

Witness

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PASTORAL LETTER

Of His Grace PAUL BRUCHESI, Archbishop of Montreal,

Ordaining a Solemn Triduum in Honor of St John Baptist de la Salle, Founder of the Institute of Brothers of Christian Schools.

PAUL BRUCHESI, by the Grace of God and favor of the Apostolic See, Archbishop of Montreal.

Dear beloved brethren, — The Sovereign Pontiff wished to make of this year of jubilee a year of joy for the Church Triumphant as well as for the Church Militant. Whilst he bestowed more generously upon the earth those treasures of grace and pardon of which he holds the keys, Leo XIII. rejoiced in heaven by proclaiming the sanctity and beatitude of many of the elect.

Amongst this glorious assemblage John Baptist de la Salle, founder of the Institute of the Brothers of Christian Schools, is the saint which especially interests us; first, because his sons are in our midst, perpetuating for more than half a century in our towns and country places the souvenir of his virtues, and the benefits of his life-work; secondly, because he feels proud to have largely contributed to bring about the signal honor of his canonization. You must indeed be aware that one of the two miracles which were required for his canonization took place in our episcopal city, in the parish of the Holy Name of Jesus at Maisonneuve.

One of the members of the community, Brother Nethelmus, suffered from an incurable disease caused by an injury to the spinal column. This malady had reduced him to such a state of weakness that he was unable to walk a single step, or even to move his feet in the smallest way. Thus paralyzed and given over as incurable by the most skillful doctors, the sick man lets himself fall before the image of the founder of the Order. With the ardor of filial confidence, he implores with abundant tears St. John Baptist de la Salle to look with pity upon him, and to assist him. At once a miracle is wrought; the sick man rises, and Brother Nethelmus feels his feet reviving, that strength returns to them, that he has power to move them. He gets up and walks. Supernatural intervention has cured him.

Such is the pronouncement of his physicians, the diocesan authority after a canonical examination, is convinced of the marvelous character of the cure; and finally, the Church, so prudent and full of circumspection, when she pronounces on the authenticity of the two miracles invariably required for the canonization of God's servants, the Church, I say, does not hesitate in this case. By her infallible mouthpiece, the Holy Father, she declares natural and miraculous the cure of Brother Nethelmus.

This event was a source of great honor and rejoicing for Canada, but especially for Montreal. Another miracle having taken place in France, Leo XIII. gave permission to proceed to the canonization of the Blessed John Baptist de la Salle, and it was his wish that this solemn act should take place during the jubilee celebration at Rome.

The 24th of last May was therefore a memorable day for the Institute of the Brothers of Christian Schools. On that day 50,000 Catholics from every part of the world filled the Basilica of St. Peter. Many bishops, prelates and superiors of religious orders were present, accompanying Leo XIII., whose face beamed with heavenly joy in the midst of numberless lights, the blare of silver trumpets, and the acclamations of the multitude.

Suddenly there is silence in the stately edifice. The voice of the Supreme Teacher goes forth amidst the immense crowd trembling with emotion and gratitude; it seems to reach the confines of the earth and the heights of heaven. That word, inspired from above, proclaimed as a saint, the Blessed John Baptist de la Salle; and decrees that each year his memory should be celebrated in the universal Church with pious devotion. The Pontifical decision is hailed by a tremendous shout from 50,000 throats. It is but the acclamation of earth echoing the joyful songs of heaven.

As we were prevented from assisting personally at these festivals, we deputed one of the canons of our chapter to represent us at Rome, as well as the clergy and families of our diocese.

But now that these joyous celebrations have come to an end in Rome, it is our turn to join with the sons of St. John Baptist de la Salle in honoring by public and solemn demonstration the blessed protector, whom the Church has just given us.

The Apostolic See calls upon us to take such a step, in an official document which regulates the order and manner of the solemnity to be given to the saint whose name we bear. We are to have, as well as the solemnity of the feast, a series of religious exercises.

Yes, the work of John Baptist de la Salle was inspired by God. It realizes the most perfect and fruitful practice of that maxim which the Saviour gave His Apostles: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

At the apogee of the great century, at the time when Bossuet was ascribing the world and its confounding heretics to his marvellous eloquence, when Fenelon was composing his masterpieces of classic literature and his sermons so filled with pious unction, whilst both of them were devoting themselves to the education of the mighty ones of the earth, Providence, whose favors are infinite and varied according to the needs of each age, raised up two rivals of these illustrious geniuses in the persons of St. Vincent de Paul and St. John Baptist de la Salle.

By different ways these apostles went down to the people, to the ever numerous throng of the humble and the poor. Our saint was born at Rheims, at the very birthplace of the eldest daughter of the Church. Of both noble and military descent, he received the clerical tonsure at the age of eleven, at sixteen he is named canon, at eighteen he obtains the degree of master of arts, an honor which a few years later receives its complement in the doctorate in theology. At twenty-seven he is ordained priest. His fine qualities, his solid virtues still more than the great name he bears, bring him into prominence. His preaching is so powerful and persuasive that people come from afar to hear him; his piety is so fervent that they come to see him officiate at the altar. But God intended His chosen one neither for the pulpit, nor for the ministry, nor for ecclesiastical dignities.

Accustomed from his childhood to prolonged vigils and fasts and to the most austere practices of humility and secret mortification, the young priest had no other wish than that of God "Let Heaven's voice be heard, and he is ready to obey." Meanwhile, a Christian teacher is sent to Rheims by a noble lady of Normandy, with the mission to open charitable schools. John Baptist de la Salle met him, assisted him by his advice, supported him by his liberality, and became himself inspired by the apostolic grandeur of the work. Harkening to the Divine call, he resolved to become a school master, and he became the humble instrument of God in the foundation of a community devoted to Christian education.

Many obstacles will be cast in his way. He is destined to know all manner of humiliations, to drink unceasingly until his death the bitter chalice of calumny and unjust judgments. He is to endure this long martyrdom publicly at Rheims, at Rouen and at Paris, not only at the hands of the hostile and jealous teachers of the day, but even from his companions and superiors, including some members of his own community.

Nothing discouraged him. Like the Apostles, he was sustained by the grace of God, and that was sufficient. Cast off by his relatives, he left the care of his ancestors, and distributed his patrimony to the poor. Despised and rejected by those who had once honored him, he gave up the office of canon. Just as he seemed to be at the point of beginning to conquer the city, suddenly all was destroyed. With indefatigable zeal he rebuilt these establishments, three successive times at Paris, Rouen and Marseille. Driven from one city, he sought refuge in another. Persecuted, hunted everywhere, deprived of his authority and rejected as a useless creature, he withdrew to a miserable hut adjoining a stable. Nevertheless God blessed him, and rendered his work fruitful, and when death came to end his long life of suffering, the Institute of the Brothers of Christian Schools was definitely founded. In spite of poverty, in spite of so many obstacles and the state of abjection into which the malice of men had thrown him, John Baptist de la Salle had succeeded in finding novices for his community. These novices he had transformed into model religious, and these religious he made unrivalled educators, giving free instruction to the sons of the people in thirty-three houses, one of which was at Rome, at the great centre of Catholicity.

Besides this important work of the primary education of boys, the saint, in order to meet all needs, endowed France with several other pedagogical institutions, of which our century would seek to claim the name. Classes for adults, evening classes for workers and peasants; normal schools for the training of school masters; boarding schools for the

children of the wealthier classes; technical, industrial and professional schools; boarding schools; Sunday schools, all these he provided with a wisdom and foresight that was never found wanting.

Such beloved brethren are the works accomplished by him on whose head the church has placed the crown of sanctity. Where can we find the secret of such power in a man deprived of all human resources and exposed to the liveliest opposition? There is only one source of it all. It was the humility of de la Salle, his piety, austerity, his spirit of mortification and of conformity to the will of Providence that God rewarded by pouring forth His Divine blessing upon all his enterprises.

Let us profit by the lesson; and let us take the resolution, so appropriate in our day, to renounce our easy and sensual manner of life, those habits of pleasure and enjoyment, that paralyze the life of grace within us, and cause such fatal weaknesses in every class of society; and by God's blessing our works like those of the saints, will be fruitful and successful.

The prodigious development of the Institute of the Brothers of Christian Schools furnishes a striking example of this truth. Less than two centuries after the death of their founder, nearly twenty thousand Brothers live, beneath the influence of his spirit, in one thousand five hundred houses, giving instruction throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and America, to four hundred thousand children in more than two thousand schools. And since their establishment in Montreal, in 1837, on the invitation of Bishop Lartigue, and at the request of the Sulpician Fathers, they have multiplied, and have founded within our national territory and in the neighboring republic one hundred and sixty schools attended by forty-five thousand pupils. In our diocese alone, they have already the care of the education of twenty houses, with a school population of ten thousand.

The good work the Brothers of the Christian Schools have done in so many different countries, the good wrought rectly by them, not to speak of the many religious communities of men and women that have followed their example, it would be difficult to relate in such a way as to do them full and entire justice.

All the nations of the earth owe them those skilful methods of teaching that are to-day in use in every grade of primary education. For if de la Salle was not the originator of popular and free schools, it is at least he, the fact is established historically, that gave them their definiteness, respect and love of religion as their true teachers, a reasonable system, solid and complete programmes sufficiently varied to answer all legitimate aspirations, and extensive enough to be adaptable to the exigencies of modern times. There is no fundamental or practical idea regarding education that the holy founder did not reveal to his sons.

But what is most to be admired, and what has contributed so much to the preservation of the faith amongst nations disturbed by the spirit of impiety and infidelity, is the solid foundation upon which he built the education of youth. He had foreseen that to cultivate the intellect whilst neglecting the heart, to fill the mind with knowledge without at the same time enlightening it with the light of faith, was a radically false system, and could never produce either Christians or men, so that he placed the knowledge, respect and love of religion as the basis of his incomparable "conduite des écoles." The saint was right; to vanish the religious idea from the education of children or to give it a secondary place, is not only to prepare for society generations of unbelievers, but it is also, by an inevitable consequence, to train up citizens devoid of genuine nobility of character, devoid of moral sentiment. Such has been the result attained by those utopists or those wicked men, who, whilst borrowing from de la Salle the details of the material and pedagogical organization of schools, have neglected the solid foundation, and tried to build instead upon the shifting sands of religious indifference or purely human morality.

You have scarcely known, beloved brethren, the poisonous fruits of so perverse a system; but the spirit of evil tries to penetrate everywhere. The number of his devices is infinite, and his artifices are deceitful.

Christian parents, be then upon your guard. In our midst you have nothing to fear. Brothers and Sisters, and regular teachers, all those that exercise the noble functions of education of your children, know the value of a soul, and are worthy of your confidence. We are happy when we visit the different parishes

of our diocese to witness the consolating proofs of this. But do not forget that, for Catholic children we need Catholic schools, and we must have them even at the sacrifice of a little human respect, of a certain pecuniary loss, or even if it be necessary sometimes to bear heavy burdens of temporal nature.

Let us ask this grace of the admirable saint, whom the Church proposes to our veneration. Fathers and mothers, ask of him those graces which you need to fulfil worthily your dear duties; make a practice of invoking his assistance every day at evening prayer in your families. Make this true disciple of the Gospel known to your children at an early age. If you find in them any mark of a religious vocation, any inclination for the life of sacrifice lived in teaching communities, cultivate those germs with loving care, and when the child hears God's call, give him generously to God. No greater blessing could come upon your families.

Who great reason we should have to rejoice, beloved brethren, if the canonization of John Baptist de la Salle became for our diocese the signal for the multiplication of priestly and religious vocations, for a strengthening of Christian life in the family circle, and for the training of children and youth, according to principles more in keeping with the law of the Gospel. It is through the intercession of St. John Baptist de la Salle that we hope for those graces that should make us a strong and powerful race.

For these reasons, after beseeching God's Holy Name, and conferring with our venerable brethren the canons of our Cathedral Church, we have ordained and do ordain the following:

1.—According to the terms of a decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, dated the 24th of July, 1899, and of an indult of June 13th, 1900, granted to the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, the last three days of the month of September will be devoted, throughout the diocese, to the special veneration of St. John Baptist de la Salle, and to returning thanks to God for his canonization.

2.—For this reason the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and other ecclesiastical functions may take place in all churches and public chapels, if circumstances permit. We urge the faithful and especially school children to offer special prayers during these three days, and we invite them to approach the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist.

3.—In our episcopal city a triduum of solemn thanksgiving will be celebrated, the exercises taking place successively at Notre Dame, St. Patrick's, and the Cathedral. The ceremonies of the first two days, at Notre Dame and at St. Patrick's, will begin at four o'clock in the afternoon, and will consist of Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, preceded by a panegyric of St. John Baptist de la Salle.

At Notre Dame, Friday, September 28th, all the pupils of the Brothers' Schools will assist with their masters, the children of the other boys' schools of the city, with their masters, are also invited.

The exercises at St. Patrick's, on Saturday, September 29th, are especially intended for English-speaking boys. Sunday, September 30th, we will sing ourselves at the Cathedral, at ten o'clock, a pontifical Mass; all the Brothers of the Christian Schools will be present. The sermon will be preached by a Bishop of our ecclesiastical province, and the ceremonies of the triduum will be closed by the singing of the "Te Deum," with the prayers "Pro gratiarum actione."

4.—By special privilege granted to the Brothers, similar functions will be held in the Chapels of Mount de la Salle and Mount St. Louis.

5.—We also authorize similar ceremonies in this public triduum in every parish, outside the city, where there is a house of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. There will be a Mass for this special purpose in such parishes on Friday and Saturday, and on Sunday solemn benediction of the Blessed Sacrament preceded by a sermon, and followed by the "Te Deum," as already mentioned.

Our present letter will be read in all the churches, where there are public offices, and in chapter in all religious communities the first Sunday after its reception.

Given at Montreal, under our hand and seal, and the signature of our Chancellor this 4th September, 1900.

PAUL, Archbishop of Montreal, EMILE ROY, Pfr., Secretary.

IRISH VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION.

The Irishmen of the great commercial city of Scotland—Glasgow—have always been noted for their sterling qualities of head and heart. Loyal and true to the land of their birth, they have yet invariably shown themselves as possessing that same spirit of loyalty to the Crown which Englishmen are so justly proud. The latest undertaking on the part of the Irishmen resident in Glasgow is the raising of a regiment of volunteers, membership in which will be strictly limited to persons born in Ireland and their direct descendants. Already we have two excellent corps of Irish volunteers in Great Britain—the London Irish and the Liverpool Irish. Now we shall

also have the Glasgow Irish. The movement, we are told, is being taken up very warmly, and as Glasgow boasts of a population of at least 100,000 Irish, there ought not to be much difficulty in raising the requisite number of recruits. We wish this undertaking every possible success, and we trust the day is not far distant when we shall see the volunteer movement in full working order in every part of Ireland itself. Why should not Dublin, Cork, Belfast, Limerick, Galway, Waterford, and Wexford have their battalions of volunteers? It is an insult to the loyalty of Irishmen at home that they should be denied the privilege which is fully granted them in England and Scotland.—London Universe.

CARDINAL GIBBONS ON CAPITAL AND LABOR.

I say labor contributes to the prosperity of the country, and whatever conduces to a nation's welfare is most worthy of commendation. It is not the office or occupation that dignifies the man, but it is the man that dignifies the office. "Honor and shame from no condition rise; Act well your part—there all the honor lies."

Cincinnatus lent dignity to agriculture by working at the plow! Caligula, by an infamous life, degraded his crown and imperal purple. Like the stagnant pool, breeds dirt, a juster and more beautiful tribute of praise to the genius of our country than when he wrote in 1835, that every honest occupation in the United States was honorable.

A life of patient industry is sure to be blessed with a competence, if it is not crowned with an abundant remuneration. The great majority of our leading men of wealth are indebted for their fortunes to their own untiring industry. Take an active, personal, conscientious interest in the business of your employer. Be as much concerned about its prosperity as if it were your own.

Foster habits of economy and self-denial. No matter how modest your income may be, always live under it. You will thus protect your liberty and business integrity, and guard yourself against the slavery and humiliation of debt, which is too often the precursor and the incentive to commercial dishonor.

While honestly striving to better your condition, be content with your station in life, and do not yield to an inordinate desire of abandoning your present occupation for what is popularly regarded as a more attractive avocation. Remember that while the learned professions are overcrowded, there is always a demand for skilled and unskilled labor, and that it is far better to succeed in mechanical or manual work than to fail in professional life.

Be not over eager to amass wealth, for they who are anxious "to become rich fall into temptations and into snares of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires which draw men into destruction and perdition."

A feverish ambition to accumulate a fortune, which may be called our national distemper is incompatible with peace of mind. Moderate means with a contented spirit are preferable to millions without it.

Sobriety will be an angel of tranquility and comfort to yourself and family. While this virtue should be cultivated by all men, it ought to be especially cherished by the laboring class, who are so much exposed to the opposite vice. Intemperance has brought more desolation to homes than famine or the sword, and is a more unrelenting tyrant than the grasping monopolist.—Cardinal Gibbons in the New York Journal.

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven Upon the place beneath; it is twice blessed; It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes; 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes The throned monarch better than his crown.

While applauding the tender feelings and magnanimity of many capitalists, I am constrained in the interests of truth, humanity and religion to protest against the heartless conduct of others whose number, for the honor of our country, is, I hope, comparatively small.

No friend of his race can contemplate without painful emotions those heartless monopolists exhibiting a grasping avarice which has dried up every sentiment of sympathy, and a sordid selfishness which is deaf to the cries of distress. Their sole aim is to realize large dividends without regard to the paramount claims of justice and Christian charity. These trusts and monopolies, like the car of Juggernaut, crush every obstacle that stands in their way. They endeavor, not always, it is alleged, without success, to corrupt our National and State Legislatures and municipal councils. They are so intolerant of honest rivalry as to use unlawful means in driving from the market all competing industries. They compel their operatives to work for starvation wages, especially in mining districts and factories, where protests have but a feeble echo, and are easily stifled by intimidation.

In many places the corporations are said to have the monopoly of stores of supply, where exorbitant prices are charged for the necessities of life; bills are contracted which the workmen are unable to pay from their scanty wages, and their forced insolvency places them entirely at the mercy of their task masters.

To such Shylocks may well be applied the words of the Apostle: "Go to, now, ye rich men; weep and howl for your miseries which shall come upon you. * * * You have stored up to yourselves wrath against the last days. Behold the hire of the laborers, * * * which by fraud hath

been kept back by you, crieth, and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the God of Sabbath."

How forcibly this language applies now to our own country, and how earnestly the warning should be heeded by the constituted authorities! The supreme law of the land should be vindicated and enforced, and ample protection should be afforded to legitimate competing corporations, as well as to the laboring classes against unscrupulous monopolies.

But if labor organizations have rights to be vindicated and grievances to be redressed it is manifest that they have also sacred obligations to be fulfilled and dangers to guard against.

They should exercise unceasing vigilance in securing their body from the control of designing demagogues who would make it subservient to their own selfish ends, or convert it into a political engine. They should also be jealous of the reputation and good name of the rank and file of the society as well as of its chosen leaders. For while the organization is ennobled and commands the respect of the public by the moral and civic virtues of its members, the scandalous and unworthy conduct of even a few of them is apt to bring reproach on the whole body, and to excite the distrust of the community.

Activity is the law of all intellectual and animal life. The more you live in conformity to that law, the happier you will be. An active life, like the purling rivulet is an unfailing source of gladness, health and contentment, while an indolent life, like the stagnant pool, breeds dirt, content, disease and death. No man enjoys with a keener relish the night's repose and the Sunday and holiday rest than the son of toil.

A life of patient industry is sure to be blessed with a competence, if it is not crowned with an abundant remuneration. The great majority of our leading men of wealth are indebted for their fortunes to their own untiring industry. Take an active, personal, conscientious interest in the business of your employer. Be as much concerned about its prosperity as if it were your own.

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CATHOLICITY IN ENGLAND.

According to exchanges received this week the new and imposing cathedral at Westminster will be solemnly opened and dedicated on the 29th of June next. Already the huge sum of \$850,000 has been spent on bricks and mortar, and, at the very least, a similar sum will be needed for internal decoration. What a magnificent edifice the cathedral is likely to be may be gathered from the fact that its length will be 360 feet, its width 156 feet. The nave alone will be 117 feet high and 60 feet wide, while the top of the cross on the belfry will be 285 feet above the ground level. The "Univers" says: "With such a magnificent church at our disposal Catholics will be able to see the full glory of the Church's ritual, the beauty of which is known only to a few. With the opening of the new cathedral the Catholic cause in England should receive a fresh impetus. Englishmen and women coming to London from all parts of the country will naturally feel prompted to pay a visit to the cathedral, in which they will find not before them the symbols and the ceremonies of that faith to which their forefathers clung with such tenacity for upwards of a thousand years, and which enriched this country with numberless places of public worship—dedicated to God, our Lady, and God's saints, which are probably unsurpassed by those of any other country in Europe."