

The QUIET HOUR

THE HOLY SACRIFICE.

Let us reanimate our Faith. Do we sufficiently reflect that it is at the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that we daily assist? Now it is no longer a Bloody Sacrifice, though nevertheless real and true, for Jesus by a refinement of love wished to spare us a too painful representation of His sufferings and death.

ASSUMPTION THOUGHT.

As slow the laggard years depart, Ah Mary dear, how sad thy heart, How sad and oh how all alone; Thou dost not speak, nor sigh, nor moan, But thy deep grief full well we know, Thy Son in heaven, thou here below.

Thy Father's will is done at last, Thy exile's o'er, thy pain all past, Thy rapture such we may not dream To catch its faintest smallest gleam, 'Twould make the way too fair, too bright, For this our passage in the night.

On earth to-day, oh Mary dear, Poor mothers' hearts are sad and drear; Their little ones are safe above But sore they miss their childish love!

SERVE HIM TO-DAY.

Fear is often a greater danger than the danger itself. Let us serve God well to-day; He will take care of tomorrow. Let the storm and the tempest come; you shall not perish; you are with Jesus. As He calmed the tempest on the Sea of Galilee at the entreaty of the affrighted disciples, so also at our prayer will He still the storms that rage around our hearts—storms of temptation, of trouble, of trial. Jesus is God. Jesus is all-powerful. Jesus will hear our prayers.

READ THE SCRIPTURES.

We need to know more of "the word of God," that we may be able as St. Peter says, to give a "reason for the hope that is within us," to those who are outside the true fold of Jesus Christ. Golden opportunities await us to spread the word of God in our daily contact with those who are not of our faith. An intelligent and well instructed Catholic sows the seed of faith in soil that is ready to receive it and unconsciously he is the means of a great harvest of souls. Brethren, love "the word of God." Take every opportunity to hear it preached by those who preach in the name of Jesus Christ. Read the Holy Scriptures, study the words of prayer and faith. Give some time to the careful study of books of instruction that will help to make your faith intelligent. Press with the multitude around Jesus Christ that you, too, may hear the "words of God," which are the words of eternal life and eternal truth.

THE PRIEST'S FINGERS.

A group of travelers, returning from their excursion to Vesuvius, stopped at an inn by the road. Before taking their meal they wished to wash their hands. The hostess hastened to comply with their request. But as she noticed that one amongst them was a priest, she did not want him to use the towel that had been used by all the others. "Please, Father," she said, "give it back to me, it is not meet that the fingers which hold the body of Jesus Christ be wiped with this coarse linen." Upon this, quickly she went to the cupboard, whence she brought a piece of fine embroidered muslin which she tendered to her priestly guest. The foregoing, related in Emmanuel, recalls the action of one of the saints, St. Theresa, if we remember rightly, who when a priest desired to wash his hands, brought him a basin of perfumed water, giving the self-same reason for her act as did the good woman of the Italian inn. Here we have the reason of the Catholic's profound reverence for the person of Christ's minister. Nothing is too good for the priest, because he is an "alter Christus." "I like to shake the hand of a good priest," said a gentleman recently. "Whenever my hand feels the clasp of the priestly fingers I experience a strange thrill of mingled awe and pleasure. It seems to me that as virtue emanated from the Divine Person of the Master as He walked among men, purifying, healing, strengthening, so must His very servant diffuse something of this subtle influence as he treads his daily way among the multitude. However, it is with others, there is more to me in the handshake of a priest than in that of other men, and I always feel better afterward."

STRIVING FOR THE BEST.

Without any lofty ideals men and women are sure to be commonplace.

The lower the ideals the poorer and cheaper will be those who cherish them. The higher the ideals the stronger, wiser and better will be those who hold them. All this is especially true of the spiritual life. The Christian who is content to live beneath his privileges is the one who will live at a poor dying rate. His light will be a poor, little, flickering thing that will do himself very little good, and will never serve to guide the wanderer and wayfarer to a place of shelter and safety. Such souls can have but little real comfort, and no real joy. They must drift with the current, and seem to have no more power to swim up stream than a dead fish. They are just driven about by every wind of doctrine, and the closest watcher cannot tell what purpose or motive influences their actions. Nobody ever makes the mistake of supposing that they are striving for the best. They are not striving at all, and they seem to see nothing that is worth striving for. But there are others, men and women of high ideals. They are never altogether satisfied with present attainments in the spiritual life.

The wonderful prayer of our hymn voices the aspirations of these souls. They put themselves close beside the great apostle Paul as he reveals his purpose in the Scripture quotation. Suppose all the readers of this chapter should commit to memory the hymn and the Scripture quotation, and then say, "These embody my ideal of what a Christian ought to be and what he ought to do," and then say again: "By the grace of God I will try to realize all this in my daily and personal experiences." And then, again, suppose that each one should resolve that, cost what it may of self-sacrifice and self-denial to attain his experience, I will pay the cost, sure that no cost can be realized.

The beautiful thing about this is the poorest and humblest of God's dear children are entitled to strive for all these best things; and the blessed heavenly father, who is no respecter of persons, will take care to help every day and every hour, so that the trusting and striving soul shall not trust and strive in vain. Who of all who read this chapter will at once commence to strive most earnestly for all best spiritual things within the reach of sincere souls in this earthly life?—Bishop Mallieau, in Words of Cheer and Comfort.

BENEFITS OF A GOOD CONFESSION.

When our first parents fell from virtue they immediately hid themselves. This sense of shame for sin committed is inherent in human nature, and is therefore a good thing, but like every good thing, it may by excess become an evil. Let us see how it can become an evil.

There are some who from this very sense of shame go on from year to year making bad confessions, go on from year to year hiding some sweet darling sin from the priest. Cowards who are unwilling to bear a momentary flush of the cheek! Sinners who are willing to commit sin but unwilling to bear its shameful effects! Then there are others—hypocritical penitents who pose before their spiritual directors and smooth over certain sins, for fear they might incur the shame of losing the good favor of the priest. Foolish people! They forget that the more honest and more open the confession the more tender becomes the heart of the priest and the more effective the spiritual remedies he prescribes. There is no such thing as the loss of reputation before the priest in the confessional. The priest is but the representative, the agent of God, and God knows all. What shall we say of those who imagine that they might have to suffer the shame of finding the priest very much shocked at the sin they have committed and unable to attend to it?

Let us make no such mistakes. There is no spiritual difficulty, no form of sin to which the priest cannot offer a solution and a cure. Every confessor has made special studies to meet the requirements of every soul—from the innocent child's to that of the blackest sinner. Herein we see what a great safeguard to our morality the sacrament of penance is. Why, even the very shame incurred in confessing a sin is half the victory over that sin! Sometimes, also, we meet persons who refuse to bear the meanness of the rebuke from their father confessor. They blush, they are confused, they are ashamed. The harshest and most cruel treatment, the deepest shame that man could suffer, would not be enough punishment for the commission of one deliberate mortal sin. The priest knows how much penance we deserve; he has sounded the under-current of society; he knows its rocks and shoals, and is therefore capable to guide the soul to safer waters.

And now, what shall we say of the peaceful relief and calm repose which follows the shameful confusion of telling dark sins to a priest? What

can we say? Those who have experienced this season of rest, know what it is. Although the sorrow for sin still abides in the soul, nevertheless the sense of shame is lost in the sense of freedom from sin. Finally, shame may incline us to omit seemingly little things, small circumstances which, if confessed, indeed would add special malice to the sin. It may also incline us to drug our consciences so to speak, to stifle doubts as to whether a thing is a mortal sin or not. Let us have some common sense with regard to this matter. Let us tell all, in spite of the nervousness and remorse and feverish brain, and the great weight will be lifted from off our souls. Let us for once be severe with ourselves, without being morbidly scrupulous. Let us choke the demon of pride. Let us, as it were, subject our souls to the scientific experiment of having a flood of electric light poured down into its very depths.

ENGLISH GIRL CURED AT Lourdes.

Miss Moemi Nightingale was one of the English pilgrims to Lourdes in May last. For ten years she had suffered from deafness, and since November, 1907, she had been totally deaf. The best aurists in England were consulted, but in vain. Her account of her cure is as follows: "The story of my cure is simple enough. On Thursday, May 21, I was saying my Rosary for the Holy Souls during the afternoon in the Grotto. It was 6.45 p.m., when suddenly I felt a pain in my ears. Thinking it was not going to be much, I said nothing. But the pains became more and more violent, so as to exceed anything I had ever felt. It was excruciating for about four minutes. I thought I should go mad with the agony; it seemed as if I had fallen asleep and was dreaming; I could see nothing around me; I cannot remember anything that happened then until they had intoned the 'Magnificat.' That is the first sound I remembered hearing. Naturally I wondered what it could mean, not being able to believe that I had been cured, and yet there was no mistake. It was true, quite true; I was healed. My father, who remained in London, can hardly realize the cure which we have announced to him by letter. "The London Catholic Weekly adds: "The most incredulous scientist ought to allow that neither hysteria, nor nervous shock, nor 'suggestion' can suddenly repair a perforated tympanum."

A New Catechism

The work of teaching the Christian doctrine through means of the Catechism often presents many difficulties. The Catholic University is at present giving exceptional thought to the matter, and that their methods are receiving a certain amount of criticism, as seen from the following by D. J. L. in the Western Watchman:

The efforts that are being made to bring order and method into the teaching of catechism will meet with the most cordial approval from priests and teachers throughout the country. The professors in the Catholic University of Washington are engaged in a most laudable work in placing before the teaching communities their new methods of instruction. Dr. Shields read an interesting paper on this subject at the recent educational convention in Cincinnati. If the method of the Reverend Doctor be true, it will bear criticism. The severer the criticism, the brighter and clearer truth must always appear. Dr. Shields says rightly that in the whole range of the Church's teaching no undertaking is fraught with such consequences as that of giving the child its first ideas about God. In that, we are all one. Then we are told that the spiritual life, i.e., the religious principle implanted in the child's soul is brought into life and activity through the medium of "organic preception." What does Father Shields mean by "organic preception?" Evidently, he means the perceptive powers of the organs of sense. The young child then before it elicits its first act of Faith comes by analogy and comparison in the visible world to the existence of God. In other words, the world of sense is the foundation on which the first act of Faith on the part of the child rests. The act of Faith of the child is the outcome of evolution commencing with the Robin's nest, as we have it in his catechism, and ending with Jesus Christ.

Now, here exactly is the parting of the ways. The child is not able to draw conclusions from analogy and comparison. The child that is able to draw conclusions in this way is abnormal and a freak, and should at once be sent to the University at Washington to complete its education. We do not meet such children; they do not exist. Let us analyze the first act of Faith which the child makes; in doing this we shall institute a comparison between the act of supernatural Faith by which it expresses its belief in God and the act of natural Faith in its reliance on the goodness of Santa Claus at Christmas time. The child accepts Santa Claus readily—without questioning, on the word of its mother. There is no analogy; there are no comparisons; the medium of organic perception may be in Timbuctoo as far as the child is concerned. The mother tells the child that Santa Claus will come and fill its Christmas stocking and the child, relying implicitly on the mother, never once doubts the coming of the generous Christmas saint. Even so, with regard to Faith in the supernatural order: The mother speaks to the child about God and God's love for children; she tells the child about prayer and heaven; and the little child lisps its infant prayer and makes an act of the most sublime Faith, guided by no other motive

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of credibility than the word of its mother.

Faith is the acceptance of Divine Truth on God's authority. In the childish stage of our existence, the motive of credibility was our implicit reliance on the veracity of our parents and teachers. Afterwards these motives received additional strength in the teaching of the priest, and finally we saw the teaching of parent and teacher and priest confirmed in the "pillar and ground of truth" established by Jesus Christ, "The Holy Catholic Church." I am ready to admit that the motives of credibility change from childhood to maturer years, but the act of faith in the child is just as real as the act of Faith in the adult.

Dr. Shields says that Our Lord taught by parables and led his hearers on to a knowledge of the sublime truths of religion by analogy and comparisons. Will Dr. Shields point out any single instance where Our Lord spoke in such a manner to children making their first act of Faith? The first act of Faith of the child is not the outcome of analogy and comparison, of which the child is incapable; it is elicited by the child relying altogether on the veracity of parent or teacher. The motives of credibility all through life grow with our growth, and when we are able to draw conclusions by analogy and comparison, then we find the authority of the Catholic Church presented to us as the final and ultimate motive of credibility.

A child is not able to understand a metaphor, nor is a child able to master the proof of "Ex entibus contingitibus" and arrive at the existence of God, nor can a robin with its young be able to evolve itself into Jesus Christ in the mind of any child, no matter how precocious the child may be. Analogy, comparison, evolution do not enter into the first act of Faith of the child. The child relies on its mother; the mother speaks; the child runs across the bridge between reason and Faith, and standing on the other side, it looks up to God and says "Credo in Deum." That is the psychology of the first act of Faith of the child, and the pedagogics of it is not the robin, but parental authority, goodness and truth.

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Catholics Do Not Read Catholic Publications

The Library Lamp notes with regret the demise of Donahoe's Magazine and its absorption by the Catholic World. It was unexpected, and would seem to afford another proof that Catholics do not properly support their publications. Donahoe's was in every way worthy of the patronage of our Catholic people. The marvel is that it did not flourish. It was bright, pleasant, popular and well illustrated, well edited and one of the most timely of our periodicals. Why was it not supported?

The simple truth appears to be that we are dropping back in this respect here in the United States. We have never in our history had so many American Catholics who read but they are not reading Catholic publications. They are being secularized through and through by the presence of secular books, secular magazines, secular weeklies, secular dailies in our Catholic homes. There are thousands of young people who come out of Catholic schools who buy the secular output regularly, week after week, but never think of buying anything Catholic. We must do something to change this condition; but what?

A Brave Priest

A story of the zeal and bravery of a young Irish priest of the Diocese of Superior, Wis., has just come to light. The priest is Father Rice, of Bruce. One night in the month of April of this year he received word that an old man, who had for many years neglected his religious duties, was dying. Although the night was dark and stormy and the distance from the dying man forty miles—a long, wearisome ride by buggy, the priest made the journey in less than four hours.

In order to reach the dying man the Chippewa river had to be crossed. The nearest bridge across the river was twelve miles away. On such a night a frail canoe could not live on the swift and treacherous river, seething with eddies. To swim it, in all probability, meant death. Divesting himself of his outer clothing, the young priest plunged into the icy waters of the Chippewa in the midst of a hail and snow storm, and after half an hour's struggle, reached the opposite bank more dead than alive, then pushed on through the woods and reached the dying man in time. Father Rice has several times risked his life crossing this river in order to bring the last sacraments of the Church to the dying. Young and

courageous, Father Rice is a quiet and unostentatious priest. He is specially noted for his extraordinary kindness to the sick. This story reminds us of the fact that the days of Marquette are not yet gone.

Very many persons use annually from cholera and kindred summer complaints, who might have been saved if proper remedies had been used. If attacked do not delay in getting a bottle of Dr. J. D. Kellogg's Dysentery Cordial, the medicine that never fails to effect a cure. Those who have used it say it acts promptly, and thoroughly subsides the pain and disease.

Safeguard from Decay

If a piece of timber lie exposed to the weather for years it will become rotten in spots. If you take it out of the weather you may prevent further decay, but no power on earth can restore the rotten spots to soundness. And so, with character, it is essential that it be not exposed to those processes that invite moral decay.—P. E. Kenney.

Ireland a Child Trying to Walk

"Ireland is like a baby trying to walk, and she is aided only by an unsympathetic stepmother," said Rev. Patrick Flynn, of Loughlynn parish, County Roscommon, Ireland, at St. Philomena's Church, East Cleveland, Sunday morning. "Let to herself," Rev. Fr. Flynn continued, "without the aid her people receives from their sons and daughters in America, Ireland would fall."

In speaking of his country in general, Father Flynn said it seemed as if Ireland were about to enter upon an era of better times. He hopes for Home Rule within a very few years. This question will come up at the next general election, he said, and it appeared as if it would be decided favorably. "Over there the peasants believe the United States to be the land of all good things," he continued. "Our farmers and small landowners are progressing through the operation of the land act of 1903, which gives them possession without increase of rent, of improvement they may make upon their respective holdings. King Edward is the most friendly occupant of the English throne Ireland has had in a long time."

"The establishment by Parliament of a Catholic university in Dublin, with four auxiliary colleges in other cities, will enable talented Catholic boys to receive a higher education in a Catholic institution, a privilege heretofore denied them. "Ireland is improving industrially. Rug and carpet weaving and lace making is being introduced in the homes of the peasantry. The peasant girls are taught at the convents. In these homes the families are large—averaging eight to ten children, at which President Roosevelt could not complain, and where he is well thought of. The Irish people are deeply interested in the trend of affairs in the United States, so many of their sons and daughters being here."

A Beautiful Promise

The first promise of Our Lord to Blessed Margaret Mary was: "I will give them all the graces necessary for their state of life." How all sufficient is this promise! We are to receive not one or two graces necessary. In return for what? Only if we will have a devotion to His Sacred Heart, that has done and is doing so much for us. What does devotion mean? Devotion means love and love means that our affection and desires are centered in the object of our thoughts. How can we obtain this devotion? By praying earnestly for it and making proper use of it, we shall be happy in this world and in the next.

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ARE YOU READY?

Life holds many hard things for us all. Perhaps, if we lived rightly, if our faith were stronger, death would not rend our hearts as it does. It is the common lot, the universal leveler, and soon or late it comes to all. It remains to make our spiritual adjustment accord with the inevitable fact.—Myrtle Reed; The Master's Violin.

The Holy Father has granted an indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines to all who spend five minutes in presence of the Blessed Sacrament praying that the success of the Eucharistic Congress and England's conversion be brought about by daily and frequent communion. His Holiness has likewise granted a plenary indulgence to all who pray for the same objects after Holy Communion.

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