

St. Joseph's—Old and New.

Gratefully inscribed to Father William, O. S. F., with the esteem of the author. Across the span of forty years, our hearts reach forth in joy and tears to memories bright as hopes new-born...

CHATHAM'S GREAT DAY.

OPENING OF ANOTHER GRAND EDIFICE IN THE DIOCESE OF LONDON.

St. Joseph's Church Solemnly Dedicated by His Lordship Bishop Walsh.

Specially reported for the CATHOLIC RECORD

On Sunday last the weather was not of the kind to cheer those who are engaged in the carrying out of a great demonstration. A noble provision had been made by the good Franciscan Fathers, aided by an energetic and earnest committee of lay gentlemen, to render the opening of the magnificent Church of St. Joseph, Chatham, a success in every regard worthy of the great occasion.

This grand church is pure Roman in architecture, 74 feet in width by 190 feet in length, width of transept 110 feet, height of towers 175 feet, with clerestory and side roofs and 62 windows. The interior height will be 70 feet, central nave and two aisles. On each side of the nave will be eleven stone columns two feet in diameter tapered, and 20 feet high with bases and caps.

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The ceremony of dedication was commenced and carried out in the usual manner prescribed in the Roman Ritual. After the dedicatory ceremonies His Lordship proceeded to occupy the Episcopal throne, His Grace Archbishop Lynch occupying a prominent seat on the Epistle side of the sanctuary, assisted by Fathers Flannery and Roman as deacons of honor.

BISHOP WALSH'S SERMON.

"Truly this is no other but the House of God and the gate of Heaven." (Gen. xxviii, 17)

MAY I PLEASE YOUR GRACE—DEAREST BRETHREN—These words were spoken by the holy patriarch Jacob on awakening from a vision which God had vouchsafed to him. In that vision he saw a mystic ladder reaching from earth to heaven, and on that ladder angels ascending and descending, and when the patriarch awoke from his vision he exclaimed, "Truly this is an awful place; it is no other but the House of God and the Gate of Heaven."

You have therefore done a great work, because you have built a house for God. You have built a house not for the wants of the perishable body but for the higher needs and necessities of the imperishable soul. It is true dearest brethren, that God does not stand in need of material temples. The whole material creation might be considered a vast Cathedral raised to the honor and the worship of God—the name of God the creator is written across the universe in letters more luminous than the stars, hence the Psalmist exclaimed, "The heavens announce the glory of God and the firmament proclaims the works of His hands."

In the mountains and in the streams and rivers and oceans, and on the blue firmament of heaven we trace the handiwork of God. We see it reflected in all the glories of nature. And this great God fills this temple of the universe with the majesty of His presence; he is everywhere; he fills the infinitude of space, he is present to all things existing, and hence, in the words of the Psalmist we may exclaim: "Whether our Lord shall I go from thy presence, or whether shall I flee from thy face? If I ascend into heaven thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there, Lord, thy hand shall lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."



THE NEW ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH, CHATHAM, ONT.

voice of God was heard above the temple. God was present there and gave the Ten Commandments to Moses, and when Moses came down his face shone with the reflected light of the presence of God upon it. And again, in the Ark of the Covenant, which the Jews had amongst them there was the special Mercy Seat of God's presence. And again in the temple. When God commanded Solomon to build the temple he declared, "My name shall be there and my eyes and my heart shall be there always."

You have therefore done a great work, because you have built a house for God. You have built a house not for the wants of the perishable body but for the higher needs and necessities of the imperishable soul. It is true dearest brethren, that God does not stand in need of material temples. The whole material creation might be considered a vast Cathedral raised to the honor and the worship of God—the name of God the creator is written across the universe in letters more luminous than the stars, hence the Psalmist exclaimed, "The heavens announce the glory of God and the firmament proclaims the works of His hands."

Now, my dear brethren, this is the consideration that makes the Catholic Church more holy, more glorious and more dear to the heart than the most magnificent temples of antiquity. The Catholic Church is where Jesus, our God and Redeemer, renews every day the awful sacrifice of Calvary for our salvation and sanctification. It is the abiding place of His Eucharistic Presence, His mercy seat on earth and the place where the ordinance of His religion are administered.

blissings which we need; it is offered up to apply to our souls the merits of that great atonement which blotted out the handwriting of death that was against us, and purchased us with a great price. The holy Mass is certainly the most dread and august mystery in our holy religion. The sacrifices of the old law were but figures and shadows of the good things to come; the holy sacrifice of the Mass is a most blessed and merciful reality. When we consider the infinite value of the Victim offered, the unapproachable and essential holiness of Jesus Christ, the high priest who offers it; the infinite honor and glory it gives to God; the untold and inestimable blessings it communicates to the souls in Purgatory, we can only bow down in humblest adoration before God, and earnestly thank Him for His infinite goodness for having given His Church this great and sublime sacrifice and exclaim in a transport of love and wonder with St. Paul, "Oh the depths of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God. How incomprehensible are His judgments and unsearchable His ways." (Romans xi, 33)

The Catholic church is for us the house of God and the gate of heaven, because it is there, principally and usually, the great ordinances administered by Christ for our salvation and sanctification, are carried out. Christ perpetually lives and works in the Catholic temple for our salvation. In the sacraments administered therein He constantly exercises the office of our redeemer. In baptism He receives children into His holy communion, and incorporates them into His mystical body. In confirmation He strengthens and equips them for the Christian conflict. In penance He pardons the repentant sinner and restores the prodigal son back again into his Father's house. In the Eucharist He feeds the weary pilgrims of the world, the travellers through the desert of life, with the bread of Heaven, and gives them strength to reach the promised land. In matrimony He blesses and sanctifies the nuptial union, and consecrates the human society. In holy orders He ordains priests, blesses and sanctifies them and appoints them His ambassadors and the dispensers of His mysteries of grace. Into the church the poor dead body is brought by loving hands, and the holy sacrifice is offered up for the repose of the soul that is gone, and the Requiem and the Libera ascend in plaintive accents before God, pleading for pity and pardon and the last offices of religious respect and of Christian charity are performed for it ere it is committed to the keeping of the grave.

Thus in all the relations of our spiritual life, in all the great events that make epochs in our history, in our joys and in our sorrows, the Catholic Church is for us the house of God, the gate of heaven and the soul's earthly paradise. Now it is the conviction that the Catholic temple is the house of God and the gate of heaven, that it is the home of the Blessed Sacrament, the place where the great saving ordinances of the Christian religion are administered, the holy place where those fountains of the Saviour, the holy sacraments, send abroad the waters of life for the spiritual regeneration and salvation of man, and that it contains the altar on which the august sacrifice of the mass is offered up for the living and the dead. This is the conviction, we repeat that in every age has induced Catholics to make the greatest sacrifices in building and beautifying churches, and in showing their love for the beauty of God's house and the place where His glory dwelleth. St. John in the Apocalypse tells us

that he beheld and he heard "the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures and the Ancients; and the number of them was thousands of thousands, saying in a loud voice: Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and benediction: And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and the things that therein I heard all saying: To Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb benediction, and honor, and glory, and power for ever and ever." (Apoc. v. 11, 12, 13) Now if all living creatures both in heaven and on earth and sea are represented by the inspired writer as occupying in one grand chorus like the voice of many waters the praises of the Son of God—the immortal Lamb that was slain in sacrifice for the sins of mankind—and in offering Him honor and power and glory, is it any wonder that the Christian Church should imitate this heavenly example and should wish to combine and unite all that is beautiful in nature and in art to give honor and glory and homage to Christ the Lamb of God offering Himself in sacrifice upon her altar, and that is what the Church, imitating the example of Heaven and inspired by faith and inflamed by love, has ever sought to do. She has summoned all the material creation to contribute its choicest gifts to the service of the altar and in honor of the Holy Sacrifice—the flowers of the fields and the blossoms of the trees, the fragrant sap of the olive, the wax of bees, the oil of olives, the work of the silk worm, the juice of the grape, gold and silver and precious stones, gems from the ocean, and marble from the bowels of the earth, the choicest woods of the forest—all the most beautiful and most precious gifts of nature are pressed into her service and made to give honor and glory to the Lamb that was slain—the Holy Sacrifice. But not alone is the material creation made subsidiary to her purpose in this respect, but all the greatest gifts of human genius; all that is good and beautiful and great and glorious in the products of the human mind have been employed by her for this great and holy work. Poetry, sculpture, architecture, painting and music have been inspired by her, have been perfected and sublimated and immortalized by her, that they might, like willing servants, be worthy to minister to the altar and to do honor to the great Eucharistic Sacrifice. The Church that christianized and civilized the world, created new types of beauty in all things which she employed in her service. This is markedly the case with architecture. Pagan architecture, whether Greek or Roman, was beautiful and perfect of its kind, but it was of the earth, earthly. Its lines were horizontal and not perpendicular, as if the men who invented it never raised their eyes toward heaven. It hugged the earth and weighed and pressed upon it. In its heavy solidity, its perfect symmetry, the precision of its lines and the harmony of its proportions it satisfied the eye and was but the expression of earthly contentment, of satisfaction with earthly well-being and happiness, and of rest and repose in the enjoyment of the visible material world and its interests. The same is true of Egyptian architecture. The imperishable pyramids were built by men who sought to make this world a permanent home. And the sphinx with its stony gaze has been looking for centuries in expectancy into the mysterious desert, waiting for some one who will never come. That was the type of Paganism, with its materialized promises. If it had been made by Christian eyes, as if the men who turned upwards, as David said, "I will raise my eyes to the mountains, whence help will come to me." But Christian architecture is Christian thought built in brick and stone. Its lines are perpendicular and pointing heavenwards. It seems impatient of the earth and hardly presses upon it. Its lofty towers and spires that lose themselves in the air, its clustered columns and arched shafts and pointed arches and vaulted roofs, seem to fly upwards, and despising the earth, which they barely touch seem to be in flight to their home in another world. They preach detachment from and contempt of the world. They are the yearnings, aspirations and immortal hopes of the Christian soul. Gothic churches are built in the form of a cross, "The creative principle of science and the most fruitful type of art," and because from the sacrifice of the cross are derived all the merits and graces and spiritual treasures of the worship and ordinances for which the Christian temple is built. The interior of the church speaks eloquently of its sacred purposes. All its lines converge to the altar where Jesus abides in love and mercy for us, and where He immolates Himself in a mystic manner for His glory and our salvation. The awesome silence that pervades the structure and the deep hush remind the soul that God alone is to be thought of here, and the world with its activities and distractions must be left out at the portals. The dim religious light speaks of the sacred mysteries which are dark to reason but visible to the eyes of faith. Saints and angels are there in painting and sculpture leading us to virtue and holiness by holy example and saintly lives. Stained glass windows are there that in their various colors remind us of the heavenly Jerusalem, with the varied sheen of the gems and pearls and other precious stones that make its walls and gates and pave its streets. In fact everything in the Catholic temple speaks of God, of heaven, of our immortal hopes and eternal destinies. The very stones seem to breathe of faith and hope and love until the whole structure seems to be alive and conscious of the sacredness of its purpose and the heavenly objects which it is designed to subserve and promote. The medieval cathedrals of Europe stand for all time unapproachable in beauty, in grace, in harmony and perfection. They are the despair of modern times and the glory of the Catholic Church. They have been very happily described as "frozen music" and are, as it were, most instructive and eloquent treatises on sacred liturgy and hagiology and ascetic and dogmatic theol-

ogy written in stone by Christian generations, illumined by faith, inflamed by love and inspired by genius. But not only did our Catholic forefathers—the men of the ages of faith—offer their gifts and lavish their means in the construction and adornment of the house of God, but they gave their time, a, d, as it were, expended their lives in the great and holy work. Old and young, gentle and simple, the monk and the layman, the prince and the laborer, the baron and his retainer, the high-born dame and the peasant woman, all worked gratuitously for years in the construction of their churches. It was to them a labor of faith and love undertaken for Christ's dear sake, for the love of His blessed mother, and for the salvation of their souls.

Such was the faith, such the motives that wrought those miracles in stone— that inspired those materialized dreams of beauty, the churches and cathedrals of the middle ages. And indeed, dearly beloved brethren, have we not witnessed the operation of a like faith and kindred motives on this continent in modern times, and the marvels which they have wrought! In this country we had no royal convert like a Constantine, or a Clovis, to build our churches, no government reached out its arm to help in their glory and to hard worked sons of toil the glory and the merits of raising temples to the God of their fathers have been reserved. The poor-laboring men who dug our canals and built our railroads, and hewed down our forests, laid also the foundations of our dioceses and of our churches. The alms of the poor, the wages of the mechanic, the scanty earnings of the servant maids, the tarty gains of the farmer and the savings of the shopkeeper, these were the means that built our churches in our cities, towns and villages, in the prairies of the west, amid the half felled forests, and along the shores of our great lakes and rivers, and as long as these churches shall stand, as long as their open doors will invite the weary and heavily burdened to seek refreshment of soul within their precincts, as long as the cross shall gleam from the steeple, an emblem of the everlasting covenant of divine mercy and pardon between the Redeemer and the redeemed, so long shall they be enduring monuments of the faith and hope and charity of the apostolic people who planted the mustard seed of the Catholic faith in this country, and watered it with their sweat and tears until it has grown up into a mighty tree overshadowing the whole land.

Now, my dear brethren of Chatham, you have had a share in this meritorious work. You have helped to build this great temple to God. It is not yet completed—it is not yet perfected—but in its incomplete state it gives us a correct idea of what it will be in its finished beauty and perfection. You have done a great work. I congratulate you, priests, who have been virtuous in conducting to obtain means to build this church. I congratulate you, the people—I congratulate our separated brethren, who were kind and gave a helping hand to their fellow citizens in raising this temple to God. In doing that they have done a great work. In a material sense, they have helped to ornament their town—they have helped to make it a place attractive to the stranger and a honor to the town and to the citizens. And for my part, when I go into a strange town or village, and see a wretched, broken church or churches, I conceive the least estimate of the public spirit and religious character of the people of the village. It shows the broken condition of things. But when we see great churches raised to God and to religion, we conceive a high estimate of the citizens of that village, and we say that not only are they intelligent and worthy citizens, but they are Christian men and Christian women, that want to serve God and to save their souls. Oh may God in His infinite mercy bless all with His ample benediction who have a share in the raising of this church to His honor. Remember, my dear brethren, that when the prophet Isaiah visited the poor widow and par took of one little crumb of oil, that will never afterwards failed during the famine time, because she had entertained the prophet. Here, then, is rewarded the woman that helped the prophet, how much more will He do for the men who have helped to build a house to the honor and glory of the Lord and the prophet. Oh, may God in His infinite mercy bless you all—may He bless you with His ample benediction. Every stone in this church will be a prayer for you to God—every prayer uttered here will have reward for you in heaven—every sacrifice offered up here will plead with you to God, with the power of the precious blood, every poor sinner converted to God here will plead for you in heaven, who helped to build a house for the purpose of religion, and when you are dead and gone this material temple will be a requiem to your souls—this material temple will stand up in praise before God for you and will be to you joy in heaven for all eternity. This is the blessing I wish you all.

At half past seven o'clock Vespers and Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament were given. Another very large congregation filled the church on this occasion notwithstanding the unfavorable weather. After the Magnificat His Grace Archbishop Lynch ascended the pulpit and preached a most able, impressive and instructive discourse.

ARCHBISHOP LYNCH'S SERMON.

His Grace took for his text the words: "What is truth?" This question was asked by Pilot of Jesus as he stood before him. Pilot did not wait for the answer; and men's minds are troubled to-day about truth; but they do not endeavor to find the truth where it is to be found, for our Lord said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." We find, therefore, all truth in the words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, communicated to the apostles by often tradition as well as by writings which are called the new

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