

Jesus said to his disciples. Whom do you say that I am?

Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ the Son of the living God.

And Jesus answering, said to him. Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my father who is in heaven AND I SAY TO THEE THAT THOU ART PETER, AND UPON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH, AND THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT.

AND I SHALL GIVE TO THEE THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven.—S. Matthew xvi. 15-19



"Was anything concealed from PETER, who was styled the Rock on which the Church was built, who received the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the power of loosing and binding in Heaven and on earth?" —TERRELLIAN PROSCRIP. xxi.

"There is one God, and one Church, and one Chair founded by the voice of the Lord upon PETER. That any other Altar be erected, or any other Priesthood established, besides that one Altar, and one Priesthood, is impossible. Whatsoever gathers elsewhere, scatters. Whatever is devised by human frenzy, in violation of the Divine Ordinance, is adulterous, impious, sacrilegious." —St. Cyprian Ep. 43 ad plebem.

"All of them remaining silent, for the doctrine was beyond the reach of man, PETER the Prince of the Apostles and the supreme herald of the Church, not following his own inventions, nor persuaded by human reasoning, but enlightened by the Father, says to him: Thou art Christ, and not this alone, but the Son of the living God.—St. Cyril of Jerusal. Cat. xi. 1.

Calendar.

- Nov. 11—Sunday—XXIV aft Pent 3d Sept. Feast of the Patronage of B V M gr doub com of Oct and St Memm
- " 12—Monday—St Martin I P M Joub com Oct.
- " 13—Tuesday—St Nicholas I P C doub com of Oct sup.
- " 14—Wednesday—St Deusdedit I P C doub com of Oct sup.
- " 15—Thursday—St. Gertrude V doub com of Oct.
- " 16—Friday—Ostave of the Dedication.
- " 17—Saturday—St Gregory Thaumaturgus B C doub.

THE SAFER SIDE.

What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? MATTH. XVI. 26.

(Continued).

Further reflection on some particular points will render this truth still more palpable. It is generally agreed by the different denominations of Christians, that our Lord has left to his Church some exterior means of acquiring and preserving sanctity, which we call sacraments. But whilst Protestants commonly admit only two of these sacred rites, and in a very imperfect sense too, Catholics admit seven of them, under the full persuasion that they are all equally contained in the deposit of revealed doctrines; and here again the advantage of the safer side is entirely with us. Since our belief, besides resting on Scripture and Tradition, is by far the more ancient and the more common belief of Christians, we certainly are at least as much entitled to find fault with the doctrine of our opponents, as they think themselves authorised to find fault with ours. Supposing then the case to be merely dubious, and the existence of the seven sacraments to be nothing more than a probability; even in this case, is it not much more safe to acknowledge them all, and avoid the danger of rejecting any of the institutions of Christ, than by rejecting several of them, to run the risk of discarding what, to say the least, he has probably established, and what may be absolutely necessary for salvation?

Thus without here insisting on Baptism, which Christ has so positively declared to be a requisite condition to enter the heavenly kingdom, (John iii. 5) and which is, however, so often neglected or carelessly administered in Protestant communities; it may be right to say with Catholics that the remission of sins committed after baptism, although it strictly requires a sincere sorrow of the heart and a firm purpose of amendment, is, by the

divine command, to be obtained through the operation of an exterior ministry and the instrumentality of those to whom Christ said in the persons of his Apostles: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose you shall retain, they are retained" (John xx. 23). They, therefore, who in opposition to this doctrine; deny the necessity of confession and absolution, are greatly exposed to the danger of not having among themselves the true remedy for their sins, and not being in the way to heaven.

Again, Catholics may be correct in believing and professing the real and substantial presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist. It may be true that our Lord, through his exceeding great charity for us, gives not barely a sign or figure, not an empty memorial of his passion and death, but his own sacred body and blood for the food of our souls, and commands us to receive them within ourselves by a real manducation, under the penalty of being otherwise deprived of spiritual and eternal life; for, he himself has said: "The bread which I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world.—Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you—For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed" (John vi. 52, 54, 56). Since, then, our dissenting brethren neither admit the true and substantial presence of Christ in the Eucharist, nor possess among them persons qualified to consecrate his precious Body and Blood, is it not highly probable that they are deprived of an inestimable blessing; that they cannot possibly receive Christ within themselves according to his sacred order; and that they are left without the means of making their souls live a spiritual life, and of imparting to their bodies the seed of a glorious immortality?

Let the same be said of the sacrament called *Extreme Unction*, which, according to the doctrine of Catholics, was instituted by the same Divine Goodness for the sake of persons dangerously ill, to strengthen them against the terrors of death, to remove the remains of their sins, to render them victorious over the attacks of their invisible enemies, and to enable them, if not to recover their health, at least to die in peace, comfort and resignation. We read in the Epistle of St. James (v. 14), that those persons ought to bring in the priests of the Church, to be anointed by them with oil in the name of the Lord. Catho-

lies, not thinking it lawful to set aside in any point the command of God and the ordinance of his Apostles, faithfully comply with the precept; Protestants do not: let the reader judge which of them will depart this life with greater security, and appear with greater confidence before the tribunal of the Sovereign Judge.

This enumeration might be carried further; but let it suffice here to say, as well with regard to other points, as concerning those already mentioned; that the Catholic following the straight way marked out to him by the plain words of Scripture and the constant belief of past ages, is perfectly justifiable in his faith and practice: being always ready to give to all men a satisfactory account of that hope which is in him, he enjoys moreover the sweet consolation of having done whatsoever Almighty God required of him. But supposing, against all probability, that his belief was erroneous, what will, after all, be the consequence? No other than that he did more than was required; a circumstance which, far from being prejudicial to his spiritual interest, rather leaves him, in the sight of God, all the merit of his obedience, fidelity and fervor. Nay more, it will be found that, under this pretended mistake, and through its instrumentality, he has greatly improved in virtue, owing to the interior disposition of sorrow and purpose of amendment, or of great purity of conscience and disengagement from at least all mortal sin, which he was obliged to have in order to approach worthily the Sacrament of Penance, or that of the Holy Eucharist.

Widely different is the case with the Protestant, even supposing again, without any probability in his favour, that he is right in his rejection of several sacraments. All the advantages he can obtain and derive from this, is that he will be his misfortune, if his opinion is wrong! How shall he be able to vindicate a conduct and belief which deprived him of the best helps towards virtue and piety, and of such rites and practices as were, to all appearance, of divine institution and necessary for the salvation of his soul? What will he allege as a justification for his having sought, by a variety of cavils, to put a distorted construction upon the words of the gospel; for his having abandoned the right way to follow crooked paths, and preferred the bare word of a few proud and unauthorized men, a Luther, a Cranmer, a Calvin, to the testimony of the whole Church and of all pre-

ceding ages? Will not these considerations create against him a most serious difficulty at the bar of Divine Justice; and does it not remain evident that, whilst the Catholic has nothing to lose and every thing to gain, the Protestant has, on the contrary, nothing to gain and every thing to lose?

What has been already said, is powerfully supported by facts and experience. Ever since the excitement, fanaticism and desire of novelty produced by the reformation have subsided, hundreds and thousands of Protestants, both on this and on the other side of the Atlantic, have returned, and others are continually returning to the pale of the Catholic Church; whereas only but few Catholics comparatively, have become, or do become Protestants. The former generally are the moral and honest, the upright and moderate of their respective societies; they are those who seek to improve in virtue, to acquire genuine piety, to practice the evangelical precepts and councils, which they see so much forgotten or neglected among themselves; they are often persons of great learning and talent, of wealth and respectability evidently actuated in their change of religious creed by no other motive than deep conviction, disengagement from earthly things, and a steadfast wish to secure their eternal salvation. The latter commonly are dregs of the Catholic community; some raw youth and intemperate person, anxious to gain admittance into certain classes of society, to obtain an alliance with them, to secure a rich inheritance; or some distressed and miserable family, whose change of religion has been perhaps solicited under the secret promise of a reward or plentiful support; or some nominal Catholic, unwilling to check a wretched passion, to suppress a habit of intemperance, to renounce an occasion of sin, to make restitution of ill-gotten goods; or some unhappy clergyman, unfaithful to his sacred obligations, tired of the restraints of celibacy, and suspended by his lawful superiors from the further exercise of the sacerdotal functions.—Again, the former, after their conversion to Catholicity, commonly lead a pious and truly Christian life; the latter, after they have turned Protestants, follow a line of conduct still more wicked than ever, and readily avail themselves of the liberty which they have acquired to gratify with less shame their vicious inclinations. In fine, the former, after having perhaps