

and his grace in me hath not been void ; ” (1) and again, elsewhere, he says : “ If by grace it is not now by works, otherwise grace is no more grace. ” (2) Such a life was that of St. Agnes, to whom the same texts fitly apply. For whether we consider her virginity or her martyrdom, or their logical outcome, the worship which she receives in the Christian Church, we find three facts in which there is nothing human, three facts contrary to the ordinary laws of human nature ; three miracles of the moral order, which prove the divinity of Christ and his Church almost as forcibly as the miracles of the physical order recorded in the Bible. I need not ask you, my brethren, to give me your attention this morning, while I briefly examine these three miracles and their consequence. You are the clients and admirers of St. Agnes. Your devotion to her will make amends for my shortcomings. Sweet saint, obtain for me the grace to do justice to thy fame and to the Holy Faith for which thou didst pour out thy virgin blood !

Virginity, my brethren, does not consist in bodily integrity, but in absolute mental purity and the fixed purpose to preserve it. St. Cy-

(1) Cor. xv., 10.

(2) Rom. xiv., 6.