

The Primary Ideal of the Christian Ministry

By The DEAN OF COLUMBIA

[A sermon preached in Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria, Sunday, February 6, 1911, on the occasion of the installation of the Rev. A. Silva White, M.A., Rector of Nanaimo, as Canon.]

St. Mark III. 14: And Jesus ordained twelve that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth.

One of the most needful things at the present time for us all, whether clergy or laity, is that we should have a clear, definite idea of the aim and object for which the Christian ministry was instituted and appointed by Our Blessed Lord.

The modern idea of the Christian ministry lays stress almost entirely upon its active side. In the opinion of both laymen and clergymen the ideal parish priest must be a man of great and sustained activity. If he does his duty he must be busy from morning until night. Busy in study reading and acquiring information which he must pass on to his people, busy visiting, busy organizing, busy with clubs, guilds and societies, busy with boys' scouts and boys' brigades, busy preaching, busy lecturing, busy with a hundred and one details of modern parochial life; and when he has done all, then he is pronounced by his brethren of the clergy and by his people to be an ideal parish priest.

Not for one moment do I pretend that it should be otherwise. The rector or clergyman of today must, if he be faithful, perform all the above and many like duties, for Jesus did and does call unto Himself men and ordain them in order that He might and may send them forth to work.

But having said this, I want to call your attention to the fact that after all this was not the primary or the chief purpose for which the ministry was instituted by Christ.

It is not for this purpose that Our Lord

primarily and chiefly calls men, and has called them year by year, and added them to the ranks of His ordained ministers, who stretch back link by link to the days of the apostles, and through the apostles to that day when He went up into a mountain and called unto Him whom He would, and they came unto Him and He ordained twelve that they might be with Him.

"That they might be with Him," here we have the primary and chief purpose stated for which Christ has appointed and does appoint divers orders of ministers in His Church.

They are ordained to be with Him. The ideal priest is and must be, chiefly and above all things, a man of God. He will not be inactive, but he will not be active at the expense of forgetting that his ordination calls him chiefly, primarily to a life of prayer, meditation and communion with God; he will not be forgetful that he must not, dare not, act until he has gained the power to act by being frequently day by day alone with Jesus. Perhaps an older generation of clergy than ourselves understood this better than we do, they may not have had our activity and rush, but there was a calm, a peace, a dignity, a sweetness, gentleness and power about them which impressed people with the sense that they were men of God, and their influence was, I venture to think, greater and more far-reaching than our own.

"He ordained twelve that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth."

Historically these two ideals of the Christian ministry as ordained primarily for a life with Christ, and as ordained for active service, have both been emphasized and insisted upon at all times in the Church of God. Both are fundamentally true, and the ideal priest is the one in whose life a perfect, harmonious blending of the two is to be found, but as the perfect

ideal is rarely met with, we find the parochial clergy, as a rule and as a whole, insisting upon and upholding the ideal of work and activity.

Taking the parochial clergy as a whole during all the many centuries of Church history, the great Day of Judgment will, I think, reveal the fact, that as a rule and with but comparatively few exceptions, they have ever proved themselves a hard-working set of men and nobly upheld the ideal of activity and service.

But side by side with the ideal of ministerial activity as witnessed to by the clergy of the parochial system, the complementary ideal of the ministerial or clerical life as a life of contemplation, prayer, communion with God, has also been continuously witnessed to and upheld, e.g. by the monastic and cathedral systems.

So far as the Anglican Church is concerned, the monastic system pure and simple passed away and ceased to influence the Church from the days of the Reformation, but not so the cathedral system; it remained and passed into the new life of the old Church to carry on and uphold the ideal which the ancient monastic and cathedral bodies ever strove to set before themselves and the world.

That ideal is expressed and contained in the first clause of the text, "He ordained twelve that they should be with Him."

If the parish priest tended to lay this stress upon the clause which tells us that Jesus ordained men that He might send them forth, the member of a capitular body was reminded by his rule or canon that primarily and chiefly Jesus ordained men to be with Him.

The canons of our ancient cathedrals were and are a body of men bound by rule or canon to be men of prayer, meditation, communion, and intercession, men who spend much time alone with Jesus and who, whilst their paro-

chial brethren fight in the valley below like Joshua against Amalek, do themselves imitate Moses' example and pray for victory to crown the efforts of the Israel of God. Most thankfully can we assert that the capitular ideal has never been abandoned or lost sight of in the cathedrals of the old land, notwithstanding certain changes and modifications of rule consequent upon the Reformation.

In a new country like Canada it is, under present conditions, impossible to reproduce in its fulness and completeness the cathedral system of the old land, but notwithstanding its present imperfect character, we may well be thankful that it has come to us to uphold in a new and rapidly growing land the ancient ideal that the ministers of Christ are ordained chiefly and primarily to be with Him. For the chief danger of the present day, more especially in new lands, is lest God should be crushed out of our everyday thought and life.

Men are so busy that they have no time to think about God, no time to pray, no time to read their Bible and prepare themselves for eternity; even the clergy are influenced and affected by the modern spirit of rush, and so we of all people have need of being reminded of the higher and highest ideal and purpose of life, the ideal to which our cathedral system witnesses, and strives to attain so far as possible under the new and hampered conditions of life in a country like Canada.

Prayer, meditation, communion, the being alone with God, the listening to Him and hearing Him speak, this is the life which is upheld by the cathedral system, the life which it lays and enjoins upon the members of its chapters. Day by day, as the bell tolls for morning and evening prayer or for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist in the early morning, it reminds all that there are far higher interests in life than the quest for gold, and that Jesus has

called and set apart His ministers to be with Him, and to offer prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks on behalf of their brethren.

Whilst the great body of the laity are necessarily at work day by day carrying on the business of life, morning by morning, and evening by evening the cathedral clergy are praying to God to prosper the work of their hands, and to defend and keep them from harm and danger alike to body and soul.

Who can estimate the value of such spiritual services?

At present, of course, we are but at the beginning, it is the day of small things; but may God grant that the day may not be far distant when upon this site the Churchmen of British Columbia will erect a stately building worthy of God and of the Church, when, ashamed of building themselves beautiful houses and leaving the mother-house of God in this land in its present primitive and dilapidated condition, they shall vie with each other to do honor to Him from whom all blessings flow; and when attached to it there shall be a body of canons, freed from the burdens of parochial life to devote themselves to a life of study, meditation, prayer and communion; a life with Jesus, who is the source of all knowledge, wisdom and power.

Meantime let us who are charged with the task of laying the foundations and battling with the necessary limitations of the day of small things, let us lay the foundations as well and as carefully as we can; let us be as true to our ideal as possible, let us remember that we are never fulfilling more truly the purpose of our ordination, never doing better work for ourselves and for others than when we are upon our knees, alone with Jesus praying for our brethren, and learning from Him the secret and the power whereby we may draw all men unto Himself.

Wagrant Verse

FROM HERE AND THERE

(Contributed)
"Thou Egot!" said one, "of thyself say naught."
I heeded, for he was old.
A roamer, I went over land and sea,
My youth was my God, and my Liberty
The creed that my songs extolled.

The world's broad highway I traversed, and sought
The themes not begot of me,
I toiled in the ways of the stranger folk,
Their joys were my own, and my own their yoke,
And mine was their minstrelsy.

I brought then my songs to that ancient man,
And sang to that heart grown cold.
"Thou Egot!" cried he, with the pride of yore;
"Thou singest thyself. So begone, once more!"
I heeded, for he was old.

I strove with the pale mountain gods that scan
Vast forests of Stygian awe,
O'er lone wailing seas, through lands forgot,
Where man never was, where his God is not,
I sped, and I learned their law.

A song of the forest's infinite gloom;
A song of Death that knows no tomb;
A song of a mountain's imperious woe,
With pall of cloud, with thrall of snow,
Whose heart, the abyss where Song lies dead;
And thus were the songs to the sage I fed.

Thy youth was thy God, and thy Liberty
The creed that thy songs extolled,
Thy song is of fetters, a song forlorn;
Thou singest of night, and a hopeless morn.
Is thy heart now waxen old?"

When lo! at his bidding, I crouched at his knee,
And searched he the depth of my eyes.
"Thou Egot!" he cried—"yet thy songs were true,
Thou singest thyself—as we all must do."
I heeded, for he was wise.
—ROGER HAGAR.
Victoria, B. C.

GHOSTS

By Alfred Noyes
I creep in by candle-light,
When all the world is fast asleep,
Out of the cold winds, out of the night,
Where the nettles wave and the rains weep!
O, creep in, lifting the latch
So quietly that no soul could hear,
And, at those embers in the gloom,
Quietly light one careful match—
You should not hear it, have no fear—
And light the candle and look round
The old familiar rooms;
To see the old books upon the wall
And lovingly take one down again,
And hear—O, strange to those that lay
So patiently underground—
The ticking of the clock, the sound

Of clicking embers . . . watch the play
Of shadows . . . till the implacable call
Of morning turn our faces grey;
And, or ever we go, we lift and kiss
Some idle thing that your hands may touch,
Some paper or book that your hands let fall,
And we never—when living—had cared so
much
As to glance upon twice.

But now, O bliss
To kiss and to cherish it, moaning our pain,
Ere we creep to the silence again.

THE GREY NORNS

By Edwin Markham
What do you bring in your sacks, Grey Girls?
"Sea-sand and sorrow."
What is that mist that behind you whirls?
"The souls of tomorrow."

What are those shapes on the windy coasts?
"The dead souls going."
And what are those loads on the backs of the ghosts?
"The seeds of their sowing!"

"TRAILING CLOUDS"

By John Lazarus
As a drenched, drowned bee
Flings numb and heavy from the bending flower,
So clings to me
My baby, her brown hair brushed with wet tears
And laid laughterless on her cheek,
Her soft white legs hanging heavily over my arm
Swinging to my lullaby.

My sleeping baby hangs upon my life
As a silent bee at the end of a shaver
Draws down the burdened flower.
She who has always seemed so light
Sways on my arm like sorrowful, storm-heavy boughs,
Even her floating hair sinks like storm-bruised young leaves
Reaching downwards:
As the wings of a drenched, drowned bee
Are a heaviness, and a weariness.

ROAD SONG

By W. G. Tinckom-Fernandez
Come from the murk of your city streets to the tent of all the world,
When your final word on Art is said, and your flag of Faith is furled;
When your heart no longer gives a throb at the first faint breath of spring—
Ah, turn your feet to the ribbon-road with a chorus all may sing!

When the sandaled Dawn like a Greek god takes the hurdles of the hills
And the brooding earth rubs sleepy eyes at the song some lone bird trills;
Where the brook like the silver scythe of a moon awaits your warm caress—
Ah, these are the gifts that the high gods fling to mortals in duress!

When the blood-red sun swings low in the West, and an end comes to desire,
When the candle-gloom of the low-ceiled room is bared to a pine-log fire,
And the tales of men are told anew till the Huntress leaves the sky—
Ah, these are the gifts for the sons of men to set their treasure by!

Then give me the clear blue sky overhead, and the white road to my feet,
And a dog to tell my secrets to, and a brother tramp to meet—
And the years may take their toll of me till I reach the weary West,
Where I lodge for good in the world's own inn, a wayworn, waiting guest.

LAMENT FOR ADONIS

As, for Adonias! See, he is dying,
Delicate, lowly,
Slender Adonias, of the
Ah, for Adonias!
Weep, O ye maidens,
Beating your bosoms,
Rending your tunics.

O Cytherea, Hasten, for never
Loved thou another
As thy Adonias.
See, on the rosy
Cheek with its dimple,
Blushing no longer,
Thanatos' shadow.

Save him, O Goddess!
Thou, the beguiler,
All-powerful, holy,
Stay the dread evil.
Ah, for Adonias!
No more at vintage
Time will he come with
Bloom of the meadows.

Ah, for Adonias!
See, he is dying,
Fading as flowers
With the last summer.
—John Myers O'Hara's new translation of "Sappho."

HIPPOCRENE

Thus contend the maidens
In the cretic dance,
Rosy arms that glisten,
Eyes that glaucé;
Cheeks as fair as blossoms,
Parted lips that glow,
With their honeyed voices
Chanting low;

With their plastic bodies
Swaying to the flute
Moving with the music
Never mute;
Graceful the orchestric
Figures they unfold,
While the vesper heaven
Turns to gold.

—John Myers O'Hara's new translation of "Sappho."

KNOWLEDGE

By Charles Hanson Towne
So many Aprils went away
Before I learned one little part
Of all the joy each fragile day
Hid in its heart.
So many Summers hastened by
Before I caught their secret spell,
And read in bloom and leaf and sky
Life's miracle.

Would that Youth's eye could see the grace
And wonder of the drifting years . . .
Grown old, their loveliness we trace
Through blinding tears.

TIDINGS

She wrapt herself in linen woven close,
Stuffs delicate and texture-fine as those
The dark Nile traders for our bartering
From Egypt, Crete, and far Rhoece bring—
Love lent her feet the wings of winds to reach
(Whose steps stir not the shingle on the beach)
My marble court and, breathless, bid me know
My lover's sails across the harbor bow.

He seemed to her, as to himself he seems,
Like some bright God long treasured in her dreams;
She saw him standing at his galley's prow—
My Phaon, mine, in Mitylene how!

THE LITTLE GHOST

The stars began to peep;
Gone was the bitter day;
She heard the milky eyes
Bleat to their lambs astray.
Her heart cried for her lamb
Cold in the churchyard sod;
She could not think on the happy children
At play with the Lamb of God.

She heard the calling ewes
And the lambs' answer, alas!
She heard her heart's blood drip in the night
As the ewes' milk on the grass.
Her tears that burnt like fire
So bitter and slow ran down:
She could not think on the new washed children,
Playing by Mary's gown.

Oh, who is this comes in
Over her threshold stone?
And why is the old dog wild with joy,
Who all day long made moan?
This fair little radiant ghost,
Her one little son of seven,
New 'scaped from the band of merry children
In the nurseries of Heaven.

He was all clad in white,
Without a speck or stain;
His curls had a ring of light,
That rose and fell again.
"Now come with me, my own mother,
And you shall have great ease,
For you shall see the lost children
Gathered to Mary's knees."

Oh, lightly sprang she up,
Nor waked her sleeping man;
And hand-in-hand with the little ghost
Through the dark night she ran.
She is gone swift as a fawn,
As a bird home to its nest,
She has seen them lie, the sleepy children,
'Twixt Mary's arm and breast.

At morning she came back;
Her eyes were strange to see.
She will not fear the long journey
However long it be,
As she goes in and out
She sings unto her self:
For she has seen the mothers' children,
And knows that it is well.
—Katharine Tynan, in The Spectator.

St. Valentine's Day

Love and Lamentations
By H. Sheridan-Bickers

I don't know what's come over men and women. They do everything except fall in love. They're all getting so clever and wary. They must be caught in their childhood or in their dotage, if anything is to be made of them nowadays.

The boy and girl of today sneer at valentines; or send each other insulting caricatures, which are vulgar without being funny.

St. Valentine's Day used to be the excuse for sending one of those vague messages coined by calldom for the discreet declaration of its youthful exotics. Apparently the sentiment of yesterday was the daughter of today's satiety. Anyway, no one sends me a "valentine" nowadays; and I still retain some charm—if I am married!

Alas! 'tis an unromantic age. The "most beautiful woman in the world"—vide the Press agent—is proposed to by cable, and accepts by solicitor.

True, there are sentimental valentines—to be sold! But the object of the sentimental valentine of today is to over-capitalise the sender, and to get the girl to take all the shares. How many of we modern-day romancists have found that, if we would walk in the Garden of Love, we must pay the entrance fee? Why can't we just send a valentine as an I. O. U.?

Woman no longer falls into her lover's arms; he falls into her hands. She just asks him to dinner, and he promptly falls "in the soup." After this fishy "entree" into matrimony, each waits impatiently for an early "re-leave" and takes the first "trifle" that offers.

A Divorce Glace intervenes, and the man is blamed if he takes the chance to "desert." Then, to add insult to injury, their "friends" in return offer them both the cold shoulder!

St. Valentine's Day is consodered to the sacrament of Love. Let us confess our love, and take its sacrament together on that day, if on no other. Send your valentines, you shy young lovers; and let this message light your hearts with the joyous flame of love's consciousness. Is your beloved beautiful? If so, she will seem a thousand times more beautiful. Is your face a failure? No face is a failure which is loved by even the lowliest thing alive. The unloved beauty is but Dead Sea fruit, that its bearer must devour in exile—the exile of the soul. Where love is, ugliness cannot be.

Let each St. Valentine's Day be a mission of beauty—let its messages be as sunshine on a Sahara of souls. For the knowledge of love is an oasis in the desert of life. No woman, who is loved, is plain. In fact, no woman who is capable of living can be plain: she can but have missed the art of being beautiful. Lovely women catch men; but only loving women keep them.

If you, dear lady, would keep your husband, go on sending him valentines of cheerfulness and charm after marriage. And if you, my dear fellow, would see your wife smiling and happy, send her some valentine of love and consideration every day of the year. Don't wait for February the Fourteenth: any day is St. Valentine's Day to the married lovers.

"So shall our love bridge space, and bring
The tender breath
Of sun and moon and stars that sing
To gladden Death."
"I see your cheek grow pale and cold,
Then flush above.
Kiss me, dear heart: that I behold
The birth of Love."