning, the Church has been fruitful in saints. In every age and country there have flour-
ished within the Church, innumerable saints. All her doctrines and practices tend towards holiness of life. See how many thousand of her children have taken to heart the counsel of our divine Lord: "If thou wilt be perfect go, sell what thou hast and come follow Me." They leave home and country and kindred, and consecrate themselves to God by the vows of chastity, obedience and poverty, that thus having uprooted the three great obstacles to perfection, they will more easily attain thereto. Their number is legion, and they are the choice fruits and fair flowers of every age, sex and condition.

Every nation that is Christian today, received the faith from the Catholic Church. It was Catholic missionaries that planted the faith in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Russia, and in North and South America. To-day, the Church is found in every country upon which the sun of heaven shines, and she numbers three hundred million souls,—three-fifths of the totality of Christians.

Every minister in the Catholic Church is able to trace his commission and powers back to Christ and the Apostles. It is an easy task. Every priest is ordained by some bishop in communion with the See of Rome. And a Catholic bishop receives his appointment from the Pope, who in an unbroken line, is the successor of St. Peter, whom Christ made His vicar on earth, and the visible head of the Church. Benedict XV is the two hundred and sixtieth successor of St. Peter, the first occupant of the See of Rome.

My Dear Brethren and Christian Friends, men left to themselves—men of different talents, dispositions and interests—even on philosophical questions, will not agree, and will hold conflicting views. Look at the ancient philosophers of Greece and Rome, look at the mod-
ern philosophers, who have rejected God's revelation—
their philosophical views were and are most conflicting
—no unity. How then explain this wonderful unity of
belief and practice, within the Catholic Church, of peo-
ple of all conditions, countries and times and of divers
interests? Only one explanation:—it is due to a super-
natural influence. It is the work of the Holy Ghost.

To die to oneself, to crucify the flesh with its desires,
to overcome perfectly our lower self, is not according to
nature. In every age, among the various people, we
find a host of men and women, members of the Catholic
Church—who, by accepting unreservedly her doctrines
have so lived and died. How explain this phenomenon?
Only by resorting to the supernatural.

What policy of government is suited to the wants and
dispositions of men, who live in different countries, of
different habits and customs, and in the different centur-
ies? In other words, what kingdom or republic has ever
been universal? But the Catholic Church, the Kingdom
established by Christ has been and is universal. How
explain this fact? Do not say with Gibbon, it is due to
her wonderful organization. But what gives her this
wonderful organization, which we do not find in the most
perfect governments founded by man? Surely the fin-
ger of God is here!

Kingdoms and Empires and Republics, like individ-
uals have their birth, their growth, their old age and de-
cay. None has had an existence lasting over a thousand
years. And the oldest, long before it reached that age,
began to show evident marks of change and dissolution.
But we have a Kingdom in the world the Catholic
Church, which has existed for nineteen hundred years
substantially the same, and she manifests no marks of
decay and dissolution. She is as active and as vigorous
in the nineteenth century as she was in the first. There is no halt in her step, no tremor in her hands and no wrinkles on her brow. She seems to grow younger and more beautiful as she advances in years. Yes,—these four marks are evidences of the Church’s divinity—her wonderful unity, the heroic sanctity of thousands of her children, her universal sway and undying life cannot be accounted for on natural grounds and bespeak her divinity:—“And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd;”***

“And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me; that they all may be one as Thou Father in Me and I in Thee; that they may be one in us that the world may believe that thou hast sent Me.”
THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

THE CLEANSING OF THE LEPER.

My Dear Brethren in Christ:—This morning, we shall confine ourselves to the consideration of one part only of the Gospel. We shall speak on the first miracle mentioned; namely, on the healing of the leper.

This miracle happened in Galilee during Christ's first sojourn there. Unlike John the Baptist, Christ did not wait for the people to come to Him, but went out to them. To all the villages He carried the good tidings of the Gospel. And upon all the people He lavished His good deeds. He preached, consoled and healed. And departing from the cities, He left the sweetest and holiest memories behind Him.

Although the town where this miracle occurred is not exactly known, we know however, that as soon as Christ entered it, the leper ran and threw himself at His feet and implored mercy. This poor unfortunate creature was the object of the greatest pity. Banished from home, not allowed to enter the city gates, in tattered garments, with his head shaven and a veil covering his lips, with the corruption of death upon him—a moving sepulchre—all retreated as soon as they espied him, shouting the lugubrious cry, 'Unclean! Unclean!' They all retreated except Christ, the Lord and Master of life and death.

The leper cast himself at the feet of the Saviour and with uplifted eyes, outstretched hands and beseeching
voice said, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean."

Although the leper had broken the law by coming into the city, his condition was so pitiful that the merciful heart of the Master thought only of healing him. And immediately He stretched forth His omnipotent hands, laid them upon him and said, "I will, be thou made clean."

In an instant the scales fell from his body, the sores healed, pure blood pulsated through his veins, the pallor left his cheeks and his countenance flushed once more with the glow of health.

Christ, in healing this leper who had entered within the city gates without permission, apparently had yielded to the first impulse of mercy. He reflects now; He has a duty to perform; He must reprimand the leper for breaking the law; and so He does. He bids him to go immediately out of the city, which he had presumed to enter unsanctioned. Knowing too, that the fame of this miracle would spread and in consequence that the multitude would flock to Him and thus interfere with His mission, He bade the leper to keep silent, show himself to the priest and make the customary offering commanded by Moses.

My Brethren, what lessons are we to learn from this miracle and the circumstances of it? First, we see the mercy and goodness of God. Christ went about doing good. He comforted, consoled and healed. No one was outside the reach of His charity. All kinds of misery found in Him a physician. He comforted the widow, consoled Martha and Mary, restored sight to the blind and speech to the dumb. But let us not forget that His charity did not stop there. The healing of the miseries of the body was but a small part of His work. He was
pre-eminently a spiritual physician. He came into the world to heal the diseases of the soul; to enlighten the mind, cleanse the heart and strengthen the will,—that was His principal work. The healing of the body was but secondary—a means to an end—to the healing of the soul.

My Brethren, in to-day’s Gospel we see, also, the respect which Christ had for sacred and civil ordinances. The Jewish kingdom was a theocracy. Religious and civil laws went hand in hand. Christ bade the leper to return immediately beyond the city gates. This was a civil enactment, a hygienic law. He also bade the leper to show himself to the priest, who was to certify to his cure. This was a sacred law enacted by Moses.

The leper was cured, and his cure was evident. There was no danger of contracting the disease now, and consequently, no need of the priests to certify to the cure. But notwithstanding this, Christ, to sanction laws and ceremonies, bade the leper to fulfil both. Yes, laws are necessary to society, and ceremonies are necessary to religion. Civil governments are necessary to make and to enforce laws, and a head is necessary to a government. But the form of the government is only an accident, and whether it be an empire, kingdom or republic, it must be respected and obeyed.

Man is composed of a body and a soul. He is not all matter, neither is he all spirit. The spiritual part within him is reached through and affected by the material. Therefore the need of ceremonies. Religion would become lifeless without ceremonies. Ceremonies eloquently speak to the soul and impress upon it the truths of religion. It is one of the simplest and most effectual methods of teaching.
My Brethren, leprosy was a sign of sin. The soul in sin is far more hideous than the body afflicted by leprosy. If we could but see the deformity of a soul in sin! The sight would be so appalling as to impress us the remainder of our days. Rather than commit deliberate sin, we would be willing to suffer all things. Just as Christ healed the leprosy of the body, in a moment by a word, so can He heal the leprosy of the soul in a moment, by grace. But as He obliged the leper under the Old Law to show himself to the priest, who was to certify to the cure, so does He oblige us under the New Law to show ourselves to the priests that they might certify to the cure of our souls.

Without the Sacrament of Penance no one could be certain that his sins are forgiven. This is one of the reasons for its institution. When we have done all that is required of us—confessed our sins and conceived sorrow for them and have firmly resolved not to commit them again—and the priest has pronounced the words of absolution over us, we are certain that our sins are forgiven; for Christ said to the ministers of the Catholic Church in the person of their predecessors, the Apostles, "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them and whose sins you shall retain they are retained" (John XX 23). The sentence of the priest is ratified in heaven, and the penitent comes forth cured of the leprosy of the soul.

My Brethren, let us resolve this morning to be most charitable and merciful. Let us try to relieve all kinds of sufferings and distress, in imitation of our divine Model, Jesus Christ. A cup of cold water given in the name of Christ will not go unrewarded. Let us perform spiritual works of mercy. Let us instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful and comfort the sorrow-
ful. And let the corporal works of mercy, in imitation of Christ, be the forerunners of spiritual ones.

My Brethren, let us resolve to obey all just laws and respect and honor our civil rulers. They bear not the sword in vain as St. Paul says, and they who resist them resist the ordinances of God. And by all means let us obey the laws of the Church, and respect and honor our spiritual rulers. The Holy Ghost guides and directs the Church in the making of her laws and in the placing of rulers over her. He works through human means, but nevertheless, His directing power is there. Let us remember the words of Jesus Christ:—"Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world:"

"He that will not hear the Church let him be as a heathen and a publican;" "He that heareth you heareth Me and he that despiseth you dispiseth Me."

And finally, my brethren, let us resolve never to remain a moment in grievous sin. Although our sins be as red as scarlet, or as numerous as the grains of sand on the sea shore, if we resort to that great institution with the proper dispositions—the "Tribunal of Penance"—the "Second Plank" as the Fathers call it held out to us by our merciful Father after the first shipwreck of our souls,—we shall come forth purified and cleansed.
SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

THE MUSTARD SEED AND THE LEAVEN.

My Dear Brethren:—To-day's gospel comprises two more of those parables, which were spoken by our Divine Lord to the assembled multitude on the shores of Galilee. Like the preceding ones they are descriptive of His church; but unlike them they describe its glory and triumph instead of its sufferings and woes.

Still sitting in Peter's boat, with outstretched hands, pointing towards the sloping fields with their beaten paths, their clumps of thistles and stray rocks, Christ continued:—"The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard, which a man took and sowed in his field, which is indeed the least of all seeds; but when it is grown up it is greater than all herbs, and becometh a tree so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. The kingdom of heaven is like to leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened."

My Brethren, the gospel offers no difficulty to him who knows anything of the nature of the mustard seed and has the slightest knowledge of the history of the early church. It is unnecessary to say anything about the leaven in the meal;—how the smallest quantity of yeast will ferment the whole mass, for who has not seen it with his own eyes?

The mustard seed compared with other seeds is indeed exceedingly small, but when grown up it surpasseth even the largest seed greatly in height. Sir William
Thompson, the great physicist, informs us that when riding over the rich plains of Akkar he saw mustard plants, the tops of whose boles reached above a horse-man's head; and Mr. Hooker tells us that along the banks of the Jordan, the boles of the plants grow to a height of ten feet. I have already referred to leaven. It signifies any substance that will produce fermentation. In the parable mentioned we shall say that it means some kind of yeast.

The gospel speaks of three measures of meal. Well, with the Jews three measures was the accustomed quantity for a baking; and one measure contained a little over two pints of meal. As we now have the foundation and circumstances of the parable, we shall proceed to its application and development.

My Brethren, could our Divine Lord have used a better and more beautiful simile to describe the humble origin, the secret life within and the great external conquest of the Church than the mustard seed?

Behold the humble origin of the Church! Jesus Christ, its founder, was not heralded into the world by the proclamation of kings. He was not born in a mansion. He was not laid upon a downy couch and robed in silk and satin. No; He came into the world secretly and silently. He was born in a stable. He was laid in a manger and was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and kept warm by the breath of the ox and the ass.

Christ did not study for the learned professions. He became a carpenter and lived at Nazareth as a simple mechanic, until He began His public life at the age of thirty. He called to the Apostle-ship not the rich, powerful and learned, but twelve poor, unknown fishermen. During His public life He had not whereon to lay His
head. He went about partaking of whatever hospitality was offered.

The Church was born in an upper room at Jerusalem. From there, twelve weak men went forth with no name, no money, no influence, no eloquence. They made converts. They preached the faith first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles. They were persecuted, but the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church. At the end of the first century Christian congregations were found well nigh in all countries along the Mediterranean; in Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy Macedonia and Egypt, Christians and Christian Congregations were found before the end of the first century. Justin, Origen and Lactantius tell us that even during the first ages, Christians in countless numbers were found in nearly all the cities of the Roman Empire. Tertullian, of the second century writes:—"We are everywhere; in the palace, in the Senate, in the forum and in the camps of the Empire; everywhere except in the Temples."

I need not tell you my brethren, that the gospel was not confined to the Roman Empire which was then, almost co-extensive with civilization. Persia, Arabia, Ethiopia and China were evangelized. The Gospel was carried to Britany and Ireland. The faith was preached to the Germanic and Slavonic nations. The Visigoths in Spain, the Ostrogoths and Lombards in Italy, the Vandals and Huns in Africa, the Burgundians and Franks in Gaul. The Anglo-Saxons in Britan came under the influence of Christianity and were converted. From then on, down through the centuries, the Church has been everywhere fermenting and leavening the whole mass.
All countries, my brethren, have been invaded by her missionaries, and all nations and peoples have heard her doctrine and yielded to her gentle sway. Go where you will all over the known world, visit any part of this globe, and there you will find the Catholic Church. She is in far off Alaska and in the most southerly countries of South America. You will find her in the most westerly Islands of the Atlantic, and in the most easterly Islands of the Pacific. She is in the heart of Africa, and on the table-lands of Asia. In every country upon which the sun of heaven shines, you will meet the priests of the Catholic Church, see them offering up the same bloodless Sacrifice of the new law, hear them preaching the same eternal truths, and will behold them administering the same Sacraments.

My Brethren, the Church grew and expanded, prospered and spread, not as empires and kingdoms do—through commerce and by the sword. She had no earthly goods nor temporal rewards to offer her followers. The sword in the hand of the king was lifted against her instead of in her defense. From the time she was launched from the Upper Room, she has been persecuted from without and within, from those in high places and from those in low places. She has preached a doctrine which does not pander to but is opposed to the passions of men. How explain her phenomenal growth, her universal sway, and undying life? There is only one explanation. She is divine. Christ has been with her. His divine life is the secret principle within her. It is the holy spirit that has drawn powerfully all hearts to her, and holds them lovingly within His embrace. Truly, then, my brethren, she has been aptly compared by the divine Architect to the mustard seed in her humble origin, but when grown up to a tree so immense that the
birds of all climes come and lodge in her branches; and again to the leaven in the meal, in her secret, silent, almost imperceptible, but yet thorough and universal leavening of the whole mass of mankind:—"The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard which a man took and sowed in his field, which is indeed the least of all seeds; but when it is grown up, it is greater than all herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. The kingdom of heaven is like to leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened."
MY DEAR BRETHREN:—St. Serenus the gardener and martyr whose feast we celebrated on last Wednesday was born in Greece so celebrated in history for her philosophers, orators, poets and sculptors,—Greece, the home of Aristotle, of Demosthenes, of Homer, and of Phidias. Being called by God to the higher life, he gave away his estate, quitted his country and friends and journeyed to Pannonia, or Hungary, where he purchased a garden, which he cultivated with his hands and on whose produce he lived.

During this time, there raged under the Emperor Diocletian the Tenth dreadful persecution against the church. It was finally ordered by an imperial edict, that the churches were to be levelled, the scriptures burned, Christians of rank to be degraded and the common people, if they remained faithful, to be reduced to slavery. Needless to say that a countless number of the Christians obtained the crown of martyrdom during this persecution, and our saint was among the number.

One day whilst walking in his garden, he was accosted by a woman, who had come hither with her two daughters. Serenus on beholding them said, "What do you seek here?" "I take a particular satisfaction," replied the lady, "in walking in your garden." "A lady of your quality," answered Serenus, "ought not to walk here at unseasonable hours, and this you know is an hour when you ought to be at home." And he continued his remonstrance thus:—"Some other design, Lady, has brought you hither. Let me advise you to withdraw,
and to be more regular in your hours and conduct for the future as decency requires in persons of your sex and condition." Stung to the quick, and smarting much under the reprimand she retired in confusion, but firmly resolved to get revenge on the good and saintly Serenus for the supposed affront. She accordingly writes to her husband, who was serving as one of the guards to the Emperor Maximian, and complains of the insult, as she deems it. On receiving the letter, straightway her husband went to the Emperor and demanded justice. "Whilst we are waiting upon your majesty's person, our wives in distant countries are being insulted," said he to Maximian. Whereupon the Emperor gave him a letter to the governor of the province in which Serenus lived. With this letter he set out immediately. Coming into the presence of the governor, he appealed to him in the name of the Emperor to revenge the affront offered to him in the person of his wife. "And who is that insolent man who durst insult such a gentleman's wife?" inquired the governor. "It is," cried the officer, "A vulgar, pitiful fellow, one Serenus, a gardener." The governor now ordered Serenus to be immediately brought before him. Being come into his presence the judge began to interrogate him thus: "What is your name?" "It is Serenus," came the response. "What is your profession?" "I am a gardener," replied Serenus. "How dare you have the insolence and boldness to affront the wife of this officer?" "I never in my life, to my knowledge insulted any woman," meekly answered Serenus. "Bring forward the witnesses, that we may convict this fellow of the affront offered to this lady in the garden," cried the Judge. Upon hearing the word, garden, mentioned, there was recalled to the mind of Serenus the woman who had visited him and he began speaking thus:
—"I remember that some time ago a lady came to my
garden at an unseasonable hour, with the design, as she
said to take a walk; and I own I took the liberty to tell
her it was against decency for one of her sex and quality
to be abroad at such an hour." This plea of Serenus
brought the blush of shame to the cheeks of the officer
and he retired in confusion, and dropped the prosecution,
as the wicked design and purpose of his wife in making
such a visit, were evident to all.

But the governor now rightly suspecting that Serenus
was a Christian instead of discharging him began to
question him on this head. "Who are you and what is
your religion?" asked the judge. Without a moment of
hesitation came the reply, "I am a Christian." "Where
then have you concealed yourself? And how have you
avoided sacrificing to the gods?" further inquired the
judge. "It has pleased God," replied Serenus, "to re­
serve me for this present time. It seemed a while ago
as if He had rejected me as a stone unfit to enter His
building, but He has the goodness to take me now to be
placed in it; I am ready to suffer all things for His
name, that I may have a part in His kingdom with His
saints." This answer filled the governor with rage and
in passing sentence of death he said: "Since you
thought to elude by flight, the Emperor's edicts, and
have positively refused to sacrifice to the gods, I con­
demn you for these crimes to lose your head." The
sentence was no sooner pronounced than Serenus was
seized by Roman guards and lead to the place of his
martyrdom, where in the greatest peace and joy of soul
he exposed his neck to the blows of the executioner's axe,
and his pure spirit winged its flight to the realms of
bliss to be united to and numbered among the glorious
band of martyrs who, with the virgins, shall follow the
Lamb most closely, and sing canticles that none other can sing.

My Brethren, the garden in which Serenus lived and which he cultivated with so much care was to him, and should be to us, an emblem of the Christian soul in its progress towards perfection. Plants always tend upward and never stop in their growth until they reach that height which the Author of nature intended when He created them. All the nourishment they receive goes towards the accomplishment of this. So it should be with us. We should never stop growing spiritually until we have reached the height of sanctity to which God in the designs of His mercy and wisdom has called us. Every desire, thought, word and action should be steps upward in our spiritual life towards this point.

My Brethren, behold the spirit of Serenus in parting with earthly goods, leaving home, and quitting country that he might better save and sanctify his soul. Have we any of this spirit? Are we willing to make even the smallest sacrifice, to save our souls? By the way some live we must conclude otherwise. Why are we thus? Why were the early Christians so different? They meditated seriously upon eternity, God and the soul; we do not. The next life was real to them; but the present one, full of vanity and vexation of spirit. If we wish to become like unto them we must think more on the truths of eternity. "With desolation is the land made desolate" said Jeremias the Prophet, "because no man thinketh in his heart"—My Brethren, we are not called upon to lay down our lives or to shed our blood in defense of Christ and His kingdom like Serenus, but we should bear within us a martyr's spirit. To fulfil all our Christian duties, day in and day out, requires some of the spirit of martyrdom. It means the dying to our-
selves, and the overcoming of our corrupt inclinations. Let us to-day entreat St. Serenus to look down upon us from his high place in heaven, and to pray to God for us, that we may never choose a creature to Him, may never sacrifice principle to expediency, virtue to passion, nor interest to pleasure, but labor on to the end, bringing forth virtue and holiness in much patience and tribulation.
FORTY HOURS DEVOTION.

My Dear Brethren:—It is true that during the "Forty Hours," if we follow strictly the spirit and teaching of the Church, there should be no sermon. Jesus Christ exposed on the altar, is to be the silent but most eloquent preacher. However, our parishes are small, we are living in a missionary country and many non-Catholics attend our special religious celebrations. On the plea then that the "Forty Hours," is a sort of mission, are we permitted to and do we preach.

During the last "Forty Hours," I preached to you on the Sacrament of Penance since to make a contrite and sincere confession in order to receive Holy Communion most worthily, was one of the ends of the celebration. This evening, my dear brethren, I am not going to confine myself to any one end, but to speak to you on the ends in general of the "Forty Hours."

The first thing that the church wishes us to do during the "Forty Hours," is to be faithful and devout in our attendance at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. At all times we should be faithful and devout, but especially now. I cannot understand how a well instructed Catholic could be otherwise. The Mass, is the continuation and representation of Calvary’s Sacrifice and wherein the merits and fruits of the Redemption are applied personally to our souls. For we must realize that without the Mass, Christ would have died for us in vain. The merits and fruits of Calvary’s Sacrifice are there on Calvary’s Heights; but it is through the Mass, as the main and principal aqueduct, that they reach individual
The Mass, wherein are given to God that infinite adoration and thanksgiving which are due to Him as the Supreme Being. And we must not forget that without the Mass such adoration and thanksgiving could not be given to Him. Man is finite and the value of all his acts is finite. But through the Mass, Jesus Christ, the great High Priest, takes our poor and weak acts of adoration and thanksgiving and unites them to His own. And therefore in, and by, and through the Mass, His heavenly Father is adored and praised and thanked as He should be. There is given to Him that worship which is due to His infinite Majesty. At the Mass, during the words of consecration, Jesus Christ leaves the bosom, so to speak, of the adorable Trinity, robs Himself of His glory, and takes up His existence on the Altar, under the humble appearance of bread and wine where He is offered up and consumed Eucharistically. During the Mass, Jesus Christ sheds mystically His blood for us, and the sacrifice is in substance the same as Calvary. One Mass gives more honor and glory to God than the united praises of all men on earth, and the unceasing canticles of the myriads of angels and saints in heaven. How anxious, then, should we be, and what grave inconvenience should we be willing to undergo, in order to assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass! No recollection and devotion can be too deep and fervent during the Mass! For it is the act of acts, the grandest and sublimest thing that takes place in time!—more awful, more wonderful, more stupendous than creation itself!

The second thing the Church wishes us to do during the "Forty Hours," is to visit our Divine Lord often whilst He is exposed publicly on the Altar for our adoration. She wishes us to spend as much time as pos-
sible in His presence, and there at His feet, so to speak, near Him almost in His divine embrace, to lay before Him the wants of our souls,—to make known to Him our temptations and trials and difficulties, and to beseech Him to assist, help and succor us—yea, to let our souls go out to Him in acts of praise, thanksgiving and love. He there conceals His splendor and glory under the humble appearance of bread, that we might not be afraid to approach Him, to draw near Him, and to speak to Him. If He appeared on the altar in His glorified humanity, we could not look upon Him and live. But He is as truly there under the appearance of bread, as He was in the flesh, nineteen hundred years ago, when He walked and talked and lived with the people of Judea. He is in the Tabernacle, a prisoner of love, and from the altar He calls out to us, "'Come to Me all you that are heavily laden and burdened and I will refresh you.'" Especially during the "'Forty Hours," He is addressing us in these words. God does not need us; but He knows that we need Him; and it is His excessive love for us that causes Him to invite us so urgently. Who with a spark of Catholic faith in Him would refuse such an invitation? If for the moment we could but rid ourselves of these bodies, which in our present state, weigh so heavily upon the spirit, what a glorious spectacle would present itself to our view in this sanctuary to-night! We should behold millions of angels—representatives of the nine choirs—in all their celestial beauty and loveliness—we should behold the Seraphim and Cherubim, the Thrones and Dominations, the Principalities and Powers and the Virtues, Archangels, and Angels—we should behold them hovering around the Altar to-night, in countless numbers, adoring, praising and thanking God!
During the "Forty Hours," the Church wishes us to go to Confession;—to receive that Sacrament which was instituted by Jesus Christ out of His infinite goodness and mercy. The Church wishes us, yea, exhorts us to receive the Sacrament of Penance during the "Forty Hours:"—To receive that Sacrament, which the "Fathers of the Church" call the "second plank held out to us after the first shipwreck of our soul," and also "the ladder let down from heaven by which men may mount up more easily." Do we understand the place which the Sacrament of Penance holds in the economy of salvation? You have heard time and again the words used by our divine Lord, when He instituted this great means of salvation, when He conferred upon the Apostles and their successors, the God-like power of forgiving and retaining sins in the name and by the authority and power of Almighty God. They are found in the small Catechism. From the Gospel of St. John, Chapter XX, we learn that whilst the Apostles were gathered together in one room in the city of Jerusalem, on the eve of His glorious resurrection from the dead, Christ came suddenly and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be to you." And He said again to them, "Peace be to you," and then continued, "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you." Then He breathed on them; after which He bestowed upon them that wonderful power, the power to forgive and to retain sins, the power to shut and to open the gates of heaven:—"Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain they are retained." From that day to this, down through the ages, among all nations, races and people, the Bishops and priests of the Catholic Church as the successors of those men to whom Christ thus spoke, have
been exercising such power in the sacred Tribunal of Penance. Outside of this great means, there is only one other way by which sins committed after baptism can be washed away, and that is by an act of perfect love of God, which includes, at least implicitly the vow of going to Confession as soon as possible. Yes, the Church is very solicitous that the faithful receive, worthily, the Sacrament of Penance during the "Forty Hours." And to receive it worthily we must first examine our conscience by the standard of the "Ten Commandments" and the "Six Precepts of the Church;" which place before us the various ways of offending God by sin. Then we enter the Confessional in the humble attitude of a penitent, who by his sins deserves eternal reprobation. After having made the sign of the cross and asked the blessing of our Father confessor, we begin our Confession by telling our sins, their number and the circumstances which may change their nature. Then we listen attentively to the advice the Father confessor may think proper to give, receive meekly and humbly the penance imposed, and make an act of contrition, or true sorrow for our sins. This act of contrition or sorrow must come from the heart and not simply from the lips. It is not necessary that we should shed tears; well and good if we can shed tears of repentance; but tears of repentance are the fruit of a special grace. Contrition or sorrow lies in the will. It is a crushing and bruising of the will. It is a firm resolve springing from the consideration of the infinite goodness of God in itself, and that goodness manifested towards us, or from the consideration of the punishment of hell, which God, in His justice, will mete out against sin in the next life,—it is a firm resolve, I say, springing from such motives, that with God's grace we shall never sin again. In other words,
we look upon sin then and there as the greatest evil in the world, and consequently, rather than commit a deliberate serious sin, we are willing to suffer the loss of all temporal goods—even life itself. The priest cannot see our hearts but God can. And it is God, through the instrumentality of the priest, who takes away the sins. When we say that we are sorry for our sins, because we have offended an infinitely good God, or because by our sins we have deserved the loss of heaven and the punishment of hell, and consequently with God’s help we are resolved not to sin again, the priest believes we are serious, and that we mean exactly what we say; and he therefore absolves us from our sins. If we did not mean what we said, that sentence is not ratified in heaven and we come out of the confessional in a worse state than when we entered. But, if we have done our part, and are serious and in earnest, though our sins are as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore, or as red as scarlet, they have been washed away, and we come forth from the confessional with our souls as white as snow. Talk about personal acknowledgment of sin and conversion—will you find anything like those wrought through the Sacrament of Penance in the Catholic Church? God gave us our nature and He instituted the sacred Tribunal of Penance to fit into it!

The Church wishes us to make a good and sincere confession in order that we may be fittingly prepared to receive our divine Lord in the Blessed Eucharist with much spiritual profit to our souls. The receiving of our divine Lord in the Blessed Eucharist is the real, practical end of the “Forty Hours.” It should not be necessary to urge well instructed catholics to receive Jesus often in the Blessed Eucharist. We cannot lead a spiritual life without Jesus Christ in the Blessed Eucharist.
Does He Himself not say, "Unless you eat of My body and drink of My blood you cannot have life in you."

Why did Jesus Christ institute the Blessed Eucharist under the appearance of bread and wine? To teach us in the most impressive manner the necessity of the Blessed Eucharist for the spiritual life of the soul. You know food and drink are absolutely necessary for the life of the body. No man can long survive without partaking of food and drink. Our divine Lord, to teach us the necessity of receiving the Blessed Eucharist, instituted it under the form of bread and wine. Just as we must partake often of food and drink,—several times a day,—if we wish to become physically strong; so likewise we must receive our divine Lord in the Blessed Eucharist often,—the oftener the better,—if we wish to become spiritually strong. St. Thomas in his "Summa" says, "That the spiritual death of the soul is brought about in two ways (just as the corporal death of the body is brought about in two ways); namely either by inward decay, or from an external cause." Now he says, "By the new spiritual life and strength which the Blessed Eucharist imparts to the soul, this inward decay, so to speak, is prevented. And since the Blessed Eucharist is the memorial of the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ by which Satan was overcome and put to flight, the evil spirits are afraid to attack the soul which is nourished on the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ."

And anent this part of the subject, St. John Chrysostom says, "We come away from the Communion Table breathing slaughter, terrible to the devil to behold." The Blessed Eucharist is the greatest remedy for that sin, which is eating into the very vitals of the people, and which is so deadly to the soul, paralyzing and destroying all its spiritual energies, and from whose grasp it
takes almost a miracle of grace to release its victims—I mean that sin,—that dreadful sin of which the American people make so light—impurity! No better remedy for this sin than the reception of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Eucharist! The most pure body of Jesus Christ received in the Blessed Eucharist acts directly too on our bodies, moderating and tempering the passions. Do you want to know the reason why nuns and monks and priests can live celibate lives—lives of angels in the flesh?—The Blessed Eucharist is the explanation. It is as the "Fathers of the Church" have truly said, "The wine that begets virgins." Do you want to know why the early Christians were so willing to lay down their lives for Jesus Christ? The Blessed Eucharist is the explanation. They communicated daily. Is it any wonder that Pius the Tenth, in his great desire to renew all things in Christ, recommended the practice of daily Communion for lay people? What a great change would come over the world, and especially what a great change would be seen in the lives of Catholics, if those members who go four times a year, would go every month, and the monthly communicants of the Church would become weekly communicants, and the weekly communicants tri-weekly or daily! Catholics seem not to realize the wonderful means of sanctification which Jesus Christ has left with His spouse the Catholic Church. Catholics, American Catholics, if we are to fulfil the grand mission which God seems to have destined for us, we must arouse ourselves to a just appreciation of what the Sacraments are, and especially what the Blessed Eucharist is and the place it must hold in the sanctification of our souls!

The final grace of the "Forty Hours" is a plenary indulgence—that is, a full remission of all the temporal
punishment due to our sins. From out her spiritual treasury,—which is the superabundant merits of Jesus Christ and the more than personal satisfaction of the Saints for their sins,—the church to which Jesus Christ said, "Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven," applies those merits and satisfaction to all those members, who have confessed humbly and contritely, received worthily Jesus Christ in the Blessed Eucharist, prayed for the intention of the Holy Father, and made a visit to Jesus Christ in the adorable Sacrament of the Altar. This is what a plenary indulgence means. But remember in order to receive it, you must be in the state of grace or free from the guilt of mortal sin. You must also have performed all the good works prescribed by the Holy Father for the gaining of the indulgence. What would be the effect of a plenary indulgence if you died after having received it? Immediate entrance into heaven. No purging or purifying flames of purgatory. To become at once the companions of the angels and saints, to behold immediately Christ, in His glorified humanity and to contemplate forever the Triune God—and to be united with Him in intellect and will—to become like to God, as it were—to see, know and love God as He sees, knows and loves Himself.

My Brethren, when you are saying that prayer for the intention of the Holy Father, think of him for whom you are praying—Pius the Tenth,—that most holy and God-like man, the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, the 259th successor of St. Peter the Prince of the Apostles—who to-night is a lonely prisoner, so to speak, in the Vatican. He sits on the banks of the Tiber weighed down by the solicitude of all the Churches, and depressed and sor-
rowful on account of the persecutions which the enemies of Christ and His kingdom are waging against the Church. We cannot in person offer him our sympathies, but we can do something better; we can pray to the God of all consolation to pour into his soul those consolations of the Holy Spirit which exceed those we could offer above all measure:—pray to God my brethren to guide, direct, sustain and uphold, Pius the Tenth, and in His own good time to humble the enemies of the church—to humble them to the dust—and to say to the Church as Christ of yore said to the tempestuous waters of Galilee, "Peace be still," and we know a great calm will ensue!
SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

THE LABORERS IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD.

My Dear Brethren:—To-day's gospel is the outcome of a difficulty which somewhat worried the Apostles, and a question which was asked by Peter. Our divine Lord, at the time, was in the country of Perea having just left Galilee, where He spoke for the last time. He crossed the river Jordan, and descended the eastern bank. Here He was met by the Pharisees, who tempting, asked about the divorce question; by the mothers bringing their little children for a blessing; and by the rich young man asking what he must do to be saved. The response of Christ, when He saw the rich young man turning away, "That it was harder for the rich to enter into the kingdom of Heaven than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle," caused the Apostles to whisper secretly one to another, "Who then can be saved?" Peter, after the Master's reply, "That all things were possible to God," said in His enthusiasm and impetuosity, "Lord we have left all to follow you what shall there be for us?"

In answer, Christ promised a great reward in this world, and the greatest reward in the next. Here you shall receive a hundred fold for everything which you will give up for my sake—home, brothers, sisters, parents, husbands, wives and lands--; and in the next world, you shall have the highest places—sitting on the twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Then it was my brethren, that Christ spoke the parable which constituted to-day's gospel, to keep them hum-
ble, that they might not become puffed up with pride thinking that all these gifts were their due and right, and not purely and simply the free gift of God.

The first part of the gospel scarcely needs any explanation. "The Kingdom of Heaven" means the church in heaven, or the redeemed and saved souls. The "householder" is God, the king of heaven and earth, who calls men into His service at all times; into the Jewish church before the coming of Christ; and into the Catholic Church, since His coming. That is the meaning of "vineyard,"—God's church on earth.

But the rest of the Gospel has been the subject of much discussion among Catholic commentators.

The Jewish day was divided into four parts,—prime, tierce, sext and none; prime began at sunrise or six o'clock; tierce at nine; sext at twelve; none at three and closed at sunset. The Church also divides the day in the same way for the recitation of the Sacred office. Literally then the "householder" is said to have gone forth and hired laborers into His vineyard at these different hours;—six, nine, twelve, three and five.

Catholic commentators in their interpretation of the gospel may be grouped under three heads. By the first class the several hours of the day represent the several religious epochs of God's kingdom on earth. From the first to the third hour comprised the time which elapsed between Adam and Noah; from the third to the sixth, between Noah and Abraham; from the sixth to the ninth, between Abraham and Moses; from the ninth to the eleventh, from Moses to Christ; and from the eleventh to the close of the day, all the time which intervenes from the coming of Christ unto the end of the world.
By the second class the several hours represent the four periods of man's life. The first hour to the third, embraces the period of infancy; from the third to the sixth, boyhood; from the sixth to the ninth, manhood; and from the ninth to the eleventh and twelfth embraces the period of old age in its various stages.

And the third class interprets the whole as referring to the Jews and Gentiles. The division of the day is ornamental—say they—simply to heighten the effect. The first hours to signify the old Dispensation and the last, the New Dispensation.

Understood in the first sense, it matters not under what religious epoch man lives. If he be faithful to God's grace he will receive the "denarius" or eternal life. Understood in the second sense it matters not during what period of man's life he is called to God's service. If he be faithful to God's grace, he will merit eternal life. And thirdly and lastly it matters not whether God's children live under the New or the Old dispensation. In view of, or on account of, the merits of Christ, they will receive eternal life or the "denarius" if they are faithful to the end.

But how explain the next sentence? It is the conclusion of the parable. It is the summing up of the whole lessons. How explain it in connection with the foregoing interpretations? "For the last shall be first and the first last." Much again has been written on this part of the gospel. To my mind the interpretation which looks at the scope of the parable, harmonizes all. If we have labored fervently and zealously, whether we lived under Adam, Abraham, Noah, Moses or Christ, whether we were called early in life, or whether we had been Jews or Gentiles, we may become first in the kingdom of heaven, since the reward is not determined by
time of service or when we labored, but by our zeal and fervor in the service of God.

And now to the sentence which closes the gospel: "For many are called but few chosen." Suarez says it is no wonder that all do not receive the first place or the highest reward, since even of those who are called to salvation some are excluded altogether from the kingdom of heaven. Other commentators explain it as meaning that among the faithful, or those who will be saved some are called to a higher life,—the observance of the evangelical counsels—and will receive the special reward attached to such service. Finally some interpret it as referring to mankind in general, that is, although Christ died for all and calls all to life eternal, the number of the saved in comparison with the number of the lost or reprobates, will be few indeed.

My Brethren, what lessons are we to draw from the gospel? The one great lesson is the importance of the salvation of our souls! "What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?" What shall I give in exchange for my soul? If I lose my soul I lose all; if I save it I gain all. Hell is the loss, Heaven is the gain. Do we realize what these two truths are? Heaven is the possession of God; the possession of the infinite truth and the infinite good. In this possession we shall enjoy all happiness and bliss. The intellect and the will of man shall be perfectly satisfied, for there shall be nothing more to love, desire and seek. Our enjoyment will be complete. We shall rest in ecstasy on the bosom of God and for all eternity. Hell is just the contrary of this. Loss of God is the greatest punishment in Hell. The intellect and will longing for the infinite truth and good, but never reaching and possessing them. These desires will last for all
eternity, but never shall be satisfied in the least.—As the body will share in the happiness and glory of the soul in heaven, so will the body share in the suffering and ignominy of the soul in hell. We shall suffer in all our senses.

My Brethren, remember no one is certain of salvation. We are given sufficient grace, but grace can be and is abused and rejected. Some, no doubt, are in Hell whom we believe to be in Heaven, while again some are in Heaven whom the world judges to be in Hell. God alone sees the heart, and sees it during the last moments of its mortal career.

What will earthly riches and honor profit us after death? If we have misused them, they will rise up against us to sting and torment us during the never ending ages of eternity.

Our earthly existence is short and uncertain. It is probable that death will call some of us this year. This time next year, no doubt, some of you who are listening to me will be in eternity. It may be you or I. Those whom we expect to die first, often times live the longest, whilst those whom we judge will live longest frequently die first.

Even the longest life is exceedingly short. After we have once reached manhood or womanhood, time flies. We are old men and women before we begin to realize it. Old age is an incurable disease. Fifty, seventy, or eighty years, which nine-tenths of us will never reach and which pass by like a fleeting shadow—what are they? Vanity of vanity, all is vanity, if we are not in earnest about the salvation of our souls. How many live and plan,—and Catholics too, even some in this congregation, some who perhaps are listening to me,—as if they are immortal—as if this life were to last forever. To see a Cath-
olic, who has been instructed and reared well in his religion, living like the heathens, yea, like dumb brutes,—an earthly sensual life—fills us, not with pity, but with disgust. Much has been given to you, and much will be expected of you, and much you will have to render an account of, to God.

Brethren, arouse yourselves this morning and do not think the name Catholic will save you. God can raise up out of the very stones, elect children to take your place. Arouse yourselves from your spiritual sleep! Arouse yourselves before you wake up in eternity! The salvation of your souls is the work and the only work! If we succeed in this our lives have been magnificent successes. If we fail, great indeed is the failure. It is a failure which cannot be repaired.

Resolve to make use of the most efficient means, for there is no other certain way of making our salvation secure. Pray fervently and perseveringly, fly the proximate occasions of sin, frequent the Sacraments, and have a tender devotion to the Mother of God. Then you may rest with a calm conscience. Death will be but the putting aside of mortality to be clothed with immortality.
SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

THE SOWER AND THE SEED.

My Dear Brethren:—To-day’s gospel contains the first parable which was spoken by Jesus Christ. Up to this time He had addressed the multitudes in plain, simple speech. But His popularity was beginning to wane; His enemies were getting the upper hand; and the rough outlines of His Church were not yet drafted.

At this time, He was in the country of Galilee, and standing on the shores of Genesareth. Here He was surrounded by a great throng of people, who were anxiously awaiting such time as He would begin to speak.

A boat was drawn up on the sand, and from the bow of this, with outstretched hands pointing to the fields, Christ began: "The sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed some fell by the wayside and it was trodden down and the birds of the air eat it up. And some fell on the rock, and as soon as it had sprung up it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns growing up with it, choked it. And some fell upon good ground, and sprang up and yielded fruit a hundredfold. Saying these things He cried out: "He who has ears to hear let him hear."

My Brethren, this parable was a riddle not only to the Jews, but also to the twelve apostles. And in a little while the twelve pressed about Jesus and asked Him why He spoke in this manner. "I speak in this manner," explained Christ, "that My enemies might behold
and not perceive, might hear and not understand.’’

But in secret I shall explain all things to you My true disciples. Seeing that the Apostles were still perplexed He said to them: ‘‘Do you not understand this parable? How then will you be able to understand the rest?’’

But taking pity upon them He explained to them the parable: ‘‘The seed is the word of God. And those by the wayside are those who hear; then the devil cometh and taketh the word out of their heart lest believing they would be saved. Now those upon the rock are they who when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root; for they believe for a while and in time of temptation they fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they who when they have heard, go forth and are choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of life and bring no fruit to maturity. But that on the good ground are they who in a good and excellent heart, hearing the word retain it and bring forth fruit in patience.’’

My Brethren, far be it from me to attempt to explain any better this parable. Jesus Christ, Who fashioned the human mind and heart, has done so, and in a manner infinitely surpassing the weak efforts of man. Be mine the other lot of applying these truths that the gospel may be fruitful.

From Catholic pulpits the word of God, the seed mentioned in the parable, is heard by all. It falls upon all like the gentle dew from Heaven. But what a difference in the effect! Some bring forth no fruit; others ten-fold; and some a hundred. And what is the reason of this? The soil is different; their minds are different; their hearts are different; their characters are different.
One class, whose hearts are cold and hardened are affected in no wise by the Word of God. It makes no impression on them. It never causes them to take a single good resolution. They hear the voice that announces the gospel but that is all. That comparison of Jesus Christ is indeed, most apt and beautiful. Their hearts and minds are like the cold, hardened, beaten soil, upon which the seed fell by the wayside. And because it penetrated not the soil, but remained on the surface, the birds of the air in their passage picked it up and carried it away, and there was no fruit. In like manner the devil acts with hardened hearts. As they do not reflect upon the truths they hear, the devil comes along, fills their minds with other thoughts, and in that way carries off the seed and it bears no fruit.

Another class hear the word of God. They receive it with joy. They resolve, on the moment, to put the teaching into practice. For an hour or two they are filled with fervor. The plant shoots up quickly; but, as it has no roots it withers and fades away at the first beams of the sun or at the first blast of the storm. These are light and superficial souls. They have no depth of character, nor strength of mind. They enter not into themselves; they allow not the Word of God to enter into the recesses of their souls, and to entwine itself around the secret strings of their hearts. At the first temptation they succumb, because not having reflected upon the eternal truths, they have not wherewith to oppose the deceits, the wiles and the allurements of the devil.

A third class hear the Word of God. They receive it also with joy; they allow it to sink into their souls; they reflect upon it, and revolve it over in their minds, and they bring forth some fruit. But as they are in the world and mingling with it, they see that it has much to
offer, and they become enamored of it. A conflict soon arises between it and God. It makes certain demands of them. But as it is near and imposing they heed it; they choose it, instead of God; they fall and are lost. Therefore, Christ compares them to the thorny soil upon which the good seed fell which was finally choked and smothered by it.

I need not refer to the fourth class—the good soil which yields fruit a hundredfold. They are the fervent, devoted, loyal, stalwart Catholics, who, day in and day out, with occasional falls, bring forth fruit in patience and humility until the end.

My Brethren, ask yourselves this morning to which class you belong! You belong to one of the four. There are some, I hope as I believe that their number is small, who belong to the first class. They come to church Sunday after Sunday, hear the Word of God and assist at the tremendous sacrifice of the Mass, and there is no change even for the shortest while in their lives. They hear the sermons, but that is all. They are present at Mass in body, but not in spirit. Poor souls! May God in His infinite mercy open their minds and soften their hearts ere it is too late.

To the second class, no doubt, a larger number belong. They are good at heart and well disposed. But they do not take the next life seriously enough. They want to do what is right, and to live good lives, but they are fickle, frivolous and trifling. To this class some of the young people belong; those who are just budding into manhood and womanhood. I ask them to stop and reflect. There is a time for mirth and a time for seriousness. The next life is something that cannot be trifled with. And it is only he that is in earnest
about it and makes use of the means that can hope to carry off the prize and to win the crown of eternal life.

To the third class—let us fear and tremble lest we be found in it—those who allow the cares or the riches or the pleasures of life to interfere in any way with the service of God and the salvation of their immortal souls belong to this class. My Brethren, are not most of us at some time or other in this class? Some allow family cares to come between them and God; others, business, or professional cares; and others, whose number is legion, pleasure in its multitudinous forms. We cannot serve God and Mammon at the same time. Our divine Lord has said it. This world and the next in regard to service and fealty are at enmity. Upon whose side are we to enlist? This is a question to put to ourselves in all seriousness this morning.

To those who belong to the fourth class—the good soil—those who bring forth a hundredfold, let me entreat them to cultivate a low opinion of themselves. Although they bring forth a hundredfold, they could bring forth more. The greater the saint the more humble he is. There is no proportion between God's grace and the fruit he brings forth. And hence the saints of God have always had a low opinion of themselves, and considered themselves unprofitable servants. The acknowledgment of sin and guilt is a mark of Christianity, in contradistinction to Paganism. Give me the humble man, who occasionally falls through weakness, in preference to the proud man who is satisfied with himself and thinks that he is perfect and can do no wrong. In the very fact that he is so self-sufficient, he is sinning against God, and through that very sin that drove Lucifer and his followers out of Heaven, into Hell. Let us always keep before us the Publican and the Pharisee.
who went into the temple to pray. The Pharisee thanked God that he was not like the rest of men an extortioner, unjust, etc., and that he fasted and paid tithes; the Publican knelt at the door of the temple and would not so much as raise up his eyes, and he struck his breast and cried out, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner!" The Lord said that the Publican went home justified, but that the Pharisee remained just as he was, —a sinner.
ST. JOSEPH.

MY DEAR BRETHREN:—On last Sunday we celebrated the Feast of St. Joseph the humble and obscure saint, the guardian of the Child Jesus and the protector of the Blessed Virgin Mary. St. Joseph as you know, is the patron of the Universal Church. He has also been made the patron saint of this diocese. By a happy and blessed co-incidence he is the patron of this parish too, and our Church and school bear his name. Any one of these reasons should be sufficient to cause us to select him this morning, in preference to the other saints of the week, as the subject of our short discourse.

St. Joseph was descended from a royal family of patriarchs. He was lineally descended from the kings of the Tribe of Juda. The history of his life has been written by no mortal man. The few facts concerning his life, have been chronicled by the Holy Ghost through the inspired penman. To him we know, was intrusted the care and education of the divine Child Jesus. And St. Bernard speaking of this great grace said, "What a happiness, not only to see Jesus but also to hear him, to carry Him in his arms, to lead Him from place to place, to embrace and caress Him, to feed Him and to be privy to all the great secrets which were concealed from the princes of the world." To him was entrusted the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary whilst with child of Jesus Christ, and during a great part of her life until his own death. And, anent this blessed privilege, the pious Gerson cries out, "O astonishing elevation! O unparalleled dignity! that the Mother of God, the
Queen of Heaven, should call you her Lord; that God Himself, made man, should call you father, and obey your commands. O glorious Triad on earth, Jesus, Mary, Joseph, how dear a family to the glorious Trinity in heaven, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Nothing is on earth so great, so good, so excellent.

For a considerable time the glorious mystery of the Incarnation was concealed from St. Joseph. When therefore he discovered that the Blessed Virgin was with child, he was much perturbed and concerned. But being a just man, as the Scripture calls him, he determined to leave her privately, neither accusing nor condemning her. As these dispositions were so pleasing and acceptable to God, before the design was put into execution, an angel was sent from heaven to remove all his doubts and fears, and to make known to him the adorable mystery of the Incarnation.

St. Joseph must repair to Bethlehem to be enrolled on the public registry. His espoused wife, the Blessed Virgin Mary accompanies him. Her time had now come, and there on a cold winter night in the stable of Bethlehem, she brings forth into the world, Jesus Christ, the God-Man. St. Joseph was near, and to him was granted that most enviable and blessed privilege of being the first child of Adam after the Mother of God, to see with his own eyes, and touch with his own hands, the Word made Flesh, Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Saviour, Our Lord and God!

After adoring the Divine Child, St. Joseph is warned by an angel that Herod the Great is seeking the life of the Infant. Quickly he arises, makes a hurried preparation and takes the Divine Child and its Mother and flees into Egypt. The journey down into Egypt was through a rough and unknown country. He has with him too,
a tender virgin and a little Babe. Many and great, therefore, must have been the privations and sufferings endured by St. Joseph on this long journey through deserts and among a strange people. It is the opinion of many "Fathers of the Church," that at the entrance into Egypt of the Divine Child, all the oracles of that pagan country were struck dumb, and the statues of their gods trembled, and in many places fell to the ground, according to that of Isaiah, "And the statues of the Egyptians shall be shaken in His presence." The "Fathers" also attribute to this visit of the Divine Child, the spiritual favors and blessing which were afterwards poured out on that country by God, making it for so many ages most fruitful in saints.

The Holy Family remains in Egypt until St. Joseph is informed by an angel that Herod is dead, and is commanded to return to the land of Israel. In obedience to that command, St. Joseph, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Divine Child arise and begin their homeward journey. But, arriving in Judea, they learn that Archelaus, the son of Herod, had succeeded his father on the throne. Fearing rightly that he might be infected with his father's vices of cruelty and ambition, they retired into the dominions of Galilee, and made their home at Nazareth, where the wonderful occurrences of our Lord's birth were less known.

Though descended from a royal family, which had long been in possession of the throne of Judea, St. Joseph was contented with the condition of an humble artisan, and by working at his trade earned a livelihood for the Holy Family. The great Saint Jerome and the Blessed Theodoret tell us that St. Joseph was a carpenter by trade. St. Hilary and St. Peter Chrysologus say he wrought in iron, as a smith. But it is most likely that
he wrought both in iron and in wood. This opinion St. Augustine favors by saying, "He and Jesus made ploughs and yokes for oxen."

When the boy Jesus reached the age of twelve, He accompanied the Holy Family to Jerusalem to take part in the ceremonies and festivities which were performed in the great Temple. After the feast was over Joseph and Mary with their neighbors and acquaintances started homeward towards Galilee. Never doubting but that Jesus had joined some of the company, they traveled for a whole day without missing Him. But when night came on, they discovered that He was not in the company. They inquired among their kindred and acquaintances, but all in vain. In deepest affliction they retraced their steps with the utmost speed to Jerusalem, and after an anxious search of three days they find Him in the Temple in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions, and by His prudence and wisdom astonishing all. Commenting on this part of the life of the Child Jesus, Aelred, the Holy Abbot of Rieval exclaims, "O my Lady, Mother of my God, what were your sentiments, what your astonishment and your joy, when you saw Him again, and sitting, not amongst boys but amidst the doctors of the law; when you saw every one’s eyes fixed on Him, great and small, learned and unlearned, intent only on His words and emotions!"

They return to Nazareth, and as the Holy Ghost tells us, Jesus was subject to Joseph and Mary, and grew in grace and wisdom before God and man. As no further mention is made of St. Joseph, he must have died before the marriage feast at Cana of Galilee, where Jesus Christ manifested for the first time His divinity. And we cannot doubt that St. Joseph had the happiness of dying in the arms of Jesus and Mary, and of being comforted,
consoled and strengthened by them during his last moments.

I have given you, my brethren, a short sketch of one of the greatest saints in God's Church; of him, for whom the pious Gerson composed an office, and whose life he wrote in twelve poems to promote true devotion to him; of him, whom St. Teresa chose as the chief patron of her order, and of whom she said that never had God refused her anything through his intercession; of him, to whom St. Francis of Sales recommends the warmest devotion, and whose merits and graces he extols so much, especially his virginity, humility, constancy, and courage; of him, whose statue is found in almost every Catholic Church throughout the whole world, and devotion to whom accompanies and goes inseparably with devotion to Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, and to the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of God. They were united on earth; they are united in heaven; and devotion to the three, Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph cannot be separated in the salvation and sanctification of our souls.

St. Joseph was a mechanic. He lived and died an humble tradesman. He should then be most dear to all mechanics. He should be their special patron. By his life, we see that great sanctity is not incompatible with any avocation. Imitate him. Be not too solicitous for the things of the world. Banish not Jesus from thy shop or house. Make Jesus the companion of thy labors, in imitation of St. Joseph, and offer up to Him all that thou dost and often entertain thyself with him. And if God has blessed thee with children, take care by early diligence to form Christ in them by constantly instilling into their youthful minds the fear and love of
God, and horror of sin. Thus thou wilt, like St. Joseph, bring up Jesus in these little ones.

My Dear Brethren, St. Joseph is the Patron of a happy death. We cannot hope to die literally, as St. Joseph died; in the arms of the Blessed Virgin and Jesus Christ, but we can die truly in their spiritual arms. Let us pray every day and fervently that we may so die; that the Blessed Virgin Mary may be there breathing upon us and whispering peace into our ears; that St. Joseph may be there protecting us and smiling on us, and obtaining for us final perseverance; and that Jesus Christ may be near us—be with us—enlightening and strengthening us by the strong arms of His holy Sacraments in that dreadful and momentous hour! Jesus, Mary and Joseph be with us then!
LENT.

My Dear Brethren:—On next Wednesday, the sacred season of Lent, will begin. On that day the ashes of palms are blessed, and with them the priest signs the foreheads of the faithful, saying, “Remember man that thou art dust and into dust thou shalt return.” The Church makes use of this ceremony, principally to impress on our minds the vanity of our earthly existence and our last end. If we always keep in view these great truths, very few of us would commit wilful sin and suffer the loss of our immortal souls. The season of Lent, then opens on Wednesday morning, next, with this solemn and significant ceremony; and I hope that we shall all enter into its spirit, and that it will be a time of much spiritual fruit for the members of St. Joseph’s Congregation.

The English word Lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word “Lencten,” meaning Spring. In reality it is a forty days’ fast preceding Easter, after the example of Moses and Elias, and above all after the example of our Divine Model, Jesus Christ, Who before He began His public ministry, went into the desert and there fasted forty days and forty nights. The church prescribes such a fast to prepare, thereby, her members for the spiritual favors of the great feast of Easter, as also for the many other advantages of soul, which must necessarily come from such a long period of penance.

It is true that there is no mention of the observance of Lent in Scripture, or of a determined number of fast days among christians. However, there is no doubt
but that the spirit of Lent is taught in the Sacred Scriptures and that Lent took its origin in apostolic times. Tertullian tells us that according to his Catholic adversaries, "those days were set aside under the gospel dispensation, in which the Spouse was taken away" and Irenaeus speaks of the fast before Easter and of the different ways of observing it in different places. In the fourth century we have many references to Lent as a period of forty days' fast. Africa, Egypt, Palestine and the Westerns generally kept Lent for six weeks; Constantinople and the neighboring provinces, for seven. The practice of the Roman Church and most Latins, was to fast six weeks, excepting the Sundays, that is for thirty-six days. Various attempts were made in the West to complete the number of forty days. At last the Latin Church added the four days of fasting before the first Sunday in Lent which now begins with Ash Wednesday. And thus we have forty days of fasting preceding Easter.

My Brethren, from the earliest times we find that the Season of Lent was made holy and sacred by the practice of special acts of piety. During the Season of Lent, the money which the faithful saved by their fasting and abstemiousness, they bestowed freely upon the poor. In order that God would deal more mercifully with them, the faithful practiced mercy toward their fellow man. Thus it was forbidden, by imperial laws, to prosecute any criminal procedure during the Season of Lent. During this time, the Church received at the altar, too, public sinners, forgave them freely and reconciled them with the church. And, following in the spirit of the Church, we find that kings and emperors released their prisoners and that masters pardoned and set at liberty their slaves. This was not
all. The Church taught that Lent was a season of mourning, and consequently discountenanced all kinds of festivities during Lent. That the people might make it a time of prayer and mortification, we find that the Church instituted special religious exercises, and urged her ministers to preach, or to have preached, special sermons. In a word, we find the church, from the earliest times, doing all in her power to have the people enter within themselves during the Season of Lent, and bring forth fruit worthy of penance.

My Brethren, very few are now obliged to practice a rigorous fast during Lent. The Catholic Church, the ever kind and solicitous mother she is, has mitigated the fast during these latter days, on account of our weakness and the hardness and drudgery of manual labor. But she has not changed the spirit of Lent, and she wishes her children to keep it ever in view. What does the Church want her children to do during this season, that they may reap much spiritual fruit? Following in the wake of her spirit, down through the centuries and until now, the Church desires her children to make Lent, first, a time of special prayer. We can all pray, no matter how weak our bodies are. Lent should be the season of prayer and meditation. Not only private prayer but public prayer. Where two or three, says our Divine Lord, are gathered together in prayer there He shall be in the midst of them. The united prayers of many availeth more than the prayers of individuals. Therefore besides being most faithful to your private prayers at home, you should come to church, and take part in the public prayers and services. We have Mass every week morning and twice on Sunday. There is no religious service or public prayer like the Sacrifice of the Mass, wherein Jesus Christ unites
our prayers to His and offers them up to His heavenly Father. I do hope, then, that the week day Masses will be well attended during this Season of Lent. I do hope that all who possibly can, will be present, if not every day at least twice or three times a week. Would it not be a most edifying sight to see every morning during Lent, many receiving Holy Communion? Make an effort to go to Holy Communion at least once or twice a week during Lent, and gradually increase the number. Three times a week, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday evenings, we are to have public services. No member, except for a serious reason, should absent himself from these services.

Secondly, the Church wishes you during the Season of Lent to practice mortification—to mortify your body. Mortification, under some form or other is absolutely necessary to salvation. If we wish to reign with Christ in Heaven, we must suffer with Him on earth. He, Himself, has said, "If any man will be my disciple let him take up his cross and follow Me." Can anyone behold those Stations and then say that mortification is not necessary to salvation? Let no day, during the Season of Lent, pass over without your practicing some act of mortification. Do it for your past sins and faults. Do it out of love for Jesus Christ, who suffered so much for you. Do it to keep the flesh under control of the spirit. Thirdly, the Season of Lent is a time to show mercy, to be forgiving, and to be most kind and charitable. Unless we forgive from our hearts, our brothers their trespasses against us, we cannot hope that our heavenly Father will forgive us our trespasses against Him. Be most kind in your judgments of others. During this Season of Lent, if you cannot say a good word about your brother keep
silent, unless justice commands you to speak. God will love you and will set up His tabernacle within you, and shower upon you His choicest graces and blessings, and forgive you many faults.

And finally, my Brethren, the Church wishes us during this Season to give bounteous alms. "He who giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord." God considers as done unto Himself whatever is done to the poor. "I was hungry and you fed me, naked and you clothed me, in prison and you visited me." "When Lord did I feed you, or clothe you, or visit you in prison?" The poor and the afflicted whom you assisted on earth, shall come forth, and Christ shall say, "As often as you did it to one of these you did it unto Me." God wishes you during this season of Lent, to give alms as a ransom for your sins, and to make yourselves more pleasing in His sight, and consequently more worthy of His grace.
EASTER.

THE RISEN SAVIOUR.

MY DEAR BRETHREN AND CHRISTIAN FRIENDS:—

Throughout the whole world to-day in all countries, among all nations, races and people, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave is being celebrated with great reverence and solemnity. And this has been going on for many hundred years, for the Resurrection of Christ is the foundation of Christian belief and hope. Let us go back then in spirit to that first Easter morn and contemplate the Resurrection of our Lord and Master from the grave, in glory and triumph, review the circumstances of it, and draw therefrom for our instruction and profit some useful and salutary truths.

The last to leave the tomb of Jesus were the holy women who had followed Him from Galilee to Calvary and had stood at the foot of the Cross with Mary His Mother and John, the beloved disciple, and heard His last cry, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." Eager to embalm the body of Jesus with greater care than Nicodemus had been able to do, on the evening of the Sabbath's rest, they purchase some sweet spices. Early next morn before the sun had risen, whilst it was still dark and misty, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James and Salome, passed without the city gates on the way to the tomb.

As they hasten along they keep murmuring to each other, "Who will help us to roll back the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre." Suddenly, the darkened
earth quivers and shakes beneath their feet and an angel descends from Heaven and rolls back the stone. But the grave had been tenantless for some while, for Jesus had risen before the dawn, in great stillness and all unseen. The holy women were too far away from the tomb to see the angel, whose countenance did shine brighter than the sun and whose garments were whiter than the dazzling snow, roll back the stone. They were too far from the tomb to see the guards lying like dead men on their faces, struck speechless and dumb, from what they had just beheld; but the rocking earth had made them hesitate to go farther. At last, re-assured by the ensuing quiet, they crept within the shadowy garden and making bold raised their eyes, and looked about, and saw that the stone had been rolled back.

Mary Magdalene, believing that the Master’s tomb had been violated, and that His body had been given over to His enemies, starts for Jerusalem in all haste. On the way she meets Peter and John, and the three mourn together the death of Christ. “They have taken the Lord from out the sepulchre,” cried the Magdalene, “and we know not what they have done with Him.”

After Mary’s departure, her two companions linger awhile at the tomb, and finally decide to enter within. And lo! an angel of the Lord clothed in white garments is there sitting at the right hand of the tomb. Seized with great fear they are unable to speak. But the angel addresses them:—“Fear not; for I know that you seek Jesus Who was crucified. He is not here, for He is risen as He said; Come and see the place where the Lord was laid. And going quickly, tell ye His disciples that He is risen; and behold He will go before you into Galilee; there you shall see Him. Lo, I have foretold it to you.”

Their hearts were now divided between fear and joy,
but fear soon overpowered them, and they fled, not daring to repeat what they had just seen and heard.

Peter and John arrive at the tomb. John, the younger and fleeter of foot, however, is the first to reach it; and peering over the mouth of the cave, he describes the linen bands, but he feared to enter within. Peter hesitates not a moment, but immediately goes down into the cave. He sees not only the swathing bands, that had enwrapped the Lord's body, but he beholds the napkins that had been wound around His head, both, folded neatly and laid aside. The sepulchre bore no marks of violence; the burial vestments had neither been snatched away nor hastily thrown aside, but folded neatly and put away in order; for the first time they realized fully "that it was necessary for the Christ to die and to rise from the dead."

To Mary Magdalene was granted the blessed privilege of seeing first, the Risen Saviour. Coming back to the tomb weeping much, she peered within and saw two angels—one seated at the head and the other at the foot, where the body of Jesus had lain; "Woman, why wepest thou?" said the angel; "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." As she was uttering these words, she heard a voice from behind saying, "Woman, why weepest? Whom seekest thou?" Believing it to be the gardener, she thought perhaps he might have taken the body to protect it from insult. "Sir, if you have taken Him away, tell me where you have laid Him." At these words Jesus said; "Mary!" Instantly the Magdalene recognized the voice that had so often comforted her soul, and she threw herself at His feet, trying to cling to His transfigured body. But Christ said, "Touch Me not, for I am not yet gone up to My Father; go, find My
brethren and say to them, "I go up unto My Father and your Father, unto My God and your God." Mary Magdalene rose up and hastened to find the disciples, and as soon as she found them she cried out: "I have seen the Lord, and behold this which He has said to me."

But Peter and John had not yet returned, and the rest of the disciples were still weeping and mourning, and although the Magdalene, in thrilling tones and with glowing certainty, had narrated to them the sight which had stirred her soul to its very depths, they would not believe her.

Other women now had reached the tomb, and passing within its narrow confines, they too look in vain for the Body of Jesus. But as they remain motionless from awe, two angels, in shining garments stand beside them and say:—"Why seek ye among the dead for Him Who liveth, He is no longer here; He is risen! Remember that which He said unto you when He was yet in Galilee."

"The Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinners and crucified, and the third day rise again." Recalling to themselves the words, they speed back to Jerusalem to bear the message to the eleven. But as they hastened along Christ appears to them and cries out, "Hail!" They fall at His feet, kiss them and worship Him. "Fear not, continued the Christ, go tell the brethren to depart into Galilee, it is there they shall see Me." The holy women obeyed and finding the Apostles, declared that Christ had appeared to them, that He had addressed them and had spoken with them, and that they had touched His Risen Body. But the apostles were still incredulous, and remained thus until the Christ finally appeared in their midst in the upper room, showed them His wounded hands and feet, ate and conversed with them.
My Dear Brethren and Christian Friends, when Christ was asked by the Scribes and Pharisees for a sign of His divine mission, He said: "A wicked and an adulterous generation seeketh a sign; but a sign shall not be given it but the sign of Jonas the Prophet." On another occasion when He was asked for a sign He answered: "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." Evidently these two prophecies refer to the Resurrection of Christ. Jonas was in the whale’s belly three days and three nights; so was Christ in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. The Jews did destroy the Body of Christ when they put Him to death; but on the third day His soul re-entered that Body, and it rose glorious and immortal. St. Paul tells us that, "If Christ be not risen again our faith is vain." The Resurrection of Christ is the citadel and fortress of Christian faith. It is the miracle of miracles, and proves by itself, conclusively, the divinity of Jesus Christ. And hence we find that it has been the object of the fiercest attacks of infidels and unbelievers. But it stands firm and unshaken. The darts and shafts which have been hurled at it, have but served to bring out more clearly and show more convincingly its strength and impregnability.

Before Christ was confined to the tomb, He first underwent a most terrible agony in the Garden of Gethsemani. So severe was His mental suffering there, that the Gospel tells us that blood came from out the pores of His skin. Then He was scourged in the courtyard by strong Roman soldiers till His body was almost one gaping wound. He is now crowned with thorns, and they drive them down into His sacred brow. Upon His bruised and mangled shoulders, they place a heavy cross, and drag Him across the streets of Jerusalem,
out of the city and up the road to Calvary. He falls from exhaustion. With pike and javelin they try to urge Him on. At last through fear that He might die before reaching Calvary’s Heights, they compel Simon, the Cyrenian to assist Him. Once arrived at the place of Crucifixion, they throw Him on the Cross, pull out His arms and legs until they are almost disjointed to make them fit the holes made in the cross. Spikes are now driven through His hands and feet, and fastened in the wood of the cross. Then they raise the cross; aloft, pierce His side with a lance, and allow Christ to hang three hours suspended between earth and heaven—the weight of His body upon those torn and bruised and crushed hands and feet. Before placing Him in the tomb, His body is embalmed and prepared for burial according to the Jewish rite. Who but a madman would say that Christ survived this, and that He was simply in a trance when placed in the tomb? It would have been a great miracle in itself!

As Christ was really and truly dead before they placed Him in the tomb, so He really and truly arose from the tomb. After His Resurrection, He appeared, not once or twice, but several times; not to one or two disciples, but to many; not in one place but in several. Not simply for a second or two did Christ appear. No, these apparitions lasted a considerable length of time, for during some of them, Christ conversed with the disciples gave them instructions and ate with them.

The witnesses of the Resurrection were men worthy of the greatest faith. They were simple men, honest and God-fearing. They were skeptical concerning the Resurrection; for when the holy women announced that they had seen the Risen Christ, they would not believe them. Yea, when Christ first appeared in their midst, they took
Him for a spirit, and not until they touched Him, conversed and ate with Him, did they believe He had flesh and blood. And we know the great incredulity of Thomas, when he had been informed by the other eleven that they had seen the Risen Christ; "Unless," said he, "I shall see in His hands and feet the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side I will not believe."

My Dear Brethren and Christian Friends, if the truth of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ did not carry with it great moral responsibilities it would never be questioned. With it as with Christianity itself, men who do not want to curb their passions and appetites, who are entirely satisfied with the present world, who desire not, nor seek after the higher life, wish that it were not true. And like the drowning man who snatches the floating straw, so do these men eagerly embrace any theory that runs counter to the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the whole range of history and science there is no fact or theory supported by such evidence. And yet these very men who question it accept the latest scientific theory on the most slender evidence. If Jesus Christ did not die and rise again, then we can know nothing of the past with certainty; we must become historical skeptics. But the mind is appalled at the thought, and revolts against such teaching. We can know from history what has happened in the past ages, and history—the best of history—the four Gospels—tells us that Jesus Christ was crucified, put to death, buried and rose again, and was seen by many disciples in different places during a period of almost forty days.

The Apostles immediately after the Resurrection of Christ went forth to preach this truth to the whole
world. It was the principal theme of their sermons. They not only preached it, but went to prison in defense of it, were scourged, and finally sealed their belief in it with their blood. Historian after historian for eighteen hundred years has been rehearsing the Gospel narratives of the resurrection, and men and women of all ranks, ages, and conditions, have gone to the dungeon and the rack rather than deny it.

The brightest minds and the noblest souls of every age and country have believed it; it has been to them the beacon light of inspiration, and the star of hope amidst the trials, sorrows and disappointments of life. The number of those who question it has been indeed most insignificant; they form but an infinitesimal fraction of the human race, and affect not the universal consent and belief of mankind in the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

My Dear Brethren and Christian Friends, there are two great and consoling truths connected with the Resurrection of our Blessed Lord. First it contains the most convincing proof of Christ's divinity. To raise a man from the dead implies divine omnipotence, for it is the same as to create him anew. The Prophets and the Apostles always worked their miracles in the name of God and through His power. But Christ by His own power and in His own name, raised Himself from the grave, after He had lain in the tomb for three days. He not only raised Himself from the dead, but He did so, after having repeatedly foretold it before hand in all its circumstances. And it was in consequence of this prediction, universally known at the time, that His enemies set a guard to watch at the tomb until the expiration of the time. Yes, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, is the most solid ground-work of our faith.
Without it according to the teaching of St. Paul our faith would be vain, and our justification would not have been accomplished:—"And if Christ be not risen again your faith is vain for you are yet in your sins:"

"Who was delivered up for our sins and rose again for our justification."

The Resurrection of our Blessed Lord is a sure pledge and earnest that we shall rise again with the same bodies:—"For by a man came death, and by a man the Resurrection of the dead. And as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive."

The greater part of this fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians is taken up with a proof of this fundamental doctrine. Yea, the resurrection of all with the Resurrection of Christ is so intimately connected that the Apostle teaches that if the dead do not rise again, then neither has Christ risen. We shall rise again, but shall our bodies rise in that glorious state spoken of by the apostle when he says? "One is the glory of the sun, another the glory of the moon and another the glory of the stars." Or shall our bodies rise in that hideous, foul and deformed state fit only for eternal flames? My Brethren and Christian Friends, our condition at the Resurrection will depend upon whether we make the Resurrection of Christ from the tomb the model of our spiritual resurrection—Christ rose glorious, immortal, impassible from the grave. His Resurrection was complete and perfect. Our resurrection from sin must be perfect and complete. There must be an entire breaking away from any habits of sin, and the tearing asunder of all affections and endearments that lead into sin. Our Resurrection from sin must take upon it the properties of unchangeableness and perseverance. But this is a gift of God—perseverance is
a free gift of God. "We can obtain it," says St. Augustine, "by one means only—persevering prayer." Let us now and every day of our life say:—O Lord, grant that I may persevere unto the end, so that on the Last Day my body may rise glorious, immortal and impassible, to be united with its Head, Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega of all things!
"Whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven them."

My Dear Brethren:—I shall confine my remarks this morning, to one part of the gospel only; namely, to the words, "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you. When He had said this He breathed on them and said to them: Receive ye the Holy Spirit; whose sins ye shall forgive they are forgiven them; and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained." On these words principally, the Catholic Church bases her doctrine of the Sacrament of Penance—the forgiveness of sins. To them her bishops and priests go when asked by what authority they claim to forgive sins:—these words are their credentials.

My Brethren, the Sacrament of Penance, like the Sacrament of the Eucharist is a great stumbling block to many outside the Catholic Church. They say why resort to priests for the forgiveness of sins? Why not go directly to God? How can men forgive sins? That is a divine prerogative.

To the first objection we say that God is our Master and we are His servants. We have no absolute rights in respect to Him, but only duties. Therefore if He has ordained that we should go to His priests, we must willingly obey Him, else we cease to be His true disciples. Further on we shall see why Christ has so willed it.

As regards the second objection, it arises from a misunderstanding of the doctrine. The priests do not for-
give sins by their own power, but by the divine power which has been bestowed upon them. The priests, in the Sacrament of Penance are God's ministers doing His work. They are the secondary agents in the forgiveness of sins, God being the principal One. It is God working through them as His instruments, as His representatives, as His ambassadors, Who forgives the sins.

The one thing then for a Christian to investigate is, does Christ wish him to go to His priests for the forgiveness of sins? Or, in other words, has He conferred such great power on men? Today's gospel gives a positive answer to these questions.

My Brethren, in order to see more clearly the truth underlying the words of the institution of the Sacrament of Penance, we must bear in mind that Christ before His death promised to confer upon His ministers such power. For from St. Matthew, chap. XVI, we learn that He said to Peter:—"And I say to thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth shall be bound also in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in Heaven."

And again from St. Matthew, chap. XVIII, we learn that He said to all the Apostles:—"Amen I say to you whatsoever you shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in Heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in Heaven." These words evidently imply a power over the gates of Heaven—a power to open them and to shut them, a power to bind the wills of the faithful, and to free them from the chains of sin:—"I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven;"—"Whatsoever ye shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in Heaven—Whatsoever
ye shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in Heaven."

Sin is the only thing which can keep man out of Heaven; sin is the only chain which can bind man to Hell.

This power, which Christ promised to confer upon His Apostles, He gave to them, as we learn from to-day's gospel, when after His glorious Resurrection, He came into their midst and said to them:—"Peace be to you! As the Father has sent Me I also send you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost; Whose sins ye shall forgive they are forgiven them; and whose sins ye shall retain they are retained." Could our divine Lord have conferred the power of forgiving sins in simpler, clearer and more explicit language?—"Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, whose sins you shall retain they are retained."

My Brethren, you will observe that Christ did not confer this great power until after His glorious resurrection, until after He had shown to the Apostles and the world that He was God. You will observe too, that before He conferred it, He breathed on them and said:—"Receive ye the Holy Spirit." Never before or after, did Christ make use of such a ceremony. By it He wished to signify that this power was a divine power, and to be exercised by and through the Holy Spirit:—"As the Father hath sent Me I also send you." His Father hath sent Him not only to preach the remission of sins, but to forgive sins.

This power, conferred upon the Apostles, passed to their successors who were to continue their work until the end of time. No where in the Sacred Scriptures do we find even the slightest intimation that this power of forgiving sins was to die with the Apostles. There was more need of such power being within the Church during the ages succeeding the Apostles, than during
their life time. And we do find such power exercised by their successors. A word or two from them: Tertullian of the second Century writes: "For if thou thinkest Heaven is still closed, remember that the Lord left here the keys thereof to Peter, and through him to the Church." Origen of the third Century cries out: "But he that like the Apostles has been breathed upon by Jesus****he forgives whatsoever God would forgive and retains the sins that are incurable." Basil of the fourth Century says: "It is necessary to confess thy sins to those to whom the dispensation of the mysteries of God has been committed." And St. Augustine of the fifth Century writes: "Trammelled therefore in the bonds of sins so deadly, does he decline or hesitate to fly into the keys themselves of the Church, by which he may be loosed on earth, that he may be loosed in Heaven."

My Brethren, very few of those who are always objecting to confession, by saying that men should go directly to God, do themselves go directly to God and confess their sins. They may say, "O Lord forgive me for I am a sinner;" but how many may I ask, examine their conscience minutely and confess their sins as they are in the sight of God? Man is on this earth and has a body as well as a soul; his soul is reached through the senses; it is affected by external objects. And, just as external ceremonies are necessary to keep alive internal religion, so also is private confession necessary in order that there may be a true, sincere and minute acknowledgment of sin. By sin we derive some pleasure, and insult the majesty of God; by confession we undergo some pain, make some reparation for sin, and restore in a way the injury done to God.
My Brethren, in the institution of the Sacrament of Penance God has been most merciful to us. Confession is another plank held out to us by God, after the first shipwreck of our soul. Without the Sacrament of Penance there is only one other way by which sins committed after baptism can be forgiven, and that is by an act of perfect love of God which includes within it from its very nature the implicit vow or resolve to receive the Sacrament of Penance. It is, then, truly the ladder let down by God from Heaven in order that man may more easily mount upwards, and regain that priceless inheritance.
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

THE SHEEPFOLD OF CHRIST.

My Dear Brethren:—The parable which forms the Gospel of to-day, was occasioned by the casting out of the Synagogue by the Scribes and Pharisees of the young man, who had been born blind. Our divine Lord had just restored sight to him, and because he testified to the truth the Jewish doctors after having first insulted him, put him out of the Synagogue.

Walking alone in a quiet part of the city of Jerusalem in a meditative mood, our divine Lord meets this young man who was begging. Moved to pity at the sight of him, Christ stops and having said, "As long as I am in the world I am the Light of the world," He spat on the earth, made some clay of it, anointed the eyes of the blind man, and commanded him, "To go and wash in the pool of Siloe." Having perfect confidence in Christ, the young man obeyed immediately, and as he came forth from the waters his eyes sparkled for the first time with the light of the heavens, and his countenance shone most brightly. He was perfectly cured.

As was to be expected the fame of the miracle spread everywhere. It was the common topic of conversation. It had also been performed on the Sabbath. And when asked by his friends how it all happened, he simply responded, "That Man whom they call Jesus made clay, anointed my eyes and told me to go and wash in the pool of Siloe. So I went, I washed, and I see." But
the Sanhedrim is alarmed, and the young man is summoned before it, and questioned minutely by these proud doctors. His answer to them is likewise straightforward and simple. "He put clay on my eyes," said the young man, "and I went and washed and I see." Unable to confuse him, or shake his testimony, and smarting under the irony of truth, they finally took hold of him and drove him out of the Synagogue, deriding him at the same time by saying: "You are nothing but a mass of sins and do you propose to teach us?"

Christ, the merciful Lord, could not forget this first confessor, persecuted for His cause; so He sought the young man and worked on him a greater miracle:—He opened the eyes of his soul to the light of divine faith. Then reprimanding the Sanhedrim, He spoke this parable to comfort the young man, and to contrast Himself, the true Shepherd of souls, with these hirelings and mercenaries, and to teach some other truths.

My Brethren, a sheepfold was a very familiar object to those people. Palestine was a pastural country. Hence, when our divine Lord spoke of the true shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep, and the hireling who flees at the approach of the wolf and allows the sheep to be ravished and destroyed, the people perfectly understood Him. A sheepfold in those Eastern countries preserves even to-day, the same characteristics. At nightfall the shepherd leads his fleecy charge within a stone enclosure, which is crowned with clumps of thorn bushes as a protection. Various foes lurk on the outside. The panther and the wolf prowl about seeking their prey. But the true shepherd is ever on the alert and wards off all attacks. And at the dawn of day, he takes up his crooked staff, counts his flock and leads them out of the fortress into new pastures. Every
now and again he utters a shrill cry. The sheep immediately stop grazing, huddle together and come panting to his feet. But let the voice of a stranger break the silence, at once they stop short, and, affrighted with uplifted heads they scamper away.

My Brethren, our divine Lord in to-day’s Gospel compares Himself to a shepherd and us to sheep in regard to our souls. Let us examine into these two great truths, and draw some profitable lessons therefrom. What are the qualities of a true shepherd and of good sheep? First, the good shepherd knows his sheep, and he knows what is good or hurtful for each one of them. Secondly, he has a most tender love for them, and he watches over them with the greatest solicitude, and defends them from all attacks of their foes. And thirdly, he provides nourishment for them and is willing to lay down his life in their behalf. Does not our divine Lord and Saviour possess all these qualities in regard to our souls? He knows each and every one of us personally and individually. He knows our characters and dispositions, our weakness and our strength, what is for our good, and what is for our injury. He watches over us from the cradle to the grave, and has provided means by which we are able to overcome all the assaults of the devil and of the evil spirits. If Christ be with us, none can harm us. At the name of Jesus, the devils tremble, and at the sight of the Cross they retreat back into hell. "Greater love than this no man hath than to lay down his life for his fellow-man:"—For us and for our salvation, Christ sweat blood, was scourged, bruised, crowned with thorns and nailed to the Cross. For us and for our sake, He left, in the world until the end of time a memorial and representation of Calvary’s Sacrifice,—the Mass. For us and for our sake He in-
stituted the seven Sacraments, the seven aqueducts leading from Calvary's Cross and conveying therefrom to our souls the merits of Christ's blood. He has left within the Church the divine message of salvation in all its purity and strength. His grace is ever near us. He has given His angels and saints charge over us, and His Blessed Mother is continually interceding for us before the High Throne of mercy. Not yet satisfied, Christ abides upon our altars, a Prisoner of Love, calling out, "Come to Me all you that are heavily laden and burdened and I will refresh you." To crown it all, He sends the Holy Ghost into our hearts, and He gives us His own Body to eat and His Blood to drink for the spiritual nourishment and life of our souls. Yes, He is the Good and True Shepherd and could do no more than He has done to show His great love and care for His sheep.

But what kind of sheep are we, my brethren? That is the important consideration. The qualities of our Saviour's sheep are first, innocence. A sheep is the least mischievous of all animals. God's servants should be innocent and saintly in their behaviour, without envy or enmity, wishing no evil and doing harm to no one. The second quality is gentleness. How gentle a sheep is! So gentle, that it lets itself be deprived of its wool and goes to the slaughter uncomplainingly. This gentleness in God's servants proceeds from the mortification of the passions, contempt of the world and true charity. The third quality is docility. A sheep, if it has strayed away, as soon as it hears the voice of the shepherd returns at once, runs after him, follows him and allows him to lead it whithersoever he wills.

My Brethren, are we innocent and guileless in our behaviour? Is there any envy, hatred or rancor within our breasts? Are we meek, humble, gentle and patient?
Do we possess our soul in calmness and serenity? Do we hear and heed the voice of the Church, the expressed wishes of our legitimate superiors, and the secret promptings of grace and the Holy Ghost in our souls? Let me exhort you to examine yourselves seriously this morning concerning these questions. “Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation; for the night cometh wherein no man can work.”

“And other sheep I have that are not of this fold; them also I must bring and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.”

My Brethren, by these other sheep our divine Lord in the first instance meant the Gentile world, in contradistinction to the Jews, the chosen people of the House of Israel, to whom He first went Himself, and afterwards sent the Apostles. Our divine Saviour had us first in view when He spoke these words. But in their applied sense they refer to all those who are not yet members of the body of the Church—those poor, pure, upright, honest, sincere, souls, who are looking out for the light and feel the need of it, who are willing to make any temporal sacrifices to save their souls—these our divine Lord had in view when He gazed up and down the centuries and said, “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold.” God wishes us to help bring them into the true fold. We can assist God, if I may so speak, in this work, first by knowing and understanding the truths of our Faith, and being ready at all times to explain them to sincere enquirers. We do not have to become skilled controversialists to do this work. A true and proper understanding of our catechism, coupled with good sense and some wit, will be sufficient. The intellect has been made for truth, and truth by its very nature draws the mind to it. A simple exposition
of the faith is oftentimes the strongest proof to sincere souls. Secondly, we can assist in this work by setting a good example. "Words move" said a philosopher, "but examples draw." The life of a good, sincere upright Catholic is a continual sermon. Such a man or woman preaches all day long. And lastly, we can assist in this work by prayer. Let us never forget that Paul plants, Apollo waters, but God giveth the increase; and the increase cometh through the merits of Christ, the prayers of the saints and our prayers in union with those of Christ. Instruction and example in themselves will not accomplish very much by way of conversion; but, joined with prayer, will bring many into the true fold:—

"And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their words shall believe in Me; that they all may be one as Thou, Father in Me and I in Thee; that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou hast given, I have given to them; that they may be one as We also are one."
THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

"A LITTLE WHILE AND YOU SHALL NOT SEE ME."

My Dear Brethren:—To-day's Gospel was one of the several talks which Christ had with His disciples on the way to Gethsemani. He had just instituted the Blessed Eucharist, and was wending His way to the garden, there to begin the first scene in the awful drama of His Passion.

When He had spoken the parable of the vine and its branches, had given the commandment of mutual love, had foretold the persecutions in store for the Church, had offered consolation to the Apostles in their sadness, had explained the mission of the Holy Spirit, then it was He foretold the time of sorrow and joy which was near at hand.

"A little while and you shall not see Me; and again a little while and you shall see Me; because I go to the Father." Yes, my brethren, after a short interval—a few hours—they would not see Jesus, because he was to be crucified and buried. His soul was to go into Limbo, and His body was to descend into the grave. But this separation was not to last long: His body would be in the grave only three days—from Friday evening until Sunday morning—on the third day He would rise glorious from the grave and they would see Him again and He would strengthen and console them. They were not to see Him for three days, because by the decree of His Father He was to die; but by the same decree He was to rise again; then and not until then,
was He to return to the Father, from whose bosom He had come forth to redeem the world.

"Then some of His disciples said one to the other—'What is this that He saith to us; a little while and you shall not see Me; and again a little while and you shall see Me, and because I go to the Father?' They said therefore 'What is this that He saith, a little while? We know not what He speaketh!'"

My Brethren, our Divine Lord no doubt, spoke here in an obscure manner in order that He might invite some questions from His disciples, and thus give Himself an occasion to explain some things more clearly; which explanations would serve to strengthen and console them in their depressed state of mind.

"And Jesus knew that they had a mind to ask Him, and He said to them: 'Of this do you inquire among yourselves, because I said; a little while and you shall not see Me; and again a little while and you shall see Me?'

My Brethren, Christ by His divine fore-knowledge knew the secret thoughts of His disciples, and consequently knew that they wished to be enlightened on the meaning of those words—'A little while.' And in thus anticipating their questions, He showed Himself to be God, the Searcher of all hearts.

"Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy."

My Brethren, instead of answering the questions and explaining the meaning of the phrase "A little while," He describes the effect of their sorrow, during that time when He would be invisible in the tomb, and their joy after His Resurrection, when He would again manifest
Himself to them. He also contrasted their weeping with the rejoicing of the world over His death. And then He illustrated their passing sorrow and their after joy and compares them to the feelings of sorrow and joy, which a woman experiences during parturition—"A woman when she is in labor hath sorrow because her hour is come; but when she hath brought forth the child she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." A beautiful, simple and homely comparison!

"So also you now indeed hath sorrow, but I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you."

Ah yes! The Apostles did weep at Christ's death and departure, but their joy after the Resurrection more than compensated them for the passing bereavement. Their joy was not temporary; their union with Him, and their hope in eternal life filled their souls with spiritual joy during the remainder of their lives. Even in the midst of persecution, whilst they suffered in the body, they were rejoicing in the spirit. And in the end, they passed from earth to heaven to be united with God for all eternity in the possession and enjoyment of all good and happiness.

My Brethren, there is one lesson in the Gospel which overshadows the others and to this I call your attention. Although Christ spoke directly to the Apostles and meant their personal joy would abound forever, nevertheless by figure and application He speaks to and means all sincere Christians. As regards the successors of the Apostles, the Bishops and priests of the Catholic Church, the words are doubly true. Their peace and joy no man can tell. For everything given up for the sake of Christ and souls, they receive a hundred-fold
even in this world. It is true they have some crosses and trials, but their lives, on the whole, are more serene, happy and blessed than all others. But we are more concerned about the lay Christians. I pity the man or the woman, who has no hope in the future life. How dark and gloomy life must be at times! To every man there must come at times those momentous questions of God, the Soul and Hereafter. When the hand of affliction is laid heavily upon them, where can they go for consolation and hope? Is it any wonder that they fly to suicide for relief? But the true Christian, no matter how heavy the crosses may be, has the future life to look forward to; which soon shall be. He believes too, that trials borne patiently in this life and with resignation to God's will, will add jewels to his crown of glory. He has something beyond this world and time to live and to work for. He has Heaven and Eternity as the end of his life and labors. A true Christian must be the happiest of men, because he is at peace with God, with himself and with the world.—

"But I will see you again and your hearts shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you."
THE FORTY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE.

My Dear Brethren:—Yesterday, the Church celebrated the Feast of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste. They belonged, according to St. Gregory of Nyssa and Procopius, to the famous Thundering Legion at whose intercession God sent rain down from heaven to quench their thirst, and thus enable them to gain a great victory over the enemy. They came from different countries, were in the flower of their age, brave, comely and strong and had rendered invaluable service to the Emperor. They suffered martyrdom in Lesser Armenia under Lycinius in the year 320.

They were attached to the Twelfth Legion then quartered in Armenia under the command of Lysias. Agricola, being Governor of the province, made known to the army the order of the Emperor Lycinius that all must sacrifice to the gods. On hearing this the holy martyrs went to the governor in a body, and after having openly confessed that they were Christians, boldly told him that no torments could make them deny their religion and offer sacrifice to the gods of the empire. The judge first tried to win them over by soft measures, placing before them the dishonor and disgrace, which would follow their refusal to comply with the Emperor’s orders and promising them in the name of the Emperor, if they would comply, high places and preferments. But to such promises they answered, that he could give them nothing equal to what they would lose. Finding these methods ineffectual, he now had recourse to dire threats, but his threats proved equally ineffectual. To all of
them they replied, that his power and that of the Emperor extended only to their bodies, which they had learned to despise when their souls were at stake. Chagrined and angered by their firmness and resoluteness, the governor ordered that they should be lashed and their sides probed and torn by hooks, and then loaded with chains and committed to prison. All of which was carried out and executed minutely.

Having lain in prison for some days, the governor coming to Sebaste visited them and tried again to win them over. They were re-examined, and they no less generously rejected his promises than they despised his threats. He now devises a most extraordinary kind of death, which being very slow and severe, he hoped might overcome their constancy. Under the walls of the city there was an immense frozen pond. It was now March and the winters in Armenia are very severe. Lysias orders that the Saints be led to the pond, stripped of their clothing and exposed naked on the ice. To tempt them more powerfully to renounce their faith, a warm bath was prepared near the pond for those who would promise to comply with the Emperor’s commands. Upon hearing their sentences, they all leaped with joy and ran to the place, and without waiting to be stripped, undressed themselves. Then they encouraged one another by saying that one night of pain would purchase for them a happy eternity, and concluded with this touching prayer:—‘‘Lord, forty we are engaged in this combat; grant that forty we may be crowned, and that not one be wanting to this sacred number.’’

Notwithstanding the urgent entreaties of the guards and the great pain endured, only one of them had the misfortune to be overcome. Losing courage he left the pond to find relief in the warm bath. However, as
usually happens, the apostate was deceived by the "father of lies," for he no sooner enters the bath than he expires. His apostasy afflicted the martyrs but the Lord quickly comforted them. One of the sentinels on guard near the bath, was granted a vision: He beheld blessed spirits descending from heaven and distributing rich presents and costly crowns on all the soldiers except the one who had apostatized. Moved by a powerful inspiration of grace, he threw off his clothes and placed himself amongst the thirty-nine martyrs. Thus the Lord in His all-wise and impenetrable ways, heard their prayers, though in a manner different from that they had imagined; and "forty they were crowned and not one was wanting to this sacred number."

In the morning Lysias ordered that all of them, both those who were dead and those who were alive, be placed on wagons, carried off and thrown into a fire. Melito, the youngest of them was found to be still alive. Hoping that he would change his resolution when he recovered consciousness, they left him behind. His mother, although a widow and poor in the goods of this world, was strong and rich in faith and worthy to have a son a martyr, reproached the executioners for their false compassion. Coming to her son who was frozen and not able to stir, but now half conscious she looked upon him with languishing eyes. As he beheld her standing there, he waved his weak hand to comfort her. She encourages him to persevere to the end and strengthened by the Holy Ghost, takes him up in her arms, places him in the wagon with the rest of the martyrs, and with a countenance full of joy says to him in words that are worthy to be written in gold and re-echoed until the end of time: "Go, Go, son, proceed to the end of this happy journey with thy companions that thou mayest
not be the last of them that will be presented before the Lord.''

Their bodies were burned and their ashes were ordered to be thrown into the river, but the Christians purchased some of them secretly and carried them away as the most valuable of treasures. St. Bazil speaking at Caesarea where some of their relics were kept, said:—

"'Like bulwarks they are our protection against the inroads of enemies," and added, "that every one implored their succor and that they raised up the fallen, strengthened the weak and invigorated the fervor of the Saints.'"

It is scarcely necessary to say that God honored the relics of these martyrs by many wonderful miracles.

My Dear Brethren, I am inclined to say no more, but to leave you to your own reflections on the pathetic and inspiring death of these forty holy martyrs. However, just a word or two. Are we not confounded and put to shame when we behold the conflict and Christ-like heroism of these martyrs? They were as much human as we—possessing the same nature, the same weaknesses and temptations. What excuse shall we offer at the Tribunal of God? We, who without having undergone any cruel persecutions for the faith have been so remiss and slothful. What shall we say on that Terrible Day when the martyrs placed near the Throne of God shall display their glorious scars and wounds as a proof of their fidelity? What excuse shall we offer for our weakness, slothfulness and cowardice? May we be able at least, to show some small fruits of love. May we not go empty-handed before the Tribunal of God. O holy martyrs! you who are now most intimately united to God we beseech you to pray continually for us, that we may be able to present to God as trophies of our faith, some acts of true compunction, some acts of burning love,
some acts of meekness and humility. O holy martyrs through your prayers may we—pastor and people—persevere—that not one may be wanting to our number—but after a life of prayer, mortification and good deeds, may we be crowned with the crown of eternal life!
FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

WHITHER ART THOU GOING.

My Dear Brethren:—To-day’s Gospel is one of those short discourses which our Divine Lord delivered on the way to Gethsemani. Leaving the Upper Room, He passed out of the city through one of the southern gates, and descended Kedron Valley. Stopping for a moment on this way of sorrow, His eyes rested on one of those many vineyards for which the country was noted; and He began to draw some lessons for the instruction of the disciples.

He first called their attention to the green branches which still adhered to the vine, then to the withered ones which had been cut off and were strewn lifeless on the ground. He likened Himself to the vine, the disciples to the branches, and His Heavenly Father to the vine dresser. Then He bade the Apostles to love one another even to the giving up of their lives as a proof, after His own example, saying: "Greater love than this no one hath, to lay down his life for his brother." Afterwards He foretold the undying hatred which the world would bear towards them and their successors. Finally He referred to the great persecutions which were to be inflicted upon them, and He warned them not to be scandalized when they came to pass because He had foretold them. But upon seeing the Apostles cast down and dejected at such news, He immediately changed the subject, and spoke the words which constitute the Gospel
of this Sunday to comfort them and to revive their drooping spirits.

My Brethren, let us take up this Gospel part by part, and try to understand its somewhat hidden meaning.

"Jesus said to His disciples: I go to Him Who sent Me and none of you asketh Me, whither are Thou going?" Our Divine Lord had just previously spoken of the persecutions which were to be waged against the infant Church and of His approaching departure. Waiting for a moment to see if they would interrogate Him further concerning these matters, as they had already, through Thomas, expressed a desire to find out more about the persecutions and His going away, Christ was disappointed, humanly speaking, and expressed His surprise in the foregoing words:—"I go to the Father Who sent Me and none of you asketh Me, whither art Thou going?"

"But because I have spoken these things to you sorrow hath filled your heart." Our divine Lord in these words reproaches the Apostles for their untimely sorrow. Being overwhelmed with grief at the news of His departure, they forgot to question Him concerning it, and consequently missed the opportunity of hearing a message which would have assuaged their sorrow, and filled their souls with great joy:—"But because I have spoken these things to you sorrow hath filled your heart."

"But I tell you a truth, it is expedient for 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." The Paraclete, the sweet comforter, so often spoken of and promised would not come unless Christ first went. It was necessary for Christ to die and to withdraw His physical
presence from the Apostles to wean them from their too strong attachment, (if I may so speak) to the human side of His character; and it was necessary for Christ to return to the bosom of the Father in order to send the Holy Ghost. These were necessary conditions:

"I tell you a truth, it is expedient for 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 when He is come He will convict the world of sin and of justice and of judgment; of sin because they believe not in Me; and of justice because I go to the Father and you will see Me no longer; and of judgment, because the prince of this world is already judged."

Yes, after the coming of the Holy Ghost, the world was indeed convicted of sin, and of justice and of judgment. It was convicted of the great sin of infidelity, because it believed not in Christ, although it had the clearest evidence of His Divinity in the teaching and miracles of the Apostles. It was convicted of the sin of injustice, because it would not believe in Christ, Whom it could see no longer. And it had been convicted of the sin of judgment, because it had already been judged in the person of its prince, the Devil, who had been deprived of his dominion over men through the Passion of Jesus Christ. By the preaching of the Apostles, the Devil, the prince of the world, had been driven out of Pagan temples, and by their words in the name of Jesus Christ, he had been driven out of possessed persons.

"I have yet many things to say to you; but ye cannot bear them now. But when He the Spirit of Truth shall come He will teach you all the truth, for He will not speak of Himself; but whatever He has heard He will speak and the things which are to come He will show you." The Paraclete, the Holy Ghost is truth
itself, and the source of all truth; consequently when He came He taught the Apostles whatever was necessary for their sanctification and the sanctification of the world. When He came He completed the truths of revelation, not all at once but gradually, as it became necessary. Thus it was that not until some time after Pentecost, He revealed to Peter that the Gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles, and that they were not to be circumcised. The Holy Ghost, Who came upon the Apostles and taught them all things was not greater than the Son, possessing the same divine nature. Neither did He reveal anything which was not in perfect harmony with the teaching of the Son, since His knowledge was one in essence with the Son. When He came He imparted to the Apostles not only things of the past, but things of the future; whatever was necessary for the Church to know in order to continue the work of Christ until the end.

"He shall glorify Me because He shall receive of mine and shall show it to you." Yes, the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete will be the cause of the glorification of Christ, because He will guide and direct the Apostles and their successors in the work of bringing men to the knowledge of Christ. By the Holy Ghost working through the Apostles and in the hearts of men, the world will be converted, enlightened and sanctified. The Holy Ghost will receive of the Father and the Son through the Eternal procession, this wisdom and holiness:—"He shall glorify Me because He shall receive of Mine and shall show it to you." Such my brethren, is a running commentary on the words of the Gospel. But what special lessons are we taught? The Gospel is pregnant with lessons. The first lesson is, without the light and comfort of the Holy Ghost, we are most miserable. We
weep when we should rejoice. In other words without the Holy Ghost shining in our hearts and minds, we judge things simply from an earthly standpoint. Before the descent of the Holy Ghost, at the news of Christ's departure, and at the thought of the hatred of the world, the Apostles were filled with sorrow and dismay. Yet when the Holy Ghost came upon them, His presence in their hearts more than compensated for the physical absence of Christ. And we know too, how the Apostles, after the descent of the Holy Ghost desired to be calumniated, persecuted and to die for Christ. Whilst they were suffering in the body they were rejoicing in the spirit. And the trials and persecutions they endured, worked for them a crown of eternal glory.

The second lesson is that a too strong attachment to any person or creature is in many cases a hindrance to our sanctification. We have an example—I speak under correction—in the case of the Apostles in their too strong attachment to the physical presence of Christ. As a rule when we love this or that person too strongly it is an impediment to true progress in virtue. That is the reason Christ calls His chosen ones to a life of celibacy. Carnal affections tie our spirits down to this earth and keep them from soaring to the realms of God's light and love.

A third lesson—(and it is a very important truth)—is taught us, namely the Infallibility of the Church. The Church cannot err in matters of faith and morals, because the Holy Ghost the Spirit of Truth and Sanctity governs and directs her. Growth there may be in the Church, but it is the growth of the seed into the plant, of the acorn into the tree. The deposit of divine revelation was completed with the death of the last Apostle. A doctrinal definition of the Church is but the full un-
The Church is infallible when she speaks through the Pope, when she speaks through a General Council, when she speaks through the Bishops in union with the Supreme Head of the Church on matters concerning our belief and conduct.

In to-day's Gospel we are taught the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity. We must hold as Catholic faith that in the one, supreme, absolute, perfect, necessary Being, there are three Divine Persons perfectly equal and distinct; that the First Person is the Father, existing from all eternity; that the Second Person is the Son, begotten of the Father from all eternity, and that the Third Person is the Holy Ghost proceeding both from the Father and the Son from all eternity. This is a great mystery; it is above reason but not contrary to it. We cannot expect to comprehend it, as it is the life which God, the infinite Being lives within Himself. It has been revealed by God, and taught us by the Church. Therefore he who rejects it ceases to be a Christian and a Catholic.

And finally we are taught to let our reputation rest in the hands of God Who in His own wise time will justify us. At first our merits may not be acknowledged, but in the end men will come to judge us at our true worth.
THE COMING OF THE PARACLETE.

My Dear Brethren:—To-day's Gospel is part of a discourse which Christ gave to the Apostles on the way to Gethsemani. After He had spoken the parable of the vine and the vine dresser, had given the commandment of mutual love, had foretold the persecutions in store for the infant Church, then it was He spoke the words which constitute the Gospel of this Sunday.

"But when the Paraclete cometh, Whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth Who proceedeth from the Father, He will give testimony of Me."

My Brethren, the Paraclete was to come first to comfort the Apostles under their trials and tribulations, and secondly to bear witness to the innocence and divinity of Jesus Christ. This comforter and witness was one by nature with the Father and the Son and proceeded equally from both by an eternal procession. Christ on this occasion, purposely did not say that the Paraclete proceeded from Him as well as from the Father, because He did not wish to weaken the testimony which the Paraclete was to bear in favor of Himself.

The Paraclete, when He came, did indeed comfort the Apostles in the many ways which Infinite Wisdom and Goodness alone could devise, and which many holy souls after them in suffering persecution for Christ's sake, have experienced. When He came, He did indeed give testimony that the Jews had no just cause of their
hatred against Jesus Christ, and that Christ was the Messiah, just and true, divine and consubstantial with the Father. This testimony was given and borne by the effects of His descent upon the Apostles, and by the wonderful prerogatives which were bestowed upon the infant Church, and by the prodigies wrought by the Apostles and their successors:—"And ye shall give testimony because ye are with Me from the beginning."

My Brethren, by the appointment of Christ a twofold testimony was to be borne to Him and Christianity. There was to be the testimony of the Holy Spirit, and there was to be the testimony of eye-witnesses. By the law of evidence, the testimony of eye-witnesses ranks in the first order. Therefore, Christ points out this quality of His human witness. And St. John calls the attention of the world to this fact:—"That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we beheld and our hands handled, declare we unto you also." And when it was a question of choosing a successor to Judas, St. Peter thought the quality of an eye-witness so important, that he advised the Apostles to select such a one:—"Of the men who had companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John unto the day that He was received up from us, of these must one become the witness with us of His Resurrection." These eye-witnesses, guided by the Paraclete presented their evidence to the world, and thus the Church of Christ began, and by a divinely appointed succession will continue that witness to the end.

"These things have I spoken to you that you may not be scandalized."
My Brethren, our Divine Lord had a wise purpose in view in foretelling the persecutions which should come upon the infant Church. From the high character of their mission, the Apostles might expect honorable treatment from the world. When on the contrary the world turned upon them in all its fury, if the Lord had not forewarned them, they might have grown weak, stumbled and lost their faith. But since the Lord had foretold them, the persecutions served as a means to strengthen their faith, because they were an evidence of their Master's divine fore-knowledge.

"They will cast you out of the synagogue; yea, the hour cometh that whoever killeth you will think that he offereth homage to God."

My Brethren, our Divine Lord speaks especially of the Jewish persecutions. The Jews would excommunicate the Apostles so that they would not dare to enter the synagogue. Yea, not content with insults, they would proceed to inflict upon them bodily injuries and even death, and whilst doing so, they would fancy that they were performing a work most agreeable to God by displaying a zeal in the cause and defense of His holy law. Of this St. Paul himself furnishes a practical example in his persecutions of the Christians.

"These things they will do to you, because they know not the Father nor Me."

My Brethren, our Divine Lord does not here excuse their ignorance. They were ignorant because they wished to be ignorant, because they had turned away from the known truth; and such ignorance aggravated their guilt. Christ had performed in their midst miracles whose evidence was more than sufficient to prove that God was His Father, and that He was His Eternal Son. And He consoles the Apostles by suggesting to
them that they had the knowledge which their persecutors had rejected, and that it would redound to their glory. "But these things I have told you that when their time shall come, ye may remember that I told you."

My Brethren, our Divine Lord foretold them beforehand to show that He was divine because their fulfillment would augment their faith in His Divinity and strengthen the Apostles to endure the persecutions. Yea, they would have the effect of increasing their confidence in their Lord and Master, Who if He willed could have prevented them. Christ would be a spectator of their combat, strengthening them, so as to secure for them the crown of eternal life.

Such is a brief commentary on the words of the Gospel. But what lessons are we taught? I shall confine myself to pointing out three. First, the Church will always be persecuted. The Church being the representative of Christ will always be persecuted just as He was persecuted. The Church must teach doctrines contrary to the spirit of the world whose prince is the Devil; consequently the spirit of the world will rebel against the Church, and persecute her in some way or another. When the Church ceases to be persecuted then she will cease to be the Spouse of Christ. Persecutions instead of being a stumbling block to our faith, should confirm and strengthen it.

Secondly, the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost is still the supporter of all those who suffer for Christ and His kingdom. He comforted the early Christians during persecutions which were waged by the Roman Empire; He comforted the Irish during the three hundred years of bloody persecution which were waged by the English government; He comforted the Germans during the subtle persecution which was
waged by the iron tyrant Prince Bismarck; He is comforting the loyal French and Spanish Catholics during the persecution now being waged by their infidel republics. And He will comfort us whenever we are persecuted for conscience sake.

And lastly the Paraclete bears witness within us to the divinity of Christ and His religion. For nineteen hundred years the Catholic Church has been everywhere, among all nations, peoples and races, civilizing and converting them. She has counted in every age her followers by the millions. Although preaching a doctrine which is opposed to the passions of men and persecuted in every conceivable way, she has continued to exist and to flourish, and at the present day she is everywhere compelling men to hear and to heed her. She fits as well into the Twentieth Century as she did into the First. She is as young, active and beautiful, as when she came out of the Upper Room at Jerusalem. She has no wrinkles on her brow, no halt in her step, no tremor in her hands. This is a standing miracle effected by the presence of the Paraclete,—the Holy Ghost, within the Church.
THE PRIESTHOOD.

"Take ye and eat: this is My body which is given for you. Do this in commemoration of Me." "Take ye and drink. This is the chalice of the New Testament in my blood which shall be shed for you." "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come follow Me."

MY DEAR BRETHREN:—These words of Jesus Christ which I have just quoted, and which are found reported by the inspired Evangelists in the Holy Gospels give us the reasons of to-day's celebration, and contain the substance of what I shall say on this auspicious occasion.

To preach at the twenty-fifth anniversary of a priest's ordination, I should consider, in itself, an honor and a privilege. But when the silver jubilee becomes also the occasion of the celebration of the first Mass of a young man, just raised to the sublime dignity of the Priesthood, I consider it a double honor and privilege. However, this is not all. Father Mark, whose twenty-fifth anniversary to the priesthood we are celebrating to-day, and Father Luke whose first entrance, we may say, officially into the priesthood we are also celebrating to-day, are members of the Great Franciscan Order—Capuchins, or humble Friars. Brethren, you likewise are specially privileged to-day in witnessing and taking
part in this ceremony, for it is a day of grace and blessing for all the members of this parish.

God, being infinite and perfect, suffices of Himself for His own blessedness and happiness. He needs not men, nor angels nor creatures. They cannot add aught to His blessedness and happiness. Why then did God create them? Goodness loves to diffuse itself. God, being Infinite Goodness, loved to communicate some of this goodness to creatures. Behold, then, the moving cause of creation—the infinite Goodness of God!

It is true that men, nor angels, nor creatures, no matter how perfect or high in the scale of being, can add anything to the essential glory of God. But creatures can give an accidental or external glory to God. By worshipping and praising Him they can increase His external glory. Behold then, the purpose or end of creation—the accidental or external glory of God!

We shall now, my brethren, be better able to understand the chief and principal work of the priests of Jesus Christ, and why we honor and reverence them. We have been created and put into this world to give glory to God. We do this principally by adoring Him, that is, by acknowledging that He is the Supreme Lord and Master of all things. We do this principally by praising and thanking Him for the countless favors and benefits which He has bestowed upon us. We do this principally by entreating Him to bestow upon us new graces and blessings, that is by acknowledging our dependence upon Him.

Now, mankind from the beginning believed that this work could only be done becomingly, fittingly and worthily by the offering up to God of sacrifices, in which victims are immolated, by a body of men selected, set aside and consecrated for this office. Hence we learn from
history that the Pagan nations of antiquity, had their altars, their sacrifices and their priesthood. Coming to the people of God under the Primitive and Mosaic revelation, we find such to be a fact likewise. Thus we learn that Enos and Jacob, Abel, Kain, Melchisedech and Noah offered to the Lord. Thus do we read, too, that the Jews had their various sacrifices—their sacrifices of thanksgiving, their sacrifices of atonement and their sacrifices to obtain peace.

It is needless to remind you that the sacrifices under the Old Law were ordained by God Himself, and had their value and merit from the great Sacrifice which was to be offered up under the New Law once on Calvary and renewed, continued and represented through the Mass, and which was pointed out by the prophet Malachi hundreds of years before its institution, when in the name of God he spoke:—"Who is there among you that will shut the door and kindle the fire on My altar gratis? I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts: and I will not receive a gift of your hand. For, from the rising of the sun, even to the going down My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is a sacrifice and there is offered up to My name a clean oblation—for My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts."

This sacrifice thus pointed out and pre-figured was instituted by Christ at the Last Supper on the eve of His Passion and Death, when taking bread into His omnipotent hands He said: "This is My body which is given for you. Do this in commemoration of Me." And likewise of the wine saying, "This is the chalice of the New Testament in My blood which shall be shed for you." From that day until the present the bishops and priests of the Catholic church, as the legitimate success-
ors of the Apostles to whom those words were addressed, have been doing what Christ did at the Last Supper, and what He had commanded them to do. They take the bread into their hands and say: "For this is My body:" then, afterwards, the cup of wine saying: "For this is the blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins." This is the essence of the Sacrifice of the New Law. This is the substance of the Sacrifice of the Mass. At those words Christ comes upon the altar: He robs Himself of His glory and takes up His existence under the appearances of bread and wine. By the separate consecration of the substance of the bread into His body, and the separate consecration of the wine into His blood, we have the mystical shedding of His blood. At the end of the Mass, Christ under the sacramental species is consumed by the priest. Since Christ is the Victim and the principal Priest, we have a sacrifice of infinite value.

Every time, then, my brethren, the priest offers up the Sacrifice of the Mass there is given to God, first, that infinite adoration which is His due; secondly, infinite thanksgiving is made to Him for the numberless graces and blessings which He has bestowed upon man; thirdly, the merits of Calvary's Cross are applied to individual souls, and the work of the Redemption becomes effectual; and fourthly, God is petitioned all powerfully for new favors and graces, both spiritual and temporal. Without the Mass, we would be deprived of these fruits; for man being a finite creature, all his works and the value of them must necessarily be finite and imperfect. But in the Mass, on account of the Victim and principal Priest, Who is no other than Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, the Image and Substance of the Father, such imperfections are remedied. Jesus Christ comes
to man's assistance. The secondary priest, and the people through him, unite their adoration, thanksgiving and prayers to those of Jesus Christ, and thus God is worthily, adored, truly thanked, and all powerfully petitioned. Therefore it is no exaggeration to say that one Mass gives more praise and glory to God than the unceasing canticles of all the myriads of angels; draws down upon this world more graces and blessings than the prayers of all the saints in heaven, and is the means of taking away more sins and of satisfying better the justice of God than the good works of all men, from the beginning of creation to the end of time. Father Mark, whose Silver Sacerdotal Jubilee we celebrate to-day, for twenty-five years, morning after morning has been offering up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Can any man tell the glory that has been given to God, or number the blessings that have accrued to man, during these twenty-five years, through the offering up of the great Sacrifice of the New Law by the hands of Father Mark? Is he not worthy of all honor on this day? And should this not be a day of special rejoicing? How the angels and saints of heaven this morning are hovering around this altar, beholding in awe the offering up for the first time of the Spotless Lamb in sacrifice and propitiation by Father Luke! If we could for the moment rid ourselves of our bodies what a glorious and dazzling spectacle would present itself as Father Luke for the first time says, "Hoc est enim corpus meum" "For this is My body" and "Hic est enim Calix sanguinis mei" "For this is the chalice of My blood"!

My Dear Brethren, Jesus Christ became Incarnate, took flesh that He might suffer and die for our sins. His principal work here on earth was to destroy sin. In Heaven He continually beseeches His Father to take
away our sins. And before His Ascension into Heaven He instituted a tribunal to continue this work of taking away sins until the end. Yea, this tribunal, like the Mass was prefigured under the Old Law. Leprosy, as you know, was and is a sign of sin. Before any one was considered legally cured of that dreadful disease he had to show himself to the priests, and receive from them a certificate of health. Christ came to fulfil the law not to destroy it, and the New Dispensation is but the completion and perfection of the Old. Before His death Christ promised to institute the sacred tribunal of Penance through which sins were to be taken away; for we learn from the Gospels that He said first to Peter: ‘‘And I say to thee that thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church, and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven.’’ Then He said to the other Apostles, ‘‘Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven.’’

After His glorious Resurrection from the dead as the Apostles were gathered together in the Upper Room, Christ came suddenly into their midst and said, ‘‘Peace be to you.’’ And He said again to them, ‘‘Peace be to you.’’ And then He continued, ‘‘As the Father hath sent Me I also send you’’ and breathing upon them He said, ‘‘Receive ye the Holy Ghost whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain they are retained.’’ From that day, nineteen hundred years ago, down through the centuries among all nations and people, the bishops and priests of the Catholic church in the Sacred Tribunal of Penance,—aft-
er the faithful have confessed their sins with true sorrow and firm amendment,—in the name of God and through the power of Jesus Christ, and as His representatives and ambassadors, absolve them from all their sins. For twenty-five years, week after week, Father Mark, in the confessional, has been continuing this work and mission of Jesus Christ, has been taking away sins, has been reconciling men with their Creator,—God,—has been making fruitful and effectual the coming of Jesus Christ into the world. Upon Father Luke this power of forgiving sins has also been conferred. Soon he will begin this great work—the greatest of all works on this earth—to reconcile men with God; to restore to them their lost birthright, to set up again within their souls the kingdom of God. Can we honor and reverence the priests of God too much? God could not raise them to a higher dignity than to make them His intimate coadjutors in the work of the salvation of men.

My Dear Brethren, when Christ came into the world riches and wealth were idolized not only in Judea but among all the nations. They were sought and loved as ends in themselves and not for any common good. The same has been true down through the centuries, and was especially true when St. Francis was born, and founded the Franciscan Order of which the Capuchin is a branch.

The Capuchin Fathers insist upon true poverty. We may say that this is their distinguishing mark. They take literally to heart the words of Christ:—"If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast and come follow Me." In the original statutes of the Capuchin Order, we find that they were to have no revenues, but were to live by begging. Everything about their churches and convents was to show the greatest poverty of spirit. Father Mark has been a member of this Order for
twenty-five years and Father Luke is just beginning his active life in it.

Can an Order like the Capuchins which brings by precept and example so prominently to the attention of the world the necessity of poverty, be praised too highly or encouraged too much in these days of avarice and greed? The world has gone mad in the pursuit of wealth. Money is the God of the people, especially the American people. They will sell their very souls for money. Wealth and the love of it, is the most fruitful source of spiritual misery and ruin. Christ foresaw this; He foresaw too, the torrents of iniquity that would flow from wealth; and therefore He Himself willingly and freely embraced poverty; and He exhorts all His true and perfect disciples to do likewise. And the members of the Capuchin Order, I believe, practise more rigorously the vow of poverty than the members of any other religious Order, and that is the reason why I refer to it in a special manner this morning.

My Dear Brethren, the priest of Jesus Christ is called “Another Christ.” Yes, the priests of Jesus Christ when true to their high calling are indeed, “Other Christs.” Their work in this world is one of mercy, love and goodness. From morn to night the fervent priest goes about in imitation of the divine Master dispensing with a lavish hand deeds of mercy and love. The threshold of his door is worn thin with the feet of those in distress. No one is beyond the pale of his goodness. In his good works, creed, nationality, wealth or poverty creates no barrier. All classes come to him for comfort and all classes find relief. He follows you from the cradle to the grave. It was he who poured upon you the cleansing waters of Baptism, which made you a child of God and an heir of the heavenly
kingdom. It was he who reclaimed you, when you were beginning to walk the broad road that leads to death and hell. From his lips came forth the saving truths of the Gospel. He broke for you the true Bread of Life for the nourishment of your soul. It was he who received from you the mutual and irrevocable promise of conjugal love and fidelity. When the hand of adversity was laid upon you it was he who first sympathized with you and consoled you. In sickness he is with you to the end. His words are the last to fall upon your dying ears. He follows you to the grave and there consigns your body sacredly to the tomb to await the final resurrection. Yea, he follows you into the next world, and beseeches the Lord to deal mercifully with you. For twenty-five years Father Mark has been exercising such a mission among the people and Father Luke is just about to begin such a life.

My Brethren, partly for your sake that this work might be more fruitful among you, the Capuchins have taken the solemn vows of obedience and chastity. As rebellion of the will and of the flesh are two greatest sources of sin, by their vows of obedience and chastity their life is one of reparation and atonement. Yea, by this life, which resembles that of the angels, they are able to enter into the very sanctuary of God and become all powerful intercessors before the Throne of Mercy. The priests of Jesus Christ several times during the day stand in the presence of God and there chant in union with the Great High Priest, and their brother priests throughout the world, and all the souls of the just made perfect, the eternal praises of God, beseeching Him at the same time to show mercy to the people, and bring them all finally into the realms of bliss and glory.
Catholic fathers and mothers, could God honor you more than to give to you a son a priest? In West Virginia the harvest is ripe, the sheaves are laden, the vines are full, the branches are bending, waiting for the laborers of the Lord. Formerly it was the prayer of pious Catholic mothers that God at least would give them one son, who should be raised to the priesthood. May this most laudable ambition take hold of the Catholic mothers of West Virginia, and when we are all gathered around the Great White Throne of God, which shall be enlightened by the spotless Lamb, may we see many sons of the mothers of West Virginia, sitting high, near to Jesus Christ, sitting on the twelve thrones helping to judge the twelve tribes.

Father Mark, half your course in the priesthood is run. You are now on the other side of life. Remember, it requires as much generalship to retreat successfully as to advance. Father Luke you are just beginning your course. You have a high mount to climb. May both of you persevere to the end in the noblest and sublimest of all callings. May you not go empty handed before the Lord. As you ascend on high, may the angels in wonderment behold and cry out, who are those coming forth with their backs laden with works of mercy, and their hands teeming with good deeds?

May St. Francis and St. Anthony, your spiritual fathers, intercede with God to impress at least the stigmas in your souls, that you may burn more and more with love for Jesus Christ crucified, and with love for the poor. Of necessity such love must overrun in works of zeal and mercy, and fructify in the salvation of your own souls. On this day too, may St. Francis and St. Anthony from their high places in heaven cast their
merciful eyes upon me, for I desire some of their love of God and souls.
PENTECOST.

THE LAUNCHING OF THE CHURCH.

My Dear Brethren:—To-day, the Feast of Pentecost is the birthday of the Catholic Church. It is one of the three great feasts of the Church; the other two being Christmas, the coming of Christ into the world, and Easter, His Glorious Resurrection from the grave.

After the Lord had ascended into Heaven, being caught up in a cloud on the Mount of Olives, and wafted out of their sight in the blue depths of the sky, the Apostles returned to Jerusalem. Here they remained in prayer without ceasing, praising God and offering Him their thanks.

On the tenth day suddenly there is heard a great sound as of a mighty wind, and it filled the whole house. And there appeared, as it were parted tongues of fire, and they sat upon the head of each Apostle. Being now filled with the Holy Ghost, the Apostles left the Upper Room and started forth on their mission to convert the world.

They preached the Gospel first to the Jews, who were gathered there from every nation for the celebration of their great festival. Every man heard the Apostles, each in his own tongue; Parthians and Medes, Elamites, Cappadocians and Phrygians, Cyreneans, Cretans and Arabians; the inhabitants of each nation heard the Apostles in their own tongue. Three thousand, astounded at the miracles, and subdued by the inspired tongue of Peter, embraced the Gospel, declared
themselves converts to the religion of Jesus Christ, made profession of faith in His doctrines, did works of penance and were baptized. Numbers of these converts immediately returned to their homes in the distant provinces and preached the Gospel to their fellow-countrymen; and thus it has come to pass that nearly every primitive church traces its faith to the miracles of the first Christian Pentecost. St. John Chrysostom calls Pentecost the great day of the new and perfect religion of grace, in the Holy Ghost; and the other Fathers call it the birthday of the Church of Christ.

My Brethren, before the Descent of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles were weak, timid, vacillating, and earthyminded men. But now, timidity is replaced by strength. They realize that Christ's kingdom is spiritual. They proclaim fearlessly that He had come to free the world from the bondage of error and sin. They go forth among the nations regardless of all obstacles, to accomplish the work that had been committed to them. The Holy Ghost spoke by their mouths, touched the hearts of their hearers by His grace, and made the first Christians a community of Saints.

The new Christians became brethren in the highest sense of the word. They had a common fund. Seven deacons were appointed to distribute the charities impartially, among the Hellinistic and Hebraicing Jews. The kingdom of God was taking definite shape and the relations between the Church teaching and the Church taught were being harmoniously established. The Apostles, conscious of the greatness of their mission and strengthened by the fullness of the power which it contained, were authoritative teachers; and the faithful, on the other hand, believed in simplicity of heart, acknowledged the Apostles and subjected themselves to the Law.
Jerusalem soon contained five thousand believers and they were all persevering, as the "Acts" say, in the doctrines of the Apostles, in the communion of the breaking of bread and in prayer. And although they frequented private houses for prayer they did not cease to hold communion with the Jews in the Temple, until after the fatal day when the predictions of the Lord were fulfilled, Jerusalem was destroyed and the Temple demolished. Then the Church freed herself from the shackles of the Jewish rites, and became a distinct, definite and visible society.

When Peter and John had announced the doctrine of the resurrection of the body in the Temple, they were summoned before the High Council and asked by what authority they did these things: "We preach," said they, "in the Name of Jesus whom you have crucified." And when they had been forbidden to preach any more in His Name they answered: "We must obey God rather than men; for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

No danger could check their zeal. They are again apprehended and cast into prison; but an angel liberates them. Then it was that Gamaliel said to the Pharisees and Sadducees: "Let them take their course; if this work be of men, it will come to naught; if of God, you cannot destroy it." They are scourged and dismissed with a warning as to their future conduct. Now began their world wide mission.

Peter preached the Gospel in Pontus, Cappadocia, Galatia, Asia and Bythynia. He went to Rome, thence to Antioch. From historical documents we know, that after the Ascension of Christ, Peter took the lead in every matter of importance. He presided at the election of Matthias; was the first to address the assembled
multitude after the Descent of the Holy Ghost; spoke in
the name of the Apostles before the Council at Jerusa-
lem; performed the first miracle; pronounced the terri-
ble sentence upon Ananias and Saphira; was the first
to admit the Gentiles into the Christian Church; and,
although not the first to follow Christ, always stands
first in the catalogue of the Apostles given by the
Evangelists. These facts indubitably prove that the
Primacy of Peter was recognized by the Apostles them-
selves.

St. Peter, with St. Paul, fell a victim to the per-
secution of Nero and was crucified on the Vatican Hill
about the year 68; but at his own request, with his head
downward, considering himself unworthy to die in the
same way as his Divine Master.

St. Matthew preached the Gospel in India; St.
Philip preached it in Phrygia; St. Thomas preached it
to the Parthians, Medes and Persians; St. Andrew
preached it in southern Russia; St. Bartholomew
preached it in southern Arabia; Matthias preached it
at Ethiopia; St. Paul traveled all over Asia Minor ac-
companied by St. Mark; and St. John spent his last
days at Hierapolis. The Church honors all the Apostles,
except St. John as martyrs, and they are represented in
pictures with the Gospels and palm branches in their
hands.

My Brethren, the Gospel took root and spread all
over the civilized world. Even at the end of the first
century before the death of the last Apostle, there was
no place throughout the Roman Empire where Christi-
ans were not to be found. Its converts embraced men
and women of all ranks, conditions, ages and learning.
Since then, Christianity has been in the world and every-
where, civilizing and christianizing men, preparing
them not only for citizenship in heaven, but making them fit citizens of this earth.

On this day let us be filled with the spirit of joy and thanksgiving; joy, because the Kingdom of God was established on this earth; thanksgiving, because Christ sent the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete into the world to save it, and into our hearts to sanctify us.

"'Come, thou holy Paraclete,
And from Thy celestial seat,
Send Thy light and brilliancy;
Father of the poor draw near,
Giver of all gifts be here;
Come, the soul's true radiancy.'"
DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

My Dear Brethren:—The Church, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, has dedicated this month—the month of May—to the honor and service of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Why has she done so? If I interpret her spirit rightly, it is because May is the most beautiful month of all the year, and Mary is the most beautiful daughter of all the children of Eve. It is because May is the month of flowers, roses and perfumes, and Mary is the “Chosen Lily of the House of David,” and the “Sweetest odor of Israel.” It is because May is the month, when all nature teems with loveliness, when the buds blossom into flowers, when the young skip and play about, and the birds sing their sweetest melodies, and Mary brought into the world the “Expectation of the Nations” the “Source of Life,” the “Eternal and Incomprehensible Beauty.” It is well now and again to ask ourselves, why we give so much honor and reverence to the Blessed Virgin Mary, why we have such great confidence in her intercessory power, and why we love her so dearly?

There are six very strong reasons, why we honor and reverence the Blessed Virgin Mary. We shall now speak upon them briefly. The first and the strongest reason and the foundation of the others, is, because the Blessed Virgin Mary is the Mother of God. God could not have exalted her higher than to have made her His Mother—He could not have honored her more. Therefore God has given us the example. “Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt 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 shall give unto Him the throne of David, His Father; and He shall reign in the house of Jacob forever.’’ Yes, Jesus Christ is God; and the Blessed Virgin Mary is the Mother of Jesus Christ; and consequently she is truly the Mother of God. That is the root of the honor and reverence we give to her.

The Blessed Virgin Mary, is the woman spoken of in Genesis, who was to crush the serpent’s head:—‘‘I will place enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie and wait for her heel.’’ God, here again, has honored her exceedingly. She is the one selected by God to be the instrument in bringing forth into the world, Him,—Jesus Christ,—Who was to destroy the kingdom of Satan.

The angel sent from heaven tells us that the Blessed Virgin Mary is ‘‘full of grace.’’ The angel sent from heaven showed the greatest reverence for her, when upon coming into her presence he said, ‘‘Hail, full of grace.’’ —‘‘And the angel being come in said unto her, ‘‘Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; Blessed art thou amongst women.’’

John the Baptist, greater than whom, according to our Divine Lord, was not born of woman, showed in a most miraculous manner that the Blessed Virgin Mary is worthy of all honor, because at the salutation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, he leaped with joy within His mother’s womb:—‘‘And it came to pass that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost’’
We honor and reverence the Blessed Virgin Mary, because the Holy Ghost through the mouth of the inspired Elizabeth has foretold such honor and reverence:—

"Because He has regarded the humility of His handmaid; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." And finally the Blessed Virgin Mary was the woman seen in the heavens by the inspired John, with the sun around her and the moon under her feet, and a crown of stars upon her head;—"And a great sign appeared in the heavens; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet and on her head a crown of twelve stars." Are these not sufficient reasons for honoring and reverencing the Blessed Virgin Mary? Could stronger reasons be offered for any religious act performed by Christians?

My Brethren, when Christ was on earth He heeded the least desire of the Blessed Virgin Mary. You all remember the circumstances of the wedding feast at Cana of Galilee. The wine failed. The Blessed Virgin sends the waiters to Christ to apprise Him of the fact. Although the time for working miracles had not come in the counsels of God, yet, because His mother wished it, He worked a great miracle, changed the water into wine and supplied the guests with plenty,—and with the best of wine. Jesus Christ is the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary: He is the most devoted of all Sons: no other Son, like unto Him. And what son will refuse his mother any request that is within his power to grant? The Blessed Virgin Mary, gave Christ that body which was lashed and torn and nailed to the cross for us. That blood which was poured out on Calvary’s Heights, and by which we were redeemed came from the Blessed Virgin, as from its source. Are these not sufficient reasons, and cogent enough, to convince any one that the Blessed
Virgin is all powerful with Jesus Christ in Heaven, and
that He will not refuse her anything?
Catholics love the Blessed Virgin most dearly, and
so should all Christians:—First, because Christ gave her
to us as a Mother when He was about to give up His
spirit, and beheld her and St. John, standing at the foot
of the cross disconsolate and said "Mother behold thy
son, and Son behold thy mother." Secondly, we
should have the greatest love for her, because it is she,
who holds back the omnipotent arm of God, when, on
account of the sins of man, He is moved as of old to
destroy the human race from off the face of the earth.
No doubt if the Bessed Virgin Mary had lived before
the Deluge, the flood-gates of heaven would have re­
mained closed. No doubt it is owing to the pleading
of the Blessed Virgin Mary that God still prolongs the
"Day of Retribution." We love her most dearly, be­
cause God has placed the salvation of our souls in her
merciful hands, and wishes us to come to Jesus Christ
through His Blessed Mother. All Christians should love
her dearly, because she remained at the foot of the
cross to comfort our dying Saviour, and was the last
one upon whom His eyes rested:—Yea, she remained—
waited—and received His dead body into her •arms,
when taken down from the cross.
My Brethren, the Blessed Virgin is worthy of all
honor and reverence, because she is, as St. Andrew says,
the "Immaculate Virgin, through whom was repaired
what was lost in Adam." The Blessed Virgin Mary
is worthy of all honor and reverence because she is as
St. Dionysius says, the "Heavenly Treasure," and the
"Riches of the Deity" The Blessed Virgin Mary is
worthy of all honor and reverence, because it was
through her, as St. Andrew says, that "God rained
down upon this earth the grace of Christ like a cloud.” Yes, the Blessed Virgin Mary is worthy of all honor and reverence because as St. Epiphanius has declared, “She is more holy than the Seraphim and more glorious than the supernal spirits.” The fact that God made the Blessed Virgin, His Mother, should be a reason for all Christians, so strong as to make it almost blasphemous to harbor a doubt that the honor, reverence, love and devotion, which Catholics give to the Blessed Virgin is not most acceptable and pleasing to God.

The Blessed Virgin Mary in bringing forth Christ into the world, destroyed the power of Satan, the great arch-enemy of our soul. If we honor and reverence those valiant heroes who uphold the honor and dignity of our country, and drive from our shores, the enemies of the father-land, how much more should Christians honor and reverence her, who, through her Son Jesus Christ, defeated and crushed the power of all the enemies of our salvation? If the angel Gabriel did not consider it wrong to leave heaven, and come to this earth, and hail the Blessed Virgin as “Full of grace” and “blessed among women,” should we hesitate for a moment to do likewise? If St. Elizabeth, under inspiration sang the praises of the Blessed Virgin, why should not we? Our praises of the Blessed Virgin cannot equal those of St. John in the Apocalypse.

My Dear Brethren, let us go to the Blessed Virgin with the greatest confidence in all temptations and trials. Christ refused her nothing, when on earth, and neither will He refuse her anything in heaven, where she sits as queen. Let us love her as our mother, because Christ gave her to us as such. She will then watch over us as the tenderest and most solicitous of mothers. We are all Christ’s brothers; she is His mother. Let us renew
our devotion to her by promising never to allow a day to pass over without invoking her. And especially during this month dedicated to her, let us say the rosary every day. When we come to that part of the Hail Mary,—‘Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death’—Let us pause and reflect. We need her protection now, during every moment of our life, but most especially at the momentous hour of death, when Satan and Hell make their last fierce assault upon our souls. Mother of God be near us then! Let us try to imitate her, especially in the practice of humility, self-sacrifice, and purity. She was the mother of God, and yet she lived a hidden life, kept herself concealed from the public gaze. She willingly gave up her son Jesus Christ for us to be crucified. She was willing to forego the honor of being the Mother of the Messias—an honor all Jewish maidens coveted—if such would cost her the loss of her virginity. Devotion to Jesus Christ and His Mother go together; they cannot be separated; and those nations and people, most devoted to the Mother are most devoted to the Son.
MY DEAR BRETHREN:—Last Thursday was the Feast of "Corpus Christi," or the feast of the Body of Christ. At one time it was a holy day of obligation in this country, and in countries that are considered Catholic it is still kept as a holy day. By its name, "Corpus Christi" or the Body of Christ, we may see the object of the feast, namely to commemorate the institution of the Blessed Eucharist.

From Apostolic times, the Church celebrated the institution of the Blessed Eucharist on Thursday in holy week, or the day preceding Good Friday. However, as the church, during Holy Week is occupied entirely with the consideration of the Passion of Jesus Christ, it was only natural and proper that another day should be set aside as the feast of the Blessed Sacrament. So it came to pass, that Urban the Fourth, moved by several reasons, in the year 1264, ordered that the Thursday following the first Sunday after Pentecost should be kept holy as a day commemorating in a special manner the institution of the Blessed Sacrament. Martin the Fifth and Eugenius the Fourth, promoted the devotion of "Corpus Christi" by grants of indulgences. And the Council of Trent speaks of "Corpus Christi" as a triumph over heresy, and anathematises those who censure the Feast or the procession of the Blessed Sacrament on this day.

Although in these United States, the church has exempted the faithful from keeping the day holy, by refraining from servile works and assisting at the Holy
Sacrifice of the Mass, yet she desires us to keep the Feast in mind and in spirit, and on the following Sunday to celebrate it in some way. We shall then this morning, speak briefly on some phases of the Blessed Eucharist, instead of on the gospel of the day, and this evening have a procession of the Blessed Sacrament.

My Brethren, you all know the doctrine of the Blessed Eucharist. It is a Sacrament that contains the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In other words the bread and wine, over which the words of consecration have been pronounced by the priests, cease to be bread and wine, and become changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. Hence, although they still retain the appearances or outward form of bread and wine, inwardly or substantially they are the Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ. This is a great mystery—one of the greatest that has been revealed, and consequently, on this earth, we cannot hope to fathom or to comprehend it. But that is no reason why we should not believe it. The one thing for a reasonable man or a christian to do when it comes to religion is—has God revealed such a doctrine or has He commanded such a thing? If so, then I must believe, then I must obey. And in so doing, on account of the weakness and limitations of my mind, which I experience every day, and on account of the infinite veracity and holiness of God which reason teaches me, I perform the highest act of the intellect.

My Brethren, our divine Lord instituted this great mystery, the night before His Sacred Passion when He was celebrating for the last time with the disciples the Jewish feast of the Pasch. Surrounded by His chosen twelve, as the shades of evening were thickening around the city of Jerusalem, on the eve of His death, He takes
the bread of which they had been partaking, and after blessing it, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, saying: "Take ye and eat; for this is My body, which shall be given up for you;" and likewise of the wine of which they had been drinking, after blessing it, He gave it to them saying:—"Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood, which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins." Then He added those most significant words—"Do this in commemoration of Me." We believe that when our divine Lord said, "This is My Body," He meant exactly what those words signify; and consequently that He changed the substance of that bread into His Body. We believe that when our divine Lord said, "This is My Blood," He meant exactly what those words signify; and consequently that He changed the substance of that wine into the substance of His blood. That He could change the bread and wine into His Body and Blood, we believe most firmly because He was God. How He did it we do not know, as we do not know how one substance can be changed into another, yet such is taking place continually in nature. We believe that when our divine Lord said to the Apostles, "Do this in commemoration of Me," He gave them power to do what He had done at the Last Supper, namely, to change the bread and wine into His Body and Blood. We therefore believe, that when the bishops and priests of the Catholic Church, who are the legitimate successors of those Apostles, say at the Mass, "This is My Body" over the bread, and "This is My Blood" over the wine, that the same changes take place as at that Last Supper. This was the belief of all Christians from the time of Christ until the Fifteenth Century, when the so-called reformers, who wished to measure and test the mysteries of God by their puny, little, finite minds
—because they could not comprehend this truth,—gave a new meaning to Christ's words, saying that when Christ used the words—"This is My Body,"—"This is My Blood," He did not mean, "This is My Body, This is My Blood," but meant this signifies, this represents, this symbolizes My Body and Blood. And since the Fifteenth Century their followers have given, I believe, about four hundred different meanings to those most simple words—and most simple too in the Syro-Chaldaic, which was spoken by Jesus Christ.

My Brethren, you all know that the Blessed Eucharist was prefigured and foreshadowed under the Old Law. It was specially so by the Manna, which came down as snow from the heavens. This Manna was miraculous bread; so is the Blessed Eucharist. This Manna nourished the Jews during their pilgrimage in the desert; so does the Blessed Eucharist nourish Christians during their pilgrimage on this earth. Christ's august presence with us on the altar was prefigured under the old Law by the Holy of Holies, before which was kept burning a sacred lamp. Behold the Sanctuary Lamp burning night and day, pointing out Christ and His abiding with us forever. Christ's death on the cross and its effects were symbolized by the slaying of the Paschal Lamb. Those whose door-posts were sprinkled with the Blood of the Lamb, were saved from the destroying hand of the angel. Those whose souls are washed and cleansed by the Blood of Jesus Christ, are saved from eternal death inflicted by our arch-enemy, Satan.

My Brethren, our divine Lord instituted the Blessed Eucharist, first, that there might be within the church, on this earth forever, a true representation and memorial of His Passion and Death; secondly, that He might still remain in our midst, and be amongst us; and thirdly,
that we might become one with Him, and He, one with us.

In the Sacrifice of the Mass Christ is offered up and slain mystically. By the change of the bread into His Body and the wine into His Blood, separately, by the words of consecration, we have the real separation of Christ’s Blood from His Body on the cross, signified and represented. Every Mass then, becomes a memorial of Christ’s passion and death, and brings before our minds the Lord’s supper.

Christ became incarnate, took flesh, was born into this world, and lived on this earth that we might be able to see Him with the eyes of the body, draw close to Him and speak to Him. He still has the same desire. And therefore He remains with us under the appearance of bread and wine. The Real Presence localizes Jesus Christ on the altar, makes him physically present, and therefore we can see Him and draw near to Him, and speak to Him. He is as truly in our midst and among us, as He was with the disciples nineteen hundred years ago in the country of Judea.

When we receive Jesus Christ in Holy Communion, we become united to Him by the closest possible union. We become, as St. Cyril says, like two pieces of melted wax, almost indistinguishably one. Christ is in us, and we are in Christ. Christ’s flesh and blood become ours, and our flesh and blood become Christ’s. We dwell in Christ and He dwells in us.

My Brethren, on this Sunday within the octave of ‘Corpus Christi,’ let us all renew our devotion to Jesus Christ in the Blessed Eucharist; and let us go back in spirit to the night of the institution, and behold Jesus Christ rising from the table, and taking the bread and wine into His omnipotent hands and saying, "This
is My Body, which shall be given up for you,’’ and ‘‘This is My Blood which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins. Do this in commemoration of Me.’’ Hearing these words in spirit let us say ‘‘Credimus,’’—‘‘We believe.’’ Yes, we believe because Thou hast said it Christ, and Thou hast the words of eternal life. And let us see in the Blessed Eucharist a manifestation of Christ’s infinite love for us. Because He loves us with an infinite love, He wishes to be still in our midst, to dwell amongst us in the Blessed Eucharist. Because He loves us with an infinite love, He wishes to give His own Body and Blood for our spiritual food and drink in Holy Communion.
XIV SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

"BE NOT ANXIOUS OR SOLICITOUS."

My Dear Brethren:—To-day's gospel contains part of the sermon, which Jesus Christ delivered before the multitude which had assembled on a Mount to the west of the Sea of Tiberias in the country of Galilee. Seated as was His custom and surrounded by a vast concourse of people, who had followed Him "from Galilee and from Decapolis and from Jerusalem and from Judea and from beyond the Jordan," Christ began to speak.

Over His head were hovering flights of birds, and at His feet were green hills and sunny pastures which reached down to the very banks of the rippling waters of the Lake. Seated with this scene before Him, and the people anxiously awaiting for Him to begin, Christ first enunciated the "Eight Beatitudes" laid down the law of charity and the forgiveness of injuries, taught them how to pray and to fast; then it was He spoke the words which constitute this day's Gospel.

My Brethren, Christ in this Gospel, wishes to teach us one important truth, namely, not to be over anxious or over solicitous about temporal goods—"about what we shall eat and drink and wear." This is the central truth around which the others revolve. Or, to speak more exactly, everything else is intended to confirm, to illustrate or to enlarge upon this truth.

The gospel according to St. Matthew, from which this part of the sermon is taken was written in Hebrew, or Syro-Chaldaic. The original is not extant, but even
during the life time of the Apostles it had been translated into Greek, which enjoyed equal authority. Now the word used in the Greek version, and which has been rendered in the Douay Version by the English word solicitous, is "Mepummate" which means "To think earnestly upon," "to have a distracting care for," "to be filled with corroding anxiety." We see then that the English word solicitous does not bring out the full force of the Greek word "Mepummate."

My Brethren, Christ does not condemn nor censure a prudent thoughtful diligence in regard to the necessaries of life. Such a diligence is sanctioned by reason itself and by the example of Christ, "the way the truth and the life." No; it is not this kind of solicitude which the Gospel forbids. No one can expect to reap unless he sows and cultivates. The scripture praises and holds up for our imitation the laboriousness of the ant:— "Go to the ant, O Sluggard! and consider her ways and learn wisdom." St. Paul labored with his own hands to secure an independent sustenance: "For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil, working night and day lest we should be chargeable to any of you when we preached among you, the Gospel." In his Epistle to the Ephesians He commands the idle to labor that they might be able to assist the needy: "He that stole let him now steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good that he may have something to give to him that suffereth need." He tells the Thessalonians that the man who will not work should not eat: "For also when we were with you, this we declared to you that if any man will not work neither let him eat." No; it is not prudent diligence, nor labor nor toil, that our divine Lord forbids. To earn our bread in the sweat of our face was the command given
by the Almighty from the beginning. To Adam of old it was said:—"Cursed is the earth in thy work! with labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life."

My Brethren, God works with us both in the natural and in the supernatural order, but He will not do the work alone. His concurrence is necessary in the natural order and His grace in the supernatural. But if we wish to live and to grow physically, mentally and spiritually we must co-operate with God, or in other words we must work and toil and labor. Do we not see ceaseless activity in the vegetable kingdom? By that inward principle of life the plants absorb, transform and unify the minerals of the earth into themselves. Behold the labor in the animal kingdom! The lion that looks not out for his prey will soon lose his ferocity; the dog that continually basks in the sunshine will soon cease to bark; and the birds that always nestle in the branches will soon cease to warble. Yes, all life is activity. God, the infinite One is essential life and activity. He is defined in philosophy as "actus purissimus"—"the most pure act" in whom there is no potentiality or readiness to act, but all act and life and perfection.

My Brethren, what Jesus Christ condemns and forbids in to-day's Gospel is that anxious, fretful, anticipating solicitude, which implies a distrust in God's providence, and is a sign that the heart is fixed and wedded to the things of this earth. Ah! the mental pain and anguish of such people. It is written on their countenance, their conversation shows it, and it is portrayed in all their movements. What is the use of it? No peace here, no happiness hereafter. This anxious, fretful, this corroding solicitude, besides sinning against the Providence of God, will not avail you anything.
By it you cannot succeed any better. In fact you cloud your judgment. You make yourself less able to cope manfully and wisely with the affairs of life. By it, you not only become a burden to yourself, but by your habitual fretfulness you become a burden to your friends. It is only through charity they tolerate your presence—“Behold the birds of the air for they neither sow nor do they reap nor gather into barns: And your heavenly Father feedeth them******Consider the lilies of the field how they grow, they labor not, neither do they spin. But I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these***Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God and His justice and all these things shall be added unto you.” My Brethren, these last words carry us over into the consideration of the second and third points,—Temporal goods are only means, and when they conflict with our eternal interests, they must be forsaken. These last two points are an unfolding of the first, or rather they help us to a more correct understanding of the first:—“Be not solicitous for your life what you shall eat nor for your body what you shall put on.” God in our creation could have Himself alone in view. Any other end would be unworthy of God. He put us in this world on trial and probation. The whole world was made for man, and man for God. The earth and the fullness thereof were made for man. But God intended man simply to use them as a means, and never to set his heart upon them. They are to be stepping stones by which man is to mount up to God. And when there is a clash, or conflict between the temporal and the eternal, between the spiritual and the material, between the body and the soul, it requires no philosopher to say which must give way. They are means, and if means, they must lead to some-
thing. Hence, whenever they turn us away, instead of leading us to our last end—God—we must part company. Besides there is no comparison between time and eternity.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you." By the kingdom of God is meant the reign of God in our hearts. The keeping of His commandments, the doing of His blessed will—the service and worship of God for Himself and the love of his neighbor for God's sake—all of which will result or terminate in the possession of God in Heaven—in the enjoyment of the infinite beauty, goodness and truth and forever. If we devote ourselves chiefly to the care of our soul and propose its sanctification in all things, God will provide us with the necessaries of life:—"Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor do they reap nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? And if the grass of the fields which is to-day and to-morrow is cast into the oven God does so clothe; how much more you, O ye, of little faith!" God never has and never will forsake the poor, who are good, and put their trust in Him. He will provide in some way or other for their temporal necessities—I do not mean luxuries—they are not necessary, and in many cases kill both the body and the soul—but He will provide for their daily wants. Behold the religious in every age, who have given their time and life to God! never have they wanted the necessaries of life—yea, God often times as we learn from the Scripture and the lives of the Saints, worked miracles to provide food and raiment for them.
XV SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

THE RAISING TO LIFE OF THE YOUNG MAN.

My Dear Brethren:—Naim is a Hebrew word which signifies beautiful and charming. Indeed in the time of Christ the City of Naim, was beautiful and charming. It was full of life and heavenly faith. The city was not far from Capharnaum of Galilee, and was situated on the slope of a hill from which the eye could get a clear view of the Plains of Esdralon.

Christ had been at Capharnaum. He starts for Naim. As He ascends the hill which leads to the city, He sees a funeral slowly wending its way out of the gates towards a point beyond the city walls. A funeral in those days was a sad spectacle. The body, swathed in perfumes and linen bands and placed on a litter, was borne by some near relatives. Preceding it, marched a company of flute players, who drew forth shrill, plaintive notes. Then the mourners came, manifesting their great grief by strikingly external signs of woe. The women weep and wail and tear their dishevelled hair, and beat their breasts, and uplift their hands and heads frantically towards the heavens. Such was the scene which met Christ's eyes. And no doubt on this occasion the lamentations were more wild and clamorous, for this was the funeral of the only son of a widowed mother.

The pitiful sight touched and moved the God-man, Christ. And He turned to the woman and said, "Weep not" and approaching the bier He touched it. In-
stantly the funeral cortege came to a standstill. All eyes were centered on Christ. The flute players broke off their notes, the wailing women ceased their lamentations, and all stood in breathless silence. Christ’s voice rang out, “Young man, I say to thee, arise!” On the moment the dead man sat up, looked around and began to speak. Christ gave him back to his broken-hearted mother, alive and strong. And the people, in fear and awe, cried out: “A great Prophet is risen up among us and God hath visited His people.” Such, my brethren, are the circumstances of to-day’s gospel.

“And it came to pass afterwards that He went into a city that is called Naim; and there went with Him His disciples and a great multitude. And when He came nigh to the gate of the city, behold a dead man was carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow, and a great multitude of the city was with her.”

My Brethren, humanly speaking our Lord’s going up to Naim at this time and meeting there the funeral procession as it came out of the gates seem to have happened by chance. No; it was not thus. Nothing in Christ’s life happened by chance. All His public actions, even the most seemingly trifling ones, were directed by the special over-ruling Providence of God. And especially was it in the case before us. Behold how the facts are narrated by the inspired writer. Here is a well-known event; the only son of a widowed mother is dead; he is being borne towards the tomb; kinsfolk and a great number of sympathizing friends accompany the remains. Christ meets the funeral cortege; He is not alone, but accompanied by the disciples and a great multitude. All are witnesses of the death of the young man, and they become witnesses of his perfect restora-
tion to life. They saw him dead; they see him now as he sits up erect and speaks. They saw him borne on a litter, lifeless; they see him now walking back to the city with his mother. Yes; this happened not by chance. It had been planned by the great God to give His Son Jesus Christ an opportunity of performing a stupendous miracle on a public occasion.

"Whom when the Lord had seen, being moved with mercy towards her He said: weep not. And He came near and touched the bier. And they that carried it stood still. And He said: Young man I say to thee arise. And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And He gave Him back to his mother."

My Brethren, Christ the God-man is moved with compassion at the sight of this disconsolate widow. His great, divine human heart is touched to the quick. He must console her who had lost her all—her love, her hope, her life. "Weep not! weep not!" He says to her. When those words were uttered must she not have felt instantly the divine influence permeating her being through and through, and like a magic wand driving out sorrow and filling her soul again with happiness? Christ not only said, "Weep not!" but His words were followed by action. He not only consoled her but He went to the root of the sorrow. She was a widow and had lost her only son. He goes to the bier, touches it, and says, "Young man, I say to thee, arise!" The dead young man arose, sat up, spoke, and He gave him back to his mother.

"And there came a great fear on them all; and they glorified God, saying, A great Prophet is risen up among us, and God hath visited His people."

My Brethren, have you observed that the Lord in performing this miracle, in contrast with the prophets
of old, made use of no ceremonies, no prayers. And why? To show that He was the Prophet of all prophets, the Lord of nature and the King of the universe. When Elias brought back to life the son of the widow of Serepta he stretched out and measured himself upon the child three times and cried out to the Lord, "O Lord, my God, let the soul of this child, I beseech Thee, return into the body." When Eliseus brought back to life the child of the weeping Sunamite woman, he laid himself upon the child, he put his mouth to its mouth, his eyes to its eyes, and laid his hands upon its hands. But not so with Christ. By the sole exercise of His own power, by a simple word, without any ceremony or prayer—similar to the "fiat" which called all things into existence—He restores to life him who was dead.

For a long time no prophets had appeared among the Jews. But God shows again His ancient love for the chosen people by sending into their midst the great Prophet, who wrought more brilliant miracles than ever had been wrought before. And hence it was this that made them cry out, "A great Prophet is risen up among us, and God hath visited His people."

My Brethren, there is a deep spiritual meaning which lies underneath the words. In the first place let us not think that Christ's miraculous power stopped at the body. No; it was not His custom to heal the body and allow the soul to remain in sin. On this occasion we have reason to believe that Christ enkindled within that soul a living faith. That when He raised the body to life, He breathed within that soul the breath of immortality; that the mother, too, received the precious gift of faith; and that mother and son went back to Naim faithful disciples of Christ.
In the second place let us see in that mother weeping over her dead son, the Catholic Church weeping over her children who are dead to God by sin. Yes; the Catholic Church weeps continually over those children who are in grievous sin, and she enjoins her faithful ones to intercede for their restoration to spiritual life. Christ, touched by the weeping of His spouse, the Church, and the supplication of her children, speaks to the hearts of sinners, calls them and draws them sweetly but surely to true repentance and amendment. Through the power and unction of heavenly grace, He raises them up mercifully and hands them back to holy mother the Church, who receives them with great joy, and watches over them lest their feet stray again into the paths of sin and death.

My Brethren, this dead young man according to some of the Fathers, represents a special class of sinners. There are these classes of sinners according to these Fathers. To the first class belong all those who are not so abandoned and sunk into sin as to be unable to help themselves by approaching the Lord by prayers and obtaining a cure. The leper mentioned in the gospel belonged to this class, because through his own intercession he obtained a cure. To the second class, belong all those, who are so sunk in sin that their spiritual faculties are paralyzed, and consequently they need others to intercede for them. The paralytic servant of the Centurion represented this class. And to the third class, belong all those who are so crushed by the weight of sin that it requires a miracle of grace to restore them to spiritual life. The dead young man of the gospel represents this third class.

My Brethren, to sum up, the first great lesson I would draw from the gospel is the Providence of God over His
servants. To them that do His will and trust in Him, nothing happens by chance and everything—crosses, trials and afflictions—work unto their salvation. Shall He who provides for the birds of the air, the fishes of the sea, and the beasts that roam the forests, neglect to watch with a special care over His servants, His intimates, His beloved ones? By Christ’s sympathy and the words He spoke, “Weep not!” we see the human side of Christ. By the raising to life of the dead, we see the divine side of Christ. In Christ there were two natures, the nature of God and the nature of man united in the Person of the Word,—the second Person of the Adorable Trinity. In imitation of Christ, Who is our model, we must not only offer words of sympathy to those in want and distress but we must act,—we must go to their assistance by money and labor if necessary,—we must relieve. This dead young man represents habitual sinners who are powerless to help themselves, and there are many such in the Church. It will take a greater miracle to restore them to spiritual life, than the one which restored this young man to natural life. Let us weep continually with the Church over them, and unite our prayers to hers for their spiritual restoration.
ST. CASIMIR.

MY DEAR BRETHREN:—St. Casimir whose feast we celebrated yesterday, sprung from kingly parents, his father being Casimir III of Poland, and his mother being Elizabeth of Austria, daughter to the Emperor Albert II. He was born on the 5th of October in the year 1458, and from his very childhood showed remarkable signs of virtue. His early education was entrusted to the celebrated Longinus, to whom he was most affectionately attached, and from whose holy example and pious maxims he derived much spiritual profit.

At this early age, observing the softness and luxuriousness which reign at kingly courts, he began to steel himself against such baneful influences by practicing severe mortifications. Thus do we find him wearing next his skin a hair shirt, frequently sleeping upon the ground, and spending a considerable part of the night in prayer and meditation.

He was especially devoted to the Passion of Christ and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The very thought of the least suffering endured by our Blessed Redeemer caused him to shed tears. He never failed to be present at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and he assisted at it with so much attention and reverence that he appeared to be in raptures. He respected the least ceremonies of the Church, and anything that tended to promote piety was most dear to him. He tried to live always in the presence of God, and was noted for his cheerfulness of temper, mildness of manners and affability of conduct. He was likewise devoted to the Blessed Virgin, in whose
honor he composed a hymn, which he frequently recited. He loved the poor, considering them the wards of Christ, whom he assisted not only with what he, himself, really possessed, but also with his father’s credit.

There now occurred in the Saint’s life an event which cost him much pain and sorrow. The nobles of Hungary, dissatisfied with their king, begged Casimir III to allow them to place our saint on the throne. Being then only fifteen years old he reluctantly gave his consent, and only in compliance with the wishes of his father. Placing himself at the head of an army of twenty-thousand men he marched to the frontier to meet King Mathias, who had assembled there an equally powerful army to oppose him. But it so happened that Pope Sixtus IV had amicably settled matters, and our saint now happily gave up the war-like expedition.

However, learning that his father was much displeased at his dropping the project, instead of returning to Cracow, he retired to the castle of Dobski where he did penance for three months. Having also learned the injustice of the attempt to overthrow the King of Hungary, and reflecting that he had been made a party to it at an age when he could not determine entirely for himself, he realized more and more the dangers to salvation that lurk in high places and in great enterprises.

He lived nine years after this event; the whole of which time he spent almost entirely in the salvation and sanctification of his soul, continuing his life of prayer, self-abnegation and mortification. Notwithstanding the advice of physicians who urged him to marry, he maintained to the last his chastity untainted and unsullied. Wasting away from a lingering illness, he foretold the day of his death like many other saints. Instead of mitigating his penitential life he redoubled his exercises
of piety and mortification as his end drew nearer. He received the Sacraments of the Church with the greatest recollection and fervor, and on the 4th of March, 1482, his pure young soul left its body, winged its flight heavenward to join the angel choirs.

Numerous miracles were wrought through his intercession. One hundred and twenty years after his death, his body and all the costly garments with which it was enshrouded were found within the tomb entire and incorrupt. There also came forth from his body, a most sweet smell and odor like unto that exhaled by the choicest and most delicious flowers. He was canonized by Pope Leo X, and is made the patron of Poland. A chapel of marble has been erected in Poland to contain his remains and in his honor called after him. And even to the present day there is to be seen at Paris in the chapel of St. Germain des Pres an original picture of him. Such is a short sketch of a saint who may be looked upon, as are Saints Aloysius and Stanislaus, a miracle of grace.

My Brethren, St. Casimir perceived that honors and riches are a great danger to salvation and an almost insurmountable barrier to sanctification; therefore, although compelled to live at court—being the son of a king,—he made use of the proper antidotes—self-abnegation, humility, great charity to the poor and mortification. Yes, we can almost say the same thing about honors as our Divine Lord said about riches—'It is harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle.' Honors and riches puff up the spirit, tend to promote softness of life, and to harden the heart. Instead of sighing after honors and wealth, let us thank God that He has placed us in the humbler walks of life, and ask Him
to keep us there. However, the fact of not possessing much of the goods of the world, and of not holding a place of honor and distinction will not save us. Love of pleasure, slothfulness of spirit, and self-indulgence, which we find even among the very poor and to some extent in the lives of most people, are sufficient to send us to hell. Let us resolve this morning, at the beginning of the sacred Season of Lent to make war on this spirit. To the love of pleasure, let us oppose the love of the cross, to slothfulness, let us oppose true zeal in the affair of our salvation, and to self-indulgence, let us oppose mortification. Remember the hair shirt worn by Saint Casimir, his sleeping on the ground, and his alms to the poor.

St. Casimir had a great devotion to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. He realized what that act of worship is—the act of acts, the most stupendous and marvelous thing that takes place upon this earth! He saw with the eyes of faith that Jesus Christ, true God and true man is there offering Himself up (in an unbloody manner) to His Heavenly Father, in adoration, thanksgiving and petition; that without it, Calvary’s Cross would avail us little; and that from it the Sacraments derive their efficacy, and our prayers their value. He realized that Jesus Christ during every Mass, leaves His high throne of glory, hides His divine splendor under the humble appearance of bread and wine, and takes up His presence on our altars. He, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, condescends to come into our midst and offers Himself up as a Victim of Love. It was this belief and a realization of it, that caused St. Casimir to suffer the greatest inconvenience, that he might be present every morning at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and that made him so recollected and de-
voted as to appear almost in raptures. Let us pray to St. Casimir to intercede with God to bestow upon us some of his devotion to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and also some of his devotion to the Blessed Virgin. These two devotions are an index of true Catholicity, and I may add a mark of predestination. St. Casimir composed a hymn to the Blessed Virgin which he recited frequently. Let us resolve at least to say the rosary every day.
I

XVI SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

THE MIRACLE ON THE SABBATH.

My Dear Brethren:—When Christ was sojourning in the mountainous country of Perea, a banquet was given by one of the famous Pharisees of that country, a ruler of the Synagogue. It was given on the Sabbath. For although the Jews commanded the strictest rest and quiet on that day they never forbade, but rather encouraged, social gatherings on the Sabbath, provided everything was gotten in readiness on the preceding evening. To such a festivity Christ was invited.

It was not through a spirit of love that the invitation was extended, but rather from a sinister motive to find out from social intercourse with Christ something censurable in His conduct. Therefore He was soon surrounded by a group of hostile guests. In the crowd of on-lookers, there was a man afflicted with the dropsy and upon him the Lord fixed a compassionate gaze. The doctors of the law observing this, turned their malicious eyes upon Christ. in an inquisitive manner. This so confused and intimidated the invalid that he was afraid to beseech Christ to heal him.

What was Christ to do? He soon found a way out of the predicament. Reading aright their evil hearts, He soon unmasked their hypocrisy. Brusquely He asked: "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?" They were now in a dilemma. If they say yes, they would contradict their own teaching; and if they say
no, they knew that Christ would refute them by their own conduct. So in the dilemma they remained silent. During the silence Christ took the sick man by the hand, healed him and sent him away. And turning to the Pharisees he said, "Which of you shall have an ox or an ass fall into the pit and will not immediately draw him out on the Sabbath?" Christ knew that not one of them would hesitate a moment to draw his own ox or ass out of the pit if it happened to fall into it on the Sabbath. What was the conclusion? Christ's action was entirely justified by their own conduct.

Completely defeated and unable to reply, the Scribes and Pharisees were much vexed. And to conceal their vexation, they hurried confusedly to the festal board. Following the custom of the times, the tables which were long and low, were arranged in the centre of the room, and were surrounded by reclining couches. The place of honor was the centre; and to it the guests seemed to rush eagerly. Perceiving such puerile vanity, Christ wished to show them to what natural humiliations this way of acting would lead them. For, should any distinguished guest enter during the feast, he who had chosen the first place must needs step down. But how much wiser the humble man, who had taken the lowest place! He cannot be bidden to give up his place, except to go up higher. Therefore from a worldly standpoint, the Scribes and Pharisees were not wise. To confirm the reasoning and also to teach a heavenly truth the Lord added: "Because every one that exalteth himself, shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted."

My Brethren, you see that there are two principal ideas in the Gospel. First the Lord heals an invalid on the Sabbath to the scandal of the Scribes and Phari-
sees. Secondly, He rebukes them for their puerile vanity and pride. We shall, then, this morning, in accordance with the Gospel speak on two things; namely on the observance of the Lord’s Day, and the vice of pride.

“Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath” is the third precept of the Decalogue. The other nine flow from nature, and are taught us more or less clearly by reason. They are perpetual and irrevocable and as much binding under the New as under the Old Law. But not so with the third precept. The observance of the Sabbath under the New Law has been transferred to the observance of the First Day of the week. The natural law commands us to set aside some day on which to worship our Creator. But it does not say that He must be worshipped on this day in preference to some other day. It is left to the positive law to determine the time, and to the ceremonial law, the manner.

The Seventh Day was set aside under the Old Law for religious worship. But in the fullness of time when Christ, the Messiah came, of whom the prophets spoke, whose law and ceremony were a shadow and figure of His law, the ceremonial part of the Old Law was abrogated to give place to that of the New Law. The Apostles therefore consecrated the First Day of the week to divine worship, and they called it the Lord’s Day. St. John, in the Apocalypse speaks of the Lord’s Day,—“I was in spirit on the Lord’s Day”; and St. Paul orders a collection to be taken up on the first day of the week,—“On the first day of the week let every one of you put aside a part with himself, laying up what it shall please him.” The Apostles then, or the infant Church under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, changed the day of the religious observance from the seventh day of the week
or the Sabbath, to the first day of the week or the Sunday. They changed it to the First Day of the week, because on that day the creation of the world was begun; because on that day Christ rose triumphant from the dead; because on that day the Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles and the Church was launched on her mission.

We come now to the observance of the Lord's Day or the practical part; namely, how should Sunday be kept? Let us go back to the Sabbath to get light. Sabbath is a Hebrew word, which signifies cessation from labor. This was the first idea which was implied in the keeping of the Sabbath. It was to be a day of rest, as it is called in Exodus and Genesis,—"The Lord rested from all the work which He had done;" and it was to commemorate the completion of the work of creation.

But the Sabbath was something more than a day of rest; it was to be a day of worship:—"Observe the day of the Sabbath; sanctify it." The Jews not only rested on the Sabbath, refraining from all servile work, but they performed on this day their religious duties towards God. Attaching this meaning to the Sunday, or the Lord's Day, we see first that we must refrain from unnecessary servile works. And by servile works we mean work which is accustomed to be done by servants. It means work in which the body and not the mind is chiefly exercised. By unnecessary work is meant work which can be done on other days; work, the postponement of which will not cause us or others any serious inconvenience or loss. The object of this part of the precept is to prevent us from doing anything which will interfere with the proper observance of the day. Secondly, Christians must spend Sunday in a holy manner, must sanctify it. Good Catholics know what this means.
They know to sanctify the Lord's Day properly they must assist at Mass, the great act of public worship; they must hear the Gospel explained; they must be present at the other public services; they must devote some time to spiritual reading; they must perform some spiritual or corporal works of mercy; and, by all means, they must strive to refrain from evil on this day.

"Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." These words of the Divine Master contain not only heavenly but much earthly wisdom. He that exalteth himself even during this life will be humbled. The proud must necessarily meet with rebuffs and contradictions. Christ illustrated this truth beautifully in the Gospel. The proud are being humbled every day. The old, trite proverb is true,—"Pride goeth before a fall." No one pities a proud man who has been humbled. No one cares for the company of the proud, but the proud. They are shunned and avoided by sensible people. On the contrary the humble are loved; their company is sought; they are praised and admired. Pride is a sign of the weak character, whilst humility bespeaks strength and greatness of soul.

How detestable a proud man is in the sight of God! He is a living lie. "Who is man that he should be proud? What has he that he has not received? And why should he glory as if he had not received?" Man is a weak creature—weak in every respect. He owes his existence to the creative act of God and his continuance in existence to God's concurrence. He cannot think a thought, have the least desire, lift a hand or raise a foot without God's concurrence in the natural order. How weak and frail man is at his best! In strength he is a pigmy compared with the lion; in fleet
of foot the deer almost infinitely surpasses him; in agility he pales into insignificance before the tiger. Why should one boast of beauty? A few days on a sick bed will make the most beautiful almost repulsive. Who should boast of intellectual attainments, when he remembers how much more there is to be known and with how much labor and difficulty he learned the little he knows? The greatest scholars, when considered in relation to universal knowledge, are truly little children just beginning their letters.

My Brethren, when it comes to the supernatural we are still weaker and more dependent upon God. We cannot think a good thought without God's grace. We cannot begin a good work without God's giving us the impulse. The grace of God is necessary to begin, to continue and to perfect any good. In our members as St. Paul says we find two laws fighting and contending for the mastery:—"That which I will to do" says he, "I do not; and that which I will not to do, I do." Yes, St. Paul's experience is ours. We resolve in the morning and before nightfall we have broken our resolutions not only once or twice but several times. Weak,—weak indeed is man, both in body and soul. Of himself he has nothing and by himself he can do nothing. He is totally and entirely dependent upon God for life, existence, strength, virtue and happiness.

In conclusion, my brethren, let us examine ourselves seriously upon these two truths. Do we keep holy the Lord's Day? Unnecessary bodily labor is forbidden, and we must give a good part of the day to religious worship, and to the things of the mind. Avoid both extremes. Right conduct, like truth, lies as a rule between extremes. After we have assisted at the religious services, we may partake of innocent, healthy, quiet
amusement on Sunday. God never intended Sunday to be a sad and gloomy day. It should be the happiest of the week, looked forward to and welcomed by all. God made the Sunday for man and not man for the Sunday. We want neither a Puritanical Sunday, nor a Continental Sunday. The Puritans sinned by excess and the Continentals by defect. Sunday is not a day when all labor and work must be suspended. Some labor and work are necessary on that day for the common good, and cannot be postponed without grave inconvenience and serious hurt to society. Sunday is not a day when factories and mills should be operated, and business houses and places of amusement kept open. Extremes, as I said, must be avoided. Sunday is a day of rest, a day of prayer, a day of devotion to God and fellowman, a day of innocent recreation, a day to commune with God through nature, and to knit more closely together the ties of family and friendship.

Are we humble? It is impossible to please God without humility. Humility is the foundation of all true holiness. Humility never boasts, never excuses its faults, never deceives, never despises the lowly, and never shuns labor, if necessary, no matter how menial it may be. God loves the humble because their life is truth. The humble are powerful with God. Their prayers pierce the heavens:—"Learn of me because I am meek and humble of heart;" "Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."
"Which is the great commandment?"

My dear Brethren:—The lawyer mentioned in the Gospel was not a Civil lawyer, but a doctor of the Jewish Law, or one learned in the Law of Moses.

He had been eagerly following the controversy in which Christ and the Pharisees were engaged, and he had seen how easily Christ had confounded them. In the course of the controversy he had heard Christ enunciate the sublime doctrine of the spiritual life which is lived in the next world. He was so enamoured of it, that he wished to learn more of the school of Christ. Not so much then to tempt Christ as to hear more from Him did this doctor of the law approach Him and say, "Master which is the great commandment in the Law?"

My Brethren, this was a question which had engaged much the attention, and disturbed the minds of the Jews of those days. The masters of Israel in their study of the moral law had made it a useless labyrinth by accumulating precept upon precept, until finally they had enunciated three hundred and sixty-five negative and two hundred and forty-eight positive precepts, which every Jew must have constantly before his mind if he wished to fulfill scrupulously the law. You may see now what an important question this was—"Which is the great commandment in the Law?"

Christ did not leave them long in doubt. He pointed to the inscription on their phylacteries, which was a prayer repeated twice a day by every pious Israelite
and ran thus:—‘Hearken, O Israel, the Lord thy God is the only God. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind and with all thy strength.’ ‘This is the greatest and first commandment’ said Christ: ‘And the second is like to it; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hangeth the whole law and the prophets.’

My Brethren, to appreciate the beneficent light which this short speech shed upon their souls, it would be necessary for us to have lived in those days, when the Israelite’s mind had been so beclouded by the teaching of the Rabbis. Here in a few words, which the simplest could understand, Christ expressed the whole law, or rather He reduced it to one single duty, namely love,—love of God above all things and our neighbors as ourselves.

Enraptured with the doctrine, which had confirmed all that he had been able to descry in the holy books, the doctor openly testified to his delight and cried out: ‘Master you have well said,’ and he repeated word for word the Saviour’s answer.

Christ was touched at such tokens of earnestness, praised his wisdom and encouraged him to take the final step, which yet lay between him and the perfect light by saying, ‘You are not far from the heavenly kingdom.’

This dialogue soon reached the ears of the Pharisees, and they gathered together to scrutinize more closely the Christ, Whom they durst no longer openly attack.

Christ was instantly aware of their presence and this time He did not wait for them to question Him but addressed them thus:—‘What think you concerning the Christ, whose son is He?’ They say to Him: ‘Of
David." "How then doth David by the Spirit call Him Lord saying, 'The Lord said to my Lord sit on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.' If then David calleth Him Lord how is He his son?"

My Brethren, the Pharisees believed in the inspiration of that psalm. Christ then from their own teaching proves His divinity. They admitted, in answer to His question, that Christ was David's Son, and yet David under inspiration calls Christ his Lord. Now David could do this only on the supposition that Christ according to the flesh, or as regards His humanity, was a descendant of David, but according to His divinity, or divine nature, was David's God.

They did not attempt to solve the difficulty for they saw that by so doing they would have to confess that Christ was their Lord and Master. So still blinded by passion they remained silent, but the people heard Him gladly: "From that day forth" saith the Gospel, "neither durst anyone question Him any more."

My Brethren, Christ in the gospel told the lawyer that the love of God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves, was the fulfilling of the whole law. That is literally true. If we love God with our whole heart and soul and with all our mind and strength, and our neighbors truly as ourselves, we shall keep the commandments; for they are but an unfolding and a development of those two precepts. If we love God above all things, we shall not adore false gods, we shall reverence God's name, and shall worship and serve Him. If we love our neighbor as ourselves, we shall honor and respect our parents, we shall not quarrel with our fellow man, nor injure him; we shall respect his wife, his property and his good name, as we would wish him to do unto us. But this love of God and neighbor must be the love such
as Christ described it. If we are willing to give up all the goods of this world and even our life for God's sake, then we have the true love of God in our hearts. If we are willing to share even the necessaries of life with a neighbor in dire want, then we love our neighbor as ourselves. Measured by this standard should we not have many misgivings? This kind of love in days gone by was in the world, especially among the old saints, but I am afraid it is fast disappearing from the face of the earth.

My Brethren, the insincerity and hypocrisy of the Pharisees, and their laying down the conditions upon which they would accept Christ were the reasons why faith and repentance were not given them. A sincere heart and a guileless soul are the first disposition for faith. The second disposition for faith is to be free from any habit of sin, and especially from that monster—the sin of impurity. And the third disposition is to feel the want of Christ's kingdom and to be on the lookout for it. For one or more of these reasons is the explanation why so many live and die out of the Church, and outside the pale of Christianity.

My Brethren, let us thank God for the gift of Catholic faith, and show our appreciation of it by our lives. We believe most firmly. We are not tossed about by every wind of doctrine. The Catholic has no doubts; a difficulty, yea many of them, do not make a doubt. He knows exactly what he must believe and do in order to be saved. He has the firmest convictions in matters of faith. He takes his faith and morals from the teaching of the Church,—that great institution which was founded by Jesus Christ upon Peter, the rock, which has been in the world for nineteen hundred years among all nations and peoples, which is everywhere at the pres-
ent time, numbering three hundred million souls, who are one in faith, in doctrine and in practice. Contrast your condition with those Jews in the gospel, who were groping in the dark until Christ dispersed the clouds. Contrast your condition with those outside the Church, who are left to themselves to search out their belief in the Scriptures. To-day they believe one thing to-morrow another. No certainty, no rest, no peace. Catholics, guard your faith and the faith of your children. It can be lost; it has been lost. It is the pearl which was found in the field and for which the man in the gospel sold all to purchase.
ST. JOHN OF MATHA.

My Dear Brethren:—On last Wednesday we celebrated the Feast of St. John of Matha who founded the Order of Trinitarians, whose sole work was to ransom Christian slaves held in captivity by the Pagans. Our Saint was born at Fancon, France, on the 24th of June in the year 1152. His parents were not only rich and noble but pious and virtuous. He was christened John, in honor of St. John the Baptist, and his mother dedicated him to God from his infancy. When he reached boyhood, his father sent him to a college at Aix, where he pursued those studies and exercises specially suited for young noblemen. But at this early age, the grace of God was urging him on to holiness, and his chief care seemed to advance and grow in virtue. Hence we find him giving away to the poor, part of the money, which his parents sent him for his own use. On Fridays he visited the hospitals, where he cleansed and dressed the sores and wounds of the poor.

Returning home from college he obtained the consent of his father to build a little hermitage on the outskirts of the city, that he might there give himself up entirely to prayer, mortification and good works. But finding his solitude broken and interrupted by the frequent visits of his friends, he obtained the further consent of his father to take up the study of theology at Paris. Here he prosecuted his studies with so much success that he won the doctor's cap with great applause, but to his own discomfiture and confusion. He was soon after ordained priest, and said his first Mass with
so much fervor and devotion as to make visible the heavenly grace with which his soul was adorned.

On this day—the day on which he offered up for the first time the Sacrifice of the New Law, in which Jesus Christ offers Himself up in an unbloody manner to His heavenly Father to redeem us from the captivity of Satan—John of Matha was inspired to offer himself up to redeem Christians from the Mohammedans. However, as this was a work of most heroic charity, it required a high degree of sanctity to undertake it. And God, who always prepares His chosen vessels, inspired John further to go into retirement to fit himself better by prayer and mortification for this work. In a great wood near Gandelu there lived a most holy hermit by the name of Felix and to him John betook himself. He asked to become his disciple, but Felix soon discovered that he was no novice in the way of perfection, and took him, not as a disciple, but as a companion. By leaps and bounds, as it were, these two solitaries advanced in holiness.

One day as they were both sitting on the bank of a spring John made known to Felix the resolution he had taken on the day he said his first Mass. He spoke with so much grace and unction on the subject of succoring and ransoming Christian captives as to convince Felix that the design came from God. So Felix proffered his assistance. They both recommended the project to God by special prayers and fastings, and then, at the end of the year, set out for Rome to obtain the Pope's sanction and blessing.

Innocent the Third was then the reigning Pontiff, and having learned from the Bishop of Paris of their sanctity and mission, he received them as two angels sent from heaven, and made them lodge in his own
palace. After giving them several audiences he assembled the Cardinals for consultation, who, after prayers and fasts to know the will of heaven, concluded the work was from God. Innocent the Third then ordered the institution of the order and appointed John of Matha, first superior-general. Their habit was to be white with a red and blue cross on the breast, and the Order was to take the name of the Holy Trinity.

The two founders now returned to France, and were received by Philip Augustus who authorized the establishment of their order in his kingdom, and favored it with many liberalities. Their first convent was built at Brie, and soon many other houses of their order sprang up in France. Their first expedition was to accompany the Counts of Flanders and Blois and other Lords to the Holy war. Their first work of rescue was while on a voyage to the king of Morocco, when they redeemed one hundred and eighty-six Christian slaves. The next year John himself went to Tunis and purchased the freedom of one hundred and ten more Christian slaves. He then returned to France, and having received many charities, set out for Spain where he likewise purchased the freedom of many Christians held in captivity by the Moors.

He made a second voyage to Tunis and carried with him abundant alms with which he redeemed many captives. Enraged at his zeal and success, the infidels began to persecute him. And as he was returning home with one hundred and twenty slaves, they took away the helm of the vessel and tore off the sails. But God in a miraculous manner, came to their assistance, and after a prosperous voyage the vessel landed safe at Ostia.

By this time through the zealous efforts of St. Felix the Order grew rapidly in France and a chapel was built
on the very spot where before had stood the chapel of St. Mathurin, and that is why they are called in France, Mathurins. St. John went to Rome and after spending two years in works of zeal and penance, died on the 21st of December in the year 1213. He was buried in his church of St. Thomas, but his remains were afterwards translated into Spain. The rule of the Order was confirmed a second time by Pope Honorius. They are forbidden to eat meat or fish, and when traveling must not ride on any beasts except asses.

My Brethren, such is a short sketch of the life of a great Saint who was as practical as he was pious. From his life, I would draw four lessons. First, God in His loving kindness, prepares men, His weak instruments, for any great work He has in store for them. St. John of Matha was given pious and virtuous parents. He was given, as a patron, John the Baptist, because his work required almost the same preparation and the austere virtues of John. Solitude was the preparation and self abnegation the work. Secondly, St. John of Matha’s life proves the divinity of the Christian religion, and the superiority of the supernatural over the natural virtues. Nature urges us always to keep our own life and convenience in view in all we do. In other words never to sacrifice our own life to save the life of our fellow man; and never to undergo privations unless we are to derive some temporal and worldly advantage and pleasure. John of Matha was at all times ready to give up his life to rescue even one soul, and to suffer all privations and crosses with no hope of temporal gain but only insults and ignominy. Thirdly, the Catholic Church, by her charitable organizations, goes to the rescue of and alleviates all forms of suffering and misery. She has her maternity homes for abandoned waifs,
orphan asylums for homeless children, rescue homes for "fallen women," homes for the aged and the poor, and hospitals for the sick. Those in charge of these various institutions consecrate their lives to the work, and in administering to the cares and wants of the inmates, see in them Jesus Christ, and do unto them as they would do unto Christ Himself. Fourthly, my brethren, let us resolve this morning to go always to the assistance of our indigent brother, believing firmly that as often as we feed and clothe him, we feed and clothe our Divine Lord and Saviour. Let us resolve to make great efforts to rescue the souls of all those who are under the complete slavery and captivity of Satan. St. John of Matha, pray to God for this congregation—that pastor and flock may be endowed from on high with some of your spirit of prayer and sacrifice, and be willing if necessary to lay down their lives to rescue even one soul from eternal perdition!—"Greater love than this no man hath, than to lay down his life for his brother."
XVIII SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

CHRIST HEALS THE PARALYTIC.

My dear brethren:—When Christ had returned to His own town of Capharnaum, He found there the Scribes and Pharisees who had come not only from Galilee, but from Judea and Jerusalem. They had come on a mission of espionage, to detect, if they could, some fault in Christ’s conduct, and to discover His ultimate purposes.

So, accordingly as it was rumored that He had arrived, we see them hurrying, too, with the rest of the populace, to enter the house where Christ was. And they seated themselves within the innermost circle to see and to hear everything.

The dwelling was soon filled to overflowing, and it was impossible to gain an entrance by the door-way. Christ as was His custom was sitting teaching. Suddenly an opening was made in the low ceiling of earthen clay; the rafters began to part; and four men proceeded to let down a pallet upon which was lying an invalid. He was a paralytic, and this was the only way by which he could be brought into the presence of Christ, the great Physician.

This deed spoke more eloquently than words, the great faith of the invalid and his companions, and moved Christ to compassion. By His omniscience He saw that the root of the evil was sin, and He said to the paralytic: “Be of good heart child; thy sins are forgiven thee.”
Instantly the countenances of the Scribes and Phar­ri­soes began to glow with a threatening menace; and low mutterings were heard,—"This One blasphemeth." But Christ seeing their thoughts said: "Why think ye evil in your hearts? Which is easier to say, thy sins are forgiven thee, or, arise and walk?"

The question silenced them for they were still in doubt as to Christ’s miraculous powers. Perhaps He could heal this man’s body, and that would add more to their discomfiture; so they maintained a distrustful silence. But Christ broke it by continuing:—"But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, then saith He to the paralytic, "Arise, take up thy bed and go into thy house."

Immediately the sick man arose, took up the pallet upon which he had been lying, threaded his way through the crowd and started for his home glorifying God.

As was natural, those who witnessed this great mira­cle, were at first struck dumb with awe; but soon their wondering delight found tongue and speech, and they said one to another with tremulous lips and bated breath:—"We have seen marvelous things to-day."

"And others of the crowd” as the gospel says, “glo­ri­fied and praised God for having bestowed such power upon men.”

My Brethren, the faith of the paralytic and his com­panions should be an example for us. They allowed no difficulty or labor to forestall them. They carried this man to the house, and when they saw that it was im­possible on account of the surging crowd to get near Christ through the doorway, they hit on the expedient of mounting the roof and directly over where Christ was sitting to make an opening, and to let down the sick man, pallet and all. Behold too, the reward! Christ was not
offended at the intrusion, but in the tenderest words said: "Be of good heart, my child." And He healed, not only his bodily ailment, but also the diseases of his soul.

When we have a favor to ask of God are we willing to surmount the same difficulties? Have we the same active faith? God is just as powerful now as He was then, and is just as ready to hear and to help us. He sends us crosses, trials and afflictions to draw us nearer to Him, to make us lean more heavily upon Him, to make us trust Him more implicitly. When we are sick let us make use of the natural means, but let us pray at the same time. When difficulties cross our path, let us meet them courageously, but let us pray at the same time. When we have crosses let us bear them patiently, but let us pray at the same time, to be delivered of them when God sees fit.

My Brethren, sickness and disease and death are the punishment of original sin. And some sickness and diseases are the punishment of personal sins. We know for certain that God under the Old Law did chastise the people by temporal evils when they broke His laws, and rewarded them with temporal favors when they were faithful to His commands. We cannot say that this is really true under the New Law. For we see wicked people prospering, while their sainted neighbors often times have a hard struggle to live even decently. And by the way, St. Thomas explains this. For the little good these wicked people do they must be rewarded somewhere. But as they are not to be rewarded in the next world they are getting it here on earth. However, even the prosperous wicked are not really happy. Happiness comes from within. A good conscience and sufficient for the day is the happiest lot.
But Brethren, to the subject, God, through the laws of nature does punish certain sins in this life with disease, and with dreadful disease too. Oftentimes for sins committed against nature, men and women reap ill health during the remainder of their life. Besides, through the laws of nature, I am of the opinion that as God now punishes nations for their sins, He likewise punishes individuals for their sins. Therefore, I am of the opinion that even now a sick soul is sometimes the cause of a sick body. And to get rid of the bodily ailment we must first be cured of the spiritual disease. Is it not a fact that our characters are written on our countenances, open to him who may read? The impure man, the sensual man, the deceitful man, the proud man, has these vices written plainly on his countenance; while the pure man, the temperate man, the honest man, the humble man has these virtues stamped plainly on his face. If this is so, then why should not spiritual diseases produce bodily ailments? Yes; there is a most subtle, intimate connection between the soul and the body, and between the two kinds of diseases. Christ perceived it in the case of the paralytic, went to the root of the trouble and healed the soul first. Let us beseech Him to do the same for us.

My Brethren, you heard the murmurings and complaints of the Scribes and Pharisees when Christ said to the man, "Thy sins are forgiven thee."—"How can this man forgive sins?" They objected. Do we not hear the same complaint to-day, when the ministers of the Catholic Church claim, through the power of God, to forgive sins? Men object almost in the same words of the Scribes and Pharisees: "How can they forgive sins?" "No one but God can forgive sins." "How absurd!"
The Church is a divine institution. Whatever is wonderful or supernatural in her is the effect of the power of God energizing through her. They cannot question Christ's words when He said, "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained them." The priests are Christ's ministers, and when they pronounce the words in the confessional, the sentence is ratified in heaven, and the sins confessed are blotted out by divine power. They are God's ministers; His forgiving power reaches the soul through their words. Their words convey divine power to souls, just as the delicate material wire conveys that most wonderful power, electricity. Touch a live wire, heavily charged, and in a second your life will be burned out. But Christ in His own name and through His own power forgave sins, for He was God. The priests of the Catholic Church are creatures and forgive sins as the representatives of God and through His power. To the objection we answer, "Which is the greater miracle, for the Church to have existed and flourished for nineteen hundred years with the world, the devil, and the flesh united against her, or for her ministers to forgive sins through the power of God?"
XIX SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

THE MARRIAGE FEAST.

My Dear Brethren:—When Christ spoke this parable He was walking under the galleries of the great Temple of Jerusalem. The night before, He spent outside the city walls. This was to be His last visit to the Temple.

It was on this journey, too, that the Apostles had discovered the tree which yesterday was arrayed in glistening foliage, but which cursed by the Master as He passed by, was now parched and dry and blasted to the roots. Ascending to the Temple, He found there assembled not only the common folk, but the Pontiffs, Scribes, and Pharisees. They came purposely to overawe by their presence, the multitude who they knew would give Christ a triumphant reception.

Beholding our Saviour about ready to speak and the eager multitude, they demanded of Him by what authority He taught. By a counter question He silenced them; and then proceeded under the imagery of a vineyard to describe God's merciful dealings with the Jews, their base ingratitude and the punishment of it. Continuing with another parable, which constitutes today's Gospel, Christ describes still more exactly and forcibly this same kindness and mercy of God, and this same ingratitude and cruelty on the part of the Jews and the just punishment of it.

A king celebrated the nuptials of his son. He sends his servants to call in those who had been invited. But
they reject the invitation and do not come. Then he sends out other servants to invite them again, giving reasons why they should come; the beeves and fatlings are killed; the dinner is prepared; and all things are in readiness, awaiting only the invited guests. But, notwithstanding this pressing invitation, some of them went to their farms, and others to their places of business, and the rest not only rejected the invitation, but laid violent hands upon the servants and put them to death.

This aroused the just anger of the king; and he sent forth his army to destroy those murderers and to burn their city. But that the festivities might proceed, he sent out his servants a third time, with orders to invite all whom they might meet. They did so; and the banquet hall was filled. Notwithstanding that the king had provided special robes for all, when he entered the hall, he saw one of the guests without the wedding garment on, and clothed in mean attire. Going up to him He asked the reason of this; but the man remained silent, unable to give any. Then the king commanded the servants to take hold of him, to bind him hand and foot and to cast him into exterior darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Christ finished the parable by saying, "For many are called but few are chosen."

My Brethren, this parable fits exactly the Jews and the infant Church. God is the king and Jesus Christ is the son for whom the marriage feast was prepared. By assuming human nature and afterwards redeeming mankind by His death, Christ espouses the Church. And the feast consequent on this union, comprises all the blessings of soul and body flowing therefrom.

Now God, through Moses and the Prophets had invited the Jews to prepare for this rich banquet. After
the Incarnation, God sent out the first servants, who were none other than John the Baptist and Christ Himself, to call in those Jews who had been invited. But they paid no attention to the call of John and Christ. After Christ’s death, when the devil had been conquered, when the gates of Heaven had been thrown open, when the Sacraments had been instituted, when grace was flowing freely and abundantly, God sent forth the Apostles to call the Jews into the Church. Some taken up with the joys and cares of the world turned a deaf ear and went their way. Others seized the Apostles, persecuted them and put some of them to death. God was now angry, and to punish their ingratitude and cruelty sent forth the Roman Army under Titus and Vespasian to punish severely the Jews. The Roman Army surrounded Jerusalem, laid siege to it, killing over one million inhabitants and literally razing the city with the ground.

After this second rejection, God sent the Apostles into the whole world, to all nations and peoples and races, to call them into the Church. The Apostles went forth inviting all indiscriminately; the Greek, the Barbarian and the Jew; and even during the life time of the Apostles, millions had entered the Church. But then some who had not on the wedding garment, which is charity, or true love of God, were found within the Church. Some are found within the Church and some will be found within the Church until the end of time, who have not put on Christ; whose lives are not only without good deeds and works, but are full of sin and wickedness. All these are represented by the man without the wedding garment. “And the king commanded that he be bound hand and foot and cast into
exterior darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’’

My Brethren, the ‘‘binding of hand and foot’’ signifies the inevitable punishment in store for the damned; ‘‘exterior darkness,’’ Hell, where lost souls shall be shut out from the sight of God’s presence and the brilliant light of Heaven, and consigned to a dark dungeon; and ‘‘weeping and gnashing of teeth’’ describes the excruciating pain of the damned. But what follows should fill us with great fear! ‘‘For many are called but few are chosen.’’ This is the conclusion which our Divine Lord draws from the parable. What do those words mean? Commentators have pondered them over and over and yet have not been able to agree on their meaning. They have been interpreted in three ways. Some commentators say that they refer to the Jews; that many, very many of them were called to the Faith by Christ and the Apostles, but few of them accepted the invitation and consequently few of their number were saved. Other commentators refer them to the Catholic Church; that of the great number of Catholics few will be saved compared with the numbers who will be lost. And a third class of commentators say that they refer to the whole human race; —all of whom from the time of Adam until the consummation of the ages are called to the Faith. But out of this multitude, the number who will be saved compared with the number who will be lost, shall be few indeed.

The parable had a personal lesson for the Jews of our Divine Lord’s time. And hence in their case it was literally true, but as regards the second and third interpretations, which is correct? We cannot answer with certainty. Considering the wedding feast as representing the Church, and the guests present as its members,
then it seems quite clear that the second interpretation is not the correct one; for only one guest was found without the wedding garment. To me the third interpretation seems the most reasonable. I believe that the greater number of Catholics will be saved, after having been first purged and purified by the flames of Purgatory; for most of them receive the last Sacraments, and during their lives were the special objects of God’s love and grace. I believe that the greater number of Jews were saved under the Old Dispensation; for they were God’s chosen people and He loved them dearly. But when we come to the human race, we can not say the same. A vast multitude although given sufficient light to know God’s law and sufficient strength to do His will, walk the broad and easy road which leads to eternal perdition. They live simply for the world and its fleeting pleasure. They entirely forget God and their souls and eternity.

My Brethren, let us examine ourselves as regards the spirit of gratitude. Are we grateful to God for all He has done for us? He has been more gracious to us than to the chosen people of old. The spiritual gifts which the Jews received cannot be compared with the graces which we are continually receiving. You saw what befell them on account of the sin of ingratitude. Perhaps the same will happen to us. They forfeited their high calling, and we have been called in their stead. To have been born and reared in the Catholic faith is a gift and a blessing beyond all measure. If we do not appreciate the gift and bring forth some fruit, perhaps God will give the Faith to others, who will bring forth fruit a hundred-fold.

Let us bear in mind that we must work out our salvation in fear and trembling. No one can be certain
that he will persevere until the end. And upon him only
who shall persevere to the end, shall the crown of eternal
life be bestowed. Remember the words, "Many are
called but few are chosen."

My Brethren, let these words continually ring in your
ears, "Bind him hand and foot and cast him into ex-
terior darkness where there shall be weeping and gnash-
ing of teeth." Those words unmistakably refer to Hell,
and the punishment of the damned. Shall I be sepa-
rated from God forever,—the infinite Beauty, Truth,
and Good, for whom my soul has been created and in
Whom alone it will find true rest and happiness? Shall
I be cast into Hell, where I shall be deprived not only
of all pleasure and comfort, but will suffer positive
pain both in body and soul throughout the endless ages
of eternity? It depends upon each one personally.
And the only certain rule to avoid the danger, is to be
always free from grievous sin:—"Bind him hand and
foot and cast him into exterior darkness, where there
shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are
called, but few are chosen."
My Dear Brethren:—On last Sunday, we gave a short sketch of the life of John of Matha, a saint who was a member of the sterner sex. To-day it shall be my pleasure to place before you for admiration and imitation, Catherine De Ricci, a woman saint, one most distinguished and who sprang from an ancient and illustrious family of Tuscany, Italy.

Our saint was born at Florence in the year 1522, about the time when Martin Luther, of evil memory, began preaching principles that have been the cause of the great religious divisions in Christianity. At her baptism she received the name of Alexandrina, but when she became a nun she took the name of Catherine, and by that name she has ever since been known.

Having lost her mother when an infant, her early education fell to the care of her grandmother, who was a very pious and virtuous woman. We are told that at this early age, before the majority of children attain to the full use of reason, Catherine was endowed by Almighty God with the gift of prayer. At the age of six she was placed by her father in the Convent of Monticelli where her aunt, Louisa De Ricci, was a nun. How happy Catherine was in such a hallowed retreat away from the noise and tumult of the world, where she might give up her mind and heart completely to God! But after a few years here, she is called home by her father. However, finding it almost impossible, on account of the interruptions and distractions of her home life, to continue the religious manner of life, which

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she had taken upon herself in order to grow more and more in virtue and holiness, she finally obtained the consent of her father to quit the world and to become a religious. So in the year 1535, the thirteenth of her age, she entered the Third Order at Prato.

And now, my brethren, God, to make St. Catherine entirely His own and to purify her of all dross and earthly love, was pleased to send her a most severe trial in the way of a long and painful illness. For two years she was afflicted with a violent distemper, which caused her inexpressible pains and which medicine seemed only to aggravate. But she bore her sufferings with great patience and resignation offering them up for the poor souls in Purgatory, and deriving all the while strength and comfort from assiduous meditation on the Passion of Jesus Christ.

Having recovered her health, which seemed miraculous, she advanced more and more in the way of a penitential and austere life. She now chastised her body, fasted two and three days a week on bread and water, and wore a sharp chain next her skin. And all the time she was exercising herself in true meekness, humility and obedience. She wished to be entirely unknown and her memory blotted out of the hearts of men. The least show of distinction caused her uneasiness and confusion. Willingly would she have lived, if possible, in the very centre of the earth. Through such humility and self-denial she was able to get rid of the old Adam of sin and self-love. God now bestowed upon her a great spirit of prayer and contemplation by which she acquired a sublime knowledge of heavenly truths, strong and most tender sentiments of virtue, and a true relish for suffering, contempt and poverty. What she desired most and labored hardest to acquire, what she asked most earn-
estly of God, especially in her meditations on the Passion of Christ, was to be purged of all inordinate love of creatures. The next step in her perfect saintship was the earnest and continual prayer that all her thoughts, words and actions—yea, the very aspirations of her soul—would be perfectly conformable to the will of God.

In the twenty-fourth year of her age she was made prioress of her order. The reputation of her sanctity now travelled abroad, and she was visited by priests, bishops, cardinals, princes and holy men and women in order to consult with her on the weighty affairs of their salvation. She and St. Philip of Neri had kept up a correspondence, and consequently desired to see each other. We are told that it happened to them as it happened to John of Egypt. One day, whilst St. Philip was detained at Rome, St. Catherine appeared to him in a vision, and they conversed together for a considerable length of time.

My Brethren, on account of her most assiduous devotion to the Passion of Christ, which was her constant meditation, our divine Lord was pleased to impress upon her the sacred Stigma of the wound in the left side and the crown of thorns, and also to favor her with marvelous raptures, a foretaste of heaven. Every week, from noon of Thursday to three o'clock of the following Friday, we are told she gave herself up entirely and uninterruptedly to meditation on the Passion of Jesus Christ. Notwithstanding her most austere and penitential life, she reached the age of sixty-seven. After a long and painful illness which she bore not only with patience and resignation, but with joy and gladness, she passed from earth to heaven amid the audible songs of the angels. She was beatified by Clement XII in 1732, and canonized by Benedict XIV in 1746.
My Brethren, of the many lessons we are taught in the life of St. Catherine De Ricci there are two which I wish to single out and to speak upon, because they are peculiar to her, or characteristic of her—I mean her assiduous meditation on the Passion of Christ and her heroic devotion to the poor souls in Purgatory. Every week from noon of Thursday to three o'clock of the following Friday afternoon, St. Catherine kept her mind and heart continually on the sufferings which our divine Lord and Saviour so willingly endured for us in His sacred Passion. This was the school from which she learned what sin really is, the infinite hatred God must bear towards it and the necessity of satisfying for it, when He allowed His only-begotten Son to suffer so much on account of it as to wring from His divine lips: “Father if it be possible let this chalice pass from Me.” This was the school from which she learned the love God must bear towards us and how far He is willing to go to save us—willing to suffer the greatest physical and mental pain and torture—yea, to die, that we might be saved and live eternally. Therefore she would have suffered a thousand deaths rather than offend God by the smallest deliberate sin. To atone for her imperfections and to suffer too for the sins of mankind, was the reason why she fasted two and three days a week on bread and water, why she wore the sharp iron chain next her skin, and why she disciplined herself—because she realized somewhat, from meditation on the Passion of Christ, what a terrible evil sin must be. She wished to love nothing but God, because the Passion of Christ taught her how intensely God loved her. Go likewise, my brethren, to the Passion of Christ and by meditation thereon learn the same great lessons and become somewhat transformed like unto her.
St. Catherine offered up, at least all her sufferings for the poor souls in Purgatory. How acceptable this must have been to our divine Lord! God loves the poor souls in Purgatory. They are His friends and dear ones. But His justice demands that sins must be sufficiently atoned for. Their time of probation is over. As members of the same spiritual society we can assist them by our prayers and good works. God wills it. St. Catherine understood this. Hence she asked God to accept her sufferings which she bore willingly and patiently, and to apply them to the poor souls there, that being released from this prison of darkness they might enter into the realms of light. My Brethren, let us resolve to be more devoted to the poor souls in Purgatory. They cannot help themselves. They are suffering much. No suffering on this earth can be compared to theirs. Perhaps we have there a father, or a mother, or a sister, or a brother, or a wife, or a husband, or a child. “At least, you our relatives and friends,” they are crying out “have pity on us.” If you are instrumental in releasing one poor soul from Purgatory, I believe your salvation is almost certain. For night and day before the Throne of God that liberated soul will be praying for you. Never let a day pass without doing something for the poor souls. A short prayer said, an alms given, a good action performed, or a little cross borne patiently and offered up for them, will be most acceptable to God and will avail them much.
XX SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

"GO HOME, THY SON LIVETH."

My Dear Brethren:—Before coming to Cana of Galilee Christ had been at Nazareth, the city of His boyhood and manhood, where He had spent nigh thirty years, under the humble roof of Joseph and Mary, living an obscure life.

Although Nazareth had listened in rapture to His explanation of the Prophets, although it had heard of the miracles worked by Him, although it felt deep down in its heart that He was a great prophet, yet, on account of His humble origin and obscure life, it hesitated to believe in Him. And when Christ in proving from scriptural examples that a prophet is not received in His own country, referred to Pagan women and lepers, the Galileans seized Him and rushed Him forward to a rocky precipice intending to hurl Him downwards, because they said He had compared them,—Children of Abraham—to such. But His time was not yet come, and some superhuman power held fast their arms and Christ, as they stood speechless and helpless, passed through their midst and wended His way in weariness up the hill that leads to Cana.

Once upon its summit Christ stopped to cast back a look upon the peaceful valley where He had toiled and suffered, and upon those people He had loved so well—His kinsfolk and early acquaintances. But He must depart from hence, because a prophet is not
reached in His own country; He must go forth to bear the message to strangers.

He arrives at Cana. Why He came here we do not know. However, the fame of His miracles had been spread throughout the country. A certain ruler, whose son was sick at Capharnaum, learns of Christ’s visit and miracles; so he comes to Christ and beseeches Him to come down to Capharnaum to heal his son who was at the point of death. Christ at first rebukes him, but at the second request, “Lord come down before my son dies,” Christ said to him, “Go home, thy son liveth.” Believing Christ’s words, the ruler starts for home. He reaches there the next day. In joy and gladness his servants run to meet him to inform him of the good news—“Your son is better.” Knowing about the hour Christ had said to him, “Thy son liveth,” he inquired of the servants the hour wherein the boy grew better. About the seventh hour,” they responded. The father knew that that was the hour when Christ had said “Thy son liveth.” Moved by divine grace, he and his household now believed in the divinity of Jesus Christ and embraced the faith.

My Brethren, there are a few interesting questions connected with the Gospel which we may answer with profit. And first about the ruler; who was he? Some commentators tell us that he was of the royal family, a relative of Herod Antipas; others say he was one of the officers at the royal court; and a third class of commentators assert that he was simply a man of station and wealth. However, it is almost certain that he was a Jew; because to him was addressed the common Jewish reproach, “Unless you see signs and wonders, etc.”

The next question is concerning the faith of the ruler; what was its nature? It certainly was a most
peculiar kind of faith. He believed that Christ could heal his son, but at the same time thought it was necessary for Christ to have personal contact with him. How different the faith of the Centurion on another occasion! This ruler either believed that Christ practiced some magical art, or was simply a prophet, or else along with his faith there was a big grain of superstition.

Why did Christ say to the ruler, "Unless you see signs and wonders you believe not." This was not so much a personal, as a general rebuke. In the ruler the Lord addressed the Jews of Galilee. Although the doctrine of Christ by its simplicity, depth and sublimity, its harmony with itself, its agreement with the truths of nature and the teaching of the prophets, should have been sufficient to make them believe; although they had the testimony of John the Baptist (whom they believed to be a great prophet) concerning the Christ; although the miracles of Christ were common talk and belief;—still all this was not enough to make them believe. They wanted to be eye-witnesses of the miracles themselves. Therefore in those words Christ rebuked the Jewish people.

My Brethren, Christ saw in the heart of the ruler the glimmering sparks of faith, and He willed not to extinguish them, but to fan them into a divine flame. And when He was besought the second time to come down to heal this son, He worked a great miracle, a miracle so astounding and convincing as to compel almost necessarily, the ruler's assent to His divinity. At a great distance from the young man who was lying at the point of death from a high fever, by the simple words, "Thy son liveth," he is suddenly cured and restored to health. No wonder when the ruler learned that it was at the same hour that the Lord said, "Thy son liveth,"
the fever had left him that he believed in Christ; that the young man himself believed; that the whole household believed. Here is a true miracle. According to the laws of nature, it should have taken at least several days for that young man to have regained his health. Never suddenly, even with the use of medicine does a person seriously sick, recover his health. But we must not forget that although their intellects were convinced by this miracle, the grace of God was still necessary to enable them to make an act of faith; and the Lord granted it to them. For in this miracle, as in all His miracles, the principal object of Christ was to convert the people. Sympathy and compassion He had for the afflicted; but that was not the end of His coming into the world, nor the object of His miracles. The restoring of sight to the blind, of hearing to the deaf, of speech to the dumb, of strength to the cripple, of cleanliness to the leper and life to the dead, were not done simply through compassion and sympathy. These motives alone never would have moved Christ to work miracles. The main purpose and end of His coming into the world, of His life and death, was to redeem and to save man.

And finally why does the Gospel say, this is the second miracle, done in Cana of Galilee? To recall to mind the other great miracle which He worked in this same city;—the first miracle, the changing of water into wine at the Feast of Cana. Christ had worked miracles at Judea, but this was the second in Cana of Galilee.

My Brethren, there are many people to-day just like the Jews of Galilee. Although the claims of Christianity and Catholicity are strong enough to convince any reasonable man, they will not believe. They want a personal sign. They want to be eye-witnesses of a
miracle. Why, the rapid propagation of Christianity, its triumph over the hostile Pagan world, the change it wrought in the lives of men and nations, is the greatest of all miracles! Why, the continued existence of the Catholic Church for nineteen hundred years, her superhuman organization, her divine life and her universal sway over the hearts and intellects of men is the greatest of miracles! As men will not be convinced by these miracles; so neither would they be convinced if God worked before their eyes a miracle,—if he raised some one to life. As God said to Dives, so we say to them, if some one returned from the other world, and told you of the hereafter, you would not believe him.

Yes, Christ is divine; Christianity is divine; Catholicity is divine. Men will not believe because their hearts and wills are not right. They will not believe, because belief entails duties and obligations, entails the crucifying of the passions, entails a virtuous life. In that lies the explanation and the reason why some men of brilliant parts remain heathens, and why some learned men never enter the Catholic Church.

My Brethren, in this miracle of Christ let us see His great mercy. Although this man should have believed without having witnessed a special miracle, yet Christ, not to extinguish the spark of faith within him, gave him a personal sign; He restores to health, suddenly at a distance, by a simple word, his son who was almost in the agony of death. Although the existence of Christianity and Catholicity are standing miracles, still other miracles are being worked to confirm their divine origin. The days of miracles are not over, and will not be over until time is no more, and man has run his race on this earth. They will not be as frequent as in the beginning, when Christianity and Catholicity, had to be
planted, watered and nurtured. But now like the oak, Christianity and Catholicity are able to stand firm and unshaken amidst all the fierce storms. God, however, occasionally for His own good purpose, and in His own good time still works miracles.

My Brethren, in imitation of Christ let our charitable works be the forerunners of spiritual favors. To assist man in his temporal wants and to relieve him in his temporal necessities is good; but to succor him in his spiritual wants and to relieve him in his spiritual necessities is better;—yea, the latter work is as much superior to the former as heaven is to earth, the soul to the body, eternity to time!
XXI SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

THE FORGIVING OF INJURIES.

My Dear Brethren:—When our divine Lord spoke this parable He was in the city of Capernaum of the country of Galilee. He and His Apostles at this time attracted only the attention of the tax-gatherers who followed them to collect the didrachma, a tax imposed upon every Jew, be he rich or poor, for the support of the Temple at Jerusalem. After having rebuked Peter for pledging his word, without first having consulted Him; after having passed such a beautiful eulogium on little children; after having decreed that the Church is to be the arbitrator for her own children; after having laid down the law that we must forgive an offending brother not only seven times but seventy times seven times; then it was that Christ spoke the parable which constitutes to-day's Gospel, to develop more by illustration this Christian doctrine of the forgiving of injuries and of brotherly love.

In this parable, our divine Lord makes use of an oriental king, an absolute monarch, at whose slightest fancy the humblest could be made the most powerful, and the richest the most menial and abject. This monarch wishes to have a settlement with his servants. One of the most favored owed him ten thousand talents, which is equal to about one million dollars. He is summoned before the king, and as he cannot pay the debt, the king orders that he and all his property, also his wife and children be sold, and with the proceeds, that
payment be made. But the servant succeeds in exciting the pity and compassion of his sovereign, and promises that in time he will pay all the debt. The king not only becomes merciful but most generous. He grants him, not only time in which to pay the debt, but he cancels it all. Yet this servant had scarcely passed from under the palace gates a free man, when he meets one of his servants, who owed the small sum of a hundred shillings, which is equal to about fifteen dollars, he clutches him by the throat and half strangling him says, "Pay what thou owest." The poor fellow immediately fell on his knees and begged for time. But he hearkened not to his pleadings, and had him dragged to prison and there confined, until he paid every penny of the debt. However, some of his friends went to the king and informed him of this cruelty and ingratitude. The king immediately commanded them to call back the rich servant. And when he came into his presence the king said to him: "Wicked servant; at your prayer and entreaties, I not only gave you time in which to pay your debt but went further and cancelled all. Should you not then have had pity on your fellow servant even as I had pity on you?" Then rising up in anger and just indignation, he commanded that the servant should be delivered over to the torturers until he had paid the last farthing. Then Christ concluded the parable by saying, "So also will my heavenly Father do to you, if you do not forgive from your heart every one his brother."

My Brethren, the king in the parable represents God; the rich servant, man, guilty of sin; the ten thousand talents, signify mortal or grievous sin. In the first part of the parable, we are taught the great malice of sin, because it is an offence against God, a Being infinite in dignity, and we are likewise taught the great mercy of God.
who freely and generously forgives sin. The second part of the parable brings out in strong contrast and sets forth most forebibly, the inhumanity and hard-heartedness of that sinner, who, after having been most graciously and generously pardoned of his sins by God, refuses to forgive his neighbor some slight fault. And the third part refers to the grievousness and heinousness of the sin committed by that man, who refuses to forgive injuries, who harbors feelings of spite and revenge, and also the dreadful punishment of it:—“And the Lord being angry delivered him to the torturers until he paid all the debt. So also will My heavenly Father do to you, if you do not forgive from your hearts, every one his brother.” You will notice that Christ does not say, “Our,” but “My heavenly Father,” to teach us that the unforgiving man and the man of revenge cannot truly call God his Father, because he does not love, but even persecutes his brothers,—God’s children. Christ uses the words, “Every one his brother,” to teach us that because our neighbor has been redeemed by Christ and is destined for the same great end, Heaven, we must love him as a brother and forgive him as such. Christ uses the words, “From our hearts,” to teach us that forgiveness must be inward, must come from the soul, and not be simply external and from the lips only. Unless the forgiveness of our neighbor is of this nature, God will not forgive us our sins and trespasses against Him.

My Brethren, besides the reasons given in the parable for forgiving our neighbor his trespasses against us, let us add a few more. First, there is no precept of the Gospel that is more inculcated by our divine Saviour than the precept of forgiveness. Therefore, although an enemy may not merit of himself our pardon, we must grant it for Christ’s sake, because it is the will of our
heavenly Father. Secondly, every time, we say the "Our Father," and have rancor and hatred in our breasts we lie to God; for do we not ask God to forgive us our trespasses against Him, because we forgive others their trespasses against us? Unless we forgive our neighbor, from our hearts, every time we say this prayer, which was taught us by Christ, Himself, we become hypocrites and make a mockery of it. And the hypocrites seem to be the only class of sinners, for whom the most merciful Saviour had no use. Thirdly, the example of the Saints, teaches us to have true forgiveness. Behold the two great scriptural examples! David, although Saul had waged against him a bitter and unrelenting persecution, forgave Saul from his heart. And Joseph, although he had been sold by his brothers, into slavery, forgave them and heaped upon them the choicest favors. Fourthly, no soul who harbors revenge can have true peace of mind. Such a one is never truly happy and tranquil. And he magnifies injuries, making stones out of pebbles, and mountains out of hills. Perturbed always, upset and fretful, he views everything through that green-eyed monster, revenge, and has no peace with himself, nor with God, nor man. Fifthly, the dreadful consequence of revenge should make us be forgiving. It is related in the life of Saporius that when on the way to martyrdom, for refusing to pardon Nicephorous, who entreated him, he lost the crown of martyrdom and fell into idolatry. Sixthly, consider how often God pardons us the most heinous sins, and we refuse to forgive our neighbor, in most cases for some supposed wrong, although God asks it. And seventhly, the most important consideration is the example of Christ, Who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Behold Him pardoning His enemies, all during His
mortal life, and when bleeding and mangled on the Cross, ready to give up His spirit, beseeching His Father to forgive those who had buffeted Him, mocked Him, scourged Him, had given Him gall to drink and had nailed Him to the Cross:—"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." My Brethren, if we wish to gain a victory over our wounded and corrupt nature which leads us to harbor revenge and to be unforgiving, we must watch and pray—we must watch continually and pray unceasingly!
THE SISTERHOOD.

"And every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife or children, or lands for My name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall possess life everlasting,"—words taken from the Gospel according to St. Matthew, Chapter XIX, verse 29.

RT. REV. BISHOP, REV. FATHERS, VENERABLE MOTHER SUPERIOR, DEVOTED RELIGIOUS, MY DEAR BRETHREN:—

We are witnessing to-day, a scene, which must be pleasing to God, His angels and His saints, and one which should fill us all with joy and gladness and move us, in the jubilation of our hearts, to cry out in the words of St. Peter when he beheld the Transfiguration of our Blessed Redeemer, "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

We are beholding, this morning a sacred and inspiring scene. Young ladies in the flower of their age, comely, talented, the idols of their companions, are leaving the world with its joys and pleasures, turning their backs on it forever, giving up father and mother, sisters and brothers and kindred, to devote and to consecrate themselves entirely to God and the service of their fellow man in deeds of mercy and of love. Some of these young ladies, following the inspiration of the Holy Spirit are seeking admission into the Religious State, are asking to be clothed in the religious garb, which is symbolical and doth speak to a certain degree the life they have chosen. The others, after having made trial of the religious life and persevering therein, and being still convinced that they are called by heaven, and that
Jesus Christ invites them to become His Spouses, are taking the final step, are giving themselves to God, are consecrating themselves irrevocably to His love and service by Obedience, Chastity and Poverty—the way of the counsels, the higher life, the perfect life, the life lived by our Divine Model and Exemplar, the life lived by the blessed Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors and the Saints and holy souls in every age, at least in spirit, from the beginning until now.

At this eventful period of your lives, novices and young religious may I be permitted to address to you a few words on the religious life, by way of fatherly advice and admonition. Dear Novices, it is in the novitiate, into which you are about to enter, that the foundation of the religious life is laid. Here you are to form those habits that are absolutely necessary for your perseverance. Here you are to be drilled and practised in spiritual discipline. Here you are to be tried. Here you are to find out for certain, whether you have been truly called by heaven to the higher life.

It is hardly necessary to tell you that humility is to the spiritual life, what the foundation stone is to the material building. Unless you acquire true humility during your novitiate the rest of the spiritual edifice will have been raised in vain. I would define humility as a firm belief in our own insufficiency. It is the realization that in ourselves we are nothing, that of ourselves we possess nothing, that by ourselves we can do nothing. It is the living consciousness of our weakness and imperfections. It is the firm belief that every good and beautiful and perfect gift comes from God, and that we can claim as our own only one thing, namely sin. Allow me then to exhort you to strive, first of all, after the virtue of humility. Humility never boasts,
never is vain glorious, never haughty nor puffed up, but always meek and lowly.

The next important stone in the spiritual edifice, is obedience. Obedience is the most necessary habit for you to acquire. Strive after it with all your might. Do not mistake it. Obedience is more than the simple obeying, externally, the commands of a superior. Obedience lies in the will. Its seat is in the soul. Obedience is the internal and ready following of the least behests of a superior. It is the seeing in the will of a superior the will of God. Therefore those who possess the real virtue of obedience never carp at, never criticise, never find fault with the legitimate commands and behests of their superiors.

Dear Novices, during your novitiate you will be taught the all importance of prayer in the sanctification of your soul. You will be taught how to pray. To be holy is to pray rightly, and to pray rightly is to be holy. Cultivate a love for prayer. By prayer we are united to God as closely as we possibly can be on earth. By prayer our hearts, minds and wills are united to God. Drill yourselves in meditation. Prayer, meditation and spiritual reading are to be the weapons with which you are to fight your spiritual foes, and by which and in which alone you will be able to come out of every conflict unscathed and victorious. During your novitiate practice acts of humility, practice acts of obedience and pray, pray, pray. It is the doctrine of the old anchorites and hermits, those spiritual giants of ages gone by, that we acquire the virtues by performing frequently those acts proper to the virtues. Is it not a fact that when God wishes us to acquire a certain virtue in a high degree, He permits us to be tempted severely by the opposite vice? It is the call to arms that develops and
brings forth the patriot. It is war that makes the general. It is the battle that gives us the hero. We shall become humble by performing acts of humility, we shall become obedient by performing acts of obedience, and you shall become women of prayer by praying. Finally begin to part company entirely with the world. Make no useless visits. Receive no useless visits. Be interested in the world and the things you have forsaken only in so far as charity and duty demand.

Dear Young Religious, you who are just coming forth from the novitiate and are about to take your place among the professed sisters, should return thanks to God that He has led and conducted you so far successfully in your high calling, and beseech Him still to lead and to conduct you safely to the end. You have now donned the full armor of sisterhood, and are to take up the active work for which you have been preparing yourselves, and in which you are to sanctify your souls and win the crown of glory which God has destined for you. Yours is a noble and sublime calling in any of its works. Some of you will enter the class room, and there spend most of your lives. Could any active work be grander and more pleasing to God? The botanist has a noble occupation. We envy him his calling, when we behold him planting and watering and pruning and watching over the innocent plants and beautiful flowers. We envy him his pure pleasure and delight, when he beholds them unfolding their latent powers and growing to maturity and perfection. But what is his occupation when compared with yours? Not a material plant nor flower are you to plant and water and prune and watch over, but an immortal soul made to the image and likeness of the great God of heaven and earth. It is to be your work to put within that mind the first rudiments of
knowledge, and within that heart, the first seeds of virtue. It is to be your work to assist that soul in its intellectual and spiritual growth. It is to be your great pleasure and happiness to behold that soul unfolding its almost infinite capabilities, and becoming more and more like unto God, its Creator. Remember the promise of our Divine Lord that "Those who instruct others unto justice shall shine as stars for all eternity." In union with the priest and under his care this is to be your work.

And some of you will enter the hospital and the orphan asylum to take care of the sick and the dying, and to become mothers to the motherless. Here you will have the great grace and most enviable privilege of waiting in person on our Blessed Redeemer and administering to His wants. Jesus Christ lives in the poor, in the afflicted, in the forsaken and sorrowful. He considers in reality as done unto Him whatever we do unto them: "I was thirsty and you gave Me to drink, hungry and you fed Me, naked and you clothed Me, in prison and you visited Me." Lord, when did we do all this unto You? And there shall come forth the sick and the sorrowful and the abandoned, but now most perfect, beautiful and resplendent. And Christ will present them and ask you if you recognize them? Yes, Lord! I saw them in the hospitals and in the asylums. I quenched their parched thirst. I cooled their feverish brow. I smoothed their rough pillow. I soothed their aching head. I spoke to them words of comfort and of cheer. And those little ones there, I fondled and caressed and performed for them all the duties of a devoted mother. "As often as you did it to the least one of these you did it unto Me. Enter thou into the joy of the Lord."
A few of you will remain in the convent and administer to the wants of the community. This life will be no less meritorious in the sight of God. Such a life indeed, will resemble closer the life of your patron, St. Joseph, the humble and obscure saint. Your sanctification will be worked out in the performance of small duties, done with a pure and holy intention. And on account of their smallness and common-placeness there will be less danger of their becoming tainted with self love, pride and vanity.

And now Dear Novices and Sisters, proceed hopefully and valiantly in the way of your high calling! But remember that God is not sending you to peace, security and repose. He is sending you, if you are His chosen ones, to temptation and conflicts. These are absolutely necessary for growth in holiness, and for the crown of glory. Where there is no struggle, there can be no life and growth. This is true throughout the whole creation; in the mineral, vegetable, animal and intellectual kingdoms. And it is doubly true, in the spiritual kingdom; for as St. Paul says, "But we glory also in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience and patience trial; and trial hope." "And hope confoundeth not; because the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, Who is given to us." The higher the degree of sanctification to which God has called us, the more severe must we expect will be the trials and crosses. Those whose lives are perfect sunshine are deserving of our commiseration. It seems as if God has forsaken them. But in the midst of the temptations and conflicts and during your whole lives, let me assure you that God, through the Holy Ghost, will shine in your hearts and souls and diffuse over them light, peace, serenity and calmness, just as the
sun diffuses over the whole physical world its soft and gentle and beautiful rays of light and heat. This is the doctrine too, of St. Paul, for as you have no doubt observed in the quotation above, after saying that tribulation worketh patience, and patience trial, and trial hope, he concludes thus, "And hope confoundeth not; because the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given us."

In peace prepare for war, in time of fervor prepare for temptation. Sunshine and clouds, darkness and light, conflict and calmness, sin and virtue, good and evil, falling and rising—such must be the concomitants of the life of wayfaring man—man,—who has fallen from a higher state—man,—whose intellect has been darkened, whose will has been weakened and in whom there is a strong inclination towards evil—man,—who possesses a material body as well as an immaterial soul—man,—who is on trial and probation, and whose true home is in heaven where,—and where only he shall possess perfect life.

Go on, Dear Novices and Religious, in perfect confidence in your sublime calling and noble work! Often raise your eyes to the heavenly Jerusalem, where, if you persevere until the end you shall follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, and sing canticles before the throne which none other can sing! Blessed indeed are the parents that have brought you forth into the world, and have now offered you to Christ as spouses! Give yourselves wholly to God this morning! Offer yourselves to Him as a perfect holocaust! Put yourselves under the protection of the Blessed Mother and the fostering care and guardianship of St. Joseph! Make friends and familiars of the angels and saints especially your guardian angel and patron saint! Learn to pray
and learn to meditate! Read the lives of the saints! Value the Mass and Holy Communion above all things! Go often to Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, especially in trials and temptations, and there before the Tabernacle pour out your very hearts and souls to the God of heaven and earth, Who has veiled His divine majesty and splendor, that you might not be afraid to draw near Him!—"And every one that hath left house or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall possess life everlasting."
ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

MY DEAR BRETHREN:—We have assembled this evening to witness and to take part in the ceremony of the blessing of a statue, erected in honor of St. Francis of Assisi. I think it is unnecessary for me to say anything to intelligent people of the purpose or the object of a statue in religious worship. I believe most people nowadays understand the reason of it, and its becomingness and fitness in worship. Suffice it for me to remark that the Saints are our spiritual heroes. They are, in the spiritual order, what patriots are in the natural order. And just as we erect statues to the memory of our earthly warriors, and unveil and dedicate them, so, likewise, does the Catholic Church erect statues to the memory of her spiritual heroes—the Saints—and unveil, bless and consecrate them. Be it rather my duty to speak on the life of him in whose memory and out of devotion to whom this statue has been placed on that pedestal—the seraphic Francis of Assisi.

Before beginning to give you a sketch of his life, I wish to say to you, my brethren, that after having read the life of St. Francis, it was with some diffidence and misgiving that I began to prepare the sermon. His life was such a marvel of grace,—his Saintship seemed to rise so high—that it appeared somewhat incongruous for one encompassed with many infirmities to attempt to speak on him. Only a Saint could speak worthily of such a saint. God seemed to select him to display before the eyes of men the gratuitousness, the grandeur and the marvelousness of his grace. So much, in the
life of St. Francis for our instruction and edification, that I was somewhat at a loss which to choose and to place before you.

St. Francis was born in Italy, the country selected in the Providence of God to be the seat of the government of His Church—His kingdom on earth. He was born in the town of Assisi in the year 1182, and came from a family distinguished for their uprightness and honesty. St. Francis’ early education was neglected by his parents because they gave too much of their time to business cares. Although Francis loved amusements and had a great aptness and fondness for making money, yet we can say on the whole that he was a model young man. His love for the poor began to manifest itself at an early age, and we find him most generous in almsgiving. One day he allowed a beggar to go away without having given him alms, and his conscience so reproached him that he ran after the beggar, bestowed generous alms on him, and vowed from that moment, that never again would he refuse alms asked for the love of God.

St. Francis, whilst yet living in the world as a layman, began to show evident signs of his future sanctity. Whenever he heard anyone discoursing on the love of God, his soul became instantly filled with great spiritual sweetness. Having been taken a prisoner of war by the Perugians, he suffered the hardships of his lot with truly christian patience, and was the source of much comfort to the other prisoners. As he was riding out one day, for his health, dressed in a suit of new clothes, he chanced to meet a gentleman, now reduced to penury and meanly clad. He alighted and exchanged clothes with him. This act of generous charity was so pleasing to Almighty God, that the following night He favored
St. Francis with a vision. In a dream he saw a magnificent and costly palace filled with rich arms, but all marked with the sign of the cross, and he seemed to hear some one say that these were to belong to him and his soldiers, if they took up the cross and fought courageously under it, as their banner. From the time of this vision, St. Francis was endowed with new spiritual life, and he gave himself up almost entirely to prayer; there sprung up within his soul a great disgust for earthly things and an ardent longing for the things of eternity. He desired now to sell all his goods and to purchase the jewel mentioned in the gospel. He knew not how to proceed in this high calling, but this he did know, that it must begin in mortification and victory over one's self. Riding over the plains of Assisi he met a leper, whose sores were so repulsive as to cause a loathing in his soul, and he recoiled at the sight of them. But immediately recovering himself, he alighted from his horse, and as the leper stretched forth his hand to receive alms, St. Francis embraced him, and kissed the sores with much tenderness.

Resolving now to begin in all earnestness the perfect sanctification of his soul, he besought our divine Lord to make known to him His will. Whilst revolving this thought over in his mind, and absorbed in prayer he beheld Christ hanging on the cross. This vision affected him so much that ever afterwards, the simple thought of Christ's sufferings made him shed copious tears. He now visits the sick in hospitals and waits upon them as upon Christ himself. Coming to Rome, at the gates of St. Peter's where were congregated many beggars, he takes his place with gladness among them, and exchanges clothes with one of the poorest. Whilst praying in the church of St. Damian before a crucifix, he
seemed to hear a voice coming from it saying:—
"Francis go and repair my house which thou seest fall­
ing." Applying these words literally to the church
of St. Damian, he went home, filled a wagon with cloth
from his father’s warehouse, sold the cloth, also the
horse and wagon, and laid the price at the feet of the
priest. This much incensed his father, who after
severely punishing him and having recovered the money,
made St. Francis renounce all rights to his share of the
paternal inheritance. St. Francis not only did this
willingly, but parted with the clothes on his back, say­
ing as he made the renunciation:—"Hitherto I have
called you father, on earth; but now I say, our Father
Who art in heaven, in Whom I place all my hope and
treasure." With the cloak of a country laborer
around him, which was given him by the bishop, St.
Francis started in search of a place of retirement where
he might uninterruptedly sing the praises of God.

Through the forests and over the highways he
walked, led on by the invisible hand of God. He is met
by a band of robbers who asked him who he is, and when
he replied:—"I am the herald of the great King," they
became angry, beat him unmercifully and threw
him into a ditch. He passed by a monastery and
received alms from the monks, as a beggar. In the city
of Gubbio a friend took him in and gave him a suit of
clothes, which he wore for the next two years. At last
he found shelter and rest in the little deserted church
of Portiuncula, which stood on a spacious open plain
about a mile from Assisi. Here he fixed his temporary
abode, and here he received marvelous revelations and
graces from heaven. After two years spent in sighs and
tears, upon hearing the priest read those words of
Christ:—"Do not carry gold, or silver, or script, for
your journey, or two coats or a staff," he applied them literally to himself, cast off his outer suit, gave away all his money, and with only a garment which was girded about his waist, thrown over his shoulders, he begins his wonderful life and apostolic mission.

In this attire, with a small cloak for his shoulders however added, and a capouch for his head, St. Francis began his work of calling the people to penance. He would preface his preaching with the words,—"Our Lord give you grace," which he had learned from divine revelation. Needless to say that his words pierced the hearts of the people and melted them into repentance, He was favored with the gift of prophecy and endowed with the power of working miracles. He foretold that the church of St. Damian, one day, would be the sanctuary and the asylum of an order of nuns, who would give great glory to God. A man afflicted with a loathsome and horrible cancer for which medicine could do nothing, was healed instantly by St. Francis' kissing the wound. The sufferings of our divine Redeemer in His passion were the principal objects of St. Francis' devotions, and in his meditation upon them, he shed torrents of tears. We are told that whilst meditating upon the sufferings of Christ, in the church of Portiuncula, a stranger passing by heard sighs and groans, and not knowing the cause stopped to see. Finding St. Francis bathed in tears, he reproached him for such silliness. But the Saint answered:—"I weep for the sufferings of my Lord Jesus Christ, I ought not to blush to weep publicly over the whole earth, at the remembrance of the events of this wonderful mystery.''

Many began to feel that St. Francis was a Saint, and to admire his heroic virtues. Among the number was Bernard Quintaval, a rich merchant of Assisi, and a
man of great prudence and respectability. He invited St. Francis to his home, and fixed a good bed for him, near his own, out of reverence and to keep a watch over him. When the Saint thought Bernard was asleep, he arose and falling upon his knees, with his eyes lifted up and his arms crossed, kept repeating continually during the night the words, "My God and my All." Bernard watched the Saint all the night by the glimmer of a lamp, saying to himself, "This man is truly a servant of God." Bernard seeing and admiring the true happiness of one whose heart is filled entirely with God and weaned from the world, wishes now to become St. Francis' companion, and begs him to accept him as such. They both recommended the affair to God in prayer, and being satisfied that it was God's will, Bernard immediately sold all his property and effects, and divided the proceeds among the poor. Peter, a Canon of the Cathedral of Assisi, desired also to be admitted with him. The Saint put the habit, which he had worn, on both of them on the 16th of August, 1209; from which day and event, many date the foundation of the "Order," although others trace it back to the day when St. Francis, hearing the words, "Do not carry gold, or silver, or scripture for your journey, or two coats, or a staff" gave away all his money and casting aside his clothes, contented himself with one simple cloak girded with a cord, and started out to preach penance to the people. The third person to join them was a man by the name of Giles, known for his great simplicity and virtue. They joined St. Francis in his cell at Portiuncula. In the same year, 1209, St. Francis received a verbal approbation of the Order from Innocent the Fourth. Returning from Rome they settled at Rivo-Torto, near Assisi, in an abandoned cot-
tage. When their number had reached one hundred and twenty St. Francis assembled them together and after exhorting them pathetically to have a contempt for the world, to renounce their wills, and to mortify their senses, concluded with these words:—"Fear not to appear little and contemptible, or to be called by men, fools and madmen; but announce penance in simplicity, trusting in Him who overcame the world by humility; it is He that will speak in you by His spirit. Let us take care that we do not lose the kingdom of heaven for any temporal interest, and that we never despise those who live otherwise than we. God is their Master, as He is ours, and He can call them to Himself by other ways."

The original rule of St. Francis, was one of great simplicity, consisting only of the Gospel counsels with a few necessary things added, however, to promote uniformity in the manner of life among his followers. It was the purpose of the holy founder to form a religious "order" with no other view or end than the perfection of its own members through prayer, penance, and solitude. But through the inspiration of God, obtained by prayer, St. Francis changed this original design, somewhat, and added the external work of laboring for the salvation of souls. The distinguishing characteristic of the "Order," according to the mind of St. Francis, was to be the vow and practice of holy poverty. The reasons which urged St. Francis to this were: first, the resemblance such a life bears to the life lived by our Blessed Redeemer; secondly, the spiritual advantages which this state affords for the perfecting in our souls of the habits of humility, patience and meekness; and thirdly, the remedies which holy poverty offers to the
eure of our irregularities, especially of all inordinate love of the world.

I shall now, briefly, speak upon the characteristic virtues of the Seraphic Francis, although I do so with some hesitation and I may say with feelings akin to awe. If poverty were so dear to the soul of St. Francis, we can say that penance was equally as dear; they were twin virtues in the life of our Saint. St. Francis called his body, "Brother Ass," because he said it was made to carry burdens, to be beaten, and to be fed but little. And he did scarcely allow himself what was necessary to sustain life, and every day he found out new ways of punishing and mortifying himself. Unless he was sick, he would eat nothing that was dressed with the fire. He drank only clear water, and that very moderately, however great was his thirst.

What great care this holy man used to preserve, unsullied and untainted the virtue of purity! In the beginning of his conversion the devil assailed him very often with violent temptations against the flesh, and to overcome them he would often cast himself into the snow. One day, as he was tempted more severely than usual, he left his cell, went out and rolled himself again and again, in the deep snow. By the vigor and ardor with which he overcame this assault, he obtained such a complete victory over the demon of impurity, that he was never more tempted against the flesh. However, he still guarded the virtue of purity most jealously, and shunned all occasions of danger. He used to say that "to converse too frequently with women and not to suffer by it, is as hard as to take fire into one's bosom and not to be burnt." "What has a religious man," added he "to do with women, anyhow, except to hear their confessions and give them spiritual instructions?"
The humility of St. Francis! He was indeed, in his own eyes, the basest and most despicable of men, and he desired to be treated as such. When anyone showed the least esteem for his virtues, he would say to himself, "What anyone is in the eyes of God, that he is and nothing more." Frequently he would command some brother to revile him with reproachful language. Thus one day, as he was repeating to himself, these words, "Brother Francis, for thy sins thou hast deserved to be plunged into Hell," he ordered Brother Leo to respond, "It is true you have deserved to be buried in the very depths of Hell." A certain holy monk was favored with a vision in which he saw a bright throne prepared in Heaven, and he heard a voice saying that it was for the humble Francis. Speaking to St. Francis afterwards, about this vision, he said to him "How can you in truth then call yourself the greatest sinner in the world?" And St. Francis answered:—"If God had bestowed upon the greatest sinner the favors and graces which He has bestowed upon me, he would have been more grateful than I; and if He had left me to myself, I should have committed greater wickedness than all other sinners."

Prayer, both vocal and mental, was the very breath of St. Francis. We may say that, with St. Francis, to live was to pray, and to pray was to live. Every year after the Feast of the Epiphany, St. Francis would shut himself up in his cell and there spend forty days in rigorous fasting and devout prayer, in honor of the forty days fast and prayer of our Blessed Redeemer in the desert. Whatever he did, or wherever he went, his soul was always raised to heaven, and he seemed continually to dwell with the angels. But it was devotion to the passion of Jesus Christ, that especially distin-
guished St. Francis. From the beginning of his conversion, the sufferings of Jesus Christ continually filled his thoughts. To soothe the sharp pains of a violent distemper, someone desired to read a little to him; but he answered:—"Nothing gives me so much delight as to think on the life and passion of our Lord; I continually employ my mind on this subject, and were I to live to the end of the world, I should stand in need of no other books."

In the year 1224 on Mount Alverno, whither St. Francis had retired for heavenly contemplation, he was highly favored by Almighty God with the sacred stigmas. Having transported himself—almost out of himself—towards God, by the burning and vehement desires of his soul, he beheld a Seraph, with six shining wings blazing with fire, coming down from the highest parts of the heavens towards him in a rapid flight. Placing itself near St. Francis, there appeared between its wings the figure of a man crucified, with his hands and feet stretched out and fastened to the cross. Two of the wings were placed above the head of the Seraph, two others were extended out as if the Seraph were about to fly, and with the two remaining wings it covered its body. The Seraph, under the figure of the crucified Redeemer, fixed its eyes upon St. Francis, and he was most visibly affected. His soul became filled with great spiritual joy, at the same time mingled with much sorrow. After a secret and intimate communication—the vision having disappeared—St. Francis' soul was inflamed with seraphic love, and his body, like wax, began to receive the impression of the five sacred wounds. His hands and feet seemed to be bored through in the middle with four wounds, and these holes appeared to be pierced with nails of hard flesh, the heads of which were round and black. The points
were long and appeared beyond the skin on the other side, and were turned back as if they had been clinched with a hammer. There also appeared in his right side a red wound as if made by a piercing lance. St. Francis did all in his power, to conceal this highly and singular favor of heaven, from the eyes of men; and ever-afterwards he kept his hands covered with the sleeves of his habit, and wore stockings and shoes.

With great reluctance, I must now bring this incomplete sketch to a close and hasten to the death-bed scene of St. Francis, as I wish to draw for you, my brethren, a few profitable lessons before concluding. St. Francis foretold his death, long before it happened, and a little before it occurred, he dictated his testament to his religious brethren, in which he counselled them always to honor the priests and pastors of the church, and exhorted them to observe their rule faithfully, and to work with their hands, not for the sake of gain, but to avoid idleness and to set a good example. Knowing that his hour had come, he bade them lay him on the ground and cover him with an old habit, and then he addressed them in the following words:—‘Farewell, my children; remain always in the fear of the Lord. That temptation and tribulation which is to come, is now at hand; and happy shall they be who shall persevere in the good they have begun. I hasten to go to our Lord, to whose grace I recommend you.’ He then asked them to read to him the Passion of our Divine Saviour; after which he began to recite the one hundred and forty-first psalm, and expired immediately after having finished the last verse:—‘Bring my soul out of prison that I may praise thy name, the just wait for me, till thou reward me.’
My Dear Brethren, among the many lessons which are taught us in the life of St. Francis of Assisi there are three upon which I wish to dwell for a few moments this evening, as being especially appropriate in these days; and they are the love and practice of poverty, the spirit of prayer and penance, and the love and practice of the holy virtue of purity.

Many of the evils in this world at the present day, may be traced directly to the love of wealth and influence. It is this love that causes the rich man to look down upon the poor man, as an inferior being, and the capitalist to treat his employees not much better than beasts of burden. It is this love that has made the poor man so discontented and envious, and has caused him to look upon the man of wealth, as an irreconcilable enemy. It is this love that has made the working man so dissatisfied with his lot in life, as to look upon his employer simply as a tyrant, who must be dethroned. It is this love, both in the rich and in the poor, that has destroyed the higher and better aspirations of the soul, and shut out from their lives the grace of God.

If the rich and the poor possessed ever so little of the spirit of St. Francis, what a change would come over the world! The rich must realize that they are but the stewards of God, and that they are not absolute lords over their wealth. They must use it for the benefit of their fellow man, and when they use it otherwise, it becomes, instead of a blessing to them, a great curse. Let them often meditate upon the words of our Blessed Redeemer, "That it is harder for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven, than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle." And let them picture frequently to themselves, Dives and Lazarus; Dives the wealthy man who refused Lazarus, the beggar, the
crumbs that fell from his table; Dives now in Hell, asking but for one drop of water from Lazarus, who is in Heaven, arrayed in gold and purple and resting on the bosom of Abraham; and this was refused him.

Let the poor man and the working man reflect that Christ was born in a stable, worked as a humble artisan, and died in poverty. Wealth and influence do not bring happiness and peace. "Sufficient for the day, is the evil thereof." That man is most blessed who is in moderate circumstances, virtuous and temperate. God knows what is best for each and every one of us. Seek the higher things of life: you are not beasts. Inequalities in life, position and talent, must and will exist. They are embedded in the very nature and constitutions of civil society. No settlement of the social unrest and discontent, until both rich and poor return to the pure gospel of Jesus Christ, and live it out in their lives.

Have you ever asked yourselves why God has made us so weak and dependent, and permits us to be subject to so many crosses and trials? To teach us to pray, to make us hold communion with Him, and to unite us to Him on earth. If we were strong and independent, and life was all sunshine, scarcely would we ever think of the good God, who made us, and from whom we receive life, happiness, and all blessings. If there were no crosses and trials, no temptations and struggles, there would be no growth and spiritual perfection, no reparation and no atonement. Behold the spirit of prayer and penance of St. Francis of Assisi! From meditation on the Passion of Jesus Christ, St. Francis learned how to pray and how to suffer. In the Passion of Jesus Christ there is found the highest wisdom. Jesus nailed to the cross, with His eyes turned towards heaven, is the best Teacher and the best book. If people were to pray more
and were willing to suffer more, what happiness and what blessedness they would find, even in this life! "With desolation is the land made desolate because no one thinketh in his heart:’’ "If any man will be My disciple let him take up his cross and follow Me."

Impurity is the vice of the age, and the sin of the American people. Drink slays its hundreds, but impurity slays its thousands. Like a canker, it is eating into the very vitals of the nation. Impurity undermines the foundation of all society; because it means the destruction of the human race. It is high time for the American people to open their eyes to this most blighting vice. Behold the angelic purity of the seraphic St. Francis, and the care with which he guarded this most beautiful and delicate of all virtues! What would St. Francis say and do if he were living now and saw how those calling themselves good Christians, yea, Catholics, expose recklessly to danger the virtue of holy purity, by their immodest garments? Dress and fashion are sending thousands to Hell. Catholic mothers and Catholic young ladies, let me call upon you, in the name of St. Francis, to set your faces resolutely against the Pagan fashion that has given us, the tube skirt, the hobble skirt, the slit skirt, the princess dress, and the decollete gown;—which seem to me to have been designed and fashioned in the lowest pits of hell! Men are immoral and lecherous enough, now-a-days without inflaming more their beastly passions by suggestive and immodest dress.

O Seraphic Francis, from your high throne of glory and bliss, we entreat you this evening to turn towards us your eyes of mercy and compassion! We beseech you, to-night, to pray to God that, as we grow older and draw nearer to eternity, we may be filled more and more
with your spirit,—especially your love of poverty and purity, and your spirit of prayer and mortification! We may then rest assured of our salvation and sanctification.
XXIII SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE RESTORATION TO LIFE OF THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS.

MY DEAR BRETHREN:—After having silenced the Scribes and Pharisees who found fault with Him because He ate and drank with Publicans and sinners; after having reminded the disciples that the guests cannot be sad but must make merry as long as the bridegroom is still in their midst; then it was that the ruler came forward and worshipped Christ and said: "Lord, my daughter hath just now died; but come, lay Thy hand on her and she will live."

Christ rose up at once and, accompanied by the Apostles, followed the ruler. Behind them came the excited crowd all eager and anxious to see what was about to happen.

Now in the midst of this crowd there was a poor woman, who had been suffering from a serious malady for twelve years. She had undergone the treatment prescribed in the Talmud; she had also paid out most of her means to physicians; but all in vain; she derived no benefit; the malady grew worse; her only hope now lay in Christ.

What will she do? She is timid and ashamed; timid, because she has no offering to make the Lord; ashamed, because her sickness is considered a great disgrace among Jewish women. At last she resolved to get the gift by stealth. "If I but touch His garment I shall be healed," said she.

Urged on by this intense and lively faith she makes her way through the crowd to where Christ is, and
stealthily touches, with her thin and wasted fingers, the tassel which hung from His garment. Scarcely had her fingers come in contact with His garment when lo! the issue of blood stops; she is healed; and with beating heart she falls back quietly into the crowd.

No one but Christ knew of her act. As He felt power going out from Him, He turned around and said: "Who has touched My garment?" And as each one pleaded innocent, Christ continued: "I have felt power going out from Me; some one has touched Me." Then looking around with those piercing glances that could fathom the depths of the human heart, His eyes fell upon the poor woman. Upon seeing herself discovered, trembling, she cast herself at His feet, and declared before all the people for what cause she had touched Him, and how on the moment, she had been entirely healed. This simple acknowledgment was all that Christ desired and He turned to her and said: "Be of good heart, daughter, thy faith hath healed thee."

Whilst He was still speaking these comforting words, some of the servants of the ruler hurried through the crowd exclaiming, "Do not trouble the Master any longer; your daughter is dead!"

The father uttered no complaint. Great as was his grief, he was a noble soul and did not begrudge this poor sufferer the happiness of having been healed. Christ beholding him bowed down in speechless grief said: "Do not fear, only believe; she shall be saved." And then He started for the home of the ruler.

At the house, the mourners were gathering. The delicate body was being prepared for the winding sheet and the linen bands. The women were about to begin their wails and lamentations. Entering, Christ said:— "Weep not; the child is not dead; she sleeps." Hear-
ing this the mourners believed it to be mockery; but Christ bade them to pass out of the darkened chamber. Then in the presence of the ruler, and Peter and James and John, Christ took the child by the hand and said, "Talitha Roumi!"—"My child, arise!"

At once the little maid arose and in childish glee started to run about. The parents were beside themselves with joy, and the Lord had to remind them to give the girl something to eat.

This wondrous deed having been accomplished, Christ remained within the house until the crowd dispersed. But the secret could not be kept long. The sight of the little girl brought back to life, the gratitude of the parents, the wondering awe of the Apostles,—all this soon betrayed the fact; "And the fame thereof went abroad into all that country."

My Brethren, I am tempted to stop here, to make no further comment, and to leave you to your own reflections on this simple, beautiful and touching gospel. But, perhaps, it will be best to explain a few things and to point out one or two lessons.

Who was this ruler? He was Jairus, chief of the Synagogue, and one of those notable men who sought Christ to implore His aid in behalf of the Roman Centurion.

Does the word worship, mean supreme adoration or does it simply mean some bodily prostration as a token of reverence? We cannot answer this with certainty. At any rate it was a silent censure of the conduct of the Pharisees, to which sect Jairus, most likely belonged.

Was his daughter dead when the ruler first besought Christ? No doubt when he left home she was on the point of expiring. And, judging from the symptoms, by the time he reached Christ, she must have been dead.
And thus it happened that his servants came hurriedly to inform him to entreat Christ no longer, as his daughter was dead.

What about the faith of the sick woman? Faith, here includes, not only belief in Christ's omnipotent power but confidence in his goodness. The woman did more than believe. She hoped, she acted, she touched the hem of Christ's garment. And we are told by historians that she erected a statue of Christ in front of her home at Caesarea Philippi to commemorate her wonderful cure; and that Julian, the Apostate, removed it, and set up his own statue in its place; which afterwards was totally destroyed by fire from heaven.

She touched the hem of Christ's garment; what does this mean? The Jewish garment which was worn by Christ was ordained by law. From each of the four corners hung a tassel. These tassels or pendants were sacred objects in the eyes of the Jews, and were intended to remind them that they were the chosen people and consecrated to God. It was one of these that the woman touched.

Who were the minstrels? They were hired mourners, and according to the prevailing custom, were introduced to excite more, by their minstrel strains, the grief of the relatives of the girl. This practice, too, was common among the Greeks and Romans. Jeremias, the Prophet, speaks of mourning women; and that the mourners shall go round-about in the street.

"The girl is not dead but sleepeth." Death is frequently called sleep in the Scripture. And hence it is that the word cemetery means a sleeping place. Christ used the word sleep in the sense in which the crowd understood it; that is, that she would not remain in death, but would soon be resuscitated. In the same sense He
said, "Lazarus in his grave sleepeth," because He was about to raise him from the dead by His omnipotent power. And now having explained a few difficulties in the Gospel we shall conclude with one or two lessons.

Let us, my brethren, try to have the same strong faith in the power and goodness of God as that poor woman. No one ever goes to Christ with the proper dispositions and comes away unassisted. As that woman's faith and confidence were rewarded munificently, so shall ours be. And Christ shall say to us as He said to her, "Be of good heart, thy faith hath healed thee." Let us imitate Christ, our Model, in His goodness and mercy. The woman had not even implored Him to cure her. She simply touched His garment. And lo! the disease that had baffled the skill of physicians for twelve years and more was cured. Let this great miracle of Christ stimulate and augment our faith. By two words "Talitha Roumil"—"My child arise!" The girl breaks the bonds of death, arises, and in gleeful joy romps about the home.

Who will dare to find fault with the Church for making use of ceremonies? Behold Christ the Lord, King, Creator of all things wearing the ceremonial garment! The use of ceremonies is one of the most impressionable ways of teaching the truth. Finally from this Gospel, we see the doctrine of the veneration of relics. Christ sets the example, by healing the woman who had touched His garment. "As she touched My garment I felt power going out from Me." It was not the garment itself that healed her. It was lifeless, like any other garment; but it wrapped the body of Christ. It is not the bones nor the garments of saints that heal us. No; it is God honoring His most intimate and beloved friends, the Saints, through these means!
MISSIONARY LIFE IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.

RT. REV. MONSIGNOR, REV. FATHERS AND DEAR BRETHREN:—You cannot imagine my surprise, nor conceive the spirit of gratitude which arose within my breast, when I received, wholly unsolicited, the gracious and magnanimous offer from the learned, esteemed and revered Pastor of St. Agnes' to come to New York and to take up a collection in this parish for the benefit of my Church. I had just made up my mind, urged a little by my Bishop, with his promise to assist me, that I must begin a fund for the erection of a new parochial residence and a new home for the Sisters. My small frame cottage, some twenty-five years old, which was planned and built almost personally at the cost of eighteen hundred dollars, by my predecessor, Rev. John Werninger, and the Sisters' home, which was planned and superintended by myself and erected at the enormous sum of fifteen hundred dollars, the workmen having been paid by the day and we having furnished the material: these modest buildings have served their day, as you see, and must be replaced by more substantial, at any rate, more up-to-date structures, in keeping with our progressive town.

Where shall I get the funds? It will take at least ten thousand dollars to erect two modest structures that will simply accommodate us. We have a debt of sixteen thousand dollars on the Church and School and have not over two hundred Catholic families from whom to draw, none of whom are wealthy, because most of them are mechanics living off their daily wages. I wrote
a book to help out matters. But as the Rt. Rev. Monsignor no doubt knows, revenue from such source is small and slow. With these facts before me, you will now perceive with what joy and thanksgiving I received the Monsignor's letter and with what alacrity I answered it and accepted the invitation. But I think I hear someone say, how has it happened that the Monsignor should have invited this unknown pastor of a half-civilized diocese to come to the metropolis of the world, make a plea for money and to take up a collection in this wealthy Catholic and cultured parish. The Monsignor has known me some forty-four years. He poured over my head the regenerating waters of Baptism. My parents gave me his name in Baptism—Henry Brann. He visited our home when I was an infant in my mother's arms and my parents considered it a high honor and a great blessing to have him cross the threshold of their door. See that thumb! My mother has always told me that I owe it to Dr. Brann who acted as physician and surgeon, when as a baby, I accidentally cut it off with a sharp knife. Dr. Brann at this time had been stationed temporarily, at St. Joseph's Cathedral during the absence of Bishop Whelan at the Vatican Council. He was teaching theology and some of our older priests were his pupils. Dr. Brann is still remembered and spoken of in Wheeling. His voice and his pen were used eloquently in defense of Christianity and Catholicity. His lectures at the Cathedral were attended, not only by the Catholics, but by many of the intelligent Protestant people of Wheeling. I have heard my father and mother say that the Protestant Ministry turned out in a body, on one or two occasions and occupied the front pews. Bishop Whelan, as an inducement to keep Dr. Brann in the Wheeling Diocese, offered to make him his
Vicar-general. Providence decreed otherwise. That eloquent voice, trenchant pen and keen logic were needed in New York to uphold sound doctrine and to crush error, as it appeared in so many forms between the years 1875 and 1900.

My Dear Friends, since my mission here is to appeal to your charity, perhaps I had better say, to your generosity, in behalf of the struggling congregation of St. Joseph’s at Huntington, in the Diocese of Wheeling, as interested people, you naturally desire to know something about the Church and the people of West Virginia, among whom I am laboring and for whom I am soliciting your aid.

West Virginia’s greatest length is about 270 miles and its greatest breadth about 150 miles. It has a population of about 1,200,000, the Diocese of Wheeling comprising almost the whole state with a few counties of Virginia and Tennessee thrown in. At present it is principally known for its forests of timber, its coal mines, its oil and gas belts.

There are about sixty towns in the state, with a population of over 5,000. Wheeling and Huntington are the largest cities, the former having a population of about 50,000 and the latter, about 40,000.

The Diocese of Wheeling is over half a century old, its first Bishop, Rt. Rev. Richard V. Whelan, having been transferred from Richmond to Wheeling in the year 1850. Bishop Whelan, as Dr. Brann will bear testimony, was a most saintly man, and filled with the spirit of self-sacrifice. It was told me by a priest (who was then a seminarian) that Bishop Whelan oftentimes would take nothing but a loaf of dry bread in the morning and start for the country, several miles distant, to fence in some ground, which he had purchased for diocesan pur-
poses. When the noon hour arrived, he saw him often sit down by the wayside and dip that bread in some cool water, which was brought from a nearby spring. This constituted the Bishop's dinner. But—as for the seminarians who accompanied him, he would send them off to some neighboring farm house to get a warm lunch. It was Bishop Whelan and his holy audacity that purchased and paid for the foundation of most of the institutions up to the advent of Bishop Donahue.

Rt. Rev. John Joseph Kain succeeded Bishop Whelan. He was the zealot for the house of God and the preacher of His word. He was not a great builder nor financier, but he was one of the model Bishops of this country. In season and out of season, in churches, in court houses, in school rooms, at the country cross-roads, he was ever ready and he did preach the truths of our holy faith, with the fervor and love of an apostle. His devotion to our Divine Lord in the Blessed Sacrament was almost seraphic at times, and this led him to be scrupulously severe in everything that was connected with the divine worship.

The present incumbent of the See of Wheeling is Rt. Rev. P. J. Donahue. Before studying for the priesthood he had been a member of the legal profession; consequently he knows the world well. He has done great work in the building up of the diocese. I believe he came into the diocese and took hold of the reins at the right time. Under his administration the number of priests, churches and missions have more than trebled themselves. Most of his time is spent traveling up and down the diocese, establishing new parishes, institutions and missions, and re-visiting them, which necessarily implies the spirit of zeal and sacrifice. I believe Bishop Donahue knows every town, city, railroad, street ear
line, court house, school room, mine, industry and coun-
try road in the state. His grip is always packed and
he is ready to move. In this grip, besides a Bishop’s
paraphernalia, you will always find a Breviary, the
Bible, Shakespeare, and Tennyson. It is no ex-
aggeration to say that Bishop Donahue spends one-
third of the year traveling through the diocese. He is
an all-around Bishop. By his learning and culture, he
could grace any of your eastern Sees, and yet he makes
himself perfectly at home with the native West Vir-
ginian in the mountain districts. He travels alone, and
will strike up a conversation with anyone. He sees the
funny side of men and things, and it is well that he
does, as Bishop of West Virginia. I hope that you
will pardon me and that he will not suspend me if he hap-
pens to hear that I tell these stories about him. They
will give you some idea of the character of the people
among whom we are laboring.

About fifteen years ago we were waiting at Parkers-
burg to take a train, which was quite late. To while
away the time, he began to “knock talk” out of one of
the boys who was romping up and down the station.
Finally, the boy “cussed” as the native West Virginian
says. A big nigger, who usually took charge of the
Bishop’s baggage when he arrived at Parkersburg,
shouted out, “boy, don’t you know who’se your talkin’
to,” and the boy answered, “I guess some — preacher.”
On another occasion he was riding into Wheeling on
a Sunday morning, and he “struck up” a conversation
with a big German, who spoke broken English and didn’t
know a minister when he saw one, much less a Catholic
Bishop. The Bishop got a great deal of amusement out
of him, and they became quite intimate, apparently. As
the train rolled into the station the man said to the Bishop
"Let's have ein glass lager together," but answered the Bishop, "it's Sunday and all the saloons are closed."

"Mein freund," responded his German companion, "I knows where we gets it. At Mrs. ______ place. We goes in through the back door." She happened to be a member of the Cathedral parish. About ten years ago at a mountain place the Bishop was confirming. You know what they gave him to eat for three days?—pork and cabbage—dinner, supper and breakfast. When leaving, they asked him when he would return, and the Bishop with a downcast countenance answered vehemently—"Never!" You see a Bishop in West Virginia must not only be zealous and self-sacrificing, but strong in body and humorous and witty in mind and soul. Pray then, that our Bishop may still have the grace to travel and the adaptability to sleep in different and in indifferent beds and power to assimilate all kinds of food, for these are necessary natural requisites for a Bishop in West Virginia at the present day.

There are about ninety priests in the Diocese of West Virginia, taking care of sixty thousand souls. Seventy of these priests are Seculars and twenty members of religious orders. About one-third of the secular priests are now far advanced in years. They have done pioneer missionary work in the diocese. They were men especially adapted to such work. Strong physically, honest, rugged, simple and men of faith. In the beginning each man had jurisdiction over half dozen or more counties. In other words, he had a territory to cover and look after, of at least 250 square miles. Their work consisted chiefly in saying Mass in private houses, administering the sacraments, catechising the children and burying the dead. The other two-thirds of the Clergy, consisting of middle-aged and young men, although more
polished and refined, or more cultured, if you will, are not as strong physically and neither have they the same spirit of self-sacrifice in the performance of the missionary duties. They do more than their work, and they are a splendid body of priests as a whole, but it is much more to their liking and taste to preach, to assist at the ‘Forty Hours’ somewhere, and to do parish work in some city church. The Capuchins have two large parishes in the diocese, the Marists have a pretty fair parish and the Benedictines have several missions in the southern end of the state. We have four religious orders of women doing work in the diocese, namely, the Sisters of St. Joseph, the Visitation Nuns, the Franciscans, and the Carmelites.

The English speaking people, who number about 40,000, are chiefly the descendants of Irish and German settlers. Wheeling and vicinity have 20,000 of these. The other 20,000 are scattered throughout the state, principally now in villages and towns. Twenty thousand of the Catholic population are foreigners—Italians, Poles, Hungarians, Slavonians, Lithuanians and Syrians. The great problem now that confronts the Bishop of West Virginia is to look after their spiritual wants. Most of them live in the Mountain districts. In the same district you will find all of these nationalities. The mine operators, in their worldly wisdom, love this confusion of tongues, because it prevents dissatisfaction and strikes. If the Bishop could colonize together in the same places, the same nationalities, the missionary problem would become much simplified in West Virginia.

Coming now to my parish and people, for I have been invited and have come to take up a collection for them and not for the Diocese of Wheeling. There is only one Catholic Church in the city of Huntington. We
have, all told, not over one thousand souls. We are therefore, one out of every forty of the population. My parish proper is eight miles long and four miles wide. Huntington is the mecca of Protestantism. Every Protestant denomination is represented—even the Jews have a Synagogue. I should judge they have 30,000 Protestant church members. Are they bigoted and prejudiced? Some of their members are, but the more intelligent ones are not so much bigoted as they are ignorant of the Catholic faith. I receive into the Catholic Church every year about fifteen converts. They are exceedingly polite and friendly towards me. With them, the priest is the Church. I have been placed in some embarrassing positions at times.

About ten years ago, I was asked to assist at the burial of a small child, whose mother was a Catholic, but whose father was a Presbyterian. I had baptized the child. When I arrived at the house, I found there the Presbyterian minister. I was naturally quite surprised and I immediately told them that if they desired me to officiate, the Presbyterian minister must simply be a mourner. I officiated. The Presbyterian minister stood at the foot of the coffin, and I preached on the necessity of infant baptism. The Presbyterian minister asked if he might ride to the cemetery with me. I could hardly refuse the request, but took great care that he drove the horse and assisted me in and out of the buggy and I allowed him to hold the umbrella, the ritual and the holy water vase, for he hated those things as much as the devil does. He had never been so highly honored in his life as he was that day, when he acted as coachman, servant and altar boy to a Catholic priest. On two other occasions, a Protestant minister remained up-stairs, consoling the bereaved widows whilst I conducted down
stairs, the funeral services of the deceased husbands, whom I had received into the Catholic Church. About thirteen years ago, the last of March, when the weather was zero, I received a sick call about 35 miles distant, up the Guyandotte river, where the people are not half civilized and life is held very cheap. We started early in the morning. An Irish peddler drove me. We followed the bed of a creek for eighteen miles. I was almost frozen. About every hour or so, my Irish friend would stop the horse and go behind the buggy and take a big gulp of whiskey. I was made aware of it from the fiery odor of his breath. When it began to grow dark, I was getting quite anxious and every little while I would say, "How much farther have we to go, and when will we reach there?" From my friend, who was drawing faith, hope and charity from the black jug, the answer would come, "Have faith, Father, faith you know will move mountains." We arrived at the town a little before midnight. A young man was dying of consumption and he wanted a Catholic priest. I gave him some instructions that night, baptized him and the next morning said Mass in that mountain shack in the presence of that dying man and gave him holy communion. He lingered only a few days. From that Irish peddler he had heard of the Catholic Church. I had another sick call in the mountains. I had to go alone. To be able to protect myself, I put a revolver into my satchel. I reached the sick person after a day's journey. There were only two rooms in the shack and no floors. A young lady was dying. She had never been baptized but knew something of the Church. I baptized her and gave her holy communion. That night about a dozen or more of the natives heard of my visit. A Catholic priest was a great curiosity. They had come from a radius of five or ten miles to see
me. They eyed me from head to foot, looked at me from the back and from the front, came close to me and then drew away. P. T. Barnum's "What is it" never excited more curiosity. I was exceedingly congenial, affable and amiable that night—never in my life more so. They showed me where I was to sleep. There were four beds in the small apartment. Three of them were occupied by half-civilized looking fellows. I retired very late, put the pistol under my head, closed my eyes and slept that night with one eye open, upon those fellows in the other beds. I have given missions all over the southern part of the state to the non-Catholics. Sometimes there would not be a Catholic in the audience. I have been asked some mighty funny questions. At Wayne Court House, where some Mormons had been visiting, I was asked what is the difference between a Catholic priest and a Mormon? I answered, Mormons go to one extreme, and we to the other. The Mormon Elders want to take all the women they can get hold of. We Catholic priests don't want any—not even one.

My Dear Brethren, I have come to New York to ask financial help. What you give will be expended in such manner as to do the most possible good in the cause of Jesus Christ. How blessed you Catholic people of New York are! In the midst of those of your own faith, with Churches and schools and religious houses and institutions at every turn and priests to administer to all your spiritual wants. We, on the other hand, are living in the midst of those who hate our creed, where everything speaks latent, if not open hostility to our faith, where churches and priests are fifty and a hundred miles apart. If I had money to give in charity, it would not go towards the founding of libraries, nor the endowment of colleges, nor the building of hospitals and sanitariums, but to-
wards the erection of a beautiful Catholic Church in some southern or western city—a church so constructed as to teach symbolically, the truths of Christianity—where God could be fittingly and becomingly adored, and worshipped, where the merits of Calvary’s cross through the Sacrifice of the Mass could be applied to individual souls, where the Sacraments of the New Law, the great channels of God’s grace to sinful and erring and weak man could be administered and where the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all its beauty, simplicity and grandeur could be preached for the healing of the people. From God we have received our wealth. Let us return some of it to Him in the most direct way by the erection and maintenance of Catholic churches to His honor and glory.