

THE GREAT FAST. HOW TO KEEP LENT WELL.

A Pure Conscience a Prerequisite to Reap Its Graces—How Observed in Past Ages.

The Christians of all ages began the fast of Lent by first going to confession, as shown by the Fathers and Councils of the Church.

Alcinius tells all Christians to confess their sins on the "I fast of the Fast," that is, on these days before Lent.

Theodolph, Bishop of Orleans, requests the people, as a preparation for Lent, to make their confessions and reconcile their differences.

From these Fathers and Councils it will appear how clear is the spirit of the Church in exhorting the people to prepare for the Lenten season by going to confession and receiving the grace of God, and to be in the state of grace in order that their fasting may have merit before God.

of charity, as the Apostle says, their fasting and their works of penance are neither satisfactory nor merit everlasting life.

Another part of this preparation for Lent consists in increasing our self-denial making frequent acts of sorrow for sin, doing good to others, overlooking the faults of our neighbors, and mortifying ourselves.

From the custom of past ages we see that all people prepared for Lent by going to confession. From the spirit of the Church in keeping the time of Septuagesima as a season of fasting and as a preparation for Lent, we see that the people should not spend the time in pleasures, in parties and in dancing, as they are accustomed to do in other days, but in a spirit of penance and fasting as a preparation for Lent.

We begin the fast of Lent on Wednesday, for the most ancient traditions of the Church tell us that while our Lord was born on Sunday, he was baptized on Tuesday, and began His fast in the desert on Wednesday.

the meaning of this rite. When man sinned by eating in the garden the forbidden fruit, God drove him from Paradise with the words: "For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." Before this sin Adam was not to die, but to be carried into Heaven after a certain time of trial here upon this earth.

The word Lent, in the ancient language of northern Europe, means the Spring fast, to distinguish it from Advent, the Fall or Winter fast.

Three things were forbidden to the Christians in the different ages of the Church during Lent: wine, meat and food. In the first ages, wine was not allowed. Abstinence from meat in Lent is not different from the abstinence commanded on other days of the year like Friday, the eyes of the great feasts, and the Quater Tenses. Meat is forbidden because it is the food nearest like our flesh, and we can easier do without it.

In the early ages, the Christians used to fast till the evening, and that continued to be the way of keeping Lent till the ninth century. Then they began to break their fast at the hour of noon, corresponding to our three in the afternoon.

During all these ages meat was not taken on fast days, only fish was allowed on account of its cold nature, and because of many deep and mysterious reasons founded on the Holy Bible.

MEAT IS NOT EATEN. The permission to use "white meats" does not allow the eating of eggs, according to the old discipline of the Church, and in Rome they are not eaten when meat is allowed, but a dispensation to eat them on certain days is granted.

This life is a continual battle against temptation, and the Church made up of the clergy and of the people, is like a great and powerful army in ceaseless battle array against our enemies.

We are coming near to the sad sight of the death of our Lord. We are to see that rage of the Jews against Him which ended by His death on the cross.

Every day is a little life, and our whole life is but a day repeated. Those, therefore, that lose a day are dangerously prodigal; those that mispend it, desperate.

There are so many of them parading in the high places of this country, that an occasional description of them may do good.

Here for instance is a Catholic judge, of good legal ability and well thought of as a private gentleman. He is not a mouther, or a poser, but a quiet well-bred man.

Here is a Catholic business-man with a million perhaps, and the head of a great concern. He has really built it up by his energy and invention.

Here is a Catholic society man. He is a good father, wealthy, charitable, and refined. He loves good society for his own sake. His children associate only with the "best" people.

Here is a Catholic journalist on a daily journal. He knows he is a Catholic from the fact that he made his First Communion and goes to Mass on Sunday.

Here is a man in humble life. He has small wages, but enough to support him.

He goes to confession once a year, never contributes a cent to the church or charity, never joins a society, never feels any particular admiration for his faith, or any part of it, sneers at many doctrines in a timid way, and devotes twelve dollars a year to beer.

CATHOLIC CULLINGS. A Christian ought in a manner to have three hearts in one: one for God another for his neighbor, and the third for himself.

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We ought to measure our actual lot, and to fulfil it; to be with all our strength that which our lot requires and allows.

We cannot always be doing a great work, but we can always be doing something that belongs to our condition.

Two painters each painted a picture to illustrate his conception of rest. The first chose for his scene a still, lone lake among the far off mountains.

At a special meeting of the Lime-Kiln Club called on Saturday evening, the sad announcement was made that Bro. Whalshone Howker had passed from earth away.

And old physician, retired from practice, had placed in his hands by an East Indian missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure of consumption.

Some Curious Words. "Variat" is the same word as "collet," and each is an offshoot of the feudal "vassal."

Wives! Sons! DAUGHTERS! We will send you our famous FAKE POULTRY, the best poultry ever. If you send us ten names of persons who keep hens, (few or many), also 25 cents for one pack of Sheridan's Compound.

The Arizona Kicker. The following items are extracted from the last issue of The Arizona Kicker:— Poor Fly!—Our contemporary down the street has still another cause to wish he could attend our funeral.

They Skip!—Three months ago, Col. A. B. Davidson and wife arrived in town and rented the yellow-faced oblong on Plute Place as a residence.

Jim's Way—The verdict of the jury in Jim Stevens' case was, as might be expected, in favor of the defendant.

Sold Again!—We had business over at the Elbow the other day, and our esteemed contemporary saw in the fact a long-sought opportunity.

The Lime-Kiln Club. At a special meeting of the Lime-Kiln Club called on Saturday evening, the sad announcement was made that Bro. Whalshone Howker had passed from earth away.

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Please Don't Forget It. That Dr. H. James' Cannabis Indica is prepared in California, India, from the purest and best Native Hemp, and is the only remedy either in that country or this that will positively and permanently cure Consumption.

National Colonization Lottery. Under the patronage of Rev. Father LABELLE. Established in 1884 under the Act of Quebec, 22 Viet., Chap. 34, for the benefit of the Diocesan Societies of Colonization of the Province of Quebec.

Allen's Lung Balsam. DO YOU KEEP IT IN THE HOUSE? ALLEN'S LUNG BALSAM. NO BETTER REMEDY FOR COUGHS, COLDS, CROUP, CONSUMPTION, &c.

of the heart for many years; and within two hours of being carried home he breathed his last. Remarks of Brother Gardner: The President said that this was another illustration of the old saying: "When ye think ye stand ye have fall."

Remarks of Sir Isaac Walpole: Sir Isaac Walpole said that death owed a shining mark, and Brother Howker was a good deal of a shiner. He was a patient, even-tempered, and good-natured man.

Remarks of Samuel Shin: Samuel Shin said that the sad news was broken to him while carrying home a can of oysters which he had purchased at a discount on account of the thaw.

Remarks of Waydown Bebe: Brother Bebe said he could scarcely realize the sad news. Just one brief hour before the word came to him, Brother Howker had called at his house to ask him what year William the Conqueror died in.

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THE PRIZES. The Prizes will be divided as follows: 1. City of Montreal. 2. Dominion Prize. 3. Provincial Prize. 4. County Prize. 5. School Prize.

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OUR Prize Competition. IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE Young Folks.

The proprietors of THE TRUE WITNESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE have pleasure in announcing that it is their intention, with the object of interesting the younger members of the Catholic community in literature, to offer for open competition a number of valuable prizes to the pupils of the Catholic schools of the Dominion.

The prizes will be given for the best original story on some subject relating to the religious, domestic or general history of Canada, early settlements, pioneer efforts, mission work, etc.

Rules for Competitors:

The stories must be submitted in the handwriting of the competitor. They must not exceed two thousand words. Each MS. must be enclosed in a blank sheet of paper of the same size as that on which the story is written.

Blank forms for intending Competitors, and all other information regarding our Prize Competition, can be had by applying at the Office, 761 Craig Street.

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MONTREAL CITY PRIZE.

The first prize will be given for the best story selected from those sent in from the schools in the city.

DOMINION PRIZE.

The second for the best story selected from those sent from the various counties in each province.

PROVINCIAL PRIZE.

The third for the best story sent from the provinces generally.

COUNTY PRIZE.

The fourth for the best story from any of the schools generally.

SCHOOL PRIZE.

The fifth for the best story from the schools generally.

These prizes will be as follows:

- 1. (CITY PRIZE)—An excellent Upright Piano. 2. (DOMINION)—A Gold Watch, name of winner and conditions under which it was received, engraved. 3. (PROVINCIAL)—A handsome Silver Watch. 4. (COUNTY)—Three volumes History of Our Own Times (McCarthy), Ireland, Past and Present. Life of Leo XII. 5. Cyclopedia of Literature.

SECOND PRIZE LIST.

Prizes will be given in accordance with the same classification for the second best stories, and a third class will also be given.

EXTRA PRIZES.

A special extra series of prizes will be given for the best story in the same grade written by children under twelve years of age, to be duly certified by their teacher. [Subscribers will be good enough to note further announcement in our columns on this subject.]