

GOOD FRIDAY.

This day is not one of man's institution, but was consecrated by our Lord Jesus Christ, when He made it the day of His most holy Passion. It is impossible that the anniversary of our Lord's sufferings could ever have passed by as a common day in those times when the memory of them was yet so recent, and when a daily fellowship in them was so continually before the eyes of Christians in the martyrdoms of his faithful servants. It is spoken of in early Christian writings under the name of the "Paschal Day," but in later ages it was chiefly known as the "Day of Preparation," or the "Day of our Lord's Passion." In early English times it was styled "Long Friday," but its present beautiful appellation is the one by which it has now been popularly known for many centuries.

Very soon after midnight our Blessed Lord was betrayed and apprehended; and about day-dawn He was taken before the judicial High Priest, Annas, the ceremonial High Priest, Caiaphas, and the Sanhedrin or Great Council of the Jews, where He was accused of blasphemy. After that He was sent bound to Pilate, before whom He was charged with treason, and by Pilate sent to Herod, as belonging to his jurisdiction. Having been mocked and insulted by Herod, the holy Jesus was sent back by him to the Roman governor, declared innocent of all crime against the state, yet scourged, to please the Jews, and, for the same reason, sentenced to be crucified. Then He was insulted with the purple robe, and the reed sceptre, and a *corona radiata* made of thorns, was buffeted and spit upon, and afterwards led forth by the Way of Sorrows to Calvary.

At the third hour (9 a.m.), our Lord, having borne His cross, or a portion of it, until His exhausted body had fainted under the burden, was nailed to it upon Mount Calvary, just outside the city of Jerusalem, two thieves being crucified with Him, one on either side. From the cross He spoke His last words. As they fastened Him to it, He cried, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" when the penitent thief turned to Him in his agony and asked to be remembered in His Kingdom, He said, "Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." When He beheld His mother and the beloved disciple standing at the foot of His cross, Head is to the one, "Woman, behold thy Son," and to the other, "Behold thy mother."

At the sixth hour (noon), ensued the darkness and the earthquake, and during the three hours which followed before the return of light, it is supposed that our Lord's greatest sufferings took place—the veiling of the Father's Presence, the agony of "being made sin for us," and of bearing, in some mysterious way, "the iniquity of us all." The awful mystery of these three long hours was summed up in an ancient Litany, in the words, "By thine *unknown* sufferings, Good Lord, deliver us."

At the ninth hour (3 p.m.), the climax of this awful period was reached, when our Lord spoke the words, "Eloi! Eloi! Lama Sabachthani?" "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" After this, He said, "I thirst," and when He had received the vinegar, "It is finished!" for now "all things were accomplished" of the Sacrifice for sin, and the sufferings of Him in whom, sinless, all sinners were then represented before God. Then, crying with a loud voice, as with a willing surrender of that life which no power in the

universe could take from Him against His will, He laid it down of Himself, with the last of His seven words from the cross, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

It must have been shortly after this that the body of our Blessed Lord was taken down from the cross and entrusted to the care of Joseph of Arimathea, by whom it was reverently laid in "his own new tomb." And thus, after being subjected to eighteen hours of mental agony and bodily suffering, the holy Jesus was left—pale, but victorious—to sleep through the Sabbath.

"O Blessed Jesus! by Thy Cross and Passion, give us strength so to mortify and kill all vices in us, that we may die with Thee to-day unto sin, and rise with Thee to better things on the bright Easter morning."

The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin. COMMONLY CALLED LADY DAY.

It is one of the glories of our holy religion, and one of the ways by which the Gospel takes such hold on our hearts, that, mixed up with the grandest and most mysterious and most divine matters are the simplest, the most tender, the most human. What more grand, or deep, or divine words can we say than "I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost"? and yet what more simple, human, tender, words can we say than, "who was born of the Virgin Mary"? For what more beautiful sight on earth than a young mother with her babe upon her knee? Beautiful in itself, but doubly beautiful to those who can say, "I believe in Him who was born of the Virgin Mary." For since He was born of woman, and thereby took the manhood into God, birth is holy, and childhood holy, and all a mother's joys and a mother's cares are holy to the Lord; and every Christian mother with her babe in her arms is a token and a sign from God, a pledge of His goodwill towards men, a type and pattern of her who was highly favored and blessed above all women. Everything has its time, and Lady Day is the time for our remembering the Blessed Virgin, for our hearts and our reason tell us (and have told Christians in all ages) that she must have been holier, nobler, fairer in body and soul, than all women upon earth.—*M.S. Sermon, Kingsley.*

Frequent Communions.

Among the many signs of revived life in the Church, for which we have to thank God in these latter days, none is more encouraging than the increased appreciation of the blessing to be derived from frequent Communion. The following remarks of the *Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette* on this important subject will well repay perusal:—

"We would plead earnestly for the weekly celebration of the Holy Communion. We regard this ordinance, we hope, as a chief means of grace, and our highest act of christian worship. It is an especially blessed way of coming to Christ, and of keeping up our fellowship with Him and His people. It is an undoubted fact that the primitive church broke the sacred bread weekly, if not daily. All scripture and antiquity is in favor of frequent communion. If we have only a monthly celebration, many an anxious one, desirous perhaps for some special reason to communicate, moved it may be by some passage in the sermon, or affected by some recent event which, in God's providence has solemnized him; on the point of leaving home it may be; or having just returned after a long

absence; entering upon some new undertaking; or forming some new and good resolution, longs earnestly to bind himself afresh to the Lord in this Holy Sacrament: but, alas! these solemn feelings have been awakened on the wrong Sunday of the month. The Holy Table is not spread for the Sacred Feast; he must go home unblest; and before another opportunity returns these heavenly emotions have vanished.

We may not have so large a number at each weekly communion, but this is a distinct advantage. If a clergyman be alone, it enables him without any fatigue or hurry to administer in both kinds separately to each; and if a record is kept, it will be found that a greater number of different persons communicate thus throughout the year; opportunity being constantly afforded, they are thus moved to take advantage of it from time to time. Besides, the very preparation of the Lord's Table (if it be so placed as to stand out prominently to view) has a most solemnizing effect upon all. Then it is before the whole congregation a perpetual sermon and appeal: a silent, but most expressive memorial, which may one day or other touch the heart of those who do not as yet communicate. It strikes them at once as they enter the church door: it is continually before their eyes during the service and the sermon; and it may one day prick their conscience to feel that they cannot leave the church without turning their back upon it. We do wrong to transpose any part of the Communion service, and give the parting benediction of peace (which should be reserved for its close), to those who Sunday after Sunday virtually excommunicate themselves. If there be one mode which more than another is conformable to Holy Scripture, and agreeable not only to the spirit but letter of the Prayer Book, it is that which includes the weekly celebration of the Holy Communion."

CORRESPONDENCE.

[The name of Correspondent must in all cases be enclosed with letter, but will not be published unless desired. The Editor will not hold himself responsible, however, for any opinions expressed by Correspondents.]

To the Editor of THE CHURCH GUARDIAN.

DEAR SIR,—I hope you will not refuse to publish this letter in your valuable paper. I am so anxious about the future of the church in this place that I have decided to appeal to outsiders to help us. The hall in which we hold service at present is unsuitable for the wants of the church, often on Sunday evenings it is unpleasantly crowded, and as this place is on the increase, we may naturally expect larger congregations. There is every prospect of the church taking a firm hold here if she only has a fair chance; our congregations have increased, and although the church in this place is only 5 months old, she shows signs of vigorous growth; our trouble is this, we want to put up a plain Mission chapel capable of holding 150 or 200 persons, this building we can erect for \$1,000, but it is impossible to raise more than \$500 here in Manitou, and I earnestly ask your readers to assist us; surely some of those whom God has blessed with this world's goods, who have, and value the means of grace will open their hearts to help us; our people are not by any means rich, and they have as much as they can do to find their clergyman's stipend and pay the necessary expenses of the church. It is most important that we should start the building of the Mission chapel as soon as possible. The Presbyterians and Methodists each have a church of their own. In kindly words you have once or twice noticed our work here, and I trust you will extend your favour by inserting this appeal. The smallest donations will be thankfully received, either by myself or the people's warden, Alf. Fowler, Esq., Manitou, Manitoba. I will gladly give any further particulars to any of your readers who desire to know more of the pressing wants of this place.

Believe me, faithfully yours,

HERBERT E. JARSON,
Incumbent of Manitou, Manitoba.