

REMARKABLE INSTANCE OF FAITH AND PERSEVERANCE.

Sometimes a striking example of the power of prayer and the answering goodness of Almighty God will animate our faith more than many sermons. So we will relate to day, says the Sacred Heart Review, a remarkable incident that occurred on the Massachusetts coast in the month of August of the present year. It deserves to be put on record for the greater glory of God, as an act of thanksgiving to Him and also to give us more courage to cry to Him out of any depths whatever, no matter how dark and deep they may be.

A boy of sixteen, named Joseph, son of one of our well known Boston citizens, was drowned by falling from a raft on Wednesday, August 11, 1897. St. Joseph's day of the week, as it was afterwards remarked. He was a merry, bright, active boy, in absolute perfect health, and was visiting with his sister Mary old family friends, but none of them were able to swim, except a little fellow not strong enough to be of any use. A young lady, a resident of the place and an expert swimmer, came to the aid of the stronger lad. He had already sunk three times, but without waiting to remove her shoes she threw herself into the water, hoping at least to bring the lifeless body to the shore. Her noble efforts were in vain.

Meanwhile, the child's piercing screams had reached to the sand hills far across the water. People were gathering in crowds, and among them was a man named Conroy, who had already received a medal from the Humane Society for saving a life at the risk of his own. He succeeded in reaching the boy, but being spent and out of breath with running he could not retain his hold and the body sank again below the sea.

Joe's sister, instead of screaming or fainting, was praying earnestly to that God who is indeed our refuge and strength. And in her practical faith in the true communion of Saints, she began to say her rosary in honor of the great St. Anthony, "who finds lost things," that he would please find Josie. A fisherman named Flynn came round the cliff in his boat, put down an extra sprit into the water, with Conroy's help, put it beneath the boy's knees, and as Mary began the third bead, asking that her brother might be found, the man drew him to the surface.

He had been, at the lowest estimate, eight minutes under the water; some say ten or fifteen. His body, a dead weight, lay across the boat, black, swollen, lifeless. Then began, under Conroy's direction, at 11:30 in the morning, what seemed at first a hopeless task. Still Joe's sister prayed. She said afterwards that she supposed she knew how to pray to God before, but that she found that she never had known till then. It was a heartrending scene, but a beautiful one that an artist would have been glad to paint—the brave man working over the inanimate form, the faithful sister on the cliff above, hoping against hope and praying in the very face of death; on the beach a circle of earnest women, kneeling, offering up the rosary, and in a field near by a little comrade with clasped hands and innocent eyes lifted to heaven, all praying that Joe might live again. But in half an hour one of the men came to Mary and gently said: "I am sorry to say it, but we have done all that is in our power to do. Your brother is dead."

Christian women in the place. Water of Lourdes was sent to moisten his blackened lips, candles were lighted for him in St. Joseph's honor. The priest came and anointed the boy, and Joe, who had been for years a notably faithful altar boy in his beautiful parish church, strove to speak to him. Perhaps the familiar sound of the Latin words memories of the many, many Masses he had lovingly served.

Surely the prayer of faith and the holy oils had visible power this time to heal the sick. For at last God's wonderful mercy granted what was asked with such wonderful faith. Half an hour after midnight the boy opened his eyes rationally and knew everything except one thing—that he had been drowned and had been dead. Neither congestion of the lungs nor brain fever set in, nor have any ill-effects of any kind followed from that time to this. On Friday, feast of the altar boys' patron, St. John Berchmans, Joe was out on the cottage piazza; on Sunday he walked to the beach and looked unawares on the spot where he was drowned and rose again; on Monday night he returned to his happy home, and on Tuesday morning he was at Mass once more. All around him were those who had watched him from his childhood, rejoicing with awe in their hearts, to see him returned as from the grave. Beside him knelt the faithful sister whose prayers and faith had not once faltered and who had the courage to claim him and win him from the very jaws of death. And before them was the tabernacle and the altar and the Real Presence of Jesus Christ. One could but think of Jesus and Mary and Lazarus and Tennyson's beautiful lines:

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer, No other thought her mind admits. Than he was dead and there he sits. And he that brought him back is there.

Joe is now studying at college and serving Mass again, strong, well and happy. We submit the letter of another physician, a practical Catholic, who was visiting at Scituate at the time of the accident. It is taken from a copy made for us by the boy's Irish hand that lay ten minutes underneath the sea in the icy grasp of death. All who know the boy and his happy Christian home cannot fail to rejoice with them over this wonderful event and to unite with them in sincere thanksgiving to Almighty God, with whom nothing is impossible and in whose strong hand are the issues of life and death.

The physician's letter is here given by permission: Dear Mr. —: Your note of thanks is most gracious, but entirely undeserved by me. When I arrived at the scene the good men who had your son in charge had done the really vital work. They are deserving of the highest praise and gratitude, not only at your hands, but from every lover of humanity. Their names should be inscribed on bronze. To think that your dear boy was under the water a good ten minutes might deter man of science from efforts at resuscitation which those brave fellows carried to success. God bless them. If a testimonial to them is got up I want to know it and contribute a mite, for their self-sacrificing and noble work calls for recognition far beyond you personally.

If I gave any useful suggestions later they pale before the work of the men of Scituate. God was kind to you in the matter, and I am willing to see in the whole affair a merciful suspension of His laws in response to the fervent prayers of your daughter and the earnest women who joined her. With hearty congratulations to you and Mrs. —, I am, yours very truly,

The Mother.

No teacher can adequately supply the place of the mother. No one has the same hold that she maintains on the intellect and affections of her child. She is not only an authority whose right to rule is never questioned, but an oracle that is implicitly believed. The words and example of a parent, especially of a mother, exert a life-long influence on the child. The seed of righteousness sown in the youthful heart by the maternal hand usually bears abundant fruit. The salutary lessons the mother has taught are seldom effaced from memory. They are engraved on the heart in luminous characters, and the sacred image of the mother herself stands before us silently but eloquently pleading the cause of God. The tablet of the soul, like a palimpsest, may afterwards receive impressions that will hide from view the original maternal characters written upon it, but the waters of compunction and the searching rays of Divine grace will bring them to light again. There is no exaggeration in saying that the hope of the rising generation is in the Christian mothers. The individual and national character may be traced to the training imparted under the domestic roof, and its beneficial or baneful influence may be guarded by the religious and moral standing of the family circle. — Cardinal Gibbons.

Yonge St. Fire Hall, Toronto, March 16, 1897. Gentlemen—I have used Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills for Biliousness and Constipation, and have proved them the best that I have ever used—will use nothing else as long as they are obtainable.—Remaining yours, respectfully, E. C. SWEETMAN. You need not cough all night and disturb your friends; there is no occasion for you running the risk of contracting inflammation of the lungs or consumption, while you can get Bickel's Anti-Consumptive Syrup. This medicine cures coughs, colds, inflammation of the lungs and all throat and chest troubles. It promotes a free and easy expectoration which immediately relieves the throat and lungs from viscid phlegm.

"QUESTION BOX"

Queries Now Submitted Show That the Lectures and Answers are Bearing Fruit.

Rev. Joseph V. O'Connor lectured on "The Sale of Indulgences" at St. Teresa's on last Sunday evening and answered a number of the queries placed in the question box. Some of these show that the lectures and answers are bearing fruit.

S. A. K., whose father and mother were Episcopalians, asked a number of questions: (1) "Would it be wrong for me to pray for departed friends? I think the Catholic custom is so charitable and beautiful that God could not be offended with one who so prayed."

It certainly would not be wrong for you to pray for the dead, yet it is scarcely consistent to do so and at the same time deny doctrinally that such prayers are efficacious or that there is a place of probation such as purgatory in the next world.

(2) "Do you not think that salvation is possible in any Christian Church provided we keep the Ten Commandments and trust in the atoning death of our Saviour?" This has been answered before. When the baptized Christian is not a conscientious heretic, but only remains outside the one true Church because of ignorance of its truth, he may be saved. The non-Catholic who believes in the Church, but does not unite himself with it for worldly reasons, or who doubts and does not investigate, rejects the grace of God and endangers his salvation.

(3) "The Church of Christ is one, but you have added to the Creed?" This charge is too general. You must specify the additions to obtain a reply.

"The Church is holy, but Catholic countries are less moral than Protestant. In South America half the births are illegitimate, and in Italy there is a regular system of organized murder, the Mafia?"

The Church condemns impurity, divorce and everything derogatory to the sanctity of the relations between the sexes. It condemns secret societies like the Mafia. If you will read Father Young's "Catholic and Protestant Countries Compared," you will find that your estimate is erroneous, and yet the author of this work depends on official and in most instances Protestant authorities to prove Catholic countries superior in morality.

(5) "The only Apostle you speak of is St. Peter. It is doubtful if he was ever in Rome."

St. Peter is the only Apostle spoken of by Catholics, but he was chief of the Apostles and hence is chiefly named. St. Peter's residence in Rome was never questioned until the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. Read Romans i, 8, and then tell us who converted them. Cave, in his "Literary History of Ecclesiastical Writers," Erasmus Baussen, in a letter to London Times, June 5, 1871; Calvin, in his "Institutions"; Dr. Dollinger, in his "History of the Church," all of them Protestants, testify to St. Peter's presence in Rome as its first Bishop.

E. F. S. thought the Pope sides with Ireland against England, because the latter is Protestant and sends Bibles to Italy and Spain. The people of Ireland fear the priests, who horsewhip them, and they believe the priests can turn them into animals. Does your Church teach that Protestants will go to hell? If a Protestant girl marries a Catholic, would she have to go to confession?

Strange to say, there are Irish politicians who think the Pope sides with England, but to him all souls are of like value, whether encased in the body of an Irishman, an Englishman or an African. Why should the Church have preserved the Bible if she opposed its reading? Remember that the Protestant Bible is not all the Bible. Read answer to S. A. K. about non-Catholics and their salvation. A Protestant does not become a Catholic by marrying one, hence does not have to go to confession.

O. G. C.: "Where is Heaven?" Heaven is a state best described by St. Paul when he said, "Eye hath not seen," etc. etc.

J. J. Y. asks if the Ancient Order of Hibernians is fully recognized by the universal Church?

All societies not approved are but tolerated. All are tolerated which are not formally condemned. The A. O. H. is not a universal order.

J. C. says he would have become a Catholic long ago, but he is a Mason and Old Fellow and his business would be ruined; besides, his wife and children are very strict Presbyterians and would make it hot for him. He thinks he could manage the matter if the Church would permit him to conceal the fact that he is a Catholic and not insist on his abstaining from meat on Friday. "Could I not become a Catholic on the quiet?" "Could I be a Catholic and go sometimes to a Protestant church?"

The communication of which this is the epitome illustrates most eloquently what is meant by the boasted liberality of Protestants. Here is a man that believes the Catholic Church is right and is afraid to take the step because it would ruin his business and estrange his wife and family. If any sign were needed to prove that the Catholic Church is true, this petty persecution would prove it. Our Lord said, "Leave all and follow Me." True love for your wife and family would, it seems, demand that you should make known your change of faith that they might also in time enjoy that grace of conversion. You are not compelled to

trumpet abroad your being a Catholic, but it would be wrong to deny it. It is best for you to consult some priest as to your difficulties.

A non-Catholic friend asked if Mary, the Mother of Jesus, ever had any other children and who were they? The idea is repugnant to every Catholic instinct. As if she who was thought fit to be the Mother of Christ could be the mother of any mere creature! The Church believes that Mary was ever a Virgin and the Scripture so teaches. Why would our Lord on the cross commend her to the care of St. John if she had sons, as some would contend? Protestant scholars, such as Pearson, Mill, Westcott and Lightfoot, agree with Catholics on this point.

W. J. M.: Were not some of the Popes forcibly intruded into the Holy See by factions of nobles and were not others nominated and installed by Emperors? If these were not Popes at all, and consequently the Roman Catholic Church lost the Apostolic succession and ceased to be the Church of Christ.

From the tenor of this it might be assumed that the writer is a believer in Christ. If the Apostolic succession indeed is necessary to mark the true Church, then this Christian is placed in the awkward position of arguing that Christ's promises have failed. The Apostolic succession and the primacy are separate; the former descends to all the Bishops from the Apostles and is the result of the sacrament of holy orders; the primacy is the succession to St. Peter as head of the Church and is not sacramental. The visible manner of selection does not preclude that the Holy Ghost inspired the choice and does not prevent the person selected from having all the attributes which a Pope should have. Many Protestants contend that they are inspired by the Holy Spirit in the interpretation of the Scriptures. Why should not the Catholic Church, with whom Christ promised to be all days, even to the consummation of the world, then claim this inspiration for *ex cathedra* definitions of faith and morals made by its head the Vicar of Christ?—Philadelphia Catholic Standard and Times.

SOUL PICTURES.

God's studio is the universe, and His one unchanging model is Himself. His colors are the light He commandeth in to being, His beauty, His goodness, and His truth. His canvas is space illimitable, and upon it the pictures of His manifold creations are but the faint reflections of Himself. The heavens declare His glory, the firmament, His handiwork, and the earth, the riches of His providence and love. He sits above and views all at a glance, life, immortality, time, eternity—all are unrolled before Him, and to His all-seeing eye, there is neither death, nor darkness, nor distance, nor obscurity, nor past, nor future time, but one living, lighted picture of the everlasting "now."

We turn the pages of His portfolio to find His pictures as infinitely varied as they are numberless. Here is shown a bit of misty landscape; there an uncertain mass of shadow. Here the majesty of the revolving spheres, and there an microscopic marvel. On one page is strength, and sublimity; on another, grace and simple beauty.

Such is the abyss of God's infinitude in the universe of nature, and no less varied is His handiwork in the souls that people it. He who has made each single mountain crag unlike to any other, and ordered for each land its own peculiar beauty, its blessing and its use—who made the stars to differ in the glory of their beams, paints also, in His impenetrable wisdom, His soul-work in various ways—in wonderful, unsearchable ways.

In one, He reflects the beauty of His holiness and spotless purity; in another, the depths of His ever-burning love. In one He never-endingly justice and enduring mercy. Here He shows a dazzling glimpse of His glory ineffable, and there the shadow of His cross. Here a Martyr, there a Martha. On one page a martyred missionary; on another an Aloysius, or a gentle, joyous Stanislaus. Side by side are painted in the robes of royalty and the single tattered garment of a beggar and the lovely, spotless Agnes stands close beside a weeping Magdalena.

We are but motes upon His canvas, and to our shortened vision, there is little but conjecture, or mystery dead and unsovable. His lights confuse and dazzle us, and the shadows He has painted in with care, to us are meaningless; till, like as in one vast kaleidoscope, we see but never ending forms and colors which we cannot understand; but to faith's discernment, God's hand is in it all. God's thought is over all, and by its harmonious blending, God is glorified.

Among these beautiful soul pictures given us by the Artist Divine, there is one that attracts us more and more not by its portrayal of wealth and rank and worldly preference—though it has all of these—but by the simple, charming beauty of its truth and gentle sweetness—that of the amiable Bishop of Geneva, St. Francis de Sales.

We love them all—the lovely Baptist, the lofty Theresa, the stainless Aloysius, the learned, humble Bernard, the pure and noble nature, Xavier—but in the pure and noble nature, diffusing as it were luminous reflection upon the dark and troubled times in which he lived, we recognize the character of a true and tender shepherd, and give our souls without resistance to be led in ways of pleasantness and peace.

His whole life, so widely known and so universally admired, is throughout its goodly length, a beautiful concep-

tion of a shepherd's devotedness, happily united to those other qualities no less essential to the welfare of the flock, namely strength and fearlessness in their defence.

Gentle and meek, and yet so full of chivalry; a lover of pacific means—gentle, sunny and so full of heaven's light and love that his soul seemed like a golden censer, and the unceasing sweetness of his spirit its heavenly perfume. Added to all these lovely qualities were noble birth, personal attractiveness, and a profound learning tempered by prudence that eminently fitted him for a defender of the faith, and the redeemer of a straying flock from the raving wolves of heresy that were then invading it.

From his youth, the one affliction of his lofty spirit, was the error of his countrymen, and his once beautiful land of the old time faith laid waste and desolated by the fearful storm of the Reformation that had recently swept over it, and as he pours forth his plaintive lamentations upon its desolated churches and ruined monasteries, we may truly picture him as another Jeremiah weeping for the departed glory of his people, Israel, for to the dwellers of the Alpine valleys, as well as to the faithless Jews, could have been applied the lamentations of God's holy prophet:

"My people have been a lost flock; their shepherds have caused them to go astray, and have made them wander in the mountains; they have gone from mountain to hill, and have forgotten their resting place." (Jeremiah 44)

The rich, the poor, the priest, the peasant, even the rough peasant of the lakes, and the simple herdsman with their flocks about them, all claimed him as their common shepherd, who knew and loved them all and whose only care it was "to seek that which was lost and that which was driven away," "to bind up that which was broken and strengthen that which was weak."

Though always affable and ready to assist all who came to him, it was upon the weak and straying members that his devotion was most lavishly bestowed. This God-like trait of character was shown most plainly in his apostolic labors among the mountain districts of his diocese, where his shepherd spirit never wearied in searching for the lost, or felt its obligation less, of nourishing one poor unfortunate than of providing for the "ninety and nine" who had never left the fold.

Nor were his diocesan labors ever so extensive, so manifold or so absorbing, but that his gracious heart found time to minister to the tender portion of his flock—the lambs—the little children. Attracted by his sweet, cheerful piety and by the invincible gentleness of his voice and manner, they trooped merrily about him, falling at his feet to receive his blessing and to kiss his robe. He never found their presence annoying or their innocent prattle wearisome, and never permitted them to be sent away, as his friends sometimes desired him; but, drawing them nearer to him, he would say, "Suffer them to come to me; they are my little people."

With the little ones gathered thus about him, listening to his instructions or singing the beautiful French hymns that he himself composed for them, he formed a picture strikingly alike to that of the Divine Shepherd in the Gospel narrative, of whom it long ago was prophesied: "He shall gather together the lambs with his arm and shall take them up in His bosom."

Throughout all his writings, which are the faithful revelations of his character, there is a vein of rich and poetic thought that seems the natural outgrowth of his sympathy with the scenery about him. His style is sometimes soft and soothing as the air of the Vale of Chamouni, or the songs of the Alpine shepherds that charm us by their sweet simplicity.

Again, it rises grandly like the eagle, seeming scarcely to belong to earth, and shows a soul as lofty and sublime as the Alps themselves; as clear and as calm as the skies that bend above them; as pure in its affections as the eternal snows that wrap their cloud swept summits, as tranquil in its emotions, and with depths as lucid and bright with heaven's sunshine, as the sheltered lakes that nestle at their feet, and a faith as firm and impregnable as their adamantine base.

What a beautiful—what a heavenly picture! How it draws us with its irresistible charm, to love the beauty of its Creator, there so perfectly portrayed. We turn to look at it again and again, long and lovingly, and as

we look our lips repeat with the prophet Isaiah, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings and that preacheth peace."—Poems with other selections from the writings of Sister M. Genevieve Todd.

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