

last. I administered the last sacraments, but Rob did not die. His life flickered up like an expiring flame, and every subsequent communion seemed to give him a fresh spurt. Naturally he took up a good deal of my attention, and I saw him pretty nearly every day as I came and went. It was clear he took to me at first, and hungered after my presence. I soon became aware that there was something unusual about the boy. There was that odd second-sight gift of his—uncanny, as you call it—to a degree. It worked both backwards and forwards, not like the common or garden second-sight! He seemed to know what was going to happen, and what had happened at a distance—so much so, that it became a joke among the staff of the hospital. When they wanted to know anything—anything lost or mislaid, or persons absent—or news not forthcoming—the boy would say, "Oh, ask Rob!" He was our secret Intelligence Department!—But what really struck me most was his sanctity. I can call it by no other name. I could detect no flaw in his conduct, or any speck in his white little soul. And yet he was not a prig—much too simple for that: there was no pose of piety, no display, and yet you felt his whole being was centered in God. For instance, the Friday after he was brought in, though he was in a high fever and must have been suffering agonies of thirst, he refused to drink anything. I asked him why he would not take anything to quench his thirst. He made a sign to me to come close to him. He put his long arms about my neck and drew me down to his ear. "Our Lord on the Cross took nothing," he whispered. When he was about to be operated on, they hoped to extract the bullet from the base of the spine—he surprised everybody by refusing to take the anaesthetic. He stubbornly held out against a whole ring of doctors and nurses; and you know what a Scot is when he is stubborn! The Padre was called in as a final Court of Appeal. He made the same sign to come close to him as before, and whispered, "Our Lord had no anaesthetic when He was on the Cross, and so I thought I'd be like Him." I must say something pulled at my heart-strings. The dear boy was so simple and so much in earnest. However I had to speak to him pretty straight and tell him how selfish he was, only thinking of what he would like, and not of the convenience of the doctors and nurses. "I'm so sorry," he said, "I didn't think of that. There was not a word more and he submitted like a lamb. The anaesthetic was administered and the operation was successful, and he was under the knife a couple of hours—seemed quite successful, and we hoped to pull him round after all. I sat by his bed when it was all over and told him so. He looked at me with a strange look in those strange eyes of his, and said quietly, 'No, Padre, I am going home.'"

"Yes," I said, "I will ship you home safely. By the way, where is your home?" He looked upwards and said: "There is my home: I have no other. Padre, at three o'clock tomorrow I shall be gone. To-morrow is Friday, and I shall die at the same time Our Lord died. Promise me something! Stay with me this night and bring me Our Lord." I promised, and tried to shake off the idea of him dying, saying how successful the operation had been, and the rest. He shook his head and kept on repeating: "To-morrow at this time I shall be gone."

"I stayed with him all that night. Bradshaw!" and the Padre got up and took some brisk turns about the room—"you'd be surprised at what I could tell you about that boy's soul. How God works in those rough soldier lads of ours! You may not believe me but I have come across souls among them as white as any nun's in her cloister—however mired the ways their feet may have trodden. Rob was one of these. Then he said he was so happy, so very happy. God had been good to him. 'I asked Him,' he said, 'to let me meet you again before I died, and so He has, and now I am ready to go.'"

"My dear boy," I said, "What are you talking about?" I thought he had begun to be delirious, but no, he was quite himself; indeed his physical conditions all pointed to an improvement. "Yes," he said, "don't you remember the wee laddie who brought you your morning papers when you were giving the mission at Dundee?" And he went on to mention some little services I had done for the "wee laddie." Of course then it all came back to me. Wasn't it odd that he and I should turn up together again like that in the vast theatre of the War? The chances were a thousand to one against it!

When day dawned he told me to go about my duties, but come back to him without fail just before three o'clock. "Dear Padre, if it is God's will, I would like to die in your arms," he said, "so come back to me if you can." He looked at me wistfully, kissed my crucifix, and then my hand as I blessed him, and that was my last look at Rob alive. I was detained, and when I returned in the afternoon he had passed away—as punctual as a clock," the nurse said, at the hour he foretold. He had looked out for me not anxiously, but

longingly, turning his eyes, then filled with a light which was not of this world, in the direction I should come. But just before the last, they heard him say, "Our Lord was forsaken by His Father when He died on the Cross." And thus Rob "went home," without a sigh or struggle, peaceful and content. I shall not easily forget that last night I spent with him. I seemed to have entered behind the veil—the other world was so close. He told me many things about myself—things no one could have known. He also described to me my future fate. There is a very great future in store for me!" The Padre stopped short and laughed in an odd way.

"Well," said Bradshaw, who felt he must say something in the pause which followed. "You tell me you have just been appointed Vicar Apostolic to some outlandish place. I suppose you will end by being a cardinal at least. The poor little chap would naturally foretell great things for you!" "He certainly did, but not what my best friends would perhaps foretell. He didn't like telling me at all. 'Dear old Padre, dear old Padre,' he kept on saying, 'something very sorrowful, but very wonderful is going to happen to you. It's a crown as ye'll wear one day, but not on this earth.' By the way, he never knew anything about my lifelong dream to be sent to the Foreign Missions. Then he went on to describe a distant Mission scene—a sudden uprising among half-tamed and treacherous savages—a brandishing of long knives—cries of 'Death to the White-Face, Death to the Foreigner!'—and a venerable old man brought out to die at their hands. And I shall have no anaesthetic when I go under the knife!"

"The two men were silent, and gazed at the glowing mass of coals. Neither cared to look at each other's face."

"Well," said Bradshaw at last, "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in most people's philosophy!"

## GENERAL INTENTION FOR OCTOBER

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XV.

THE SPREAD OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

In his Apostolic letter, *Maximam illud*, on the conversion of the heathen, issued November 30, 1919, our Holy Father Benedict XV. wrote: "We strongly recommend the Apostleship of Prayer to all the faithful, without exception, and we trust no one will fail to become a member." Needless to say, the desire so plainly expressed in these words has been heeded in many quarters, especially in Europe. The Apostleship of Prayer—or League of the Sacred Heart, as it is popularly known among ourselves here in Canada—now numbers about twenty-six million members; and yet this army, vast though it be, is only a fraction of the three hundred millions of Catholics scattered throughout the world. The goodwill of both the faithful and their pastors must be enlisted, their zeal must be intensified, and a great deal of recruiting must still be done if the wish of the Holy Father is to be realized. Many reasons might be given to urge greater assiduity in this work of recruitment, the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus not being the least: but we may expect results only when Catholics have learned to esteem the Apostleship of Prayer at its true worth and when they may exercise their zeal for their own and their neighbor's souls.

God is looking for apostles among men. If He alone, as the Author and Master of grace, is the Saviour of souls, He asks other souls to help Him in the work of salvation; in other words, He wills to save men in cooperation with their fellow-men. This is the principle on which the apostolate among souls is based. "All power has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Math. xxviii, 18. "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved but he that believeth not shall be condemned." Mark xvi, 16. Both texts prove the necessity of teachers, and the obligation of hearing them; they also prove, first, that the conditions of salvation, laid down by our Lord, cannot be normally fulfilled without the aid of other men; and, secondly, that the call for this spiritual aid is addressed to a far greater number of people than the twelve Apostles and their official successors, Bishops and priests exercise their ministry among souls; they have assumed this obligation and the world looks to them to fulfill it. But it is an error, unhappily widespread, that the apostolate of souls is a vocation reserved to these few; another error is a personal affair, and so long as we succeed in saving our own souls we are not called upon to worry about the souls of our neighbors. The Apostleship of Prayer was founded precisely to disabuse Catholics of these errors, and to show them that they can do a great deal to help their neighbors spiritually.

While it is evident that every true apostle must be a Christian, it is not evident to common folk that every Christian should be an apostle; and yet what other conclusion may we draw from the teaching of our Blessed Lord? "Love God with all your heart and strength, and your neighbor as yourself, and you have fulfilled the whole law." But love shows itself in work rather than in words. To love one's neighbor as oneself is to procure for him the one blessing worth seeking, namely, salvation. Only in becoming an apostle, therefore, can we completely carry out the design of the Master.

But how many ordinary, everyday men and women exercise their apostolate among souls? By prayer. The millions who make up the membership of the Church may not be called upon to teach, or preach, or suffer, but they may pray. They may become apostles by becoming prayerful men and women. Prayer is an apostolic work; it is a power that tires not, that does not, that is everywhere, even though the traces of its passage be invisible to men. Prayer is a spiritual power that challenges time and space. It is a missionary force, employing every tongue; it can change hearts in the twinkling of an eye. Without prayer and the grace that it brings, those who see and speak and toil among souls are but sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. Every Catholic knows that he has at his disposal the energizing power of prayer. If he lets this power lie dormant, except when his own petty personal interests are at stake, he is one of those unprofitable servants described by our Lord. The interests of the whole world need prayer, and need it never more urgently than in the present age; the interests of hundreds of millions are clamoring for prayer and for all that follows in its train: graces of all kinds, spiritual and temporal favors for themselves, their homes and families, their neighbors, friends and enemies.

Seeing that prayer is such a power in the world, why not employ it with system, so as to get from it the best that is in it? Why not concentrate all the prayers which fall from millions of lips daily, and thus make them more effective? In this age of organization, worldlings have shown us how to go about it. In their material concerns they know the advantage of united effort and they pool their energies in syndicates and business monopolies. United effort in purely human affairs accomplishes much. Similar success may be obtained in the spiritual order when our efforts are united. Our Lord tells us that when two or three are gathered in His name, not as isolated units, but when united in prayer, He is in the midst of them, undoubtedly all the more ready and willing to listen to them. If this be the true interpretation, it means that our prayers, though poor and inefficacious when isolated, are powerful when organized, and become irresistible when directed towards a common end.

We all know that this systematization of prayer has been successfully brought about. Just as there are federations among business men to assure the better management of worldly affairs, so also is there an immense federation of prayerful Catholics, organized for the purpose of spiritualizing their daily works and sufferings, transmuting them into prayer by a daily offering of them to God in union with the Sacred Heart pleading, and directing them as a great intercessory power with God towards some determined end. This is called the Apostleship of Prayer. Eighty years ago a humble priest in France conceived the plan of concentrating the prayers of millions into one irresistible stream of prayer and supplication, for the purpose of storming heaven, the more easily to move God to listen to His children. The work grew and spread to various countries, and today there are eight thousand Centers, with a membership of twenty-six millions who daily offer their works, words and sufferings to God for the intentions recommended to the Apostleship. Who will dare assert that when millions are united in prayer, they will not have confidence in the intercessory prayer uttered by so formidable an army, among whom are hundreds of thousands of holy souls?

The Apostleship of Prayer is established in hundreds of parishes in Canada and Newfoundland; our membership has reached over half a million; and yet in many places, owing to coldness and indifference, the organization does not seem to be appreciated as a source of intercessory power before God. Have we lost the prayerful habit? or have we lost confidence in prayer. A distinguished priest in England, in a recent article on the need of fostering a spirit of prayer, wrote this passage: "As no good for souls can be accomplished without God's help, and as that help is usually the fruit of prayer, it is clear that prayer must be the main support of all good work for souls; and therefore any organization which encourages prayer for this end and unites the faithful in the exercise of it, must be at the present time of the first and paramount importance. Now the Apostleship of Prayer is preeminently such an organization. We have few more powerful means of doing good, of spreading God's Church, than by the growth and



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spread of the Apostleship of Prayer, and I believe that if we were to make a great joint effort, earnest and real, to spread the Apostleship and to infuse more life and energy into it, we should do an immense amount of good." He then asks: "In how many of our Local Branches is anything done to help this work? In many I fear nothing at all is attempted, and in very many others the only sign of life is the distribution among a few of the Monthly Leaflets and a certain number of Messengers, often there are no Promoters' meetings, and in some cases no Promoters, and very seldom if ever is the Apostleship of Prayer even mentioned to the people. If the Apostleship is to have more life infused into it, the first thing to do is to insure that the people know more about it."

Evidently human nature is the same everywhere, and conditions in England differ very little from those in Canada. Were it not for the zeal of a few Promoters who appear to be immune to a discouragement, the League would have long ceased to live in many of our affiliated Centers. In many others, it is waning in influence because the Apostleship of Prayer has never been fully understood, nor has the simplicity of its functioning ever been explained. What is simpler than to make a daily offering to God of our prayers, deeds, words, sufferings, in union with the Sacred Heart pleading, or to say a daily decade of the rosary in honor of Our Lady asking her to carry our petition to the throne of her Son? This is the tribute required from each member of the League, a tribute which adds no new obligations to the life of an ordinary Catholic. But when these tributes are multiplied by millions, systematized and directed in an intercessory manner for the intentions recommended every month, they become a rich source of graces. Answers to prayer are given in a marvellous way. If proof of this were required, read the letters of petition and thanksgiving which appear in our pages every month.

Would it be too much to ask our Promoters, old and new, to read the Promoters' Guide, Hints for Promoters, and other similar publications, and thus acquire an intelligent grasp of the work they are called upon to do? Let them renew their zeal, reorganize their Circles and form new ones by fresh recruiting. The invitation to do so came two years ago direct from the Holy Father. He knows the power of intercessory prayer, and on more than one occasion has shown by his words how much he appreciates what our Apostleship of Prayer is doing for souls throughout the world.

E. J. DEVINE, S. J.

## UNEMPLOYMENT

It is always a serious problem when a country is called upon to consider the question of unemployment of its citizens. Upon the family depends the welfare of the nation, and in order to conduct the family upon lines of decency and dignity and to raise up worthy citizens for the nation, there must be assurance of immunity from actual want of the necessities of life and there must be at hand means to provide for mental development.

Undoubtedly there is a more severe trial through which a man is called to pass than that during which his hands are empty of the tools he is accustomed to wield. It is an additional cause of suffering when he sees about him those who depend upon him, in particular innocent children, looking vainly to him for the supplying of their needs.

At the present time, when business depression is causing great anxiety and suffering the part of many men, the voice of the agitator is heard above the throng, striving to insinuate his plausible theories into the ears of the world. With specious arguments he covers up the poison of his insidious words, so that they seem to be fair to those who do not look deep down beneath the bark to the marrow.

In such conditions there is but one thing for the man of faith to do. When he has done all that is possible to help himself, then there remains nothing save trust in an all-wise Providence.

The Church, ever-vigilant Mother, points to a long list of her sons, who have through suffering attained to a great conquest. In God's good time the evils wrought by man can be worked out for good. By turning, therefore, a deaf ear to those who speak against the virtue of Christian endurance, man becomes a conqueror of himself, and with a more powerful Ally than

any earthly monarch or potentate, he emerges from his trial purified, exultant, realizing in truth the words of St. Paul: "I can do all things in Him Who strengthens me."—The Pilot.

## WEEKLY CALENDAR

Sunday, Sept. 25.—St. Finbarr, a native of Connaught, instituted a monastery at Lough Eirc, to which so many disciples flocked in the sixth century that eventually the city of Cork was founded. He was Bishop of Cork seventeen years and his body was buried in his own cathedral.

Monday, Sept. 26.—Sts. Cyprian and Justina, martyrs. Cyprian was brought up in all the impious mysteries of idolatry, astrology and the black art. He endeavored to use his arts on Justina, a Christian lady of high birth but inaccessible modesty. Prayer aided her to overcome his spells. Finding himself worsted by a power superior to the demons he served, he became a Christian. Cyprian and Justina appeared before the same judge during Diocletian's persecution and both were beheaded.

Tuesday, Sept. 27.—Sts. Cosmas and Damien, brothers, born in Arabia and who studied as physicians in Syria. They practiced for charity and took no fees, serving the helpless until during Diocletian's persecution they were accused as Christians, tortured, and thrown bound into the sea.

Wednesday, Sept. 28.—St. Wenceslaus, son of a Christian duke of Bohemia. The lad became a devout Christian. His mother, on the death of her spouse, persecuted the Christians, in which she was joined by her second son, Boleslas, an apostate. Wenceslaus was chosen ruler of part of the kingdom and overcame the leader of an invading army with the sign of the cross. His brother invited him to a banquet and slew him when later he was praying before the tabernacle. He died in 938.

Thursday, Sept. 29.—St. Michael, the archangel who was chosen by God to thrust Lucifer and the other evil spirits out of the kingdom of Heaven. Michael means "Who is like unto God."

Friday, Sept. 30.—St. Jerome, one of the great doctors of the Church. He was born in Dalmatia in 339 and studied in Rome. He became famous for the study of Hebrew. His noblest work was the revision of the Latin Bible.

Saturday, Oct. 1.—St. Remigius, Archbishop of Rheims, who converted and baptized Clovis, king of pagan Franks, gaining the whole Frank nation. He withstood and silenced the Arians and left France a Christian nation. He died in 533, after an episcopate of seventy-four years, the longest on record.

## ERIN

What lonelier sound than the boom of the sea  
Intoning sad strains of a drear symphony:  
What lonelier heart than an exile who yearns  
For the sight of the sod where his soul e'er sojourns,  
What lonelier grief can a Country endure  
Than the void of those rights which she fain would secure.

The tide of thy woes moves O Erin  
Ma-Chree  
Full adown through the years, O so  
Lonely a plea.

Thy sons with their hearts e'er entwined in the sod  
Have been tolling for thee with their hopes placed in God.  
Like onrush of clans to the battle's dim fray  
Lo the fire of their souls has proved matchless in sway.

Hark Erin, joynotes from afar have been heard  
Though the crowning of patience has oft been deferred,  
Like the shamrock shall thou be equally ranged  
And ne'er from the footstalk of right be estranged.

Lo awaken ye Sages and Bards proud of old,  
Awaken ye Chieftains and Warriors bold.  
All ye who detested the hatred and wrong  
Wake and list to the echo of liberty's song.

The North and the South, the East and the West  
Behold the dear sod glad in freedom's behest.  
Like the thrushes content in the arms of a tree  
Behold Erin secure in her earned liberty.

O Erin the strains of thy freedom resound  
Through the great Halls of Time with a whirlwind of sound.  
Let glory's new light gild the clouds of the past  
Like the glow of thy deeds in History's annals.

The land that was saddest and lowly oppressed  
Is the land of the Irish, and God knoweth best.

—Cecilia Maryton

We have always two duties to perform—we must always work and we must always pray.

Alas for the man who is too busy to pray, for he is too busy to be saved.—Cardinal Manning.

Men cannot learn what they are not prepared for; to force the teaching avails nothing.



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