

The Unity And Divinity Of The Church.

On the occasion of the re-opening of St. Michael's Church, Flushing, N.Y., April 19th, Mgr. P. F. O'Hare, LL.D., was the preacher. His text was:—

“How Beautiful are Thy Tabernacles, O Jacob! and Thy Tents, O Israel!” — Book of Numbers, xxiv., 5.

He said:—

The words I have just quoted come spontaneously to our lips as we recall the material and spiritual progress of this parish in the past and behold with delight the marked and extraordinary evidence of present devotion in labor and generosity spent upon this tabernacle of God, finding as it does an adequate expression in the gorgeous and significant ceremonies of this day. Well merited indeed are the hearty congratulations extended to pastor and people on the magnificent achievements everywhere noticeable in the reopening of this splendid temple of worship. But the triumph of this day, great as it is and manifested in the external beauty of this edifice, does not adequately express the internal comeliness and grandeur of Holy Mother Church.

The tabernacle of Jacob and the tents of Israel were only shadows of the tabernacle which in the fullness of time God erected in the midst of mankind and for our blessing made it His habitation and dwelling place upon earth. Yet, even that tabernacle compelled its adversaries to acknowledge its beauty, chant its glory and bless those who were privileged to live beneath its shadow. It was indeed a day of triumph for Israel when the false prophet who was hired by his enemy to curse him looked down from Mount Phogor and pronounced words of praise and benediction. Truly the wonderful scene of that day recorded by the inspired writer was a prophecy of what has transpired and is still occurring in the history of the Catholic Church.

In the midst of her peaceful work of reformation, civilization and salvation of the human race, there were always enemies, false prophets and hirelings ready to utter maledictions against Her, to impede Her mission and to make Her existence a burden on earth. Wherever the missionaries of the Church pitched their tents there was always a Balac ready to persecute them and when conscious of his futile efforts he was compared to hire other false prophets to defame Her name and defile Her beauty by the venom of malice and slander. Yet, in spite of the powerful weapons used against the Church She ever compelled Her enemies, men like Julian the Apostate, to acknowledge defeat and to proclaim Her the conqueror. The diplomacy of statesmen and the machinations of rulers, when used in antagonism to Her, proved but a broken reed, and She always mocked when the mighty stood up against Her anointed Lord and proved themselves babes in their attacks upon Her. Yea, Her very enemies who started out to crush Her uttered words of benediction as they beheld Her in all Her glory and the beauty of Her law and became Her devoted sons and advocates! What inspired Balac to turn the curse into a blessing after the spirit of God came upon him ever prompted the great, sincere, intelligent minds, though adversaries of the Church, to stand in awe and admiration contemplating Her beautiful divine form, after they were touched by the grace of God, efficient and irresistible.

As the false prophet looked down from the mountain into the peaceful valley where Israel was camping, he was deeply impressed by two conspicuous characteristics of the Church of the old dispensation which mark in all their fullness and completeness the Church of the new Covenant. “He saw” first of all, so we are told in the chapter of which my text is a part, “He saw Israel abiding in their tents, by their tribes,” symbolizing the unity of the Church of God; he learned too that their encampment in the plains of Moab

where they then rested was directed by Jehovah through Moses, His chosen servant, symbolizing the divine authority residing in the Church. In a word then, this morning's celebration—the devotion of God's people and minister, an illustrious representative of the hierarchy upon his throne, the tabernacle of Israel's God and the Gentiles' Redeemer—in our midst—leads us most naturally as it invites us most temptingly to consider the captivating beauty of the Church in Her unity and divine authority.

In unity there is strength. This is a principle which is dictated by reason, sanctioned by experience, and approved of by the verdict of history. It is a motto we teach our children and follow ourselves. It enters into every undertaking of life, it is the vital consideration in questions of war or peace, it is the bond of domestic life, the source of success in national affairs, and its indispensability in all enterprises for the carrying out of great social and moral plans is a self-evident truth. That there are any in the human family who deny it and who make it a part of life's task to combat it, is but a proof into what depth of folly man's mind may fall when it wanders from the safe path of reason and experience.

To realize the principle of unity in society and religion, which is so deeply imbedded in human nature, has ever been the aim of the great leaders of thought, of powerful rulers of empires, and of all men who ever came in touch with the breath of God which inspired them to contribute aught toward the upbuilding of the human race. The great men among the pagans sitting in the shadow of darkness, living in the valley of idolatry and superstition where the sunshine and the full light of Christian truth had not as yet penetrated, were feeling their way toward and reaching out for the realization of that principle of unity. In Israel's history, where the footprints of God are more clearly visible and the aim of which was to lead to a more perfect manifestation of the divine purposes, this principle of unity was firmly established, and in ceremony, symbolism, national laws, emphatically inculcated.

This is what Balac saw when looking down from the mountain into the peaceful camping place of the Jewish people. He saw a community developed into a nation, a united band of tribes facing the whole universe, braving dangers, confronting kingdoms, all the result of the adhesion to one principle, strengthened by unity of faith, and so when he opened his lips to utter malediction, the divine spirit who restrained him directed his attention to Israel's invincibility, fortified by its unity of faith.

What Balac's hireling saw in that valley was but the shadow of that unity of faith in the Church of all nations which in the fullness of time was realized in the holy Catholic Church, and by means of which the vast structure of a social and spiritual empire was erected and kept together for ages. Whenever the hierarchy calls the Priesthood and the Laity together on an occasion like the present to commemorate the successful achievement of some ecclesiastical enterprise, the world's attention is directed to the source of our strength, to the unity of faith.

Wherever the world turns its eye to-day there is nothing but strife, contention, division, discord. Socially and religiously the human family represents at the present time a most disheartening and sickening spectacle. Of it we may well say what the inspired writer said of the worst period in Israel's history: “There was no king in Israel, and each one did as he pleased.”

There is no longer unity of faith, and therefore no more a standard of morality in national life. Outside of Rome the bond of faith has been torn asunder; certainly on matters supernatural it no longer exists, all is a babel of opinions, and there are, sad to say, as many creeds as the passions and whims of their originators and followers.

In the ceremony of to-day we are reminded that in the midst of life's discord there is however one spot where all is quiet, peace and harmony, and where the eye can rest contentedly and the soul be comforted; for there alone is found the “one faith, the one baptism, the one

Christ.” With hearts full of gratitude and thanksgiving because we are not “tossed about by every wind of doctrine” we Catholics, and we alone, can truthfully and joyfully exclaim “How beautiful are thy tabernacles O Jacob, and thy tents O Israel!”

The unity of faith which inspired Balac to bless which consisted in the unity of brotherly love. This is indicated in the words preceding my text where we are told that he “Saw Israel abiding in their tents, by their tribes.” The unity of faith and morals was delightful to behold; but he saw not merely individuals, not pure fragments, not social units, but all of one mind, one heart, all inspired by one idea, standing shoulder to shoulder and forming one powerful army, one for all for one. That was indeed a grand spectacle, but a more sublime view was once vouchsafed to the human eye in the early ages of the Christian era. It was that unity of brotherly love which in those days inspired respect and confidence among the pagans and made it a theme of poetic fancy and the subject of enchanting eloquence.

It was that same brotherly love among Catholics of old, that common feeling of kinship, that readiness to suffer and die together, which made possible those glorious epochs in the history of the Middle Ages when the whole of Europe formed one Christian family presided over by one Father of Christendom.

Whenever in history Catholics “dwelt in their tents, abiding by their tribes,” they were invincible in the face of the most overwhelming powers and their cause was always sure of victory. The machinations of statesmen proved ineffectual against them and the weapons of enemies attacking them were but broken reeds. Protected by that brotherly love they came out unharmed from the fires lighted by Nero in the streets of Rome. The invaders of the Green Isle were helpless in the face of that union of brotherly love; the blasphemies spread in France by Voltaire were no more potent than the babbling of children; and in Germany with a Priesthood in exile and bishops in prison a united Catholic body made “the man of blood and iron,” the Chancellor of the Empire, cringe, humiliated and defeated before the throne of the successor of St. Peter. Whenever unity of faith is accompanied by unity of brotherly love among Catholics the malediction upon the lips of God's enemies is turned into blessing, and they mingle their voices with those of the faithful chanting exultingly the glorious refrain, “How beautiful are thy tabernacles O Jacob, and thy tents O Israel.”

The few tribes of Israel would soon have been scattered before the mighty enemies which they had to meet in almost perpetual battle if their movements were not directed by an authority which could never fail. Had they not surrendered to that guidance of divine authority they would have remained in the bondage of Egypt, they would not have endured the hardship of the wilderness, nor would they have dared to face the giants of Palestine whom they were to conquer. Their very encampment in the plains of Moab was directed by God through Moses. The whole of Israel's life was a surrender to the guidance of God's authority and of those whom He commissioned to lead them, and by virtue of that they were always victorious. Only when rebellion and mutiny was in Israel's camp were their enemies powerful against them. So deeply was the false prophet impressed with that fact that he repeatedly said to Balac who hired him to curse, “How shall I curse him whom God has not cursed? By what means shall I detest him whom the Lord detesteth not?” And again: “Can I speak anything else but what the Lord commandeth?” It was that deep conviction that Israel was not encamped in a strange land as a mere intruder, roaming about according to will that made him pause in his wicked enterprise and pay heed to God's warning which inspired him to exclaim, “How beautiful are thy tabernacles, O Jacob! and thy tents, O Israel!”

The principle of divine authority was largely the secret of the great achievements of the Church all through the ages.

Like unto Israel of old the children of the New Covenant went through the stranger's land, and stranger's hands were ever uplifted against them. Every effort was produced to make their existence a burden to them, and the observance of their faith the ante-chamber of the prison or the house of death. But knowing that their movements were directed by the authority of God, they went forth fearing neither torture nor death, and impressed their persecutors with the conviction that a disobedience to their behests was a defiance of the laws of God. All through the history of the Church this principle of divine authority stands out in high relief, and is the keynote to a proper understanding of the wonderful growth and the invincible power of the Catholic Church.

At all times the human family stood in need of the instruction and reiteration of the principle of authority, but in this age more so than ever before. This age stands out most boldly in its denial in theory and practice of this principle of divine authority. For the last four hundred years genius and learning, wit and satire eloquence and poetry, sophistry and specious reasoning were all employed to ridicule and to talk to death and to stamp it out of the mind and action of men. Protestant Christianity squeezed it out of the system, it has been driven out of domestic life, and it is treated with scorn in governmental life. Authority may well say in the words of the Son of God, “I have nowhere to lay down my head.” True, the Catholic Church still preaches the doctrine of obedience to authority; she still proclaims it from the pulpit, in the confessional, in the schoolhouse. But even among Catholics this principle is not as deeply rooted as is desirable, and unfortunately shows signs of greater weakening. Modern loose ideas have affected many of our faithful brethren, and they are inclined to treat authority with less respect and to regard it as less sacred and binding than did their forefathers.

Behold the result of the denial of authority in our day and generation! Behold the appalling consequences in Church and State, in the home and in society! Everywhere we see its baneful effects. The restraining so necessary in the home for the purpose of bringing up children in the fear of the Lord, the doctrine of obedience to parental authority is even regarded as a relic of medieval institutions unfitted for modern life. Hence the horrible crimes committed by the young, the fearful immorality prevalent where virtue and chastity is expected, the frightful excesses practiced in the name of liberty. Yea the hatred of all restraint at home, and not the love for true liberty, has wrecked many a fireside, brought disgrace upon many an honored name, broke many a father's heart, and brought an untimely death upon a sorrowing mother. The authority entrusted to the head of the home is discarded, and the scandal in domestic life is so great that the printing presses of the daily papers cannot keep pace with it, and is more over of such a disgusting nature that even a sensational journalism must blush for its publication.

Is it better conditioned in the affairs of the nation? Has not the absence of authority demoralized national life, and does it not threaten its very existence? The denial of legitimate authority is the mother of so many revolutions and the foster-father of so much lawlessness. Indeed there is no longer regard for constitutional authority. The person of the chief magistrate of city, State or nation is treated with disrespect, and the tribunal of justice is hailed with contempt. Majesty is no longer attached to law. This denial of authority has demoralized all conception of respect for the superior, for property rights, for individual liberty, and the very foundation stones of the national structure are being removed one by one, so that the structure itself will soon totter and fall asunder.

And in the Church of God? What

is it in the Temple of Jehovah? Woe me that as I priest of God, I must in shame acknowledge it, that this aversion to the guidance of legitimate and divinely established authority has robbed the Spouse of Christ of thousands upon thousands of souls. Like a pestilence it has smitten thousands to our right and slain tens of thousands to our left. We boast of thirteen millions of Catholics in this country, but how many millions have we lost because of this disregard for the authority of bishop and priest? How many of those whose forefathers worshipped at the altar of God are now the devotees of strange idols? Yes, my brethren, the doctrine of obedience to authority which the false prophet saw among Israel and led him to utter words of praise and benediction must be inculcated, and that with vigor, into the hearts and minds of our people and placed as a motto on their lips and constitute the guiding principle of all actions of life.

Brethren, let this festive occasion, this day of joy and triumph, be the means of recalling the vital teachings of our holy faith, viz.: of unity and authority. Let it be remembered that the victories you won and the sacrifices you brought to obtain them were prompted by this principle of unity and obedience to authority. Let us in our own lives and in our daily conduct manifest more and more the unity of the Church in doctrine and morals and the unity of common loving brotherhood. Let us so love that obedience to divine authority may be visible and shine forth in every enterprise and doing of life. Let us Catholics in this fair land preach these saving truths by our daily walks to those who had no opportunity to learn from the lips of Mother Church, so that they also, like the enemies of Israel of old, may exclaim, “How beautiful are thy tabernacles O Jacob, and thy tents O Israel.” May the beauty of divine unity and authority even excel the beauty of this temple, that you may receive the benediction of Almighty God and become a blessing to untold numbers by bringing them to the knowledge of the one true faith as it is in Christ Jesus, and His Spouse, the Church Catholic and Apostolic.

Our Boys And Girls.

The Lord my pasture shall prepare, And feed me with a shepherd's care; His presence shall my wants supply, And guard me with a watchful eye.

When in the sultry glebe I faint, Or on the thirsty mountain pant, To fertile vales and dewy meads My weary, wandering steps He leads.

Though in the paths of death I tread, With gloomy horrors overspread, My steadfast heart shall fear no ill, For Thou, O Lord, art with me still.

—Selected.

IN CHURCH.—Yesterday morning, on Easter Sunday, my dear boys, while passing through church during Mass, I happened to see a girl in one of the pews chewing gum, whilst in her hands she held an open prayer book apparently praying. It was most disgusting for me to see this, and I felt like saying to her, “You rude girl! how can you be so irreverent in the presence of our Lord, so rude, as to be chewing gum whilst you are trying to speak to, to implore Him in prayer.”

Now, this was only one instance where a girl showed a lack of reverence, a lack of common sense, I may say. There are many other instances. And I have seen also boys falling prey to the bad habit of chewing gum in places, at occasions and times where it was most unbecoming, to say the least.

The habit of chewing gum has become so prominent of late years that one can see people of all classes and stages of life chewing their cud. No one will make any objection to that. Some doctors say that gum chewing is very conducive to good health. It may be true; there's no objection whatsoever to that. But what people of good manners do object to very earnestly is the habit of chewing gum in all places, irrespective of people, of time and occasion. This is what makes gum chewing most disgusting and marks the guilty ones so rude and impolite.

Chewing and eating are closely related to one another. But now, it is considered quite impolite to eat on

the street. For the same reason it must also be considered a breach of etiquette to chew on the street. Whilst walking along the street you are always liable to meet someone you know, or who knows you. It may, perchance, be a person of high rank or position in life. Would you dare to speak to him whilst having your cud in your mouth? Indeed not. Would you swallow it first? Hardly; your stomach would object to such a dainty. Well, what are you going to do then? You must get rid of it in some way; because you will not have the other person know that you are chewing gum on the street, lest he should consider you rude and impolite. All that remains is to take it out of your mouth; and that you cannot do without being noticed and some bad impression being left in the mind of the person you are speaking to.

The same can be said of gum chewing in street cars or in the elevated trains, as well as in other public places. One of the many things giving a person amusement when riding in street cars or elevated trains is the reading of the ad signs posted in the cars. The manner in which these ads are composed, the very classical poetry used and the ideas expressed are no doubt very often quite original. But, it is just as amusing to watch some of the passengers around you chewing their gum at a frightful rate of speed. The manner in which these hungry chewers work away would make you think that they are being paid for their labor, or that they had not eaten food for a week. Let me assure you, it has always been very disgusting to me to see it, and I think disgusting also to most other people. It is out of place. It is undignified. It is unworthy of a refined person.

But, what shall I say of chewing gum in church? My dear boys, what would you think of a man who would smoke a cigar while saying the “Our Father” or praying from his prayer-book? What would you think of such a combination? No doubt, you would consider the man rude, to say the least, who would try to smoke a cigar and pray at the same time. But, what difference is there between this and chewing gum during prayer? None at all. Both are acts of the greatest irreverence toward God.

What does prayer mean? It means an uplifting of the heart of God, a conversation with God, to ask something of Him, to thank Him for something or to praise Him as the Supreme Being. Will you dare to enter into a conversation with God whilst you are chewing gum? Say, would you attempt to “chew gum whilst speaking to President Roosevelt? I think not. You would never dream of such an impolite act. You would take your gum out of your mouth long before you entered into his presence. Friend, can you deny God that same act of courtesy, of etiquette, which you would by no means deny the president of our country? Reason, my dear boys, reason, commonsense; use it all over. It will be for your own good.

And what will a business man think of a boy who chews gum while coming to his office in search of a job? Let me tell you, the prospects of this fresh lad will be very poor, because he brings with him the poorest recommendation he could bring. He shows himself to be a boy of impolite manners, a rude, an irreverent, an offensive fellow. Nobody would engage such a specimen. If he dares to come into the presence of a gentleman with so little respect and reverence, he deserves only to be shown the door. It would be useless to try him; he would sooner or later prove himself to be that lad he seemed to be, a rude, a fresh, a saucy fellow.

Beware, therefore, of chewing gum in public places. Don't think it's not being noticed. It is, my dear boys. Some people are watching you and forming their opinion of you according to your conduct. You are never unnoticed in public places. Chewing gum is a thing which is permitted only when alone or perhaps in a small company of acquaintances or friends. Outside of that avoid it. It is disgusting to the lookers-on. Beware, my boys!—Father Klasen, in the New World, Chicago.

AMERICAN CENSUS RETURNS.

A bulletin just issued by the Census Bureau discloses the fact that the native born children of foreign parents show less percentage of illiteracy than the children of American parents. The difference in favor of the former is nearly 4 per cent. This statistical comparison will come as a shock to the smugness of those Americans who find a reason for every national evil in the “ignorance” of the foreigners. Just over 99 per cent. of the children of foreign-born parents are able to read and write.—Exchange.

CHAPTER XV

“Who is it? Mrs. Fr. The fat, good old got dinner ready for “Never fear her. She ing, diligent woman, minds the business she It was not to lie awake use of her ears that she the blankets. Hark! t er proof still that She must be dreaming imitates the horn of c Well, Eily, be ready Ballybunion at sunrise ing. You must contriv to the shore without Lowry, or anybody e ble.”

The creaking of the tained the ponderous here startled the young ate though most ill-as After a hurried good res returned to his time to escape the of the good dairy woman awakened out of a dr and keelers and fresh sound of voices in th room. On opening the ever, she was a little observe her lovely gueude of devotion. Dep circumstance of the o putting any awkward Frawley, after yawning and shaking her shoul tumbled into bed again ily resumed the same horn which had excite tion of Hardress.

Reader, I desire you that this speedy fit of a manoeuvre of the ge sin, assuredly, was no reflection. But if the suspicious, go down up and pray that as (alas has not been the first, last, instance in which be made subservient u terrestrial purposes!

There was a slight fo rin mingled with the tions of the young hu prepared for slumber. was, with a quick pe keen feeling of the l worthy, the passion he ed for the gentle Eily sudden as it was violer ity of her origin at a pride of birth was m in matrimonial allianc at present, might, it d deterred him from con wishes of his friends, i sion made on his imag less powerful; but youth, and the excelli his bride, were two that operated powerfu ing him to overlook al sels than those which ed. He thought, never he acted towards Eily o a generosity which app es of magnanimity her before the whole v opinions; and perhaps tained a little philosop in the conceit that evinced an independent his own mental resourc a spirit superior to the judices of society. He fore, a little chagrined parent slowness in app noble an effort, for in him the justice to bell was a higher motive t of self-adulation whic to bestow upon her h affections. But the re ally partially acquain character of Hardress, early circumstances wh it to its present state and imperfect virtue; fore, while that fery quenched in slumber, hours of inaction, i comprehensive view of qualities and acquirem here.

While Hardress Crega child, he displayed mor of precocious ability have shed a lustre on of many a celebrated o tained, even in his sch soubriquet of “Counsell fondness for discussi childish eloquence whic in maintaining a favo His father liked him f desperation of courage, apt to discover on occ inadequate provocation