

THE SPIRIT THAT SAVES.

The Bishop of Newport, in the course of his Lenten Pastoral, says: All pastors keenly experience at times the feeling that many of their flock, who seem to be practical Catholics, are strangely distant from Christ. These people attend their Church, make use of the Sacraments, contribute to the offertory, help the schools, and are generally sympathetic with the priest. But their hearts are not fully Catholic, and their religion is deficient in spirituality. Outward indications of this deficiency are not wanting. Some Catholics live in the Faith, but the Faith does not seem to live in them. Their Faith sits on them as a garment, but it does not penetrate the depths of their spirit. It is a profession; it is even a practice; but it is not their life-blood, or the breath of their life. They believe in God's revelations, but not so much in God Himself. They believe in the teachings of Jesus Christ, but do not seem to be drawn to Christ's Person. Their Faith is not to them a precious and absolutely essential possession.

Living, like all of us, in the midst of ceaseless non-Catholic activity, they are too tolerant of religious error. They are not only friendly with non-Catholics, which is right, charitable and useful, but they do not feel as they ought the lamentable misfortune of such non-Catholic friends in their false or inadequate religious views. They are inclined to be very nervous as to what "Protestant will say." They cannot be got to see why the Catholic Church opposes mixed marriages. Sometimes, and even in spite of clear law, they will, on occasion of weddings or the like, go the length of appearing at a non-Catholic service. They are inclined to believe that the anti-Catholic newspapers print, day after day, against the Church, the Holy See, the Bishops, the religious orders. These things tinge their views and warp their sympathy. On the other hand, they are not what is called "devout" or "pious." Prayers and practices which are sanctioned by the Church as helping the heart to get nearer to the God made Man, and to His Blessed Mother and the saints are for the most part strange to them. Sometimes, again, their want of Catholic spirit will show itself in their restlessness, and even anger, when the Church has to speak out against these abuses; in their ignorant impatience of certain restraints, and in their allowing themselves to be carried away by a merely political cry, in things that lie on the borderland where religion and politics touch, and where the true Catholic always puts in the first place religion as interpreted and applied by those who have the Divine commission to teach the flock.

Such are a few of the shortcomings which are too often found among Catholics in non-Catholic countries, and which prove that their Holy Faith is not as deep, as penetrating, and as spiritual as He would desire, who, when He was taken up to Heaven, sent His Divine Spirit to take possession of every heart, and to fill us all with His Heavenly fire. Considerations like these, dear children in Jesus Christ, ought to urge us all, at a season like this Apostolic fast of Lent, to use every means to save our lives from the loss of God's Holy Spirit. For the danger lies here. Two spirits contend without ceasing for our destinies—the spirit of God, who would sanctify and save us, and the spirit of the world, the flesh and the devil, which would wreck us everlastingly. Eden the holy Name of Christ will not save us, unless it reigns in our inmost hearts and in our most personal affection. Every man has faculties and desires, and the power of attention, and ability to resolve and to act. If he uses these gifts on the world alone, and not in the interests of spiritual union with Christ, he is living a dangerous and precarious life on the very edge of mortal sin, perhaps apostasy.

These days of Lent are days of soberness, of recollection, of change of heart. If you followed the Church liturgy, on those Sundays, you would find yourself joining in wailing "Miserere"—listening to the Psalmist and the Prophets as they proclaim life's brief span, and warn unthinking mortals of the passing of irrevocable time—offering up fasting and almsdeeds in the spirit of the Cross—and praying with tears for pardon of the past and a new heart for the future. This is the spirit which saves

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men from the world, and makes their religion a living thing. In order that we may all make a practical attempt to become more spiritual, there is one easy means that presents itself. Indeed, spiritual religion is, in itself easy; if it were difficult, it would not be part of every man's duty. What makes it difficult is the attractiveness of other things, which appeal to our lower self; what the Holy Spirit in the books of Wisdom calls "the fascinations of worldly trifles" ("Wisdom" iv. 12). It is easy enough, when we think of it, to turn the thought to God, and to lift the heart to Him. And it is not too much to say that most men's lives would become spiritualized if they gave an intelligent attention to the duty of daily prayer. Among the fruits of prayer, as explained in a beautiful passage of the great Catechism of the Council of Trent, are mentioned the deepening of faith, the intensifying of Divine love, and the strengthening of our grasp of God's being.

MISSION OF ST. PAUL.

ON TO ROME—"Finally he calls their attention to the civil power which has its centre in Rome. He reminds them of the great truth, which he is longing to proclaim in Rome itself, that all power is from God, that the law of God must rule its exercise, and that obedience must be given to it as to the authority of God. Then he asks them to pray that the day may soon come when he will have the happiness of seeing them and speaking to them the word of life.

"It came three years from that date. But he enters the Eternal City a prisoner in chains. Revisiting his beloved missions in Palestine, he has been seized by the Jews, who drag him before the civil authorities in Jerusalem and demand that he be put to death as his Master had been. Paul alleges his right as a citizen of a Roman municipality, which Tarsus was, and appeals to the court of the Emperor. To Rome then he was sent as Caesar's prisoner.

"If he trembled on entering Athens still more does he tremble on entering the Eternal City, where he knows that the crowning work of his ministry is to be accomplished. As he saw Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, smiling down on Athens from the hill of Acropolis, so he now sees Jupiter, the god of power, looking sternly down on Rome from the height of the Capitol. Under the grasp that power the entire world lies prostrate. The striving of the nations for independence has yielded to the might of the Roman eagles. From the Atlantic Ocean to distant India, from Britain to the heart of Africa, Rome's dominion is without resistance. As at the birth of Christ, the temple of Jaus is still closed and the Pax Romana reigns throughout the world.

PLEADING IN ROME—"Providence gives him time for his work. Nero is so immersed in his pleasures that he is in no hurry to attend to the business of the tribunal. Two whole years Paul waits for his trial; and during that time, although fastened by a chain to a Pretorian guard, he is free to come and go as he will. Everywhere he is welcomed as the messenger of the Lord. Peter is still absent in the East, and all bow unquestionably to the Apostolic authority of Paul. From the little Christian community the fame of his unearthly eloquence spreads among all the serious-minded of the city, and converts to Christ are numbered even among Caesar's household. They who have foreseen the impending ruin of the Empire, and could see nothing but anarchy, beyond, now recognize that Christ Crucified is the wisdom of God and the power of God, and that in him lies the hope of the world's future. "At last he is judged by Nero and

set free, for the tyrant has not yet become a persecutor of the Church. He knows that this is a last opportunity granted him to revisit the scenes of his missionary labors and give his farewell advice and blessing to his children in God. He crowns this sweet, sad pilgrimage by a visit to Jerusalem, the City of God, which he has always loved and honored as his mother. For the last time he kneels in the Temple, which he is well aware is soon to disappear from the earth; and on Calvary, whence the power and the wisdom and the love of Christ Crucified are pouring forth to possess the world; and on Mount Olivet, whence his dear Master had ascended to prepare a place for His faithful disciples.

HIS MARTYRDOM—"Then he finds Peter, and tells him that Nero has begun the persecutions, and decreed death to all Christians, and that they must go together to put courage into the flock of the Lord and show them how to die for Christ. Together they hasten back to Rome. Together they give heart to the terrified Christians, making them invincible against all the tortures that fiendish ingenuity could devise. Together they were thrown into prison, where they still carry on their apostolic work. And together, on the 29th June, in the year 66, they lay down their lives for Him who died for us all. And, says Tertullian, "the blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the Church."

"Thus God has planted in the heart of Rome the seed of the power of Christ Crucified, as He had planted in Athens the seed of His wisdom. Through the cold, hard winter of the following centuries His providence keeps it safe beneath the snows; and when the folly of human pride and power and sophistry has done its worst and has failed, then that seed of Divine wisdom and power shoots up its blessed growth, to cover the earth with its beauty and save the nations with its healing. And till the end of time men shall bless the wondrous Apostle who was God's chief instrument in this mighty work."

THE CURE OF ARS.

The two canonization processes which most interest the Catholic world to-day are those of Joan of Arc and the Cure of Ars. Pius X. has inaugurated his reign by proclaiming the heroic character of the virtues of the former, and last Sunday he advanced the process of beatification of the latter another important step. No servant of God is ever admitted to the honors of the altars until it has been established to the satisfaction of the most rigid tribunal of judges that at least two miracles have been wrought through his or her intercession. The two proposed in the case of the Cure of Ars were truly remarkable. The first of these, says the Decree, published last Sunday, took place in the town of St. Laurent le Macon in the year 1862. Claude Leon Roussat, a boy of six years old, was an epileptic, with no control over his limbs, and deprived by his malady of the power of speech. All human remedies having failed, his parents took him to the tomb of the Cure of Ars, and there began a novena to the Servant of God. At the end of the novena he was completely cured. The second miracle was wrought in the person of a little girl of nine, named Adelaide Joly. Running one day, she dashed her left arm against a wall, and almost immediately a white tumor began to develop on the injured part. She was taken to the Children's Hospital at Lyons. The doctors gave her up as lost, but in her case too, a novena was begun to the Cure of Ars, and every day the strings of his shoes were applied for a moment to the tumor. At the end of the ninth day the tumor had disappeared, leaving behind it scarcely the slightest mark. The Decree proceeds to add that the authenticity of these miracles has been most minutely examined and finally approved. And thus nothing remains in the way of the solemn beatification of the Cure of Ars.—Roman Correspondence of New York Freeman's Journal.

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NOTES. PALM SUNDAY.—To be Palm Sunday. With the exception of that day, the day from which its name is derived, the Holy Week—beginning which the culmination of earth's greatest tragedy, Lent is drawing to a close. An important movement in a climax, the crowning of those weeks of penance and atonement are at hand. Brought to them, in Eastern lands, there is a dark, desolate pathway to travel—it is beyond the Jordan, the streets of Jerusalem, at the slopes of Calvary, at its summit. From that Saturday we will be called to walk, in spirit, along the memorable of all roads. Even that journey is undertaken to follow another path, the day of Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. The fame of Christ's passion and his menial spread to the sides of the Jordan, to the villages and towns, to the streets of Jerusalem, and as the day drew to a close, the Jews and more numerous; the the Jewish priests, the Scribes and Pharisees waxed stronger, the people seemed to have become more and more fervid in their devotion to Him, to honor Him, to see Him. It had been made known given day He was to enter the city. The ears of the people were filled with the stories of the feast of the Centurion's daughter, the widow's son at Naim, the leper made well, of Lazarus, and they sought to honor Him, the Messiah, the King of the Jews. Consequently they were jealous of His coming in Jerusalem to prepare for Him a reception. Thus it is that He, seated upon an ass, palm branch in His hand, preaching the wonderful of the world's greatest miracles. Him along the way, and thousands in number; they and old, male and female, and sinner; and they spread cloaks on the roadway, and the path with branches, and flowers on all sides, and in bearing palms aloft—they sang "Hosanna" of welcome to the Israel. And from every point of vantage spectators of the procession, and they, the palms and joined in the hymn. And it was thus that the God entered Jerusalem, on to a cruel and long preparation. The people knew it not; Apostles were unaware of it; saw in all this exultation and paid him, the grim spectacle. Judas kiss, the mortal agony of the High Priest, the of Pilate, the pillar of the via Dolorosa and the consumption of all upon the of Golgotha, and He was seen beyond the veil of the heart and He knew that those who were applauding that moment would be loud cries of denunciation before would have grown many day. He knew they were creatures pulse, and while they might care in their songs of praise, ed but the breath of adversity turn them to shouts of execration. And He proceeded on that way, neither rejoicing nor quailing at the contemplation of the to soon come; it was the quiet of the Infinite that He displayed.