

The Catholic Record.

"Christianus mihi nomen est, Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname).—St. Pacian, 4th Century.

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ST. PATRICK.

What contributed most to our pleasure on Patrick's feast was the absence of literature identifying him with one of the many sects. The old saint has figured so many times over as a Presbyterian (fancy him with the New Catechism!) and again as an Anglican, that we cannot refrain from thanking our brethren for their praiseworthy silence. What has always mystified us is that anyone with any knowledge of history should have dared to depict him as a sort of Christian knight-errant and forerunner of the Reformation.

The facts of his coming to Ireland and his teachings are so plainly recorded that the not seeing them can be accounted for only by an intense bigotry or mental blindness.

Even Usher and his work, which is the principal storehouse of our opponents' arguments, admits that Patrick was commissioned by Pope Celestine to carry the good tidings to the Irish. There may be doubt and dispute as to the place of his birth, but that he came from Rome, pledged to preach the Catholic faith, is not denied to-day by any reputable historian. St. Patrick, writes Probus, poured forth to God the following prayer:

"O Lord Jesus Christ lead me I beseech Thee, to the seat of the Holy Roman Church, that receiving authority there to preach with confidence Thy sacred truths, the Irish nation may, through my ministry, be gathered to the fold of Christ."

And soon after, being about to proceed to Ireland, this man of God Patrick went, as he had wished, to Rome the head of all Churches, and having asked and received the Apostolic authority, he returned the same road by which he had gone thither.

The ancient and most authentic of the Irish annals, says Dr. Parsons in "Studies in Church History," derive the mission of St. Patrick from the Holy See. Thus the four Masters write: "St. Patrick was ordained to the Episcopacy by the holy Pope, Celestine, the first who commissioned him to come to Ireland and preach and give the Irish the precepts of faith and religion."

We do not wish to weary our readers with the many testimonies given by Dr. Parsons in reference to this fact. It was so indisputable that to deny it in times past was indicative of mental collapse.

Patrick, himself, claimed that Peter's See was the source of Ireland's Christianity. You may see his words in the Book of Armagh—words of a Bishop bound to Rome, the centre of unity, and knowing naught of the forms of error that sprang up long after he had been summoned to his reward.

"Thanks be to God," he says, "you have passed from the kingdom of Satan to the city of God: the Church of the Irish is a Church of Romans: as you are children of Christ, so be you children of Rome."

If history, then, is any guide to a knowledge of past times, we say that the individual who endeavors to dissociate St. Patrick from Rome, and to prove that he came to Ireland with no commission save from the Holy Spirit, should go into politics at once.

And never did the Irish forget the commands of their Apostle to be loyal to Rome. In the days of their nationhood as well as in the days when their feet were hard pressed on the path of suffering and humiliation, they never swerved in allegiance to his teaching. When they were offered the gold that would fain buy their priceless heritage they spurned it, and chose suffering and starvation rather than apostasy. Their fidelity in stress and storm to an ancient faith must thrill anyone, even if he came from Derry.

stamped on their history that one is at a loss to ascertain why it should have ever been called into question. It is sometimes denied in our days, but it takes crass ignorance plus a love for notoriety to do it. "No discussion on religious matters," says Dr. Lynch, as quoted in the erudite work of Dr. Parsons, "ever arose in Ireland which was not referred to Rome for adjudication. From Rome Ireland had her precepts of morality and her oracles of faith. Rome was the mother, Ireland the daughter; Rome the head, Ireland the member. From Rome, the fountain source of religion, Ireland undoubtedly derived and with her whole soul imbued her faith. In doubtful matters the Pope was the arbiter of the Irish, in things certain their master; in ecclesiastical matters their head; in temporal, their defender; in all things their judge; in everything their adviser; their oracle in doubt, their bulwark in the hour of danger."

And the devotion of the past is the heritage of the present.

The Irish are guided on their way by the teacher who can never fall into error. They know nothing of the inconsistencies and absurdities of the various forms of so-called religion that have been foisted on the public, for the faith that has stood Gamaliel's test is theirs, burning within their hearts as brightly as when it was first enkindled by St. Patrick.

EASTERTIDE.

We hope that Easter day may be laden with blessings for our readers. For us it is the most beautiful feast of the year. Our heart thrills with the music of the Alleluia and we are back over the years and seem to see with a certain measure of happiness the body of the Christ laid to rest on His bed of stone. We look at the pale Face—beautiful yet despite its disfigurement—at the seamed and scarred tabernacle of the tenderest and gentlest Soul.

The mother's heart must have been broken. She knew Him and He was her Son. She had crowned Him to sleep in her arms; she had watched and guided Him until He went about His Father's business. The shadow, indeed, fell athwart her heart on that day in the temple—but to see Him die beside the thieves and amidst the execrations of His persecutors was too terrible.

But there was peace in the grave—and He had at last somewhere to lay His head. Perhaps the mother was grateful for that.

The multitude went to their homes wondering at the events that had transpired or forgetting them instantly—for people are fickle.

The leaders who had plucked Him from the land of the living rejoiced that He could no longer be a menace to their ambition. Pilate, perchance, had watched the terrible drama with dismal forebodings. True, in a fit of weakness he affixed his signature to the death warrant, but he was fashioned differently from the Pharisees. The beauty and majesty of the Nazarene told him that day he sat in judgment that he was confronted by a very King amongst men. And the darkness came down on governor's palace and Pharisees' home and the garden.

The next day the priests came to see if the sentinels were faithful to watch and ward over the tomb, and they find them on the alert, ready with lance and shield for all invaders. No deluded disciple can take the body whilst the wary Romans remain. The hours go by, bearing happiness to His enemies and giving them a pledge that the miracle on which He had staked His cause would not come to pass.

On Sunday morning they hear unwonted clamor in the streets. Knots of men are here and there in earnest converse. A man strangely like one of His followers goes by hurriedly, indicating by his whole bearing that his heart was singing some joyous song. Had the sentinels proved recreant to their trust?

And sallying, forth eager to know the cause of the excitement they hear the cry that the Nazarene has arisen from the dead. Yes, the tomb is empty. They watched well, the soldiers—but patrolling the garden this morning they met a Man whose face gleamed like the lightning. Lance and shield fell from their hands and they became as dead through fear. Mary,

who was a sinner in the city, who kissed His feet in Simon's banquet hall, has seen Him in very truth alive. The words fall in hideous discord upon the ears of the Pharisees. And so the Nazarene, who had nought save the robe woven Him by His mother, had conquered them who had everything, and had proven, it seemed, that He could bring life back to the body which they saw nailed to a cross.

But how the tidings must have made sweet music in the hearts of the Blessed Mother and the Magdalen. They were side by side on Calvary—gazing upwards at the gibbet which held for the one a peerless Child, and for the other a gracious Master who had given her back her peace and purity.

The Mother had her Son once more—no longer a worm, and no man, but clad in strength and majesty. "My Mother," He said: "I am arisen and with thee still. Arise, my Mother, arise. Make haste, my love, my dove, my beautiful one, and come, for the winter is now past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers have appeared in our land."

The Apostles opened the history of the triumph that we read to-day. Clear was the path now and clear the goal, and with intellects freed from the bondage of doubt and with hearts buoyed up by the hope of the imperishable crown they rejoiced in the day that the Lord had made. It was no dream or fleeting vision. Many times did the Apostles see Him in broad daylight during forty days, in different circumstances and at different times. The certainty of the reality removed all suspicion that the Master of three years was not the God foretold by the prophets. It gave them a faith firm and fearless—a faith that bade uncultured men from the fishing hamlets of Judea to charge the picked battalions of the world and hell. And we rejoice to day because in Christ all shall be made alive, that some day we shall see our God, and call Him, as Magdalen on the morn of the first Easter—Rabboni.

TALK WITH A PARSON.

Parson: "He (Christ) declared that the kingdom of heaven is within you."

It is well known that Our Lord thought of the Pharisees. He called them vipers, hypocrites, painted sepulchres. Now, if you look in Luke 17—20, 21, you will see that the words you refer to, "the kingdom of heaven is within you," were addressed to these Pharisees, these enemies of Our Lord whom He so frequently and vehemently denounced. The words then must have a different meaning from that you would give them. This is an instance of careless quoting of Scripture.

You next quote St. Paul's words, "the kingdom is not meat and drink, but in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost," and then you explain that by meat and drink, St. Paul meant "churches, forms, sacraments and organizations." By this interpretation you desired to make it appear that St. Paul made light of the Church. If you had taken the trouble to read the text in Romans 14—18 to 17, which you refer to, you would have seen that his words had not the most remote reference to churches, forms, sacraments, or organizations. Let the reader consult the passage from Romans and he will see how carelessly you throw texts of Scripture about without any special reference to their meaning, and how ignorantly you interpret what you quote.

If you desired to know what St. Paul thought of the Church you could have found it in his first letter to Timothy 3—15, where he speaks in no equivocal terms, "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of truth." It is evident from this that when St. Paul wrote to the Romans he addressed them as members already within the house of God, the Church of the living God; and as members of the household he advised them in the way of perfection that leads to the kingdom of God.

Parson: "The kingdom of God is the end, the Church is but a means to the end."

If by "Kingdom of God" you mean eternal happiness, salvation, the Church of Christ is certainly a means to that end, and the only means to that end in the present order of Divine Providence. She was instituted by Christ as the custodian of His sacraments, and the guardian and interpreter of His Word. She is His house, His kingdom on earth, built by His own hands, and, therefore, the divine life established means to eternal life; and he who desires the end must avail himself of the means mercifully extended to him. To despise the means is to despise Him who provided it.

Parson: "Christ seems desirous of one thing only—to get the kingdom of God into the souls of men, and He used the Church as a means to that end, and nothing else."

He died for man's salvation; and He established His Church as the means to that end; as the means to enlighten, purify and sanctify the souls of men and make them worthy of the eternal kingdom. If you call this "getting the kingdom of God into the souls of men" we have no objection. This means, the Church, the handiwork of the Son of God, is therefore sacred, a divine instrument; and to speak of it lightly, as you do, shows a lack of reverence not in keeping with the Christian character which you profess.

As the means to an end—to eternal life—the Church, you say, "is but a husk to the kernel, the scaffolding to the building." If the Church of Christ is but a husk because it is a means to an end, then the grace of God is but a husk, for it also is a means to an end. The incarnation, teaching, sufferings and death of the God man are but husks, for they are means to an end. The Bible, revelation, is but a husk because means to an end. All government, divine or human, is but husk because means to an end. All created things—including the souls of men—are but husks, because all are means to the theological end. If all be husk, where is the kernel? It is a fact worthy the attention of the philosopher that the Protestant, especially the flippancy and superficial one, cannot argue against the Church without taking an irreverent, infidel attitude toward sacred things. Whatever has the hand of God impressed upon it should be sacred to the Christian. The Church is the creation of the eternal Son of God, and yet the Iowa parson, who thinks himself to be a minister of Christ, attempts to be witty, and even wise, at the expense of that Church which St. Paul tells us "Christ loved, and gave Himself up for it." (Ephesians 5:25) It is but a husk, a scaffolding, says the parson.

Parson: "But Roman Catholicism seems to make the Church both means and end, and so far as I can understand it, it aims at nothing so much as the glorification of the Church."

Seems! In arguing against the Church or against anything else, you should not be content with seeming; you should know what it is. There is no doubt Catholicism—as it seems to you—is utterly indefensible and no one would think of defending so grotesque a product of your feverish imagination. All one need do is to show that Catholicism, "so far as I understand it," is a Catholicism that is not understood very far. The Catholic needs only to defend his religion as it is. He is not called on to deal with the rubbish you attribute to it, further than to repudiate it. He is not responsible for the nightmares that haunt your imagination as a consequence of too heavy a load of undigested misinformation. Catholics love and glorify the Church, and they have the example of Our Lord for doing so. St. Paul tells the Ephesians, "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself up for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. . . . No man ever hath his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church." (Ephesians, 5—25, 27, 29) This Church, so loved and nourished and cherished by Our Lord, you call but a husk. In view of the above words of St. Paul your saying is exceedingly flat.

Parson: "Your whole conception of the Church is wrong because your conception of truth is wrong."

The Catholic conception of the Church is beautifully expressed in the above words of St. Paul to the Ephesians, and by what he wrote to Timothy, "The house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth." We assume that the Apostle's conception of Church truth is to be preferred to yours.

But by what criterion do you measure Father Nugent's conception of truth, that you judge it to be wrong? By your own yardstick? Very well, by what criterion of truth do you verify your yardstick; that is, show that it is the correct measure or norm of truth? What light have you that Father Nugent has not? The Bible? He has it as well as you. Your private judgment? His is as good as yours. What right, then, have you to set your conception of truth up as a model which he should copy in order to be right? He has the same right to insist that your conception of truth should correspond with his in order to be correct. You have no patent or copyright in the matter.

Parson: "Do you think the truth depends on any man or set of men, to give it validity and power?"

The truth once delivered, identified, and understood, needs no further witnessing. We speak now of revealed truth. In God's Providence in both the Old and the New Dispensation men were necessary to deliver, identify and explain the revealed truth, because God would it so. They were, therefore, necessary to give it validity and power, for undelivered, unidentified, unknown, it could have no power. The truth in itself is one thing; the truth as known is another. It is the knowledge of the truth that is important to man, for truth that he does not know

is to him as that which is not. Your question, then, to have any practical bearing, should have been put in this form: Does a knowledge of revealed truth depend on any man or set of men to give it validity and power? And the answer is, Yes; because God in dealing with mankind has invariably used men as instruments to make His will known. In the Old Law He used Moses and the prophets. In the New Law He spoke through the Apostles whom He commanded to teach the world and through His Church: "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." The coming to us of the knowledge of revealed truth has, then, in God's Providence, always depended on what you call "a set of men." It is the known truth that is to us valid, fruitful and enlightening. The unknown truth has no action or influence on us. Then the action, influence and fruitfulness of the known truth depends upon God, on "a set of men," who from time to time, by Divine commission, made revealed truth known to us. What you know of revealed truth from the Bible depends on the "set of men" who wrote it.

Parson: "Does truth wait for an organization of ignorant and illiberal men to discover it and to give it indorsement and currency?"

That it does is the Protestant theory. The Catholic rejects it, and believes that only by an infallible authority can revealed truth come to us in a manner that leaves no doubt of its identity and meaning. The only organization that has the authority to deliver revealed truth is, in the New Dispensation, the Church established by Christ to deliver it.

You err then egregiously when you say, "Your whole Church organization proceeds on that assumption," namely, that the truth must wait for an organization of ignorant and fallible men. The Catholic proceeds on the assumption that the Church of Christ, against which He said the gates of hell should not prevail, cannot err in teaching, and is therefore infallible.

Parson: "It is truth which makes or organizes, not organization which makes, discovers or declares the truth."

The known truth may, but does not necessarily, make organization. Nor does it alone make organization, for Mahomedanism and Mormonism are organized. Even thieves and burglars organize. When you said organization neither discovers nor declares the truth you forget that Methodism is an organization. You make a very humble confession when you say by necessary implication that your own Church does not declare the truth. We leave it to your brethren to settle that with you.

Parson: "The truth is living and almighty; organizations are dead and helpless things."

The truth, when known, is powerful, but unknown it is of no force. You do not seem to perceive that the real question is, not how powerful truth is, but how do we come to a knowledge of it? It is valueless to you if you do not possess it; like the gold and diamonds hidden in the unknown depths of the earth. You can turn them to no use, even as coaliferous, unless you possess them. The point is not as to their existence somewhere, but how can you obtain them. So with truth, all general and abstract talk about its beauty and power is less of time if you do not possess it; that is, do not know it. As for revealed truth, it can become known to us only through the means God has appointed: that is, through His teaching Church. You fall into the unconscious sophistry of assuming that you know the truth, whereas that is one of the things to be demonstrated. Another sophistry is that you constantly confound truth with a knowledge of it.

Parson: "Your position assumes that truth is that dead and helpless thing which depends on organization for its existence."

This only shows how extremely ignorant you are of the Catholic position. Truth is a dead and helpless thing to him who knows it not. It is only when it is promulgated by the means appointed by the Revealer that truth becomes living and forceful. That means, in the New Dispensation, is the organization called the Church of Christ. It is through this divine instrument that the truth is made known to men and when known it becomes operative. The great practical question for men is not the power of truth—for all admit that—but what is the means to come to a knowledge of that powerful truth. Revealed truth in itself depends on no one but God, but our knowledge of it depends on the organization which God established to communicate it to us. That is the Catholic's position; and not the absurd one you attribute to him.

Parson: "Truth made the Church possible."

And being possible, our Lord made it to be, and to make a certain knowledge of revealed truth possible to us.

Parson: "Truth is not now, nor never was, dependent upon stills for its standing."

That is doubtless true; but our knowledge of revealed truth depends on the teaching of the Church of Christ, which as St. Paul tells us, is the pillar and ground of truth. Here, as frequently elsewhere, you confound truth with your knowledge of it. Truth that is unknown has no standing in human consciousness—even on stills.—N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

THE DIVINE CHRIST.

"What think ye of Christ?"—the older question of Christ Himself to the Pharisees—has been propounded by the Boston Herald to the representatives of five religious bodies, and under it the answers therefrom are grouped in last Sunday's issue as "Five Easter Sermons." The Herald leads with "The Christ of Roman Catholicism," by the Rev. Henry A. Brann, D. D. The Christ of the Catholic Church, is, of course, the Divine Christ of the Sacred Scriptures, who proclaimed His own Divinity, and in proof thereof spoke and wrought as never man spoke or wrought before. Writes Dr. Brann:

Profound as are many of the pagan poets, and sublime as are the Hebrew prophets, none of them can compare with Christ. His ideas are the germs of all the great principles of modern social science and of modern enlightenment. The seed which He sowed has developed and blossomed into every form of beauty and beneficence. His lessons have filled the minds of men with grand thoughts and their hearts with love and charity. In His Sermon on the Mount He has, in the Eight Beatitudes, said what no one but God could have said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." These words alone have transformed the whole social world.

Further he declares, and all men of learning must endorse him: "Those who assail the divinity of Christ are pigmies to the intellectual giants who, in every age, have adored Him." The Rev. Lyman Abbot, representing Evangelical Protestantism, confesses the Divine Christ, so do the representatives of the "New Church" or Swedenborgianism, so do the Christian Scientists, though with their own peculiar explanations of His miracles. Dr. Minot J. Savage, representing the Unitarians, denies the Divinity of Christ and His miracles. Who so inconsistent among all misbelievers, as those who deny Christ as God and glorify Him as Man? It is a singular coincidence that the Gospel of Passion Sunday is chiefly of Christ's own assertion of His Divinity to the unbelieving Jews. But they were more consistent than the modern Unitarians, for rejecting Christ as God, they would not have Him for a prophet. It is useless to plead that Christ spoke figuratively, or was by any one taken in a figurative sense: for in proclaiming His God head on this or on any occasion, He appealed to the Jews' most sacred knowledge and tradition: "Before Abraham was made, I AM" thus giving Himself the very Name which the Eternal and Inmutable God spoke to Moses. Their immediate attempt to destroy Him proved that they did not misunderstand His meaning. If Christ were not God, Christianity would be a huge imposture. But it is good to see that even among Protestant Christians this basic article of faith still holds its own; and that its very repudiators pay tribute to its deep roots in the consciousness of men by their own celebrations of Easter Sunday!—Boston Pilot.

A QUESTION OF COMMON SENSE.

Rev. Dr. Rainsford, of St. George's Protestant Episcopal Church, New York, made a forcible plea last Sunday for the religious training of American youth.

"Ethical teaching," he declared, "the future citizen must have, and I will say that I would rather the children of our great city were handed over to a Christian body, the Roman Catholic, for instance, to be taught by them the ethics of the Christian religion and their duty to God and their neighbor than see them not taught religion at all. That is a strong statement, is it not? I do not want to be misunderstood, however."

"I do not advocate, of course, such a handing over of the children, for I am sure common sense and a growing feeling of the inadequacy of our present public school training will result in our adopting a better way."

"But I would rather call the Roman Catholic clergy in and open the schools to their teaching for thirty minutes five times a week than give the children a merely secular education. First we faucied the main point of education was to train the head. In time we added to that idea the training of the hand and body. But, I tell you, the child is more than head and hand. There is the will and soul. Education is narrow, and will fall till she deal with them also."

Such public appeals are useful in that they may hasten the era of common sense applied to the rational development of sound theories of education under State control.—Catholic Universe.

PROTESTANTS AND LENT.

An encouraging sign of the times is the tendency towards a special observance of Lent which is noticeable on the part of many Protestant congregations. Commenting on this, the Outlook says that the number of churches which are planning to observe Holy Week is larger this year than ever. "No time in the year," says this Protestant paper, "is so favorable for special religious work as the Lenten season." A few years ago this statement would have seemed a strange admission on the part of a Protestant editor, but among educated people the influence of the Church is making itself felt, and there is not such a horror of Catholic practices as there used to be.—Sacred Heart Review.