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LEAGUE OF THE

General Intention for September.

SPIRITUAL RETREATS.

Among the various means of re-newal and sanctification which Divine kind of cabalistic charm written out on

Wisdom has suggested to the masters of spiritual life, it would be hard to single out one other which has produced more abundant fruit, or wrought greater prodigies of grace than the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius — better known to the faithful under the name of Spiritual Retreats.

The word retreat implies in general a withdrawal to a distance, and in matters of the soul, the meaning of the word is identical. It is a withdrawal from the turnoil of life for a few days prelates, heads and founders of religin order to meditate on eternal inter-ests. St. Ignatius, in his Spiritual Exercises, does not understand it otherwise. So, from the outset, the Religious of his order have always endeavored to hold in readiness secluded asylums for the convenience of those who have affair. a wish to devote a few days to the

study of the great truths of religion. Retreats thus made in seclusion, or in houses expressly set apart for that pur-pose, are the only ones which are wholly deserving of the name; for then, indeed, we separate ourselves from family, friends and business of every kind, in order to treat with God in holy solitude on the affairs of

eternity, and on the world which is to It might seem, at first sight, that retreats of this nature were fitted for those souls only, who, by a special vocation, are called to live removed from the daily intercourse of their fel lowmen, and from the noise and bustle of worldly affairs. But the prompt testimony of experience points to their powerful officacy for good with all classes of Christian society, and con-sequently with such of the faithful, as a whole, who are engaged in worldly affairs. The great Bourdaloue re-marked that these retreats were prefer-ably for just such classes of Christians; in fact, for them "they were more necessary.'

So much so, that when Pope Paul III. published in 1548 his famous Bull Pastoralis officii, in which he lavished so much praise on the Book of the Exercises, he did not confine himself to a bare declaration that they were "replete with piety and holiness, most helpful and most salutary for the edification of souls and their spiritual advancement ;" but he added an exhortation to the august testimony he then

"Considering, moreover, as we ought to do, the abundant fruits, which Ignatius and the society founded by him, have produced in the Church of God throughout the world, and to which these same Exercises have so much contributed : we declare by the present Bull, that we praise and ap prove of the said Documents of Exercises, and all and each of those things

which they contain ; we earnestly ex hort the faithful of both sexes whereso ever they be (ubilibet constitutos) to them (et illis instrui devote velint)."

serve Him.

It is well known with what eager-ness, until the Society of Jesus was suppressed, all classes of Catholics responded to the appeal of the Holy See. A great number of houses of retreats were immediately founded, and thither

Would we fully appreciate the im

portance of the work? Then, apply

the old axiom fas est et ab hoste doceri.

can learn the good that may accrue.

THE CATHOLIC RECORD

SACRED followers of Ignatius had come into work assumed proportions of a magniwhom he may devour," would be subpossession of certain magical secrets tude hitherto unknown. whereby they transformed into other We regret to be oblig jected forever to the sign of the Virgin in the zodiac of the heaven of grace. We regret to be obliged to pass over beings those who trusted themselves to their direction. "Woe," writes one of collective retreats in the seventeenth beginning, Mary was borne on the 8th collective retreats in the seventeenth century, and especially Father Vincent day of September. Listen to St. Am-brose : The eighth day, or octave, is not them, "woe to the unfortunate who Huby's great success, in this particufalls into their snares : twice a day a day of time, it is the day of eternity. 'The octave is the crowning of our lar, in Brittany, whence the good work one of these sorcerers will bring him a spread first throughout the rest of hope.' Our time is reckoned by weeks, France and then made rapid progress paper !" The plain fact is that all the good accomplished by the Society of Jesus, during the three and a half centuries in other European countries. Seventy years after the foundation of his work and the week has but seven days. When the week ends we begin one

a score of retreats were given every year in one of these establishments, and as many as one hundred and of its existence, are to be attributed in strict justice to the persistent and methodical use of these spiritual arms. To come to our own times, our asso-ciates will be happy to learn that in Europe, and even in the missionary countries of Hindostan and China, men's retreats are once more in And here again it would be all but impossible to enumerate the apostles and savers of souls of every order, secular

ious institutes, illustrious laymen and flourishing condition, and are yielddevoted Catholic women, who were continually being formed at this school, and who snatched a few days from the multiplicity of their occupaing a rich harvest for the Divine Hus-bandman. It would seem that the more modern impiety strives "to ban-ish God from social life," according to the expression of Leo XIII., the more tions to busy themselves about the supreme, or rather the one only great all generous souls are intent on rein-"Then only do we deem an understating Him, and their first step is to give Him first place within themtaking of consequence," says Bossuet,

"when friends enter heartily into it selves. Doubtless we live in evil times. and enemies bestir themselves about The storm is brewing ; but all the more reason, do we say with Origen, "to use every endeavor to consolidate

A whole volume might be written on the miracles of grace, and of conversion more especially, the result of the practical application of these holy winds begin to howl and the billows heave." And he adds: "Let us lay Exercises. This book, we believe, has well our dwelling with many a ponder not yet been written on earth, but the ous stone, so that when the blast comes all shall be able to see that we have blessed denizens of heaven have not hesitated occasionally to divulge the thoughts of the elect. Father Balthazar Alvarez relates

that the archangel appeared to a holy soul who thought of entering upon the Exercises of St. Ignatius and delivered this message: "This retreat which you have been inspired to undertake according to the method of the founder of the Society of Jesus, is much in Sacrifice of the Mass, in reparation for favor wi h our Queen. She has com-missioned me to make known to you that these Spiritual Exercises are in part her work, for it was at her insti-gation and, so to speak, at her dictafaithful. Amen. ion that the holy man composed them. She herself, while upon earth, unin terruptedly devoted herself to their

practice." Whatever may be thought of this revelation, of the reality of which Father Alvarez, the principal director of St. Theresa, affirmed he had a moral certainty as strong as mortal man could have, we as least all know in what esteem the Sovereign Pontifis have always held the book of the great solitary of Manresa. We have already dition of the Apostolic days, was cur-rent in the East. This teaching was drawn attention to the words of praise of Pope Paul III, who in another Bull had added that the book was admirably found in the Proto evangelium Jacobi, calculated to move the hearts of the faithful. Yet, this recommendation, however strong it be, must not make us pass over in silence the precious testimony given officially, not so long since, in the name of the great Pontiff who now fills the See of Peter.

"The Holy Father," it is there said, "sees in the work of the Exercises of the under the whole Church by Gregory XIII. in St. Ignatius, a work of regeneration, directed with wisdom and with zeal, make use of those pious Exercises, and devoutly to regulate their conduct by society. God grant that these houses

1594.

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of spiritual retreat, where faith becomes more robust and the Christian spirit acquires new fervor, may be multiplied? In our own so troubled times it is of the utmost necessity." Still more recently, Leo XIII., after expressing his satisfaction at having were immediately founded, and thither flocked in turn the nobleman, the mer-chant and the tradesman; men and women, of every rank and condition, batook themselves to these solitudes, these solutions are also between the solutions and the solution of a Father of the Society of not solution of a Father of the Society of solutions are also between the solutions are also b

eternal day Christ. "Listen to the first words of the Mass in honor of Mary's Nativity: 'Thy birth, O Virgin Mary! Mother of the Son of God, has announced joy to all the world, because thou hast brought forth the Sun of Justice, Jesus Christ, our God, who, taking away maledic

"According to a tradition, from the

tion gave benediction, and confounding death gave unto us eternal life.' "Are they not true, true as very Scripture? Do they honor or dishonor Christ, her Son? From the lips of the priest they ascend to the heavens. Is Christ angry? Are the words a sin the foundations of the edifice before against Him? "Is He afraid to hear His Mother the tempest bursts upon us, and the

praised, lest He might, thereby, lose a part of His glory? Why, then, did He make her so glorious? Why did He make her His Mother? Can He ever O Jesus, through the most pure Heart of Mary, I offer Thee all the prayers, work and sufferings of this day for all the intentions of Thy Divine Heart, in union with the Helm be jealous of her who conceived Him,

Sacrifice of the Mass, in reparation for all sins and for all requests presented through the Apostleship of Prayer: in particular, that the practice of Spirit-ual Retreats, especially those of men, may become more general among the

may become more general among the the son of Abraham. Abraham begot Isaac ; and Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judas and his brethren, and down a long and glorious ancestry The Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed of patriarchs, prophets, princes and

kings, from name to name, moves the inspired pen of Matthew, Apostle and Nothing is known about the place. evangelist, until it pauses thus : 'And Jacob begot Joseph, the husband of date, or circumstances of the Blessed Virgin's birth. Joachim and Anne Mary, and of whom was born Jesus, who is called the Christ.' The moment her name is written, His, the Christ's, were her parents, and this belief, the earliest authority for which is the trais linked to it. Such was His and her ancestry.

"But she was to have but one de an apocryphal gospel of early date. It is recognized by St. John of Damascus scendant, Jesus Christ, our Saviour. She closes the 'Book of the Genera-tion of Jesus Christ.' Take her name **a**way, then take His. But she herself and James, Bishop of Edessa, while the "Liber Pontificalis" mentions in the life of Pope Leo III. that he had the history of St. Joachim and St. Anne painted in the Basilica of St. Paul. was and is, the living book of the gen eration of Christ. How? Listen! In God was infinite and eternal thought In The feast of St. Anne on July 26, which He expressed that thought in His Eternal Word-His only Son. But this is mentioned in the Roman and other thought, eternally conceived in the mind of God and eternally expressed, remained hidden in the Trinity. It is very uncertain when the feast

one saw it, no one heard, no one knew it, save the three Divine persons. God of the Blessed Virgin's nativity was in-troduced. It is mentioned by Walter, willed to speak this Word outside of Bishop of Orleans, in 371, and in a work on the Virginity of Mary ascribed Himself and outside of eternity, in time, and God willed to write this Word in a living book, that it might be heard and read forever. Mary received the secret thought of God and the invisible to St. Ildefonsus, but really, as Dachery thinks, written by Paschasius, in the middle of the ninth century. It is placed in the list of holidays by the Word. Through her it was spoken in Emperor Manuel Commenus in the time and became Incarnate. In her pure flesh it was written and became visible. She does not express the word as the Father does, but she bears it



AUGUST 29, 1896

HEART.

Messenger of the Sacred Heart.

again, and count from the first to the seventh day. Beyond the seventh we do not pass, and thus the eighth day is not in the measurement of time, and

OUR LADY'S BIRTHDAY.

Virgin, Sept. S.

of Celestine IV. The dissensions be

tween the Church and Frederic II.

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betook themselves to these so Jesus, related his own experiences as and, in company with those of their own class and sex, shut out the world follows: "I myself, formerly, feeling that for a sennight at least, the better to

listen to God's voice and to strengthen within them their resolve to forever tial to sustain it, sought for it for a time in vain. I read and re-read In our own day, in many countries the work has been taken up anew, and with such initial success that the bighter have an entrutiened for the loss of St. Ignatius fell into my hands, and I was forced to say : 'Here brightest hopes are entertained for the is the substantial food I am in quest of. future : still it belongs to the apostles "Since then I have never parted of prayer to accelerate and extend the with the book. The one only considerent for the greater glory of the ation of the end of man would suffice to Sacred Heart of Jesus, and in view of the most urgent interests of His cause. reform and reconstruct the social

world. Blessed was born. The saints, also, always professed great veneration for this masterpiece of practical asceticism, to which might From the enemies of the Church we be applied the words of St. Bernard, that it is delicious to the taste, sub stantial as nourishment and efficacious

Take France as an instance. The pious work had scarcely begun to as a remedy." Besides the canonized saints of the Society of Jesus, who thrive there when the enmity of the secret societies was aroused and found found spiritual delight in the practice vent in the Chamber of Deputies. The of the Exercises, we might name St. Philip of Neri, St. Charles Borromeo, exasperation of the unbelievers knew no bounds, and for four long hours the St. Francis of Sales, St. Vincent of pious work of Retreats was denounced Paul, St. Leonard of Port Maurice, St. with every excess of language, as if Alphonsus Liguori, St. Theresa of some new and powerful enemy was Avila and St. Magdalen of Pazzi. already at the gates of the capital.

While limiting ourselves to the above names, we shall presume to in-Hatred is not less clear sighted than love. Of this no other proof is necessist more particularly on the testimony sary than this senseless denunciation of one among them, mainly because hi of the Spiritual Exercises, uttered in supernatural perspicacity led him, tones absurdly indicative of fear by from the beginning, to discover what fanatics of free-thought, who all follow latent power the Exercises contained the lead, some no doubt unwittingly, when there was question of assuring in souls the complete triumph of Chrisof the arch-enemy of mankind. Assuredly, it is not without bitter envy tian virtue and of propagating far and that Satan and his devoted ones with

wide the Saviour's kingdom. "Having always," says the biogra-pher of St. Vincent of Paul, "professed him daily witness the defection from his ranks, brought about by what we might call cloistered retreats, which a special devotion to St Ignatius, and snatch one by one from the everlasting a pious admiration for his order, Vinburning so many souls he had counted cent resolved early in his career to ex-

on to feed the unquenchable flames. tend the practice of spiritual retreats And who will ever tell the number of souls saved, from the time they were after the manner set forth in the Book of the Exercises. Even in 1629 or of she Exercises. Even in 1629 or first written, by these salutary Exer-cises? During the life time of St. Ignatius, the results accomplished were the first to place themselves in retreat the first to place themselves in retreat manifestly so extraordinary that the Calvinists of the sixteenth century, powerless either to deny or explain them away, spread the report that the

now keep it on September 8. The octave was added by Innocent visible in the humanity of Jesus Christ, IV. in consequence, it is said, of a vow her Son, to all the world." made by the Cardinals at the election

Silent Suffering.

There are times in the experience of made it difficult to secure the peace every heart when the truest and most necessary for an election, and in the acceptable offering that it can lay be extremity the conclave begged the fore God is the golden offering of sil-Blessed Virgin's prayers, and promised, ence-times when under the influ-ence of some overwhelming disappoint in case the favor was granted, to have an octave added to the feast of her men, some unlooked-for injury, or some The poet priest, Father Abram J. sudden revelation of human unworth-Ryan, wrote for this feast the following: iness, the heart finds a bitter pleasure

in hopeless denunciation of all things. "Let us go, in the spirit of faith and love, to day to the thrice blessed home and vents its pain in ascribing to life its saddest, most distorted coloring. Nor is it only the worthlessness and imperfections of the world about us where the Immaculate Queen of of the

"Tread softly, for we are to enter a upon which is thus poured the heart's new Eden of perfect innocence and highest grace. In reverence let us go complaining bitterness ; full often does it venture to reproach even the holiness in, as if we were passing through the and justice of God's dealings. Can we gate of a sanctuary, where a sanctity doubt, then, that God is grieved and incomparable is hiding in a holy taberoffended by these outbursts of morbid complainings, which in many cases betoken by no means the heart's deep "How hidden everything is about

the child ! In her veins, even now is flowing the very blood which Christ will take into His humanity, and which derived pure from her, the all pure, and united to His Divinity, will become infinite in mercy and in merit when it flows for us in the day of Cal-

vary. God makes no sign. His future mother is a frail little infant. Ah how the Father. Son and Holy Ghost, in infinite love, must have watched over the predestined child ! How Gabriel, her guardian angel, must have hovered

near her! "Oh ! infant, in_, whose heart the blood of our Redeemer is even now beating, dream your dreams divine, least be rigidly imposed, and learn us poor sinners

to the Altar where her Christ, and ours, spirit.

is sleeping in the Eucharist. "It is the 8th of September, the Feast of the Nativity. This month the sun passes, in the zodiac, out of the sign of the lion into the sign of the Virgin. So into her was to pass, and over us tice; and the sign of the lion, which is the sign of the evil one. "who goeth tice; and the sign of the lion, which is the sign of the evil one, "who goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking should try it.

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est pain, but more frequently the fre ful impatience of annoyance and vexa-

Let us remember that such times are seasons of genuine temptation. evil one is never more pleased than children of God, sentiments or words wholly belying that relationship, and conveying the impression that all faith in an all-loving and over-ruling Pro-vidence is merely a delusion. If the when able to draw from the lips of the turbulent thoughts within may not be Which will be sold at the lowest price JAMES WILSON checked or controlled at such times, let 398 Richmond St., London. 'Phone 650. least be rigidly imposed, and learn D.R. WOODRUFF, NO. 185 QUEEN'S AVE Defective vision, impaired hearing pasal catarrh and troublesome throats. Eye-lested, glasses adjusted. Hours, 12 to 4.

but dream in pity, too, and in love of that no truer or more acceptable tribute can be offered Him we serve, than a Come now from the sleeping child silent, if not a docile or submissive



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