## CONFESSION.

CONTINUED. At the dawn of Christianity mankind At the dawn of Christianity mankind was groaning under the tyranny of the devil. Everywhere was a maddening race for pleasure; the impress of luxury was stamped on every heart. Crime in its fullest growth was the appanage of corrupt society. Man, a willing slave to passions, sat down contented in the shadowy region of death; bound hand and foot, he willingly embraced his fetters; amid the dismai clanking of his chains, he flattered himself. This deplorable degraflattered himself. This deplorable degra-dation pressed heavily upon society; the yoke of slavery, for four thousand years, reminded man of his fallen nature, and wrenched from his impassioned heart sighs and mournings. Saten, a heartless master, compelled enclaved humanity to pay a heavy tribute in the shape of passions, hatred and disorderly affec-tions which bound our fallen nature in still faster servitude. The merciful God, when the fullness of time had come, looked down upon His oppressed people and sent, after the manner of Moses delegated to King Pharaon in behalf of his children of predilection, His only begotten Son to pay and exhibit once for all the general price and ransom of all mankind. Thus wrapped up in human nature, Christ caused the light of for all the general price and ransom of all the general price and ransom of human nature, Christ caused the light of liberty to shine into the darkness of misery and servitude. He came on a mission of mercy and compassion; His restaurance, or the power of the keys, extends its jurisdiction only mission of mercy and compassion; His restaurance, or the power of the keys, extends its jurisdiction only of Divine right of a detailed and specific confession of our sins not to God, over post-baptismal sins, because we are, only after baptism, made members of and miseries of heart rending humanity.

His very name implies that He came to rescue from the bonds of sin the same as the power of two great truths: "First, the Divine institution: two great truths: "First, the Divine institution: the keys, extends its jurisdiction only of Divine right of a detailed and specific confession of our sins not to God, but to His chosen ministers, the Divine institution: the keys, extends its jurisdiction only of Divine right of a detailed and specific confession of our sins not to God, but to His chosen ministers, the Divine institution: the keys, extends its jurisdiction only of Divine right of a detailed and specific confession of our sins not to God, but to His chosen ministers, the Divine institution: the keys, extends its jurisdiction only of Divine right of a detailed and specific confession of our sins not to God, but to His chosen ministers, the Divine institution: the keys, extends its jurisdiction only of Divine right of a detailed and specific confession of our sins not to God, but to His chosen ministers, the Divine institution: the keys, second, the necessity of Divine right of a detailed and specific confession of our sins not to God, but to His chosen ministers, the Divine institution: the keys, second, the necessity of Divine right of a detailed and specific confession of our sins not to God, but to His chosen ministers, the Divine institution: the chosen ministers in the confession of our sins not to God, but to His and miseries of heart rending humanity.

His very name implies that He came to rescue from the bonds of sin the soul of man: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His peeple from their sins." (Matt. i., 21.)

The whole history of His life is replenished with facts each and all up. holding His eagerness to consiort bleed, ing hearts, but the chiefest was His lord gave the Apostles to preach, to holding His esgerness to comfort bleeding hearts; but the chiefest was His glorious victory over death and hell, by which he stamped His mission, His works and institutions with the seal of His Divinity. Among His institutions the and institutions with the seal of His Divinity. Among His institutions the one standing out most prominently is His Church, His visible representative and mouth piece upon earth and the channel through which He dispenses to markind the graces of redemption. Having by His gloricus resurrection placed the seal of His Divinity upon this institution, He then proceeds to enrich it with treasures and to provide it with helps by He then proceeds to enrich it with treasures and to provide it with helps by means of which it may be enabled to discharge its high office. Among the treasures with which He enriched it, one of the chiefest and most necessary is the sacrament of penance. As the Church was established by Jesus Christ to perpetuate the work of reconciling sinners to God, it obviously follows that the reconciliation of sinners to God was to be the principal office of the Church. But how was that reconciliation to be made? Was Christ to come personally to every singer and say to each one, as in the case of Magdalen and of the man sick of the palsy: "Thy sins are forgiven thee;" or was the power of forgiving sins to be delegated? Carist might have come personally if He had so willed it, but St. Paul teaches us that Christ delegated a minister to perform that work. We read, 2 Cor., v. 18, the final arrangement of Divine Providence in the reconciliation of sinners: "But all things are of God who hath recon-

ciled us to Himself by Christ and hath given to us the ministry of reconcilistion. We are therefore ambassadors we are therefore ambassadors for Christ, God as it were exhorting by us. For Christ we beseech you, be ye reconciled to God," It is evident from these words of St. Paul that God reconciled to Himself the world by Christ, who in turn appointed His apostles and their legitimate successors in office to be injurious. ministers, i.e., to reconcile to Christ those guilty of post-baptismal sins. Let us now see what is the remedy that He will leave for the cure of the maladies into which man may fall after baptism. In the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew, beginning with the eighteenth verse, we read: "Thou art Peter and upon this

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thou shalt loose on earth, it shalt be locsed also in heaven." And to all the apostles assembled together on another occasion He uses the same forcible language in precisely the same words (Matt. xviii., 18.) We must here observe that Christ, in this metaphor, made a twofold promise which He will execute after His recurrection, viz., first, the primacy of Peter over His Church, con firmed by these words, "feed My lambs," firmed by these words, "feed My lambs," "feed My sheep" (John xxi., 16 17.); and secondly, the power of the keys, or the power of torgiving sins in the sacra ment of penance. The apostles and their ment of penance. The apostles and their legitimate successors are likewise promised to partake of the power of binding and loosing, but with a due subordination to the one head invested in supreme authority. Now, according to St. John, when the fulness of time had come, Christ fulfilled the promise which He had made, and conferred on His Apostles the power of releasing the soul from the galling fetters of sin and of restoring it to the liberty of a child of God. Jesus Christ, after His resurrection, appeared in the midst of a call of God. Jesus Christ, after His resurrection, appeared in the midst of His disciples assembled in the temple for fear of the Jews, and after greeting them with the accustomed salutation, "Peace be with you," He added: "As the Father hath sent Me, I are sent to also send you" . . . I am sent to alleviate the ills and miseries of fallen humanity, to release man from the bondage of sin; and after forty days I shall return to My Father, consequently by the power entrusted to Me, I send you to continue the work commenced by Me, and thereupon breathing upon them, He said, "Receive ye by Me, and thereupon breathing upon them, He said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." (John xx., 22, 23) The promises made by our Blessed Lord to the Apostles prior to His death and resurrection are now fulfilled, and the land

Holy Spirit to repentant souls possessed by the spirit of darkness." Christ nere manifestly stamps His Apostles with a sacerdotal character and constitutes them judges in the causes in which this discretionary power is to be exercised. It obviously follows that Christ, about to part from earth, did not will to come personally to every repentant sinner and say, as in the case of Magdalen and of the man sick of the palsy, "Tny sins are forgiven thee." (Matt.ix. 2.) In virtue of the omnipotence which has been given Me on earth and in Heaven, "I give to you the right of binding and "I give to you the right of binding and "I give to you the right of binding and loosing consciences, of judicially remitting and retaining sins; I bind Myself to ratify in Heaven the sentence which you shall pronounce on earth." To confirm the truth of this doctrine I shall quote the holy Synod of Trent: "If any one saith that those words of the Lord the Saviour, "Receive the Holy Ghost,... are not understood of the power of forgiving and of retaining sins in the sacrament of penance, as the Catholic Church has always understood them from its has always understood them from its very foundation, but wrests them contrary to the institution, to the power of preaching the gospel, let him be anath-ema." (Can. iii. Works of Satisfaction.)

These scriptural quotations prove con-clusively that the sacrament of penance Trent has anathematized all those who shall oppose the doctrine of the divinity and necessity of sacramental confession : "If any one shall deny that sacramental confession was instituted or that it is necessary by divine right to salvation, let him be anathema" (Can. vi)

Having proved the divine institution of the sacrament of penance, I shall pro-ceed to establish the obligation of confessing post-baptismal sins, which obligation is implied, on the part of the penitent, in that power bestowed on the Apostles and their lawful successors in the priesthood. It is true that our Lord did not directly command the necessity of confession for the remission of sin, still we must be impressed with the conviction, that he who is dead must be restored to spiritual life by making use of the means left us by Christ. And this means is inherent "to the keys of the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xvi., 19) The metaphor of the keys implies the concurrence of the key holder to gain admission into heaven, because its gates are closed against sin; therefore the sinner must have recourse to the Church, invested with the power of the keys, to gain entrance into heaven. Of what gain entrance into neaven. Of what avail would this great prerogative be, were admission into heaven's portals obtained without the keys? This power would be nugatory. But of what use would the keys of the treasures of redemption be to the Apostles if these graces treasured up were made to flow into the soul of sinners without the con currence of those divinely constituted dispensers?

read: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church. . . . . And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever the cause? How can they observe equity in enjoining punishment if sins are not Priests in the confessional are called specifically declared? How else can a judge remit or retain sins aright? The greatest living authority would not be sufficient; there must be prudence and knowledge to direct authority. It is knowledge to direct authority. It is necessary therefore that he obtain an exact knowledge of the number, the gravity and quality of the offences, of the dispositions of the guilty person, of his firm resolutions, of his earnest desire to give satisfaction both to God and to man. And can that knowledge be obtained except by confession? The priest is not empowered to give absolution to every one indiscriminately. He must exercise the power with indement and discretion. the power with judgment and discretion.
And that he cannot do unless the sinner unfurl the fold of his conscience and con

unfurl the fold of his conscience and confess the secrets of his heart.

It manifestly follows, therefore the very power of binding and tooking, of retaining and forgiving, confined by our Lord on His Apostles and successors in the ministry, necessarily implies a strict obligation on the part of the singlener to lay open the state of his soul by a humble and sincere confession to receive the full benefit of that power. Such is the doctrine of the holy Synod of Trent: "If any one saith that in the sacrament of penance, it is not necessary, of divine right, for the remission of sins, to confess all and singular the mortal sins which after due and diligent pre vious meditation are remembered, ever those which are (mortal sins) secret let him be anathema." Hence we are not surprised when we read that the first Christians accused themselves at the feet of the Apostles: "Many of them, who believed, came confessing and declaring their deeds," (Acts xix., 18) Why did those Christians confess at the feet of the Apostles? Simply because of the divine injunction, "confess therefore your sins one to another, that you may be saved." (St. James v. 14) They felt and were made to feel this point of the divine law, that is, a divine inductive law rection are now fulfilled, and the lan-guage He employs to confer the power of loosing and binding is of the plainest, that confession is a necessary condition unto forgiveness. I might here adduce the testimony of the Fathers to confirm of loosing and binding is of the plainest, and consequently cannot be misconstrued: "The power which I hold from My Father, the same I communicate to you. Receive the power to impart this all within the compass of this fold by all Druggists.

cursory proof. I will consequently select a few apologists of the Church who have written so explicitly and abundantly on this subject that their testimonies will be amply sufficient to prove the dogma without taking the Fathers collectively. St. Basil writes: "Necessarily our sins must be confessed to those to whom has been committed the dispensation of the mysteries of God. For it is written in the acts. God. For it is written in the acts, they confessed to the Apostles by whom also they were baptized.' Two conclusions obviously follow from these passages: First, the necessity of confession. Second, the obligation of de claring our sins to a priest to whom is committed the dispensation of the mysteries of God." St. Chrysostom says: "Do not confess to me only of fornication, nor of those things that are manifest among all men, but bring together also thy secret calumnies and evil speakings." Again, "To priests is given a power which God would not grant to either angels or archangels; insomuch that whatever the priests do below, God ratifies above, and the Master confirms the sentence of His servants. For He says 'whose sins you shall retain they are retained.'" The Great Doctor gives us the weight of His testimony to establish more firmly two great truths: "First, the Divine instiby whom they were baptised." Hence, I gather that all post-baptismal mortal for reconciling the faithful unto God as sins, of which, after a diligent examina-often as they fall into sin after baptism, let him be anathema (Can, i. Works of of a divine right, submitted to the power of the keys in the sacrament of

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