

The Catholic Record

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advanced High Churches in the neighborhood and has heard it boldly stated in their pulpits that the Mass is a sacrifice, and propitiatory on behalf of the living and the dead.

The Anglican student's next step will probably be to go to service at a Roman Catholic church. He is impressed by the solemn ritual, by the general air of quiet devotion, by the clear presentation of doctrines in the pulpit and the absence of "doctrinal diplomacy."

And then the theological student enters the ministry of the Anglican Church. He belongs to the advanced school, with pronouncedly Roman sympathies. He joins the English Church union and the confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament. He has "Daily Communion," and prays for the dead. He is attracted by the devotion of Catholics to the Holy Mother of God.

Where then is this central infallible authority? asks the coming convert. Who can answer so clearly as our Lord Himself? What He says on the character of His Church is found in the gospel of St. Matthew, chapter 16, verses 18 and 19.

The above words of our Lord show that the Church founded by Christ is the Church of which St. Peter was first vicar of Christ on earth, the Church which received the faith as delivered to the saints—the Holy Catholic Church. The coming convert sees, in the light of history, that the pre-reformation Church in England acknowledged the papal supremacy and taught the same doctrines as are taught by the Roman Catholic Church to-day.

THE REASON OF THE ROSARY IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Among the devotions of the Catholic Church that perplex a non-Catholic is the rosary. The beads, so familiar and full of pious association to a Catholic, to a non-Catholic are usually a stumbling-block. Why should grown up people carry beads? he asks, and why should the "Hail Mary" be repeated ten times, in five different decades, separated by a "Gloria be to the Father," and the Lord's Prayer? "What is the meaning of this strange service?" asks the non-Catholic.

The first traces of the use of beads for pious purposes are as early as

ancient Nineveh and are recorded among the solitaries of Egypt, who lived in the first centuries of Christianity. There are one hundred and fifty psalms in the psalter, and these were at one time recited by the monks daily. Those of them who did not say the one hundred and fifty psalms, said as many Our Fathers, and made use of little pebbles or beads to count the number of prayers.

The devotion of the Rosary was first of all intended to stem a dangerous movement against the Church of Christ. Each century has seen some attack upon the Catholic Church. Each attack has been repelled by the divinely guided Church. Agnosticism, Arianism, Nestorianism, Eutychianism, and other systems of error have arisen and passed into obscurity or protean impotence before the light of God's truth.

While the struggle between modern democracy and over-weening nationalism is being waged in Europe night and day with a spirit that can only be changed by vast disaster or by the grace of God, prayers for the dawn of peace are being offered by Christians throughout the world. The power of prayer is witnessed by experience and by credible historical evidence.

So in the present war, we can fervently pray that God will defend us from all hostile powers that would rob our land of liberty. And we may be sure that if it be good for us and for our salvation, He will guard the British Empire and will grant her many years of usefulness as a defender of liberty and a champion of the oppressed.

"But why pray at all?" some sceptic may ask. Does not God know from all eternity, what He intends to do; how then can our prayers effect His purpose? St. Thomas Aquinas, that great doctor of the Church, anticipated this difficulty when he declared that God has indeed decreed all things, from eternity, but in His disposition of the present order of affairs, foresaw our prayers, and was able so to dispose second causes that effects in harmony with our petitions might be produced at the proper time.

So runs the story, and the belief that St. Dominic was the author and institutor of this devotion is authorized by the fact that different Supreme Pontiffs have so declared in various passages of their apostolic letters, among which may be cited those of Pope Leo XIII., which, while commending this devotion to the faithful in the most earnest terms, assume the institution of the Rosary by St. Dominic to be a fact historically established.

WHY PIOUS CATHOLICS SEEK INDULGENCES

Among the puzzling problems of the Catholic Church for an outsider is the belief in Indulgences. First of all, there is the word itself, indulgence, the meaning of which in modern English is not the same as the indulgence to which the belief of the Church refers. It is hardly necessary in those days of comparative enlightenment to state that an indulgence certainly does not mean a permission to commit sin, as some uninformed people have supposed.

There are two kinds of actual sin, called also personal sins, in opposition to original sin—mortal sin and venial sin. The punishment due to mortal sin is eternal. God, in His infinite mercy, has furnished man with one means of delivering himself from the abyss of sin into which he may have fallen, viz., the sacrament of penance.

The severe canonical penances which the Church in former ages prescribed to penitent sinners were founded upon this truth. Three, seven, ten, fifteen and twenty years' fast on bread and water was prescribed as penance, says Mgr. Rouvier, for one single sin.

If to prevent sinners from being disheartened, the Church treats them nowadays with greater mildness, she does not consider them less culpable, or their sins less deserving of punishment; the penalty to be undergone remains the same. It may, however, be cancelled by prayer, fasting, almsdeeds and other supernatural good works; but they who die without having made full satisfaction, will be much more severely punished in the cleansing fire of purgatory.

THE SITUATION IN IRELAND In this day of the Empire's testing, when the whole-hearted co-operation of all creeds and classes is so urgently needed, if we are to successfully meet and vanquish the well prepared forces of a powerful and unscrupulous enemy, anything that makes for sectionalism or division should be anathema.

OUR METHODIST contemporary, The Christian Guardian, is much concerned over a reported forthcoming tour of the notorious "Pastor" Russell through several Ontario towns and cities, and urges that ministers should "put their congregations on guard against his teachings."

A MOMENT OF retrospection will make it evident that The Guardian's anxiety is not altogether groundless. To normal minds Russell's methods, even more than his extravagances, are their own condemnation and present no allurements to those well-instructed in the fundamentals of revealed religion.

THE future will have a serious tale to tell when he runs over the long list of apparently partizan actions by the War Office in Ireland during the past ten months—how the Carsonites were allowed to raise an 'Ulster Division' with an Ulster badge, while neither of the two divisions raised in Nationalist Ireland (the 10th and 16th) was allowed to be called an 'Irish Division,' or have any corresponding distinction: how the Protestant Universities of Belfast and Trinity College, Dublin, were allowed to have officers' training corps, while the Irish National University, which is Catholic and Nationalist, was forbidden to have one.

HOW PRAYER MAY SPEED THE DAWN OF PEACE

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