

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DEVOTION AND DEVOTIONS.

As this publication is designed to serve the interests of one special devotion and is also intended to be of service to other devotions, we think it fitting to explain, at the outset, the meaning of the word devotion properly so called, or the difference between *devotion in general* and *special devotions*.

§ I.

Of Devotion in general.

“Devotion,” according to Saint Thomas, “resides in the will, and consists in the prompt accomplishment of whatever relates to the service of God.” Saint Francis of Sales defines devotion as “a general inclination and readiness of the heart to do what we know to be pleasing to God.” Our venerated Founder, the Right Reverend Bishop LaRocque, used to say that “Devotion consists in a certain ardor which inflames the soul, urging it to devote itself to God, according to the measure of that fervor.”

Consequently, the effect of devotion is to render the will steadfast in its purpose of serving God under all circumstances and in spite of all obstacles. Hence, devotion is one; it abides in the inmost soul and has God for its *essential* object and end.

§ II.

Of Special Devotions.

Special Devotions, on the other hand, are manifold. They are intended to meet the spiritual requirements of individuals, their special attractions and their various callings. They are inspired by the Holy Ghost, and are very numerous, because the gifts of the Spirit are varied and are always suited to the particular needs of each soul. Special devotions emanate from the spirit of devotion in general, or else lead to it, inasmuch as an upright soul that embraces a special devotion, with the intention of devoting itself more closely to God, will find, in the means