

I saw him hold the medal in his hand, and for a while there was silence, whilst I, at least, was praying. Then once again I tried persuasion, and this time not without effect. The Mother of God had prayed for the lad to her Son, and the softness of his heart was the answer. He was fearful still, but he did not say to me nay. Upon reaching Hull he followed where I led, and together we reached the presbytery by the Catholic Church. At the door John Fyvie's fears returned and he could only be induced to wait for the priest, who was out, by a note from me—I was already overdue elsewhere—in which I begged for leniency for one who had long been absent from the Sacraments and who was bound for the North Sea mines. I left him with this note in one hand, and furtively though he did it, I could see my medal was clutched in the other. Then I knew he was all right. I had his promise, and the Mother of God would get for him the strength to keep it. As we parted, I told him I would remember him in my Mass each day at 7 o'clock—and I, too, kept my word.

Just lately, on my return through Hull, I met the priest to whom my note had been delivered, and I learned for certain that once again Our Lady, the Refuge of Sinners, had as John himself would say, "brought another craft safe into port," or, in other words, "and again the priest smiled at his listener." I learned that he had been to his confession.

A sudden impulse made Madeline detail him yet a moment. "I will tell Mrs. Fyvie everything when I see her," she said. "And I will write to her as well. Thank you so much for telling me—and—and will you pray for me, too."

For a moment the priest thought of the medal which had replaced that which the sailor boy now wore, but deciding that the moment for offering such a gift to Madeline O'Leary had not yet come, he left her with a prayer to the Help of Christians on his lips, having secured from her the promise of a visit as soon as she heard from Mrs. Fyvie.

That night the letters were carried across England and in due time they were delivered at the cottage in Slieveboy. Later in the same day came a brown official envelope with further news—official news—of the widow's sailor son.

And after another span of hours Madeline O'Leary, spelling the casualty list of mingled victory and disaster to our fleet, came upon one name she sought: Fyvie, J.—A. B. O O O

Heavily, with blinded eyes, she turned towards her letters, and one of them bore the Slieveboy mark. It was written in a labored, childish hand, but the words were Mrs. Fyvie's own. "God's will be done, daughter dear, for Him to leave me stript. But didn't he send the good news first of all, and may His holy will be done." She read no more. She could not see the paper in her hands, but in her mind a great light broke. The faith and trust of Mrs. Fyvie had completed her awakening, and the visit duly paid to the priest who had told the news of John Fyvie's last confession was not only to tell of the widow's letter, but also to ask for herself instruction in the Catholic faith.—Alice Dease, Rosary Magazine.

**GENERAL INTENTION FOR AUGUST**

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XV.

**THE RETURN OF PROTESTANTS TO CATHOLICISM**

It is a sad truth, clearly established by even a cursory glance at history, that the greatest enemies of the Church, whether we consider their energy and activity or the last- ingness of their misguiding labors, have been those whom she had nursed and cradled. So patent is this regret for the fact, that if there had been no bad Catholics, there would now be no Protestants.

We may go much further back in the history of the Church to the time when the present schismatical bodies, represented in Europe, Asia, and Africa, by remnants of once important religious communities in communion with the Holy See, knew no self-dependent existence, but were linked with Rome in the bonds of a charity founded on the same faith and vivified by the union of all under the pastoral staff of the great shepherd, the Vicar of Christ.

But bad Catholics arose. Some were powerful through their own personality; others were powerful through political backing; others, finally, were powerful through a fortuitous combination of the circumstances of time and place and local dealings. All made a bad use of that power which might have been turned into channels for the good of souls, and for the spreading of the Kingdom of God on earth. Those misguided men, Nestorius, Eutyches, Photius, and others, who laid unholy hands on the seamless robe of Catholic unity, played their parts, basked in the glare of a fleeting glory, and then passed on out of the daylight of life into the darkness of the tomb. But their works remained. Not endowed, it is true, with the energetic, life-giving vitality that betokens a healthy and vigorous organism, they still survive, as a man survives, though his limbs are palsied, through his blood creeps sluggishly through

his veins, though his eye is dim, though his perceptions are hazy and vaguely defined.

It is no new venture, then, when certain powerful and ambitious Catholics in the sixteenth century decided to make over, according to their personal views, the work which our Divine Lord had raised on Peter, a work which had been vitalized by the direct personal action of the Holy Ghost. It was a bold undertaking, but it was not new in the life of the Church.

The success of those men was so sudden, so dazzling, so great, that some timorous Catholics actually wavered in the faith and had misgivings about the Divine promises of the perpetuity of the Church. Poor, devoted souls! God has said that the Church shall survive all perils. His word cannot fail. But there is no Divine promise of any certain degree of fervor, constancy, and missionary spirit at any particular time among the faithful in general; for those qualities depend upon the free cooperation of individual Catholics with the grace that God places at their disposal but does not force upon them against their will.

If the progress of Protestantism was rapid and startling, the suddenness with which that progress came to a halt seemed no less than amazing. To the thinker of the twentieth century, however, who can look back reflectively over the past four hundred years, there is nothing wonderful in the meteoric rise of Protestantism, as there is nothing wonderful in the way in which it soon spent its energy as a conquering force.

Though the Church is a spiritual society, her work is with human beings in whom evil tendencies are always struggling for the mastery. A saint is recognized as a saint simply because he curbs those tendencies and brings them under the control of grace; a sinner on the other hand, gives a free rein to those same tendencies and becomes more or less hardened and set in his evil ways. Thirst for power is an evil tendency; greed for our neighbor's goods is another; so is restless striving for unrestrained freedom of action. There are in man other tendencies which lure him to forget the dignity of his immortal soul and to live as a beast with beasts.

What could be more trying to a proud or vainglorious monarch than the thought that some old man far away in Rome had excoriated the ruler, might admonish him, not as an equal might remonstrate with an equal, but as a father admonishes his son? If that monarch were of extravagant habits, how he would hanker after the treasures of church and shrine and venerable abbey, treasures slowly heaped up during long years, thanks to the pious charity of the faithful! Those treasures had been preserved and guarded and prudently administered by men who knew that they were but stewards of the great Householder.

If a powerful man resolves to exert his might in a high-handed fashion, he will always find other men to applaud his determination and to assist him in his design. These men may be distinguished nobodies, without fame or social standing or respectable family connections, who hope to rise from the mire of obscurity by the favor of him whom they serve. As a consequence of their nefarious co-operation, their hands may "drip with the fat of sacrifice," it is true, but if they rise to the petty greatness at which they have been gazing, they hide those sin-stained hands from sight and fiercely aver that they are clean.

Another and a most important element which facilitated the religious upheaval that attended the rise of Protestantism is to be seen in the Black Death, a plague which ravaged the greater part of Europe in the fourteenth century. The clergy and the religious having suffered enormous losses, the bishops were forced to promote young and inexperienced clerics with little priestly formation to important offices in the Church, where their fewness and incapacity resulted in a generation of poorly instructed Catholics. This evil, if it was an evil, might have righted itself in time, had the state of public affairs remained in other respects normal, but the horrors of a long and exhausting war added considerably to the general demoralization. Even with this increase in the burden of the ministers of the altar, the public conscience might have been rescued from impending woe if religion had been supported by an earnest and enlightened body of men engaged in administering the affairs of state. But just the opposite took place; for, coupled with a defective knowledge of religious truth among many of the faithful, there appeared the ambition, the headstrongness, the greed, and the lust of this or that potentate, who would be a law unto himself, and therefore framed a code of religion and morals to suit his own caprice.

With these facts before us, we are guilty of no exaggeration when we say that undoubtedly many of our brethren in the sixteenth century did not really reject the faith; nor is it an exaggeration to affirm, as we do affirm, that they were robbed of their faith. They were as much the victims of physical violence as is the traveler who is robbed by the masked highwayman. Their children's children did not know the faith, for only a distorted caricature was held up before them as the genuine faith "once delivered to the saints."

But the faith in which the ancestors of those children had lived and served God did not perish. It still exists, according to the Divine

promise, and it remains, as it has been from the foundation of the Church, the unfailing source of spiritual life and activity.

We see on the other hand, to what sore straits Protestantism has been reduced after less than four centuries of existence. As soft sandstone yields to the action of alternate heat and frost, and shows creases and furrow and channel, so Protestantism, left without Divine protection to the mercies of the human elements that created and fashioned it, has succumbed little by little to spiritual disintegration until it is now a sort of religious corpse galvanized into movements that seem to be the actions of a being endowed with life. When it went forth from the one fold and the one shepherd, Protestantism carried as its luggage a considerable store of religious and moral truth, but as time passed by, daring men laid violent hands upon that store, so that it is now sadly diminished. The way of doubt, uncertainty, and anxious questioning has replaced what was once faith in mind and heart. So fatal is it to search infallibly without an infallible light to point the way! But the soul is naturally Christian. There is hidden away in it, perhaps in some obscure corner, a lingering recognition of its dependence upon God in faith, hope, and charity. That smoldering ember may yet glow with all a seraph's ardor if only by apostolic zeal it be sought out and fanned into flame.

The problem of Church unity, when it regards nations differing in speech, temperament, ideals, government, and traditions, is so difficult that only a Divine Lawgiver can establish and maintain it. The case might seem otherwise, however, if there were question of only one country having a common language and history; yet we see that even here though the matter is almost as simple as man can make it, anything like oneness of belief and practice is as visionary as the dream of an opium-smoker. As English is commonly spoken and understood, the words "high," "low" and "broad," for example, are not precisely synonymous; but as they are applied to different sections of religious thinkers belonging to the same State Church, they connote a divergence of religious thought so wide that only the most elastic bands can embrace all three. This, however, does not constitute oneness of faith, even though there be a certain oneness of organization; for, if such were the case, we might with equal plausibility maintain that the present combination between Austria, Germany, and Turkey constitutes a religious oneness. The Holy Trinity and the Sacrifice of the Mass are not local and trifling disciplinary questions to anyone that is interested in religion.

When, therefore, we observe that in certain churches of a religious organization, the Mass is offered as a sacrifice and that in other churches of the same religious organization that same service called "Mass" is denounced as superstition and downright idolatry, we cannot see any unity of worship in that organization. If the Mass is an adorable Sacrifice, it is not idolatry; if it is idolatry, it is not an adorable Sacrifice.

Small wonder, then, that at sight of such substantial differences of opinion on vital religious questions within the uncertain limits of the same ecclesiastical organization, serious and thinking people are inclined to withdraw from all common effort to serve God, and to do what they can as private individuals towards saving their souls and honoring God's majesty. "Others, we fear, and their number may not be small, may have conceived a disregard, if not a contempt, for religion, when they have seen it treated as if it were a game of battledore and shuttlecock. The result would be indifference to religion, which would dry up the well-springs of piety and render the heart callous to the promptings of grace.

O, if they would but turn their eyes towards the centre of religious truth where their forefathers gathered and followed unity of faith! We see no hope for a return to the one Fold in anything like a body, for we are not acquainted with any Protestant denomination in which unity of religious opinion and persuasion prevails. Hence, we are invited and exhorted to pray for the return of Protestants to Catholicism; since Catholicism represents something clearly defined, discoverable, knowable, while Protestantism is "one" only in protesting, without any common ground for the hundreds of conflicting sects that go under that general name.

"The hungry sheep look up and are not fed." This vividly portrays the spiritual state of many good people who, from education and environment more than from bad will, are estranged from their true Mother, the Church. Here, as in other matters as well, the long way is by pre-

cept, the short way is by example. If there had been no bad Catholics there would now be no Protestants; if we Catholics now had a proper appreciation of our faith, the number of Protestants would diminish, quickly, for the earnest, the well-meaning, the sincere Protestants would feel impelled to examine the claim of the Church to this respect and allegiance. It is not the fault of the Church, it is true, that there are so many careless Catholics, for she is ever reminding them of their duty to God and to their conscience; but while the inquiring non-Catholic sees the indifference of Catholics to their Church and to the voices of their pastors, he does not hear and does not know the efforts that the Church is always putting forth to recall her wayward children to their duty. "The enemies of a man are those of his own household."

For those fascinating souls that are constrained to live on spiritual crusts through lack of a place at the great banquet of God, we ought specially to pray, that they may know and enjoy what we know and enjoy, namely, the fullness of the Catholic faith and the helps and consolations that it brings to him who knows it, reverses it, and strives to put its holy precepts into practice.

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**FALL TERM OPENS MONDAY, SEPT. 6, 1915**  
For Catalogue and particulars address Rev. F. Forster, C. S. B., President.