

Pilate, through the long hours of agony on the cross, he never but for a few short moments, left Him, and do not forget it was at the foot of the cross, that St. John received that last dying token of his Saviour's love and confidence, "Son behold thy mother!"

After the Resurrection St. John was among the first to visit the sepulchre, outstripping in his eagerness even the zealous Peter.

It is generally believed that he remained in Jerusalem fifteen years after the Ascension, that is till after the death of the Blessed Virgin, who had been committed to his charge. During the early part of this time, he was the constant companion of St. Peter. Together they visited the Temple, healed the lame man, were cast into prison by order of the Sanhedrim, and together, (Acts VIII.), they administered the rite of confirmation for the first time, to the converts in Samaria.

At length, after many years, St. John quitted Jerusalem and went into Asia Minor, making his home chiefly at Ephesus where he established a church, and appointed Timothy as its first Bishop. By this time he, the youngest of the Apostles was the only one of all that glorious company left on earth, the others, his own brother, his chosen friend and companion among them, had sealed their faith with their blood, but he the beloved, was still to tarry, waiting his Lord's leisure, till He should come and take him home, and the life thus spared and prolonged was devoted to his Master's service. Many churches were founded by him, particularly the seven mentioned in the Revelation, but in the midst of his labours, he was seized by order of the cruel Emperor Domitian, carried bound to Rome, and there cast into a cauldron of boiling oil; but it was not God's will that he should die thus. His was to be a martyrdom in *will not in deed*, and he came out of the cauldron unharmed. You would have thought such a miracle would surely have changed the hardest heart, but no, the cruel Emperor was unappeased, and the aged Apostle was banished to the Island of Patmos. Here he wrote his wondrous Book of the Apocalypse or Revelation, which has gained him the title of The Divine, and of which the first and last chapters are chosen as the second lesson for the day. On the death of Domitian St. John was recalled, and returning to Asia, again made his home in Ephesus. Some say that it was now he wrote the three Epistles and the Gospel which bears his name, but this is uncertain, others asserting that they were written before his banishment. He died at Ephesus at a very advanced age, and we are told that to the very end love was the ruling principle of his life, so that when from age and weakness he was unable to preach, he used to be led into the church, and say only, "little children love one another?"

And now our Festival talks are come to an end; very soon and we shall enter upon a new year, and I trust as each succeeding month once more brings round the Holy Days, you will not forget what I have tried to teach you.

L. H. B.

HOLY INNOCENTS.—DECEMBER 29.

"These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb."—REVELATION XIV: 4.

On this festival, the Church lovingly remembers those little ones slain by the cruel Herod, who were the first martyrs for their Lord. The Collect says that they glorified God by their deaths, and the Revelation counts them among those blest souls "which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth," "being the first fruits" of His redeemed.

This, the Church's Feast for children, reminds us of their relations to the kingdom of heaven.

Since our Saviour said, "Suffer them to come unto me," they should be made His own in Holy Baptism, and trained for His service. When even those of mature years would come to that sacrament, they must first "become as little children."