

the elevation of a priest to the episcopal dignity, to be a successor of the Apostles.

Before we can understand the dignity of the mission of the Apostles and their successors, the bishops of Holy Mother Church, we must have some knowledge of the mission of Jesus Christ who sent them with power to continue His work — "As the Father hath sent me so also do I send you": Jesus Christ, God made man, was sent by His Heavenly Father into this world to redeem mankind, to satisfy the justice of God, to pay the penalty of sin, to purchase by His Blood the grace of sanctification, to preach His gospel of heavenly truth, to restore the likeness of God in men's souls, and to obtain for them everlasting life in the Kingdom of His glory. To fulfil this mission Jesus Christ came as High Priest, Sanctifier of souls and Teacher.

He came as Priest. Of Him the Royal Prophet has said "The Lord hath sworn Thou art a priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedech" (Ps. CIX. 4.) Christ as priest offered the Sacrifice of Himself, His Body and His Blood under the appearance of bread and wine at the Last Supper, and on Calvary He offered Himself a bleeding victim to His heavenly Father for the Redemption of the world. Thus did he pay the penalty of sin and satisfy the justice of God, and exercise His office of priest.

He came as the sanctifier of souls. He tells us "God sent His son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved by him (St. John III. 17). Our Lord loved sinners. He suffered for them because he loved them. We read in the gospel how He went about doing good, not only healing the ills of the body, but especially the ills of the soul. He is the good Samaritan pouring oil and wine into the wounds made by sin. He is the Good Shepherd seeking the stray sheep to bring them back to the shelter of the true fold. He is ever the kind Father welcoming the returning prodigal with joy. He ever showed mercy to the sinner. Mary Magdalen was pardoned. To the man sick with the palsy He said "Thy sins are forgiven thee" and to prove His power over sin He said "arise and walk. He restored health to his palsied limbs and strength to his body, and the man stood up freed from his infirmities. Again when Jesus was hanging on the cross whilst His blood was flowing for the redemption of the world, He exercised His mercy: To the penitent thief He said "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." He was truly a sanctifier of souls. Through Him came grace into the world, and by His death He purchased eternal life for us all.

He came as Teacher. The three years of His public life were especially devoted to teaching. Throughout Galilee and Judea, every mountain side and valley and plain re-echoed His words of heavenly wisdom. Everywhere the multitudes gathered to listen to His teaching and declared He "spoke as one having authority." Nicodemus came to Him at night and said to Him "We know that Thou art come a teacher from God for no man can do the things Thou dost unless God be with him" (St. John III. ), Even the minister who were sent by the Pharisees to apprehend Him declared, "Never did man speak like this man." Thus did the people who heard Him bear witness to His mission