

OUR LADY OF LA SALETTE.

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The foundation on which rests our devotion to Our Lady of La Salette is only the different proofs which establish the reality of the apparition. We recall them for the pious associates in reprinting the excellent little treatise of M. Rousselot, entitled: "Short and clear summary of the motives a Catholic has for believing in an apparition of the Holy Virgin on the Mountain of La Salette, the 19th September, 1846." First, the apparition of the Holy Virgin of La Salette took place the 19th September, 1846. The next day the fact was known in the village of La Salette and in the Borough of Corps. It was received with confidence by some, and with distrust by others, and with great incredulity by a large number. That was to be expected. Secondly, at the end of some days it was known in the surrounding countries; it soon reached Grenoble. From that time the authorities of the diocese were forced to take notice of it as an event out of the common course. They commenced to inform themselves prudently, with wise precaution, without prejudice and without enthusiasm.

It was forbidden for the clergy to speak of it in the pulpit or to announce any decision before that of the authorities. The belief in the reality of an apparition gained ground, and embraced nearly all the inhabitants of Corps, of La Salette, and of neighboring countries. A notable change soon took place in the manners and habits of these irreligious people. Apart from any action of the clergy, and notwithstanding their absolute silence, the inhabitants of the canton began to visit the mountain as true and pious pilgrims; they ceased their blasphemy, their work on Sunday, and went more to church. A miraculous cure at Corps of a woman who had been ill twenty years and who was known to every one, made a profound impression; she had already implored the assistance of Notre Dame de La Salette, and had some water brought her from the fountain; it was soon known that from being uncertain the fountain had become inexhaustible, which increased faith and confidence. However, some days after the 19th September priests and learned persons visited Corps and La Salette, and made long and minute examinations of the two shepherds separately and together; they were astonished at the sagacity of these little peasants, and their replies to the numerous questions, the difficulties and the subtlety by which they tried to prove the truth of what they said; but they never contradicted themselves or each other. Soon the report of miracles performed in other places determined the people to make pilgrimages to the mountain so celebrated and regarded as holy, but upon which there was as yet no chapel, no altar, no priest, nothing to attract or satisfy piety or even curiosity. Pilgrims began to carry away the water from the fountain.

Sister St. Charles, of Avignon, was, with the knowledge of the whole city, rescued from death by appealing to Notre Dame de La Salette and by the use of this reputed miraculous water. Many other miraculous cures in different places astonished and increased the number of pilgrims. There were nearly 100,000 the first year, and at the first anniversary 60,000 covered the mountain. Two commissions formed by the Bishop deliberated separately and secretly; they decided to oppose nothing, as all passed regularly and religiously, but thought it best to wait before deciding.

The Bishop and his clergy maintained a profound silence on the subject. Two priests, delegated in 1847, travelled over nine dioceses in the south of France; no hint was talked of but La Salette and the miracles operated by the intercession of Notre Dame de La Salette. They were assured in particular of the cure of Sister St. Charles, and on this question they consulted Mgr. Nando, Archbishop of Avignon, who replied that he had no more doubt of the cure of this Sister than of the resurrection of Lazarus.

In November and December, 1847, a commission of sixteen members of the clergy met at the Episcopal Palace, the Bishop presiding. The question of La Salette was there discussed very seriously in eight sittings. At the end the Bishop announced that he would reserve his decision for the proper time.

However, reports of miracles increased every day; the pilgrims became always

more numerous; notwithstanding the revolution of 1848 it became more and more serious and there was a constant concourse of pilgrims of every nation and tongue, every state and condition. For four years every pilgrim could see and question the little shepherds, authors of this great movement, and all agreed that they were neither deceivers nor deceived.

Eight months after the apparition they began to write on the subject. The apparition was related, discussed, and proved veritable. On the other side there came from the Bishop of Grenoble difficulties and objections. All were received, examined, appreciated and reduced to its just value. Most of the pilgrims (above all, those distinguished for piety, knowledge and position in the church or in the world) in passing the episcopal city, gave their impressions and their convictions, almost always favorable to the fact of the apparition.

In 1848 the bishop authorized the publication of the truth of the event of La Salette, but didn't announce himself as judge of the fact. However, he prepared his mandate, debated it in his council, communicated it to some of his most venerable colleagues and finished by sending it to Rome, from which city it returned with some observations which the prelate hastened to obey. At last, in November, 1851, after a delay and an examination of five years, the mandate, ardently solicited by the greatest number of the dioceses and the foreigners, priests and laymen, with a very small number opposing it, was sent forth, published, and read in the six hundred churches of the diocese. It was sent to nearly every bishop in the world, and translated into several languages; it was printed at Rome in the papers and submitted to the Pontifical criticism. The next year His Holiness Pius IX, by nine writings, sent in, in less than three months, granted the most precious favors to the sanctuary of La Salette, to the missionaries who served there, to all pilgrims who visited it. By the last given, December 2, 1852, His Holiness permitted the whole diocese to celebrate each year, by the office and the Mass of the Holy Virgin, the anniversary of the apparition.

After this historical sketch, to which I could add many other things, here is my profession of faith in La Salette. I believe in the apparition of the Holy Virgin on the mountain of La Salette:

1. Because by an examen of eight years, and by every precaution taken in this time, the result for me is a moral certitude or the greatest probability that one can humanly and religiously obtain, that the little shepherds in their relation of the apparition were neither deceived nor deceivers.

2. Because for ten years without cessation, in many places, and on a great number of sick persons, marvelous cures have been performed, so entirely apart from all laws of nature, and so perfectly established by the public voice, and some even by the episcopal judgment, that they constitute true miracles performed by invoking Notre Dame de La Salette, and by use of the miraculous water from the fountain; at the same time, I believe that God would not by true miracles authorize an abominable imposture or a sacrilegious jugglery.

3. Because, from religious and supernatural events I ought so to believe not from my own private judgment nor from my own particular examinations, as Protestants do, but from the doctrinal and canonical decision of two Bishops of Grenoble in unison with the Sovereign Pontiff and acting with his consent. Also the two Bishops published mandates very explicit on the truth of the event at La Salette—very explicit mandates, which were received and adhered to by a large number of bishops. And thus the apparition has the highest sanction it could have—that of competent authority.

4. Because apart from a supernatural and divine intervention what has passed under our eyes for ten years can never be explained in a reasonable manner:—

1. A pilgrimage always sustained, always numerous, always edifying, composed not only of the simple faithful, but of a large number of men eminent by character, by rank, by virtue and learning both in Church and State.

2. A hitherto uncertain fountain becomes inexhaustible, known as marvelous, from which water is carried in every direction.

3. A magnificent sanctuary, built on a

height of eighteen hundred yards, in honor of Mary, for the construction of which the entire universe contributed by generous donations.

4. Two hundred and fifty churches, sanctuaries, chapels, altars, which grew up as by enchantment, in honor of Notre Dame de La Salette, every one connected with the sanctuary of the mountain—a large number of them as much frequented by pilgrims as the Sanctuary of the Holy Mountain.

5. Conversions without number, conversions unlooked for, conversions more extraordinary than the bodily cures.

6. An archconfraternity, established by order of the Sovereign Pontiff, which already counts its members by hundreds and its associates by hundreds of thousands.

7. A unique correspondence between La Salette and the entire world, which in ten years has amounted to 40,000 letters.

8. So many confessions, communions and works of charity, of zeal, of piety, of generosity and of penance that La Salette has been the means of.

9. Eleven bishops and more than thirty priests or learned laymen have been historians, defenseurs and apostles of Notre Dame de La Salette.

10. Inutility of efforts made, of difficulties raised, of imaginary objections, of lavish injuries to destroy or weaken the faith at La Salette, and which far from doing harm has only served to make it better known.

11. The progressive accomplishment of the prophetic threats made on the mountain, the diseases of the vineyards, potatoes, etc.

12. The salutary, solemn warnings addressed by the Mother of God to the whole world, warnings which have been echoed everywhere, which were so well adapted to the wants of the time; warnings which obtained the happiest results, by the diminution of blasphemy, profanation of holy days and by the associations recently formed for the extirpation of blasphemy and the sanctification of the Sabbath.

Behold the motives of my faith—motives so powerful that they make me regard the fact as certain beyond doubt. I must add that apart from divine intervention, apart from a celestial apparition, La Salette becomes inexplicable, and to evade one miracle we must admit a multitude of miracles. If La Salette is only a deception why is it that for ten years only good has come from it? Could a bad cause produce such good effects? We count the sanctuaries of Mary by hundreds; is there one which owes its origin to a known falsehood?

I do not condemn or accuse of incredulity those who do not believe it, neither do I tax them with heresy or put them out of the Church, but I regard them as unreasonable and without logic.

But I blame, openly and energetically, and so will every sensible man, the systematic opposition which, to fight against the fact, employs injuries, falsehoods, calumny, malicious concealments, and other arms which the incredulous and the heretics use habitually in their attacks against religion.

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH.

The Maisonneuve Monument.

After the discovery of Canada by Jacques Cartier, under Francis First, of France, many attempts to colonize it were made, but they brought not the hoped for results.

Then, companies endowed with royal privileges succeeded each other. Their twofold object was the colonization of the new country and the extension of commerce between France and Canada.

But colonization appearing to them too difficult and above all too expensive, they occupied themselves solely with the fur trade. The company founded by Champlain, in 1610, did not extend its operations in any other direction.

Thus the work of colonization commenced at Quebec did not make any visible progress until Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve and his companions arrived in Montreal, on May 17, 1642.

For a work of this kind it was necessary that disinterested persons of wealth and influence should come together. Providence had chosen M. Olier, founder of the Sulpician Order, and M. de la Dauversiere, a gentleman of Anjou, descended from a Breton family, who had taken part in the Crusades. Both, united by similarity of views and inspirations, resolved to establish, on the island of Montreal, a colony, and a city

to be called Ville Marie, having no other aim than the spiritual and temporal good of the savages and the foundation of a French Catholic colony.

They met at Meudon and exchanged their views, which they found to be identical. M. Olier gave twenty-five dollars to defray the first expenses of the new society.

Despite the innumerable difficulties, which often brought it to the brink of ruin, and which were caused by the rigor of the climate, the ferocity of the savages, the difficulty of communication with France, the almost continual wars with Indians, with England and with the neighboring colonies, the enterprise was at length successful owing to the courage, perseverance and devotion of the men of heart that upheld it.

[[Father Leclercq, a Recollect priest, wrote:—"Of all the projects formed for the conversion of the savages, there was none more disinterested, more solid or more cleverly arranged."

The company at first numbered only five, but the associates increased afterwards. This society took the title of "The Society of Notre Dame of Montreal."

When, in 1640, this organization decided to execute its project, a man was needed possessing besides the virtues of an ordinary citizen those of bravery, abnegation and that devotion which serves to make a hero. M. de Maisonneuve, who hitherto had no aspiration but to serve his God and country, immediately offered himself to the associates. He became the leading spirit of the company of which Olier was the head and the executor of the sublime decision he had taken at Meudon in 1639.

LECTURE DATES

FOR THE CATHOLIC SUMMER SCHOOL OF AMERICA.

We have had several inquiries, made personally and by letter, concerning the dates of the lectures to be given at the coming session of the Catholic Summer School. We publish this week a circular that contains all the information that has as yet been made public. The teachers may be particularly interested in knowing that the fourth week, from August 6th to August 11th will be consecrated to their special work. We have also been asked by scores for the dates of the lectures to be given by the editor of THE TRUE WITNESS. Mr. Foran will lecture on the evening of Wednesday, July 18th, and the evening of Thursday, July 19th. The subjects are: "The Early Educators of Canada and Foundation of the First Institutions in the Country," and "The Indian Missionaries and the Educators of the last fifty years in Canada."

LITERARY NOTES.

BIBLE STUDIES.

The Catholic School and Home Magazine, for May, has opened a new department for the study of the New Testament, in order to place within the reach of our people an easy method of becoming acquainted with the Gospel Narrative. The editor, Rev. Dr. Conaty, has adapted the work for ordinary School and Home Study, on the different Sundays of the month, by way of question and answer. The May number contains Leaflet No. 1, as a preparatory lesson, on the Bible and the sources and extent of its authority. It will be valuable for Sunday-School special classes, higher grades of Parochial Schools and Home Classes. Reading Circles will find in the Magazine an aid in this special study. It is an aid to teachers, interesting to pupils, useful in parish schools, original, progressive.

The Magazine for May has its usual pages of interesting historical and literary matter, all of which is original and helpful to students. It is the best Magazine of its kind. It is issued monthly and costs but 50 cents a year. Send for May number. It is published at 340 Cambridge St., Worcester, Mass.

I had a severe cold, for which I took Norway Pine Syrup. I find it an excellent remedy, giving prompt relief and pleasant to take. J. PAYNTER, Huntsville, Ont.

Mamma—Did you take your capsule without any trouble? Robbie—Yes, but I had an awful time gettin' the quinine out of it first.—Inter Ocean.