

The Catholic Record.

"Christianus mihi nomen est, Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname.)—St. Pacian, 4th Century.

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Our Lady of Stone.

A LEGEND OF ALSACE.

It was a statue made of stone,
Of rough gray stone, the peasant hands
Had carved it, taught by love alone,
The love that knows and understands.

Upon Our Lady's gentle face
There was a smile so passing sweet,
That, ere at Mass they took their place,
The people turned that smile to meet.

And mothers brought their children there
When they were sick, her help to seek,
And made them lip a baby prayer,
To her who loves the poor and weak.

The winter night was falling fast,
And all the ground with snow was white,
When by the church a poor child passed,
Half dead with cold and grief and fright.

The centre door still open stood;
The sacristan so chilled had been,
So eager for his fire of wood,
The open door he had not seen.

Oh had some angel in his flight
That you have met on all your ways,
And some angel with magic wing,
And some angel with magic wing,
That poor young homeless, helpless thing,
Through the dark aisle she slowly creeps,
To where the statue glimmers stands;
And kneeling at its feet, she weeps,
And stretches out appealing hands:

"My mother told me long ago
That you have met on all your ways,
But love poor children most of all,
And always answer when they call.
Then, dear Our Lady, pity me;
I have no one—no one but thee."

Steps down the statue from its place;
The wind is blowing, harsh and cold,
And the little tearful face,
And pillows it upon its breast.

And as they glide across the floor,
And slowly down the steps descend,
The carved saints above the door,
Their solemn heads in homage bend.

Their silent walk across the snow;
That you have met on all your ways,
And with new warmth, the child's limbs glow,
Beneath the statue's stony fold.

III.

Beside the town a convent stands,
Famed far and wide for kindly deeds;
Where gentle hearts and gentle hands
Combine to help their neighbors' needs.

The nuns their vesper office sing,
When through the chant, soft-toned and low,
The convent bell is heard to ring,
Through all the corridors below.

The portress hastens with her keys—
Some wand'er seeks her help and care—
Quickly she draws the bolt—and sees
Our Lady's statue standing there.

Upon the sister's kindly breast
The statue laid the weary child;
"In that safe haven may she rest,"
Our Lady said—and softly smiled.

"The child now sleeps; let her wake
Within the convent's holy walls;
Cherish and guard her for my sake,
God's Mother on your pity calls."

IV.

The child so grew, in strength and grace,
Beneath the convent's fostering care,
That when the convent bell was rung,
They all decreed that she should bear.

Since then each year when falls the snow,
And winter winds are blowing loud,
The nuns in long procession go;
The townfolk all behind them crowd.

Then through the silent, listening street
The sisters pass, the Deumus singing,
And kneeling round the statue's feet
They thank, while all the bells are ringing.

—Frank Penttil, in Irish Monthly.

RE-OPENING OF THE MISSIONS TO NON-CATHOLICS IN BROOKLYN.

During the week which terminated Sunday last a mission for non-Catholics was given in the Church of St. Mary, Mgr. O'Connell is the esteemed rector. The mission was conducted by Rev. R. M. Ryan, and consisted of the usual exercises. The spacious parish hall was crowded each evening by an earnest throng, many of whom were Protestants, who listened with marked attention to the lecturer's lucid explanation of those doctrines of the Catholic Church which were made the pretense for separation from it at the Reformation. Father Ryan's mode of discussing them differed somewhat from that usually followed. The proofs from Scripture and tradition, while receiving due attention, were not so much insisted upon, as they have been so often given before, and so often impugned. But, while nature and reason were freely drawn upon for apt comparisons and illustrations, the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers were not omitted. The audience was reminded to refer to the more precise and exact statements from them, supplied on the leaflets which were distributed each night to every member of the audience. One result of this was that, being thus furnished with the chapter and verse of the Scripture texts and the precise places in the writings of the Holy Fathers, fewer challenges were made through the Question Box for Scripture authorities, to which Protestants are accustomed to look for every thing claiming credence. This method seems to weaken the controversial spirit, which, when stirred up, hardens the mind to all impressions contradictory of pre-conceived notions.

IMMENSE AUDIENCES.

The audiences increased each night up to Sunday evening, when, so large was the attendance, that the lecture had to be given in the church. A vast crowd filled the sacred edifice on that occasion to listen to the closing discourse on the Holy Eucharist. The treatment of this all-important central doctrine of Catholicity was unique,

and was listened to with breathless attention for over an hour and a half. The lecturer started out with the proposition that God, in all His dealings with man, accommodates Himself to His creatures as He made them. After illustrating this by many references, he showed that there is no form of life of which man has cognizance that is not dependent on transubstantiation. When, therefore, the Son of God decreed to impart eternal life to man's soul and body He should either change man altogether into another and different being, or change His uniform plan of dealing with him, or make use of transubstantiation as the means of imparting this new life of which the Lord speaks in nearly every verse of the sixth chapter of St. John from the 32nd to the 60th.

On similar lines he treated of the love of Jesus Christ for man, which was for Him as a being with a soul or body only, but as one compounded of soul and body. The union, therefore, to which this love necessarily tends should include both, and be of the closest known to man, as the love impelling it is the strongest. Such is that which transubstantiation effects. No wonder—but, rather, necessarily—Christ availed Himself of it to be perfectly united to His beloved creature. He showed how clear and easy of comprehension this made the otherwise insurmountable difficulties of St. John's 6th chapter, the references of St. Paul in Corinthians and of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke. The lecture evidently produced a profound impression.

On the same day Father Ryan opened a two-weeks' mission in Maspeth, L. I. DOUBTS ON POINTS OF FAITH.

The following are some of the questions propounded through the Question Box:

"Having been brought up in the Catholic faith, and being very anxious to remain in communion with the Church, I would ask if a man having serious doubts as to the genuineness and truth of several important doctrines of Roman faith, yet willing to live up to those doctrines, and reasoning that whereas so many able minds have been enabled to grasp and adopt those doctrines, may it not be my own shortsightedness that fails to comprehend them, and admitting the possibility of their truth, can I remain in the Church without, in the eyes of the Church, being a hypocrite and guilty of sacrilege?"

One who leaves the Catholic Church on account of doubts concerning points of faith falls from the frying pan into the fire. Outside of the Church there is little else but doubt and perplexity; inside of it, if either exist in any individual, it is easy of cure. The terms "hypocritical" and "sacrilegious" cannot be applied to one who incalculably doubts. But no Catholic can remain long an incalculable doubter, for his religion obliges him to take immediate steps to clear up his doubts. This he can do very easily by a clear and simple statement of them to his pastor or some other priest, when he will discover that they are not nearly so formidable as he imagines. In the present case there is evidence that they cannot be so momentous, for a palpable fallacy is implied in the remark that some minds are able whilst others are not able to grasp these doctrines. No mind can grasp so as to comprehend the supernatural. The evidence of its truth is the same for all minds, namely, that God has revealed it. This is the highest and strongest that man can have of the truth of anything, for, in all other kinds of evidence, there is the possibility of deception; in this there is none. God cannot deceive nor be deceived; therefore, if He reveals anything it must be infallibly true, and it is neither necessary nor useful for us to try to comprehend it. For, even were the latter possible, and did we succeed in accomplishing it, our merit for believing would thereby cease, as it would not be God we then honored by believing, but ourselves. This, however, does not preclude our studying to ascertain the conformity of the thing revealed with reason or its harmony with God's other works and with all truth in general. Quite the contrary. Hereby we honor God and strengthen our own faith.

Now, for a Catholic, it is extremely easy to find out, beyond all manner of doubt, whether God has revealed one or other doctrine of His Church. This being certainly ascertained, there is no longer room or any excuse for doubt. Hence the questioner is in no way exposed to the danger of acting the hypocrite or committing a sacrilege.

TROUBLE-SOME STUMBLING-BLOCKS.

Among the doctrines causing the preceding questioner's trouble he mentions "Eternal punishment, the shutting out from Heaven of infants unbaptized through parents' neglect, the power of the Church to say that sin otherwise than that enumerated in the Ten Commandments is sin in the eyes of God, the power of priests to act as God's agent in the matter of confession—in fact the Apostolic succession; this, of course, involving the infallibility of the Pope."

Regarding the first there is no supernatural truth more fully or more frequently asserted throughout the whole of the Old Testament, none other more

clearly stated by our Lord in the New, and none more uniformly held not alone by all Christians but by all mankind in general. To perceive its consistency with other divine truths and reconcile it with the idea of a God of infinite goodness and mercy, there is needed not only study but prayer. The exposition of the fruits of the former would require a whole treatise to touch upon them even; a whole lecture would hardly do the subject justice. Such treatises are easily procured. (See the Abbe Martine's "Religion in Society," chapter 24, 25, 26.)

The same answer applies in part to the state of unbaptized infants, about whom the Church merely teaches that they are excluded from the vision of God. But how could any one imagine they had any right to it more than any other animals?

The power of the priest to absolve a confessed and penitent sinner was fully established in the lecture that followed on "The Forgiveness of Sins."

Only a transgression of the known will of God can be a sin. To imply, as the questioner does, that God made known through the Ten Commandments only what He wished man to do or not to do, is contradicted by every page of Holy Writ, by every believer rightly exercising reason. The six precepts of the Church and others of her laws are only fuller developments of the divine law. They are not additions thereto, as may clearly be perceived by examining any one of them. St. Paul, I Cor. 6, 9, makes this evident.

The infallibility of the Pope was treated in full in the lecture on the Church by the questioner. Penance and the Holy Eucharist will have each a lecture devoted to them, in which beyond all shadow of doubt they will be demonstrated to be sacraments, on evidence all Episcopalians profess to admit. Matrimony is declared to be a sacrament, and even a great one, by St. Paul, and he certainly is good authority.

For this cause, he says, "shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church" (Ep. v, 31, 32).

THE CHURCH HOLDS A JUDICIAL TRIAL.

The second question, "How can a priest forgive sins?" will be fully answered in the lecture on "Penance." He can "remit" or "retain" sins, the very way the "Son of Man" did it, the way the judges in civil courts remit or retain fines and other legal penalties; that is in virtue of the power given them by the State. The one receives power from the "Kingdom of God," the other from the kingdom of man, and both exercise it in the same manner, namely, by means of a judicial trial.

"Will you please tell me if you can prove that there are seven sacraments? Our ministers claim that there are only three—the Supper of the Lord, confirmation and baptism, and if there are any more in your Church, that the Church, not God, made them? Also how can a priest forgive sins? How can you prove that the Pope is infallible. We claim that our Church is the real Church of Christ and the Apostles; but your arguments so far are satisfactory in favor of the Catholic Church being such."

Regarding the first question there is no more difficulty in proving penance, holy orders, matrimony and extreme unction to be sacraments than there is in proving the three mentioned.

The infallibility of the Pope is proved from the very nature and necessity of his position as Head of the Church, and, consequently, its mouthpiece. For its infallibility would be vain or useless without a means of utterance to express it. This the Pope or somebody else must be; and who else but he could be imagined? Hence, Christ made the first Pope, Peter, infallible. I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren. (Luke xxii, 31, 32.) Surely, the Lord's prayer was heard. But what good would it be to the countless millions of Peter's brethren who have lived since if his gift were confined to himself, and not handed on to his successors, who had far more need of it than he had?

The Episcopal Church was born out of time, and entirely too late to have any claim to the paternity of Christ and His apostles. Its true paternity is well known. All history, every encyclopaedia, does it full justice, and leaves no doubt about its pedigree.

PITY FOR THE IGNORANT.

"The Episcopal Church claims that there are only two sacraments necessary for salvation—strictly speaking, only one; that is baptism, and the Supper of our Lord when we become old enough to receive it. When were the other five made? I claim that your Pope must have called those five sacraments. Strictly speaking, they are not. That is what we are taught to believe."

Nothing but sincere pity and sympathy can be felt for the poor souls expressing their perplexity in the above. That is what we are taught to believe—by whom? The "Articles of

Religion" in the Book of Common Prayer, Art. 25, says that "there are two sacraments ordained of Christ in the Gospel," and that "there are five others commonly called sacraments," but "they are not to be counted Sacraments of the Gospel" because, probably, they were not instituted by the gospel. How could they be, having been in existence before a word of the gospels was written? St. Paul differs from the Episcopal teachers concerning matrimony, as we have seen, for he calls it a "great sacrament," as if foretelling the quips and quarks to be afterward introduced, and which are thus voiced by Dr. Morgan Dix, the present rector of Trinity Episcopal Church, New York: "But she (our Church) does not deny that in addition to these (baptism and the Lord's Supper) there are sacraments of an inferior grade. The sacrament of matrimony is mentioned by that name in one of the homilies. . . . while absolution and others, it is acknowledged that they are also sacraments." ("The Sacramental System," page 83.) At page 84 he says: "Take confirmation, for it cannot be considered as barred out by the language of Article 25. It is retained among us on the very ground that it is a following of the apostles; surely not a corrupt one." (Article 25 distinctly states the contrary.) Dr. Dix further says, very appositely, indeed: "Deny to it the sacramental character, and what is left? A ceremony. And he might add, nothing more. Again, 'anointing of the sick, or, absolution,' are administered as sacraments, are called sacraments and are believed by all Ritualists, to be sacraments. How, then, does the Episcopalian questioner say there are only two sacraments, and that the Pope made the other five? Who was this Pope? Jesus Christ. No other as the maker of a sacrament is known to the Catholic Church, which has always held and taught that not she, but only Christ, can make a sacrament.

A CHURCH WITH THREE SACRAMENTS.

The painful uncertainty of our Episcopal brethren was painfully exemplified by another questioner stating that his Church recognized three sacraments only—baptism, confirmation and the Lord's supper. This is really nearer to being what it does, or, rather, what it did admit. Cranmer, the nurse of our Anglican heresy, said in his catechism: "Our Lord instituted and annexed to the gospel three sacraments, baptism, absolution and Communion." The Confession of Augsburg enumerates three also as "having the command of God and the promise of the grace of the New Testament." Luther admitted three also. Those who are not of the latest offshoot from the faithful parent of so many different and contradicting divisions of the same Church claim two major and five minor sacraments, a distinction utterly unknown to the Primitive Church. Their predecessors claimed three, but did not agree about which they were. And, thank God, the latter and more devout Ritualists admit the whole seven. Would to God they only had duly authorized administrators of them, for, of course, in the "Kingdom of Heaven" no more than in the kingdoms of earth, not every one can appoint judges, generals and ambassadors.

THE ANGELS.

Their Existence, Their Nature, and Their Powers.

That there are angels is an article of Catholic faith defined by the Lateran Council. There exists evidence proved by the Sacred Scriptures. Some heretics (the Hussites) denied their existence, asserting that the angels mentioned in the Bible are merely ideal or poetical beings. Others have taught that angels are the disembodied souls of men. Such vagaries, like all heresies, prove the necessity of having an infallible and authoritative teaching Church such as Christ has established. Indeed the order which God adopted in creation requires angels for its completion. A certain gradation of perfection is observable in creatures, which implies that there must be beings wholly spiritual in their nature, between God and man. We see degrees of perfection added to creatures, exalting them successively in the order of being, from the clay we stand on up to man. Man being both spiritual and material, the distance between him and God leaves room for another order of beings still more perfect than man. That gap in the gradation of perfection is filled by the wholly spiritual beings—the angels. Beginning with inanimate and inorganic matter, there comes next in the scale of perfection the Vegetable Kingdom. In flowers and shrubs and trees there is life, without sensibility or instinct. All know the difference between a live and a dead plant. In the animal kingdom, another degree of perfection is added. In animals there is not only vegetable life, by which they grow and increase like plants, but there is sensibility—the power of sensation—and there is instinct. Passing all the different grades of perfection in the merely animal creation, we come, at last, to the monarch of the earth—to man. In

him is the sum of all the perfections of all inferior creatures; to which is added the wondrous perfection of the human soul. Intellect, reason, and free will raise him high above the earth and above all the creatures that God has made upon it. Made of the dust of the earth, he has all the perfection of inorganic matter. Since he grows and increases from birth to maturity, he has the perfection of vegetable life. Sensible to heat and cold, to pleasure and pain, he is endowed with all the advantages of animal life. Gifted with reason, in the light of which Nature is an open book to him, with an everlasting longing for immortality and eternal happiness; with consciousness of responsibility, and with free will to overcome his animal propensities—he is manifestly the most perfect of God's earthly creations.

But does this gradation of perfections end in man? No, there is a link wanting to complete the chain of God's creatures. One link more will connect all His creatures, from the dust of the earth to the throne of the Creator. That link is supplied by the angels. They are higher in the order of perfection than man, for he is "a little lower than the angels" (Ps. viii, 6). Unlike man who is a composite being of soul and body, the angels are wholly spiritual—"He hath made His angels spirits" (Heb. i, 7). Hence all those sensations which we have through the senses, and those means of acquiring knowledge which we have through them, are known to the angels. But this is a perfection in them not a defect.

The use of the senses is to convey knowledge of external things to the soul within the body. To have that knowledge without instrumentality of the bodily senses, belongs to a more perfect state of being. The organs of sense limit the powers of the soul, at best, and when any of them is injured or destroyed, that means of acquiring knowledge is impeded or lost. That the angels have full knowledge of the material creation is implied in the fact that they are employed in this world as "guardian angels" and "ministering spirits" (Heb. i, 14). Again, in the operations of mind the angels are superior to man. Reason which is a perfection in us when compared to mere animals, is an imperfection when we are compared with the angels. Reason is a slow means of discovering truth, and is useful only because our intellect is imperfect. Intellect perceives truth immediately on presentation: as in the proposition—"the whole is greater than any of its parts." But it needs the slower operation of reason to convince us that "any two sides of a triangle are together greater than the third." If we had the intellect of an angel the truth of the latter assertion would, at once, be as clear to us as that of the former.

We know that the angels need no process of reasoning to understand any truth, for as "they always see the face of the Father" (Matt. xxiii, 10) in that Beatific Vision their unclouded intellect beholds and understands all truths immediately. Yet, as they are creatures, and therefore finite, their knowledge from contemplating the Divine essence is limited. God alone has perfect knowledge of Himself. But of all created things the angels have complete knowledge. All the laws of Nature, discovered and undiscovered by man, are known to them. Of the mysteries of God, of future events, and of the secrets of human hearts, their knowledge, naturally, is limited. Whatever they know of these they know only by special revelation. Thus of the final coming of Christ on the "Last Day," our Lord said: "Of that day and hour no one knoweth, no not the angels of Heaven" (Matt. xxiv, 36), and to God alone are the secrets of human hearts visible: "Then only knowest the hearts of the children of men" (2 Par. vi, 30). The angels have will and power over their own movements. The exercise of their will was manifested in their probation by both those who fell and by those who remained faithful to God. By a mere act of their will they pass from place to place, and exercise power over other spirits and over material things. They can clothe themselves with a real body, or take the appearance of a body, as the Sacred Scriptures show. Witness the doings of the angel Raphael in favor of young Tobias and his family (Tobias v, etc.) and of the angel who in one night slew one hundred and eighty five thousand of the Assyrians. The Bible supplies many examples of the power which the angels have in this world.

Bible commentators say that the angels were created when the earth was. In the text—"In the beginning God created Heaven and earth" (Gen. i, 1) they take the word "Heaven" to signify the angels. As to their number, the Angelic Doctor, Saint Thomas, says it exceeds every material multitude. The prophet Daniel speaking of the angels before the throne of God, says: "Thousands of thousands ministered to Him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him" (Daniel vi, 10). No two angels are alike. They are of neither genus nor species. Each of them is a separate creation. From the Bible we learn that they are divided into three hierarchies, each of which contains three orders or choirs—nine choirs in all.

First in rank are the Seraphim; next, the Cherubim; and, after these, the Thrones. These three choirs compose the first hierarchy. The second hierarchy consists of the Dominions, the Virtues, and the Powers. And the third hierarchy includes the Principalities, the Archangels and the Angels. The word angel, however, which signifies messenger, is applicable to them all; but each has his own proper name. The Archangel Michael, who is of the first order—the Seraphim—is the chief of all, as appears from the way in which St. John speaks of him in the Apocalypse.—Catholic Review.

BECOMES A CATHOLIC.

Niece of Bishop Potter of New York Forsakes Her old Time Faith.

A niece of Bishop Potter, the New York Episcopal prelate, has become a Roman Catholic. So says the story that comes from Florence, Italy, where she makes her home. Still more grave for the Bishop's peace of mind, she entered the Catholic communion a year ago, and secretively did not until two weeks ago did she muster enough courage to tell her family about it. So, while the Right Rev. Henry Potter, bishop of the Protestant Episcopal diocese of New York, has been making bitter attacks on the recent encyclical letter of the Pope, one of his own family has become a devout believer in the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff.

Florence Thompson (Flossie) was the Bishop's pet name for her is the youngest child of Mrs. Laura Thompson, who, before marriage, was Maria Potter, the Bishop's sister. Florence Thompson, the daughter, is now a beautiful girl of eighteen.

When Bishop Potter has gone abroad his sister's home invariably has been the objective point of his visit, and of the children Florence was the dearest to him.

Moving in the society of an Italian city it was to be expected that the young girl should have many friends and acquaintances in the Catholic families. Ecclesiastics of the Roman Church, however, were excluded entirely from Mrs. Thompson's list of friends. What perplexes her family most is the question of who influenced her to change her belief. While the girl had been reared in the bosom of the Episcopal Church, three of her uncles being clergymen in that denomination, she herself says that she long had been in doubt as to the true change of faith by her own conscience was the only explanation she gave her mother when she confessed to her two weeks ago that she had been a Catholic for a year.

The young woman remains firm in her determination in spite of all the pressure that has been brought to bear to get her to return to the faith of her fathers. It is even hinted that she may join some religious organization rather than endure the unpleasant home life that may result from her change in faith.

Princess Helena a Catholic.

Bari, Italy, October 21.—Princess Helena of Montenegro, her betrothed husband, the Crown Prince of Italy, and the members of the princely family of Montenegro who are to attend the wedding, arrived here to-day on the royal yacht Savoia, escorted by Italian warships. The Prince and Princess were warmly greeted on landing. The decorations were universal.

The Prince of Naples remained on board the Savoia, but Princess Helena, escorted by the Duke of Genoa, the representative of King Humbert, landed at 10.20 a. m., and, in a procession of forty-one carriages, with soldiers lining the route, went in a dismal rain through enthusiastic crowds to the church of St. Nicholas. She was met at the church door by the clergy with great ceremony.

The Princess then formally professed the Catholic faith and heard Mass, while artillery salutes were fired. The Princess afterwards returned on board the royal yacht.

A Conservator of Order and Morality.

In an article in the *North American Review*, in which he gives reasons why churches should not be taxed, Speed Massey says: "The government certainly stands in as great need of religion and religious morals as it does of many other branches of education; and none will question the advisability of rendering governmental assistance to the promotion of literary and scientific achievement, even though it frequently result in vast expenditure of public money, with no adequate recompense. And this, too, when it is well known that the arts and sciences nearly always bring financial gain to those who pursue them, while religion does not. I would not go to the length of advocating the levy of a tax for Church purposes by governmental authority, for it is met that Church and State should ever maintain an inviolable separability; yet, to go to the opposite extreme of taxing Church property for governmental purposes, would, it seems to me, be most unwise and indiscreet."