

CONSECRATION

of St. Mary's Cathedral, Halifax

On October 19th His Grace Archbishop O'Brien, Grand Spiritual Adviser of the C. M. B. A. of Canada, consecrated St. Mary's Cathedral, Halifax, N. S.

The Halifax Herald of 20th October says:

Yesterday, with most impressive ceremony, that magnificent pile, which Roman Catholics have raised for the worship of God, St. Mary's cathedral, was solemnly consecrated to the service of the Creator of all things. The parishioners of St. Mary's have long had in view the consecration of the cathedral, and the work done during the past few years, to bring about the desired end, has elicited the warmest praises from those looking on from outside. Recently His Grace Archbishop O'Brien was petitioned with a view to having the services of consecration held, and at least their fervent wish has been gratified.

It was the first service of the kind ever held in the maritime provinces, and was therefore attended with the greatest interest, and although Roman Catholics do not recognize any particular day of thanksgiving, according to the rules laid down by the Church in regard to consecration services, here after 4th Sunday of October will be a particular day in St. Mary's, for those who shall have visited the church will gain forty days' time indulgence in the usual form of the Church.

The services were largely attended and Archbishop O'Brien, who presided, conducted the consecration ceremonies, assisted by Rev. Father Daly, of St. Joseph's, and Rev. Father McCarthy, St. Patrick's, as deacons.

The following named also assisted in the service: Bishop McDonald, of P. E. Island; Father F. N. Ryan, Toronto; Father Barry, V. G., of Bathurst; Father Morrissey, Father Joiner, Father Campbell, Bathurst; Father J. O'Connell, Sydney; Father Donovan, St. John; Right Reverend Monsignor Murphy, Father Underwood, Rev. Dr. Foley, Rev. Dr. Campbell, Father Moriarty, Father Gerald Murphy, Father Comeau, Father Cole, Father Brennan, Father Young, Father Kinsilla, Rev. Dr. Walsh, Father Currie, Father Dooley, Father J. Sullivan, Father James Daly, Father Cronzier, Father Hamilton, Father Egan, Father Labrecque, and Father McManus, of the Halifax diocese.

The chanting was done by the Eudist Fathers. The ceremony of consecration was very lengthy, and lasted over three hours. Every rite had its significance, and an onlooker, understanding at least a part of the ceremony, could not fail to be impressed with its grandeur and religious character. Although the office of consecrator was necessarily one requiring an expenditure of energy and great physical effort, His Grace Archbishop O'Brien stood the test well and everything passed off very smoothly.

The consecration of St. Mary's Cathedral was concluded last evening with a sermon by Rev. Father Ryan of St. Michael's cathedral, Toronto.

The sermon of the evening was, in deed, the consecration sermon. Rev. Father Ryan took text from the third psalm, "How beautiful are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts." The reverend preacher said in substance: Your Grace, Reverend Fathers, dearly beloved brethren. It seems to me that the words I have cited from the inspired prophet of God very fittingly

express the thoughts and feelings of the congregation when contemplating this magnificent temple solemnly consecrated to day in its renewed beauty and splendor to the service of Almighty God. Perhaps, before going farther, I may be permitted, as an outsider, but a sincere admirer of Halifax, to offer my most heartfelt congratulations to the learned and illustrious Archbishop of this great and venerable See, to the Right Reverend and most energetic Rector of this beautiful cathedral, to the zealous priests and the devoted and generous people of St. Mary's parish, for this splendid monument and evidence of their united work, this historic and most worthy addition to the magnificent ecclesiastical architecture of Canada.

CATHOLIC MUNIFICENCE

But this beautiful church is only the crowning glory of Catholic munificence in this fair city by the sea. In making a short tour of your city last evening I was amazed and delighted at the wonderful progress in Catholic institutions even during the few short years since my last visit to Halifax. The beautiful globe house, the new churches and parochial residences, the splendid institutions of learning, the commodious and well-kept homes for the orphans, the erring and the wayward; and all this the work of a religious minority, who are not all millionaires. As I saw and admired I could not help saying in my heart of hearts, God bless the good priests and people who have so nobly seconded the zeal of this great Archbishop in this magnificent work for Halifax, for humanity, and for the glory of God.

When reading the most interesting and edifying story of the church in Halifax I felt at first inclined to make my sermon historic. But then, I thought, my hearers know this story well. It has been learnedly told by the scholarly editor of the Memoirs of Bishop Burke and has been cleverly summarized since in one of your leading city papers. So I resolved to make my sermon dogmatic, to speak to your faith rather than to your feelings, and take my thought from the ceremony of the morning, which, while it primarily teaches most important religious truths, will also be one of the most interesting facts in the history of the church in Halifax.

ELOQUENT SILENCE.

And now to the subject of my sermon. It is a significant fact that there was no sermon this morning. The interpreters of the Sacred Scriptures tell us that inspired silence is often more eloquent than inspired words. The sermon of this morning was a silent sermon. It was a sermon to be seen rather than to be heard. Yet, was it one of the most eloquent, impressive and instructive sermons, in action, that the Catholic Church preaches to her people, indeed to the world in the solemn consecration of a temple to the service of the ever-living God. In my discourse this evening I will merely attempt to interpret the silent sermon of the morning, and will ask you to consider three temples, three tabernacles, consecrated to God—the tabernacle of Heaven, the tabernacle of earth and the tabernacle of the altar.

THREE ARE ONE

I would say at the outset, and I would like you to understand, if only for the sake of the unity of my sermon, that these three are one. They are one, because the person for whom they are is one, and He is the second person of the Adorable Trinity—the eternal

word, Jesus Christ Our Lord and Saviour. I am taking in a good deal of Catholic Christian theology in my sermon, so I can only attempt to suggest some thoughts.

The learned and eloquent preacher then took his hearers with him to the first tabernacle, and soaring on eagle wings with the apostolic seer of Patmos, St. John, he gave a vivid description of what the beloved apostle saw before breaking into his sublime preface: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." It is well for us to see and adore Him in the beginning, because we have to follow Him to the end. In the beginning, then, we see Him in the first tabernacle in the bosom of the Father, where He was begotten.

BEFORE THE DAY STAR

true God of true God, the figure of the Father's substance and the splendor of His glory. And in a moment the Eternal Word passed from the first tabernacle to the second, from the tabernacle of Heaven to the tabernacle of Earth. *Et Verbum caro est et habitavit in nobis*—The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us. He who was from the beginning in the bosom of the Father passed in a moment to the bosom of His Mother, became the Divine Babe of Bethlehem, whom the angels of heaven were ordered to adore. But we have to follow Him farther. Not only to Bethlehem, Nazareth, Calvary, the cross and the tomb, but to the tabernacle of the altar, where we have Him with us to day and forever till the end of time. The very same God who was in the beginning, the very same Christ Jesus our Lord that was born in Bethlehem, lived and worked in Nazareth, suffered in the garden and died on the cross. He loved His own who were in the world, and He loved them to the end. And the end is the

TABERNACLE OF THE ALTAR

The three tabernacles give us three acts in the divine drama of God's love to man. The Word was with God, and the Word was God—Behold the first step, or rather the first act of the divine drama. The Word was made flesh, the second grand act. The flesh was made food, the third and last act of the drama. Here again the preacher showed with much force and eloquence and scriptural and theological citations and illustrations the various, and as he seemed to insist with much show of reasoning, the ever increasing degree of glory to God in the advancing acts of the divine or Christian drama. Returning to, and summing up his first thought of the three tabernacles, he showed the peculiar character of the consecration of each, and the distinctive

REASON OF CONSECRATION

at all. Here the reverend preacher became amiably and eloquently controversial. He said, a church can be consecrated to God alone, and the reason is this: a church in our Christian Catholic sense is a place not merely of popular, or congregational prayer, not a house of religious meeting, not even a stately building in which the book of God is read or the man of God preaches, prays, or sings to or with the people. Not even again a temple in which there is only a table. No, our religious house, our house of God, our temple, our church, is, indeed, as the Master said His house should be, a house of prayer. But the best prayer, the only divine prayer, is the prayer of sacrifice, and for sacrifice there must be a priest, and for a

sacrificing priest there must be an altar and victim. And in our churches we have an altar, we have a priest, we have a victim, and all are found in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The real reason why a recent controversy was

DECIDED AGAINST ANGLICAN ORDERS

was simply this. They would not have an altar, nor a sacrifice, nor a priesthood, and what they would not have, what by their words and acts they were not to have, they simply ceased to have, and they have not now. But again, said the preacher, to come to St. Mary's, to come home. What was the first St. Mary's church? St. Mary's tabernacle? It was St. Mary herself. Here he went on to show how God had consecrated this tabernacle of earth: how beautiful and fair it was and what a fitting type of the temple consecrated to-day. And yet, said the preacher, through Mary was not only God's temple, but God's Mother, this Church could not be consecrated to her. Sacrifice is an act of Supreme worship that can be offered to God alone, and it is an act of religion so essentially and exclusively divine that it may not be offered

WITHOUT IDOLATRY

and blasphemy even to God's holy mother. This is why Catholics so easily distinguish between the honor they give to God and the honor they give to His saints. To God alone they offer sacrifice. For the saints, they ask the assistance of their prayers.

Coming to the third tabernacle—the tabernacle of the altar—the preacher gave a rather original and striking proof of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. He took his thought from the three tabernacles, and his argument seemed to be this: In the first tabernacle God loved us and gave life to us. In the second, He loved us and came to give His life for us. In the third, He loves us and wants to live with us. With the cleverness of an experienced theologian as well as the fervid eloquence of a zealous priest, the preacher showed how the three tabernacles, the three consecrations are concentrated in the Eucharistic Christ and commemorated in the ceremony of to-day, in St. Mary's cathedral.

THEIR RELATION TO BEAUTY.

Having explained the religious teaching of the three tabernacles, the preacher went on to show their relation to all true beauty. Following the definition of Plato, St. Thomas, and St. Augustine, he put his argument, or application somewhat in this way. In the first tabernacle was the "splendor of the true." In the second, the fairest of the fair of the Being who of all mere creatures was the most pleasing in the eyes of God, the Immaculate Virgin, Mother of Christ. In the third tabernacle was ideal and real beauty united and made completely perfect in the beauty ever ancient and ever new, the divine beauty of the Eucharistic Christ daily immolated and permanently dwelling on our altars. This is why Catholics surround their altar with every form of beauty—the beautiful lines of architecture, the beautiful figures of sculpture, the beautiful colors of painting and the sweet and beautiful melodies of sacred music and song—All these arts combine to give praise and glory to God in St. Mary's cathedral to day. In concluding the preacher made eloquent and touching reference to the glories of St. Mary's in the past, the Masses offered, the Bishops consecrated, the priests ordained, the communions received, the baptisms con-