

the awful havoc among the angelic host. God's universal law, then, is that the price to be paid for the treasure of eternal life is trial and temptation, and man's whole life has been so ordered for the solution of this question.

What was the sin of the angels? For a certainty we know not, yet from Holy Scripture and our experience of human life we may believe it to have been a sin of pride; the Sacred Humanity of Christ, being proposed for their adoration, although He in His human nature was of a lower order than themselves. Unwilling to humble themselves to the command of God, the trial of prodigious multitudes was of fatal result. The greatest of all, Lucifer, their leader, consumed with pride at his high endowments forgot the love and homage due His Creator. His fascinated followers shared in his awful punishment—God awarding to the rebel host, the lot which they had deliberately chosen for themselves; for the instant they turned from God, heaven's wrath opened upon them, and the sentence of reprobation fell upon them. The Beatific vision—the Light of God in all His love and beauty—had passed forever; so, too, they were stripped of dignity, and the eternal company of the blessed. Their angelic privileges gave way to an eternal hatred against God and all who serve Him. The will of the wicked angels had chosen sin for its lot—seeking self without God. He leaves them to themselves without any portion of the Supreme Good, which is Himself; and so hardened in their pride, these wicked spirits become the more so in their rebellion. "The pride of them that hate Thee, ascendeth continually."

In this is seen the most terrible effect of sin: transforming as it does the mind and will, placing a barrier to the Light of God's truth. On, how lightly man permits sin to glide into his heart. Harmless at first, it may appear, for its evil effects are as yet known only by faith and God's gifts are in part, still with him; but sin increasing, death surprises the soul in its evil, and in the light of eternity sin stands revealed in its horror and cruelty—wedded to that soul for an eternity.

But the obedience of the good angel, led by St. Michael, was without hesitation, and this won for them their sinlessness forever. Their intimate union with God, assures them of their safety for all eternity; for beholding the face of God, there is nothing outside of Him that can attract them.

But this sinlessness of the angels is true freedom; for is not perfect freedom, the freedom of those who choose only out of various ends, all leading to God? But those who cast off the honorable service of God by sin, only change masters, and become the bond slaves of him who led the rebel angels, and who first said: "I will not serve."

The angelic host then resting in their unclouded happiness with God, hold the secret of that happiness in perfect detachment from all thought of self, from all desire to further their own glory; for how their rapturous strains of love ascend to the throne of God, as they welcome to the heavenly Jerusalem, every soul entering upon its eternal reward. The return of the wanderer to the fold—this indeed gives them a peculiar joy: "There is joy before the angels of God, over every sinner who does penance."

The angels having arrived at the goal of their existence, no longer merit; yet their happiness is complete, measured alone by the capacity of their nature. Not so with us; every good act we perform is an advance, where, after the brief span of our earthly career, shall have been run, all that we do now with difficulty and after a struggle with corrupt nature, will be an unmixt happiness—for such is the service of the angels to their God.

To understand fully the beauty of the angelic service toward God, would require many considerations upon the number and order of the angels. "In the multitude of the people is the dignity of the king," and so it must be in the angelic world. "Star differeth from star in glory;" thus the various degrees of grace among the angels constitute their particular service toward God. And so, likewise, according to the grace each man has received from God, some aspect of the life of Jesus must be manifest in him—some particular virtue must dominate his life. To the pure of heart God will unfold it; the angelic spirits teach how to practice it.

Beholding then the face of God in heaven, the happiest, the blishest occupation of God's creatures, is the joy of the angels, as prostrate before the Most High, the heavens ever resound with their song of praise. Nor do they cease singing the praises of the Mother of God; for next to her Incarnate Son, she is the splendor of the heavenly courts, she the Mother of their King and God, is also their queen. As Queen of Martyrs she has earned a more excellent reward than the angelic hosts, and now enthroned far above the Cherubim and Seraphim, close to the throne of God, she reigns as Queen of Angels.

Each of the angels, then, has his office, whether it be to chant the praises of God, of our Blessed Lady; to adore the Blessed Sacrament upon earth or to tend the creatures of God. A brief consideration of this last office of guardianship to men, will respond to the last point of our treatise; what is the relation of the angels towards us?

Faith teaches us that God in His mercy has given each a guardian angel. "See that you despise not one of these little ones, for I say to you," says the Saviour, "that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven."

The universal sense of the Christian people has always clung to the beautiful ideas of guardian angels being appointed to every individual child of Adam—be he Christian or heathen; prince or beggar; the new born babe, the old man tottering on the brink of grave. Oh, the dignity of a soul, since God has condescended each being from birth to the care of an angel. However degraded he may be, each human being will have through life an angel

as his companion. Speeding with lightning swiftness wherever God sends them these blessed spirits attach themselves to their charges and guard them as treasures confided to them by God. If he labors and sighs for that soul's salvation, shall they regard it with indifference? On the depths of God's love, ever sustaining us in our conflict with evil, thus maintaining a just balance of forces in the spiritual world and so holding sacred human liberty against the assaults of our deadly enemies. For, as St. Augustine says: "The Holy Angels assist us in our labors; protect us in our rest; encourage us in combat; crown us in victory."

But, above all, at the hour of death our good angel assists and defends us—that supreme moment when the evil one redoubles his fury, "knowing that he hath but a short time." Then it is that our angel guardian helps us to bow to God's will, making devoutly the sacrifice of our life; timely receiving the Sacraments, patiently bearing our illness and the agony of death. He accompanies us before the judgment seat of God, to render an account of his stewardship and witness either for or against us. It is believed he is God's Messenger of relief to us in purgatory, and that he is destined to be our inseparable companion for eternity.

The angels of God, then, in general our guardian angel in particular merit veneration at our hands. For if filial honor be due to parents, civil to magistrates, respect to age and virtue, to strict duty rests upon man to render religious honor to these blessed spirits so wonderfully manifesting the supernatural perfections of the Infinite God; for to every class of God's creatures is due the honor which their character demands.

Many who practice other laudable devotions forget this debt of reverence and gratitude to the holy companion ever at their side—the best, the truest, the most devoted friend. A lasty morning or evening prayer, perhaps, the only address made to this powerful defender and to two other angelic hosts of the heavenly Jerusalem. Of these latter, the glorious St. Michael is one of the few whose name has been revealed to us; to him we owe special devotion; for, when Lucifer fell from heaven, St. Michael, having led the armies of God against the rebellious host, remains as chief of the archangels and angels before the throne of God. It is he who is the defender of all the faithful in the hour of death and before him Satan trembles. It is St. Michael who will marshal the dead to the last judgment. His feast was a worthy prelude to that which the month of October ushered in, dedicated as is this entire month to the angels. May its conclusion leave in our hearts a solid devotion to the angels, and especially to our Guardian Angel—won by a loving and intimate converse with this untiring ever present, though invisible friend.

Holy Writ tells us that on the Resurrection, mankind "shall be as the angels of God in heaven," but this resemblance to the angels must be perfected in life, by living the life of the angels imitating their unworldliness and devotion to God; then will the close of life find its happy fruition in the words of Scripture:

"You are come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God: the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of angels."

—Western Watchman.

ST. PETERS, ROME.

HISTORY OF THE MARVELOUS EDIFICE WHOSE CORNER-STONE WAS LAID FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

On Wednesday, four hundred years ago—April 18, 1506—was laid the foundation stone of St. Peter's in Rome, writes correspondent of the Dublin Freeman's Journal.

When St. Peter's body was taken down from the cross on which he had given up his life for Christ, it was laid to rest in a simple grave just beside the place of his martyrdom, on the other side of the Via Cornelia, which flanked the Circus of Nero. The first years of infant Christianity were such as left but scant opportunity of adorning the burial places of the martyred dead, and more than a generation had passed before any monument decked the last resting place of the Prince of Apostles. But about the end of the first century Pope Anacletus was able to erect a little oratory over the tomb of Peter, and for more than two centuries this was the only memorial that marked the grave of the first Peter of Christ. Around and near this lowly monument the successors of Peter were buried, down to the year 202, when, owing to causes that have never been satisfactorily explained, the Popes began to be laid to rest in the Catacomb of St. Calixtus, outside the city, on the old Appian Way.

The years that followed were big with mighty changes. Persecution raged long and terribly. The battle of the Milvian Bridge was fought, and Maxentius, the last of the persecuting emperors, was defeated and lost his life in the Tiber. Constantine unfurled the standard of the cross over the conquering Roman legions, and the Catholic Church stood forth at last in the full light of day and liberty. One of the Emperor's first cares was to erect suitable temples to the God of Babel, in whose name victory had crowned his career. Foremost amongst these was the basilica of St. Peter, which he raised over the lowly tomb where the Fisherman of Galilee had been buried.

In the years and centuries that followed no place was more venerated than this. From the ends of the earth pilgrims thronged unceasingly to visit the tomb of the apostle enshrined in the centre of the basilica of Constantine. Once more it became customary for the Pope to be buried there, and Pontiffs have been laid to rest within the precincts of the temple that was erected to his memory, martyrdom and ashes. Writing in the fourth century, St. John Chrysostom exclaimed at the

sight of that temple: "Here, as one stands, the view of the shrine strikes on his heart—he is affected as if they that lie there were present; and he quits the place almost as another man." I admire the city of Rome, not for its columns or any other vain display, but because of these two glorious pillars of the Church—St. Peter and Paul."

From the day of its first erection by Constantine the history of St. Peter's is but a reflection of the story of Papal Rome—now witnessing royal scenes, such as the coronation of Charles V. and now—during the dreary days of the captivity of Avignon, and the still more dreary days of the great schism of the west—with grass growing up to the very steps of its altar, the cattle grazing undisturbed amid its storied aisles. Then was Rome nothing more than a skeleton of a city, as the old chronicler expresses it—so poor that they have no lamp to light on the altar, and the church itself was a tottering ruin, and wolves prowled freely in its precincts and dug up the bodies that had been laid to rest in the consecrated clay round about.

These evil days ended with the election of Pope Martin V., who at once devoted 20,000 gold florins to the erection of a new and over the venerable temple, which he repaired with unstinted labor and unwearying hand. But the sacred pile was old. It had stood the brunt of twelve hundred years. Time had laid a heavy hand on its walls, so much so that in the course of some years it was found that these walls were unsound and repairs but temporary.

Under the inspiring influence of the Renaissance, Nicholas V., in 1450, conceived the design of demolishing the old edifice and rebuilding it from the foundations. His idea was taken up by Paul II. and Sixtus IV.; but the project languished for want of funds, and little had been done towards its accomplishment when Julius II. became Pope.

For a time it was the intention of Julius merely to carry on the work of restoration begun by his predecessors, and to extend the old edifice. It was, in fact, an accident which led him to change his plans. He was a man of great deeds and magnificent projects, and among other plans he proposed to erect a stately monument to deck his grave in St. Peter's when he should be called away to join those who had gone before him. For this purpose he invited Michael Angelo, who was then a young man, to come to Rome and take charge of the undertaking.

Michael Angelo consented, and in accordance with the Pope's wish drew up the design of a monument, which was, however, of such colossal proportions that if it was to be carried into effect a new and vast edifice should be erected to contain it. The great architect Bramante was the man in Rome, the right-hand man of the Pope. Julius consulted him on his project. Bramante's answer was to plan a new and glorious basilica that was to surpass all other existing structures in size, beauty and magnificence, and was to "embody the greatness of the present and the future."

Pastor thus expresses the idea that dominated the minds of the Pope and the architect: "The mausoleum of the poor Fisherman of the Lake of Geneva, signification of the office which he had discharged to his successors. The idea of the Universal Church demanded a colossal edifice, that of the Papacy an imposing centre; therefore, its main feature must be a central dome of such proportions as to dominate the whole structure. Thus, Bramante thought, could be best attained by a ground plan in the form of a Greek cross, with the great dome in the centre, over the tomb of the apostles. His contemporaries were enthusiastic in their admiration of his design, and the poets of the day sang of it as the ninth wonder of the world."

Julius was a man of action. He lost no time once he had made up his mind. Accordingly he made rapid preparation for a beginning, and was able to lay the foundation stone on Low Sunday, May 18, 1506. Accompanied by Cardinals and prelates, he went in a solemn procession to the excavation that had been prepared for the foundation, twenty-five feet deep. Into this he descended along with two Cardinals and a few masons and fitted into its place the foundation stone of white marble, which was in readiness, with a suitable inscription recording the contemplated work. Underneath the foundation stone were placed twelve medals specially struck for the occasion. Will the revolutions of time ever bring them to light?

The progress of the undertaking was as swift as the beginning had been prompt. Julius had two thousand five hundred men employed, and he personally superintended much of the work. But he was not a long life, and he was cut off ere he was able to see anything more than the erection of the four gigantic pillars that were to support the dome. But his project was eagerly taken up by Leo X. and Clement VII., and the huge structure continued to grow inch by inch and year by year.

Bramante, too, died while yet the work was in its infancy, and his place was taken by Raphael, Veronesi and Sangallo, who made some alterations in the original designs. These were in turn succeeded by Baldassare Peruzzi and Michael Angelo, who made further changes in Bramante's plan, and who, during the Pontificates of Paul III., Julius III., Marcus II. and Paul IV., labored with all his boundless energy down till his death, in 1564. Pius V. and Sixtus V. entrusted the work to the architects Della Porta and Fontana, who, under Gregory XIV., completed the dome, which later on was adorned with mosaics by Clement VIII. At the suggestion of the architect Maderno, Paul V. consented to change the final plans prepared by Michael Angelo, and a change that, like most of the ideas of Maderno, has met with little favor ever since. The basilica was finally dedicated to Urban VIII., in 1626.

Thus, after one hundred and twenty years' incessant labor, under the direction of the most brilliant architects the world has yet seen, at an expenditure of twelve millions sterling, the glitter-

ing pile was complete, and men could gaze in wonder on the

Rich marbles, richer paintings, shrines where flame The image of gold, and haughty dome which vies In air with earth's chief structures, though their frame Sits on the firm-set ground, and this the clouds must claim.

It is a common thing to hear visitors at the first sight of St. Peter's complain that it falls short of their expectations; that it seems much smaller than they had imagined. Such is, indeed, the case. But this impression arises not because the building is small, but because of its perfect proportions—each part is so well adapted to all the rest that the gigantic dimensions of the structure are toned and mellowed into harmonious appearance. In reality it is difficult to imagine that the measurements of St. Peter's reach the following immense figures: It is 614 feet in length, 445 in breadth, 152 in height. The distance from the floor to the cross surmounting the dome is 448 feet, while the dome itself is 139 feet in diameter and 443 in circumference. All this, added to the glittering ornamentation that decks every inch of St. Peter's, fully justifies the enthusiastic language of a writer of sixty years ago: "We have before us a scene which no earthly edifice ever presented, which no imagination can picture, no pen describe. The vastness, the solitude, the symmetry, the richness, the beauty, the grandeur, the gorgeous magnificence, in a word, that surrounds us on every side enchants the eye, expands the mind, warms the heart, lifts the soul to the lofty objects of eternity and prompts us to fall down in spontaneous and grateful acknowledgment to God, Who has gifted man with such sublime conceptions, and enabled him to call forth such wondrous creations."

The stupendous monument designed for the tomb of Julius II. was never carried out. An obscure memorial in a deserted corner of St. Peter's marks his resting place. Nothing could have better pleased the Pope. In him there was nothing selfish or mean. His one object was the glory of God and the exaltation of the Church, and as he had lived to see it, he would have been well content with the glorious pile that, out of a plan for his own tomb, was raised above the resting place of the Prince of Apostles. None could say with better reason than Julius: "Si monumentum quaeris, circumspice"—"if you seek a monument to my name, gaze on the mighty dome of St. Peter's."

THE CHURCH AND CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY.

"What" asks M. de Lamazelle, writing in Le Correspondant (Paris) "is the attitude of the Catholic Church toward the doctrine of equality which, under the name of Democracy, arose out of the French Revolution?"

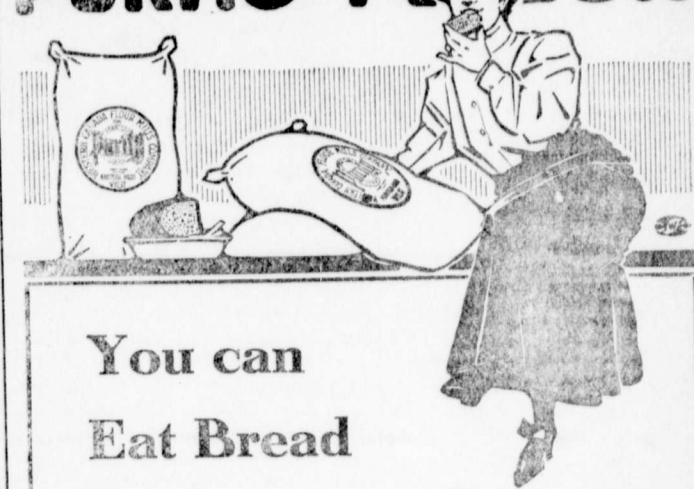
"There is," he continues "an equality which Christianity has proclaimed from all time, which was, in Christianity's advent and which never at any time entered into the notions of pagan philosophy. This is the equality of all men before God. 'You are all, said Saint Paul, 'children of God because you have all been baptized in Christ.' Christianity has never affirmed, however, that in the concrete world in which they live, men are all equal. Nor have the Popes of modern times reversed in any way, the doctrine of the early Church, that there shall be masters and servants. The late Sovereign Pontiff, Leo XIII., expressed himself in terms that are not open to question, as to the conception of Christian Democracy held by the Church, saying: 'The equality of the different members of society consists solely in their holding their origin from God. Yet human society, such as by God established, is composed of elements wholly unequal, even as the members of the human body; to wish the equality of all elements is to wish for the destruction of the social regime itself. Christian Democracy is entirely removed in principle from social democracy; its basis is the Catholic Faith and it holds as inviolable the doctrine of private property.'"

These teachings, re-affirmed by Pope Pius X. demonstrate beyond question that Christian Democracy is the opposite of that democracy which is present, for a salient example, exercising its sinister influence on the French people, in the guise of fraternalism and equality which are independent of all godly principles. In the opinion of the late Pope, Christianity alone can raise the condition of the lower orders and solve the social problem. Said His Holiness:

"The crucial question is of such a kind that religion alone can solve the problem. The Church alone can, by its teachings, its organized educational system, its energy, its activity in literature and through the wisdom it finds in the gospel, prove the Saviour of the working classes. It is by no means by a doctrine of patience and resignation that it will succeed in its mission, that it will reconcile the poor and the humble with their lot. On the contrary it will teach the rich that if they have inviolable rights they also have inalienable duties, that as St. Thomas said 'the man of possessions must look upon himself as an administrator appointed by God to help his fellow creatures. Into the beneficence of the master there must enter all the systematized activity that characterizes sound economy, but that at the same time the whole duty is not to be considered finished when the master has rewarded his servant with the wage agreed upon; that his obligations are as interminable as the holding of his possessions lasts and the consequent necessity of employing labor, endures.'"

Christian Democracy, says M. Lamazelle, has therefore in it nothing of the nature of Socialism and yet as both the late and the present Pope have affirmed, it may be termed a democracy in the meaning that it is beneficent action among the people, withdrawing from it its political sense. Catholics who do not call themselves Christian

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