

Yet, a few years ago I began to reproach myself for my want of courage and after recommending the matter to our good Lord, I called upon Him at His office. To my surprise, He received me with a warm shake of His hand. He told me He had become entirely disgusted with Spiritism. He had been very prosperous in business, had built a house for himself and his little family, and that near a church, so that his pious mother could spend a great part of her time before the altar. His child, when apparently in danger of death, had been baptized; he had sent her to a convent school; she was now a grown up Catholic young lady and had married a Catholic.

But he himself lived only for temporal happiness. His marriage had never been rectified and I could make no impression on his conscience. As it is said to be often the case with those who have dealt with the evil spirits, he had lost all faith and hope of future happiness.

A year or two later he came to see me and we conversed for a couple of hours, but all to no purpose. He said he was absolutely determined to die as he had lived. He had lately been sick and had bought a lot in the graveyard, which he had gone to see unmoved, and firm in mind to refuse all religious assistance at the moment of death.

Only one paragraph more is needed to complete this wretched story, and it is the saddest of all. Not long after our last interview a friend of mine sent me a paper from Mr. Mum's native city containing his photograph and the full details of his suicide. He had gone to the graveyard, and on the way called in at a florist, ordering a magnificent bouquet to be sent to his wife, and had paid for it on the spot. He went to sit on the lot which he had bought for his burial. He then drank poison; the bottle was found lying by his side. To make sure of his devilish work, he shot himself in the head; his pistol lay by him when the body was discovered. Poor fellow! And every word of this terrible story is literally true. It is too clearly imprinted on my mind for me to ever forget its details.—Charles Coppens, S. J., in The Messenger of the Sacred Heart.

SALVATION OF THE JEWS

Many may ask: "After all, why should we pray for the conversion of the Jews? We have no interest in them, and they appear worthy of none." It is for the purpose of making this point clear that the present article is written; for right-minded people are generally open to conviction.

GOD'S PEOPLE

The first reason then is found in the fact that the Jews are God's people. Long ago, He chose them and called them by His Name. Over what other Nation did His loving care extend, even to the minutest details of daily life? "Non fecit taliter omni nationi." In all their wanderings, in all their trials, God's Providence watched over them. His Mercy and Justice pursued them, even as the mercy and justice of a kind father pursues a beloved but wayward son. To them God revealed the secrets of His eternal designs. "He hath made His way known unto Moses, His will to the Children of Israel." (Ps. cii.) For their sake, He scattered Nations. "He suffered for their sakes." And He brought forth His people with joy, and His chosen with gladness." (Ps. civ.)

ETERNAL LOVE

Truly God loved them with an eternal love. Were this not enough to touch the heart of Christians the new people of God, then could be brought forward the plea that Christ's mission on earth was the Salvation of His Nation: "I have come but for the lost sheep of the House of Israel." This does not mean that our Lord would save the Jews only. No; but His Apostles would see to the rest of the world after His death. Jesus' special work was the conversion of the Jews.

Did this work succeed? Humanly speaking it was a failure. He died on the Cross derided by those He had come to save, and His Sacred Heart pierced by those He loved. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."

WHAT WE OWE THE JEWS

To you then, oh Christians, He has left the task, you must continue what Jesus has begun. By your prayers hasten the time when God will have pity on the people. He has punished for a while. They are wanderers on the earth, yet they know it not. Some have returned to their God, but many are still afar. In all countries they stray, they recognize not the Saviour, and they are exiles from their native land.

What do we owe the Jews? Jesus Christ was of the Jewish race. It follows then that in His Veins flowed the blood of that ancient nation—identical with that of the Patriarchs and Prophets. The Hebrew people today are the same as in the olden days when Christ traversed their cities, blessing and healing their little ones. To the Jews, Jesus is related in a human way, more closely than to others, and in the Blessed Sacrament, where are present the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ, we find again the blood of the Jewish people. To the Jewish

race we owe Jesus and so it follows that from them also we derived the Blessed Sacrament. To Catholics the Holy Eucharist is the epitome of their religion. Without it our Churches were so many bare halls; but with it, life itself becomes changed and endurable.

PRAY FOR THEM

Devout Christian, when before the Altar, do not neglect to pray for the Jews, that they, too, may adore the Hidden God, the Emmanuel, the God with us.

The greatest treasure the Church possesses after the Blessed Sacrament, is without doubt the Bible. The Holy Scriptures have been guarded by her with the greatest vigilance, for they contain the Works of God. Yet this Bible, so justly the object of our veneration and pride has been written from first to the last by Jew, and by Jew alone. No other hand but that of a Hebrew has contributed one passage; the Holy Ghost dictated the eternal truth to Jews alone. Do we ever think of that? If the world boasts of its literature; if the writings of the Ancient Greeks and Romans are marvels of beauty, what can be said of the Book of Books? Even those who believe not in the divine inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures, admit that they surpass in beauty and literary merit all other writings.

RESPECT FOR NATION

It is not, however, from this standpoint that we consider the subject today. To Catholics, the Bible is not merely a classic; it is something higher and nobler. In it the earth found the promise of the Messiah; in it are recorded the Life and Miracles, Passion and Death of Jesus, the Son of David.

Here then is another reason for respecting the nation we desire to convert. God grant that they who diffused the Light of Truth, may not themselves remain in the darkness of death.

THEIR GREAT MEN

From what race have the prophets sprung? Can history show greater men than those whose sole aim in life was to announce the Messiah and to keep the memory of the Redeemer in the minds of the nations? Today in reading the prophecies one is struck with the divine spirit that called them forth. When Israel will read them with love and submission, then will the Promised One be recognized and Jesus Christ will be adored as their God and their King.

THE APOSTLES

Over the whole earth, more or less have Christian missionaries brought the good tidings. But who began the evangelization of the world? The answer is, Twelve poor fishermen. The Apostles have accomplished one of the greatest miracles ever operated by man. These men, who, with one exception were to lay down their lives for the Faith, belonged to the nation, whom many despise. To that race then we owe the Faith, so dear to millions of souls.

FIRST CALLED

How great must be the desire of the Saviour's Heart to bring into the fold those who were called first, but whose ears have been deaf to the beseeching voices of their God. Pray that they may soon answer the touching invitation offered them; pray that more may be zealous in their regard, and that the Priests may become interested in this nation, so that their prayers at the Holy Sacrifice may ascend from the altar to the throne of God, for Israel.

GLORY OF THE CHURCH

But their day is past. Gone is the glory of the nation on earth, branded with the sin of desecration. Over no country shines the Star of Juda; no temple hears their sighs; no altar bears the Sacrifice of Propitiation. Yet the day will come and the day must come when, "The remnant shall be converted, the remnant, I say, of Jacob, to the mighty God (Is. x. 21.) The day will come, for God has said it, when the Sons of Abraham will be the glory of the Church: "Israel shall blossom and bud; and they shall fill the face of the world with seed." (Is. xxvii. 6.)

TO KNEEL WITH US

Oh hasten the time when Israel may kneel at the feet of Christ and adore with us the Eucharistic God. "And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for an only Son."—(N. D. S., in The Antidote.)

PRAYER

The most perfect act man can offer to God is that of prayer. It is the acknowledgment that He is God and that we are His creatures, the more perfect is it, the greater our union to Him; likewise the greater is this union, the more perfect is our prayer. St. Thomas describes prayer as a supplication whereby we try to persuade God to do what we desire. Hence it would be very useful for us to know by what form of prayer we can best attain this end, as well as the form of prayer that is the most pleasing to God. Indisputably we can affirm it to be the one that unites us the most intimately to God, thus giving us the greater power over His Heart. God in His infinite Wisdom and Goodness knowing no other means of union greater than that of food with the one who can eat it, gave us Himself to be our food and to be united substantially and in an ineffable manner to us. This considered shows what a powerful

means of prayer we have in Communion! And when we know from Jesus' own lips that He desires us to come to Him in all our necessities, that He is more eager to give than we are to receive; that He invites and urges us to come to Him and to ask whatever we desire when He is in us by Holy Communion we must naturally conclude no more powerful form of prayer can be imagined than Holy Communion. Aye! God Himself though Wisdom Itself did not discover a greater.

Jesus desires, therefore, that we expose to Him our troubles, and even go so far as to help us win our cause by becoming our advocates. So, when you come to Communion be careful not to ask less confidently than Jesus expects you to. You may imagine his disappointments did other sentiments than those of tenderness and confidence sway your heart. Lay before Him simply as an artless child your troubles and your fears. He is not like the generality of men too engrossed by their own affairs to pay much attention to your sufferings and your wants. He is not cold or indifferent, as some sometimes even our nearest and dearest. Tell Him all as to your Master and He will answer as to His child, for He is tender as a Father toward us, or to express myself more fittingly, as a Mother, He Himself having said: "Even if a mother forget the first fruit of her womb I will not forget you."—Catholic Bulletin.

CONFESSION AND COMMUNION

It is very strange how even well interested Catholics imagine, in their own case at all events, that they must go to confession every time they wish to receive Holy Communion, and it is stranger still how many people accuse themselves in the tribunal of Penance of not going to Communion after their last confession.

There is nothing more important than some clear, definite rule to guide the faithful in regard to what is understood by the state of grace and the need of confession. We know that it is false notions about confession that form the chief barrier which prevents people from receiving Holy Communion frequently and even daily. Old prejudices die hard, and it is no easy matter to get it in people's heads that confession need not have any connection with Communion, that confession is necessary only if they have committed a mortal sin since their last confession.

A very simple direction may be found in the following rule: Never communicate without confession beforehand if you are certain of being in a state of mortal sin. In other words, even a scrupulous person can go to Communion every day unless he is prepared to swear that he has committed mortal sin since his last confession.

The main task which confronts us—and it is not so easy as it might appear—is to separate from one another in the minds of the people the two sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist. Penance is only hypothetically necessary for Holy Communion. If what is "most earnestly desired by Christ our Lord and the Catholic Church" is put into practice, namely, frequent and daily Communion, then penance as a preparation for Holy Communion becomes an exception, and a comparatively rare exception at that, and not by any means the rule. This must be clearly and distinctly understood, first of all; in other words, to put it briefly and briefly at once, we must preach down penance and wish to preach up this most earnest desire of Christ and the Catholic Church.

This should not be understood as depreciating in any way the sacrament of Penance, which conveys to the souls of sinners the saving and sanctifying Blood of Jesus Christ. The necessity of the sacrament of Penance is in no danger of being lost sight of. But where Penance stands in the way of Holy Communion every day, the sacrament may be omitted unless communicants are convinced that they have been guilty of mortal sin since their last confession. This is practically the whole doctrine regarding frequent and daily Communion; it is very simple, plain and straight.—Catholic Sun.

BUSINESS ASSOCIATES

A serious matter for the boy or girl who starts out in business life is to properly meet the attitude of religious indifference held by fellow employees. Beside them in the office, store or workshop are companions who have been brought up in the belief that one religion is as good as another, or that religion does not count. All that matters, according to the best of these easy-going codes of living, is to do what is right. If doing this costs too much effort, why then "it's only natural for a fellow to slip once in a while." A religion which is disagreeably insistent on going to Mass on Sunday, avoiding temptations, receiving the Sacrament regularly, giving honest service in employment, is not understood by the indifferent non-Catholic, or unbeliever, with whom Catholic youth may be associated during working hours. An intimacy easily develops. Such influence is constant and very often injurious, especially if employed by an older person. If their combined pleasure or recreation is to be hindered by the Catholic sense of

religious duty, then of course something must break. The Catholic associate must be induced to give up his bothersome convictions. This daily influence is something to be reckoned with, the more so, if it is not an indifferent attitude, but a form of propaganda. Outburst of direct attack on religion will put the Catholic on the defensive, so the work proceeds in a well planned campaign. To a certain type of man or woman it is fun to weaken or destroy religious convictions in a child. Ridicule is a form of attack very hard for the young to meet. Surely the boy's or girl's associates in business should be a cause of serious thought to parents. Such daily influence should be met with proper parental reinforcement, and, in such cases, a quiet confidential talk in the evening will do much to counteract the harm of the day.—New World.

GOD BLESS THE LITTLE ONES

The need of children and the proper care of them was one of the chief topics discussed at a recent meeting of physicians held in New York City. Various methods to the attainment of the end were proposed, but all present were agreed on one point—that we must have more and better babies if the world ever hopes to recover from the War.

The decline in the birth rate in various large cities is causing considerable apprehension. Statistics indicate that this decline is growing greater year after year. Birth control and other immoral practices are becoming matters of every-day medical experience, and even of open propaganda. But the War, by reaping the flower of the world's manhood, has shown us our need. It is strongly possible that the exciting events and constant nervous tension and worry of the past six years will cause the coming generation to be a race of weaklings, nervous, high-strung, and practically wrecks. Now more than ever, we need to devote our best efforts to the careful raising of children, that the world may recover at least some part of the strength which it has lost through the ruthless ravages of War.

It is by experience that we learn to sympathize fully with people, by having ourselves experienced the same things which they experience. And we all know what it is to be children, to have the feelings, the desires, the needs of a child. We should all have a natural fondness for children, for they are going through a period which we have lived, the joys and sorrows of which we know through actual experience; we should be able to get their point of view.

Children are, as someone has said, a little bit of Heaven, placed here among us sinful men to remind us whence we came and whither we are going. Children are the purest article as it was sent upon earth by God, before the contaminating serpent had given it to eat of the tree of knowledge, before its eyes had been opened to the occasions of evil and sin with which the world is infested.

For when we are children, we romp and shout and play, without a thought beyond the present day. But when we grow older, worry and seriousness settle like a pall over us, and, unless we allow the sunbeams of the happy memories of childhood days to break through the clouds and shed their cheering rays upon our hearts, we will be lost in the gloomy night of mechanical action, living a life that is not life, but merely an existence. God knows how badly we need children! They are the music whose joyful strains make light the path of an otherwise weary and monotonous existence.

"Ah! what would the world be to us if the children were no more? We should dread the desert behind Worse than the dark before."

Children are never had. They may be mischievous; they may be inclined to do things which are forbidden them; but, incapable of moral action, they are likewise incapable of moral

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gullit. And it is by keeping the happy days of our own childhood green in our memories that we shall enable ourselves to make allowances for their lack of perfection. A normal child must have its fun.

Let us always love children, despite their undeniable shortcomings, and cherish them always. They are the sunshine of the world. Let us ever appreciate them, bear with their faults and keep our love for them in our hearts.—A. M. B. in The Echo.

"Better late than never" is not half so good a maxim as "Better never late."—Anon.

We make mistakes, or what we call such. The nature that could fall into such mistakes exactly needs, and in the goodness of the dear God is given, the living of it out. And beyond this I believe more. That in the pure and patient living of it out we come to find that we have fallen, not into hopeless confusion of our own wild, ignorant making, but that the finger of God has been at work among our lines, and that the emerging is into His blessed order; that He is forever making up for us our own undoings; that He makes them up beforehand; that He over-mere restoreth our souls.—A. D. T. Whitney.

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