



"AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM."

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ENCYCLICAL LETTER FOR PENTECOST 1897.

To Our Venerable Brethren, The Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops and other Local Ordinaries Having Peace and Communion with the Holy See.
LEO XIII., POPE.

Venerable Brethren, Health and the Apostolic Benediction.
(CONTINUED.)

On Devotion to the Holy Ghost.

These sublime truths, which so clearly show forth the infinite goodness of the Holy Ghost towards us, certainly demand that we should direct towards Him the highest homage of our love and devotion. Christians may do this most effectually if they will daily strive to know Him, to love Him, and to implore Him more earnestly: for which reason may this Our exhortation, flowing spontaneously from a paternal heart, reach their ears. Perchance there are still to be found among them, even nowadays, some, who if asked, as were those of old by St. Paul the Apostle, whether they have received the Holy Ghost, might answer in like manner: "We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost" (Acts xix., 2).

At least there are certainly many who are very deficient in their knowledge of Him. They frequently use His name in their religious practices, but their faith is involved in much darkness. Wherefore all preachers and those having care of souls should remember that it is their duty to instruct their people more diligently and more fully about the Holy Ghost—avoiding, however, difficult and subtle controversies, and eschewing the dangerous folly of those who rashly endeavor to pry into divine mysteries. What should be chiefly dwelt upon and clearly explained, is the multitude and greatness of the benefits which have been bestowed, and are constantly bestowed, upon us by this Divine Giver, so that errors and ignorance concerning matters of such moment may be entirely dispelled, as unworthy of "the children of light." We urge this, not only because it affects a mystery by which we are directly guided to eternal life, and which must therefore be firmly believed; but also because the more clearly and fully the good is known the more earnestly it is loved. Now we owe to the Holy Ghost, as we mentioned in the second place, love, because He is God: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul and with thy whole strength" (Deut. vi., 5). He is also to be loved because He is the substantial, eternal, primal Love, and nothing is more lovable than love. And this all the more because He has overwhelmed us with the greatest benefits, which both testify to the benevolence of the Giver and claim the gratitude of the receiver. This love has a twofold and most conspicuous utility. In the first place it will excite us to acquire daily a clearer knowledge about the Holy Ghost; for, as the Angelic Doctor says, "the lover is not content with the superficial knowledge of the beloved, but striveth to inquire intimately into all that appertains to the beloved, and thus to penetrate into the interior; as is said of the Holy Ghost, who is the Love of God, that He searcheth even the profound things of God" (1 Cor. ii., 10; Summ. Theol., 1a. 2ae., q. 28, a. 2). In the second

place it will obtain for us a still more abundant supply of heavenly gifts; for whilst a narrow heart contracteth the hand of the giver, a grateful and mindful heart causeth it to expand. Yet we must strive that this love should be of such a nature as not to consist merely in dry speculations or external observances, but rather to run forwards towards action, and especially to fly from sin, which is in a more special manner offensive to the Holy Ghost.

For whatever we are, that we are by the divine goodness; and this goodness is specially attributed to the Holy Ghost. The sinner offends this his Benefactor, abusing His gifts; and taking advantage of His goodness becomes more hardened in sin day by day. Again, since He is the Spirit of truth, whosoever faileth by weakness or ignorance may perhaps have some excuse before Almighty God; but he who resists the truth through malice and turns away from it, sins most grievously against the Holy Ghost. In our days this sin has become so frequent that those dark times seem to have come which were foretold by St. Paul, in which men, blinded by the just judgment of God, should take falsehood for truth, and should believe in "the prince of the world," who is a liar and the father thereof, as a teacher of truth: "God shall send them the operation of error, to believe lying" (2 Thess. ii., 10). In the last times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits of error and the doctrines of devils" (1 Tim. iv., 1). But since the Holy Ghost, as we have said, dwells in us as in His temple, We must repeat the warning of the Apostle: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed" (Eph. iv., 30). Nor is it enough to fly from sin; every Christian ought to shine with the splendor of virtue so as to be pleasing to so great and so beneficent a guest; and first of all with chastity and holiness, for chaste and holy things befit the temple. Hence the words of the Apostle: "Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? But if any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy. For the temple of God is holy, which you are" (1 Cor. iii., 16-17): a terrible, indeed, but a just warning.

Lastly, we ought to pray to and invoke the Holy Spirit, for each one of us greatly needs His protection and His help. The more a man is deficient in wisdom, weak in strength, borne down with trouble, prone to sin, so ought he the more to fly to Him who is the never-ceasing fount of light, strength, consolation, and holiness. And chiefly that first requisite of man, the forgiveness of sins, must be sought for from Him: "It is the special character of the Holy Ghost that He is the Gift of the Father and the Son. Now the remission of sins is given by the Holy Ghost as by the Gift of God" (Summ. Th. 3a, q. iii., a. 8, ad 3m). Concerning this Spirit the words of the Liturgy are very explicit: "For He is the remission of all sins" (Roman Missal, Tuesday after Pentecost). How He should be invoked is clearly taught by the Church, who addresses Him in humble supplication, calling upon Him by the sweetest of names: "Come, Father of the poor! Come, Giver of gifts! Come, Light of our hearts!

O, best of Consolers, sweet Guest of the soul, our refreshment!" (Hymn, Veni Sancte Spiritus). She earnestly implores Him to wash, heal, water our minds and hearts, and to give to us who trust in Him "the merit of virtue, the acquirement of salvation, and joy everlasting." Nor can it be in any way doubted that He will listen to such prayer, since we read the words written by His own inspiration: "The Spirit Himself asketh for us with unspeakable groanings" (Rom. viii., 26). Lastly, we ought confidently and continually to beg of Him to illuminate us daily more and more with His light and inflame us with His charity: for, thus inspired with faith and love, we may press onward earnestly towards our eternal reward, since He "is the pledge of our inheritance" (Eph. i., 14).

Such, Venerable Brethren, are the teachings and exhortations which We have seen good to utter, in order to stimulate devotion to the Holy Ghost. We have no doubt that, chiefly by means of your zeal and earnestness, they will bear abundant fruit among Christian peoples. We Ourselves shall never in the future fail to labor towards so important an end; and it is even Our intention, in whatever ways may appear suitable, to further cultivate and extend this admirable work of piety. Meanwhile, as two years ago, in Our Letter Provida Matris, We recommended to Catholics special prayers at the Feast of Pentecost, for the Reunion of Christendom, so now We desire to make certain decrees on the same subject.

An annual Novena Decreed.

Wherefore, We decree and command that throughout the whole Catholic Church, this year and in every subsequent year, a Novena shall take place before Whit-Sunday, in all parish churches, and also, if the local Ordinaries think fit, in other churches and oratories. To all who take part in this Novena and duly pray for Our intention, We grant for each day an Indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines; moreover a Plenary Indulgence on any one of the days of the Novena, or on Whit-Sunday itself, or on any day during the Octave; provided they shall have received the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist, and devoutly prayed for Our intention. We will that those who are legitimately prevented from attending the Novena, or who are in places where devotions cannot, in the judgment of the Ordinary, be conveniently carried out in church, shall equally enjoy the same benefits, provided they make the Novena privately and observe the other conditions. Moreover We are pleased to grant, in perpetuity, from the Treasury of the Church, that whosoever daily during the Octave of Pentecost, up to Trinity Sunday inclusive, offer again publicly or privately any prayers, according to their devotion, to the Holy Ghost, and satisfy the above conditions, shall a second time gain each of the same Indulgences. All these Indulgences We also permit to be applied to the souls in Purgatory.

And now our mind and heart turn back to those hopes with which We began, and for the accomplishment of which We earnestly pray, and will continue to pray, to the Holy Ghost. Unite, then, Venerable Brethren, your prayers to Ours, and at your exhortation let all Christian peoples add

their prayers, also invoking the powerful and ever-acceptable intercession of the Blessed Virgin. You know well the intimate and wonderful relations existing between her and the Holy Ghost, so that she is justly called His Spouse. The intercession of the Blessed Virgin was of great avail both in the mystery of the Incarnation and in the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles. May she continue to strengthen our prayers with her suffrages, that, in the midst of all the stress and trouble of the nations, those divine prodigies may be happily revived by the Holy Ghost, which were foretold in the words of David: "Send forth thy Spirit and they shall be created, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth" (Ps. ciii., 30).

As a pledge of Divine favor and a testimony of Our affection, Ven. Brethren, to you, to your clergy and people, We gladly impart in the Lord the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at St. Peter's, in Rome, on the 9th. day of May, 1897, in the 20th year of Our Pontificate.

LEO XIII., POPE.

The Recent Paris Fire.

One of the consequences of this catastrophe has been to reveal the hidden beauty of a number of noble lives, writes the correspondent of the Liverpool Catholic Times. There are biographies to be written, and facts of supernatural beauty and heroism will be given to the world, the record of which but for the flames of the Rue Jean Goujon would for the most part have died with their authors.

Concerning one of the victims, Madame de Natimesil, the Semaine Religieuse of Evreux says that in order to meet the growing demands upon her charity she gradually parted with everything that constitutes the surroundings of a woman of position, including horses and carriages. Paris, perhaps better than Evreux, could say what she was and what she did, for it was here she poured with full hands into that inexhaustible mine of Catholic charity which causes Paris in this respect to take precedence of other cities. No longer possessing a carriage of her own, she went about on her errands of mercy in a hired vehicle and sometimes in an omnibus. She denied herself what was necessary and forestalled her income in order to feed and clothe the poor. The day on which she met her death at the charity bazaar she had returned home to fetch her rosary, having forgotten it.

Also among consequences of the catastrophe are conversion. The seeds of more than one were sown amid the flames. The cure of a Paris church relates the following incident concerning one of his parishioners. A young man, the reverse of a practical Catholic, had accompanied his mother and sister to the bazaar. He was there when the fire broke out. Having succeeded in rescuing his mother he rushed back to save his sister, whose garments were already on fire. The flames were around him. He took his sister in his arms and was carrying her away when a burning rafter fell on his head. These tarred rafters in flames, falling on the victims, helped the tragedy to do its work with terrible speed. The one falling on the

head of the young man in question left him uninjured, and he succeeded in bearing his burden away in safety. A day or two after, talking of what had happened with his sister, who was suffering with severe burns, he said: "Did I belong to the pious people I should say that my escape was simply miraculous." "Go and fetch the hat you wore," said the young lady. He brought it. "Look inside," she said. He looked inside and saw what appeared to be a small coin gleaming in the lining. It was the "miraculous medal." His sister had placed it there. The young man understood and approached the sacraments the next day.

"Victoria Regina Imperatrix."

This is the somewhat grotesque title of one of the best women who ever wore a crown. In our hatred of England and England's policy of extermination in Ireland we must not blind ourselves to the noble character and lofty motives of the woman who for sixty years has reigned, if she did not rule, over England. To justly estimate her worth we must not compare her with an ideal queen or judge her by the abstract laws of responsible Christian monarchy; we must consider her in the light of history and compare her with all the sovereigns of England since Elizabeth. She has been a good woman. No scandal ever invaded the precincts of her court. She abhorred debauchees of low and high degree. She never received a woman of shady morals, or one who was divorced and married again. Her family were brought up under as strict discipline as any in England, and while under her eye were models of princely conduct. She has been a peace-maker all her life. God only knows how many wars might have deluged Europe in blood had Victoria been an ambitious or dissolute sovereign. She has always been the friend of this country, and during the war of the Rebellion she showed her friendship in a way we should never forget. In her relations with the Catholic Church, Victoria has been most just. She has shown marked respect for the Catholic religion and its ministers, from Pope down. Exchanges of courtesy have taken place frequently between Balmoral and the Vatican, and among those who congratulated her on her jubilee none spoke more sincere words of praise and well-wishing than the Sovereign Pontiff, Leo XIII. The rank of the Cardinal of Westminster was fixed as next to princes of the blood royal and before that of the Archbishop of Canterbury. When the late Sir John Thompson died in Windsor Castle, the Queen had the funeral performed in the Castle and assisted in person. Victoria did not give Ireland home rule. She did not busy herself with reforms in Ireland. For this she cannot be blamed. It was a subject too vast for the Irish people themselves, and it is no wonder that one poor woman recoiled from the undertaking. But Victoria has made it possible for Englishmen to see Ireland though plain glasses, and show them that the fate of the British Empire could be in nowise imperiled by any measure of self-government England might bestow on Ireland.—THE WESTERN WATCHMAN.