

How the Feast of the Immaculate Conception Was Celebrated in Montreal Churches.

(Continued from Page 1.)

have already asked. My son, my daughter, she says, give me your heart. No matter what temptations you have, no matter what struggles you have, I am the mother of our Lord, trust your soul to me, and then your salvation is secure. Trust yourself in Mary, Mary Immaculate, the glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel, the honor of our people. Who can be against us if Mary Immaculate, the triumph of God over sin and the devil, protects us? This jubilee closes this evening, and the joy and happiness shall be ours if we prove faithful sons and daughters to our spotless mother. Oh, break the habits of sin, stay away from dancing halls and give up that cursed drink which has your soul separated from God. Give up that everlasting curse which can only be quenched by the fires of hell. Come to Mass regularly, be faithful to your daily duties, and then when death comes Mary Immaculate shall be at your death bed to take your soul and present it to God, saying, "Here is my child, here is the soul of my Immaculate Conception, who promised at the end of the jubilee to be faithful to me," and then, my friends, the words of my text shall be forever in your hearts, and then we shall sing with the angels and saints, "who bow down before the majesty of God, and who forever and ever cry out unceasingly, 'Praise and Glory, thanksgiving and power to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, who has made Mary so perfect, so beautiful and so holy. Praise and thanksgiving to God our Lord, who has given us the victory through Mary the Immaculate Conception.'" Amen.

On Sunday evening the exercises of the week came to a close with the solemn and touching ceremony of the reception of one hundred and sixteen young women into the Sodality of the B. V. M. The Act of Consecration read by Rev. Father Fortier, C.S.S.R., Director of the Sodality, was responded to by the aspirants in a most impressive manner. After the consecration both the senior and junior members of the Sodality marched in procession around the church, singing hymns to Mary. The young ladies' sodality choir sang the Benediction of the feast of the Immaculate Conception. Their rendition of the sweet, soulful music lent additional charm to the devotion of the occasion, while the music of the regular choir on the Sunday following was worthy of particular note.

All in all, the week has been a never-to-be-forgotten one by the people of St. Ann's. To them and their zealous, beloved spiritual guides many golden years, even more blessed and fruitful, if possible, than the past.

ST. GABRIEL'S PARISH.

The children's Mass was said at 8.45, during which the pupils of the Convent of the Holy Cross sang hymns in honor of the Blessed Virgin. At the three Masses 1100 people received Holy Communion. At ten o'clock solemn High Mass was sung by Rev. Father O'Meara, the pastor. The high altar was tastefully decorated with flowers. The altar of the Blessed Virgin was artistically arranged with potted plants, flowers, banners and colored lights, and reflected great credit on Miss S. Lyons and Miss Annie O'Grady. At 7.30 p.m. the rosary was recited, followed by a discourse on the feast of the day by Rev. Father Fahey. A procession of the Children of Mary then took place, during which the ladies sang sweetly several hymns. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament closed the proceedings. The singing of the fine choir of the church lent an additional charm. Rev. Fathers O'Gorman, S.J., and Malone, S.J., of Loyola College, assisted Rev. Father O'Meara and Fahey to make the celebration worthy of the parishioners, and all have reason to be proud of the way they honored the day.

The Presbytery was beautifully illuminated during the evening. Chinese lanterns, electric lights, and lanterns being used which made a very pretty scene.

Sarsfield school was decorated with flags, and at night was brilliantly illuminated.

The windows of the Holy Cross Convent presented a pretty picture, with their mottoes and colored lights. The Christian Brothers' school and community were also brilliantly illuminated, as well as hundreds of houses in the parish.

ST. ANTHONY'S PARISH.

At St. Anthony's Church the feast was celebrated with great eclat. The main altar was adorned with innumerable colored electric and other lights, flowers and potted plants, while the Blessed Virgin's altar was artistically arranged. At ten o'clock solemn High Mass was sung by Rev. Father Donnelly, assisted by Rev. M. L. Shea, as deacon, and Rev. Thos. Heffernan as sub-deacon. The choir rendered a pretty musical Mass by Gounod, Miss M. E. Donovan presiding at the organ. In the evening the church was taxed to its utmost capacity, hundreds being obliged to stand. In the vast congregation were a large number of Protestants, who listened with rapt attention to the eloquent discourse given by Rev. Father T. Heffernan. The sermon was a masterly one, and will linger in the minds of those who had the pleasure of hearing the rev. gentleman. The Rev. Father took for his text: "Thou art all fair, O my love, and there is no spot in thee." (Cantic of Canticles.) Fifty years have come and gone, fifty of joy, fifty of sorrows, for the individual, the family, the nation, since Pius IX., of memory sainted and immortal, from his throne raised opposite the altar, in the extremity of the Basilica, ushered forth into the fulness of its light the dogma: Thou art immaculate, Maria. This incident is not to be forgotten. The oldest of the Cardinals and the oldest of the bishops accompanied by the Catholic Patriarchs of the Greek Church, approaching, knelt at the feet of His Holiness, asking him in the name of the Holy Roman Catholic Church to be willing to decree as a dogma of faith that the Blessed Virgin Mary Mother of our God, our Creator and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, had been exempted from the universal stain of original sin, and that she was consequently immaculate in her conception.

The thrill of deepest emotion was felt through the whole assembly as the Vicar of Jesus Christ arose. Having asked for the last time the guidance of the Holy Ghost, by the solemn intoning of the Veni Creator, in the midst of a silence so profound that all those present could distinctly hear his voice, the Pontiff Supreme read the decree of Faith:

"By the authority of our Lord, Jesus Christ, of the holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, and by our own, we declare and define that the Blessed Virgin Mary has been, from the first moment of her conception, preserved from all stain of original sin and that this doctrine is revealed by God. If any dare to think otherwise, let him know that he is condemned, and that he has departed from the Catholic Faith."

Deeply beloved, I positively abstain from any description whatever of the time, place and circumstances of this solemn occasion. I leave you now just for a moment to your own imagination. A moment. Let us not be unwise; rather let us keep full with the oil of present grace the lamp of our holy faith. Contemplate but for a moment the scene enacted in the Church of God this blessed day.

"What happiness can equal mine" comes from the lips of the Virgin Immaculate. Around her throne hasten, as only angels and saints may, those countless angelic spirits, chief among whom we notice Gabriel, the Archangel, who so many hundred years ago, a messenger from God, found in her room at Nazareth a young and tender girl in the most sacred recollection awaiting the fulfillment of Heaven's eternal decree—Mary, Mary Immaculate.

But why dwell upon the doings of the angels? Their nature is so much purer and holier and loftier than ours that it were but drawing fitting figures of the imagination. Rather let us consider the other host—the immense, the grand host of the saints of God—our brothers, our sisters, who having lived in the flesh knew its contradictions, its onsets, its conflicts, but knew, too, the secret of victory in contest. But what of those? Ah, Pius IX., thou art there, thou, the champion of thy mother's cause. Thou that indomitable spirit, who understood so well what was demanded of thee, placed between "love and duty"—love that would have saved thee the words, "If any dare to think otherwise, let him know, etc."; duty that made thee recognize, "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican."

Is it wrong, think you, dearly beloved, that Mary, our Mother, caused to be erected at her right hand on this special day a special throne for her select and noble son Pius IX.? Immaculate! Immaculate! sounds forth around about on every side. Are any of ours among the happy ones? Fathers, mothers,

you who sit here to-night, has it been your privilege to have offered to God the souls of little babes, shortly after the waters of baptism glistened upon their baby brows? Mothers, you who seemed to feel the death grip upon the heart as the lifeless little form was borne away to the cemetery! Mothers, you who were not as yet able to fashion the little lips to produce the sound, papa, mamma, may rest assured that they, under the maternal vigilance and care of Mother Immaculate, have been taught to pronounce this day, Immaculate, Immaculate. Are there any of us here who have witnessed the pious death of some loved parent, relative, friend? Such as they have also venerated before her throne pronouncing with their saintly lips Immaculate, etc. And we of the Church Militant, are not wanting when the voice of mother calls us to duty. This morning in every church throughout the land souls bent low in adoration to receive their God, the Son of Mary, in honor of the Virgin Immaculate. To-night, your presence in this overcrowded edifice bears ample testimony to undying filial affection for our Mother Immaculate. And why should it be otherwise? With our flesh and blood of earth, the fiftieth anniversary of an important event calls for special observance, the presents are then of gold. This the reason, therefore, of the extraordinary things of to-day. Our flesh and blood of heaven should not be worse treated than those of earth.

What is it all about? may be heard from the lips of those who never learned to experience this Immaculate Mother's love. I see before me some, and quite a few, who are not of the holy religion. Chiefly for them shall I briefly explain the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. At all times among Catholics it was firmly believed that Mary, the Virgin Mother of God, was immaculate—that is, that on account of the unique position she was to fill in the history of the world, there could not possibly be any instant in her whole existence during which she was affected by any sin. This was all very well, but let it be clearly understood that there always have been and always will be men who argue for argument sake, and others who argue through ignorance—such ignorance as is extant through an imperfect education—and you know the old adage, "A little education is a dangerous thing."

Up to fifty years ago this question of conception immaculate was what we call a free question—that is to say, men could argue about it, consider its merits, admit it or imprudently deny it. Men, in other words, could make use, and did make use of license, to the detriment, partial, it is true, of liberty—it was then that Rome spoke, and checked the foolishness of some of her children, by taking away their license and obliging them to make good use of their liberty. This is the reason why proclamation was given to a truth that was with the Church, as its tenet, from the very beginning.

St. Anthony's Presbytery was brilliantly illuminated by rows of electric and other lights, as well as the exterior of the church.

The Catholic Emigration Home, corner of Fulford and St. Antoine streets, was tastefully decorated and beautifully illuminated, the statue of the Immaculate Conception being brilliantly lighted.

St. Agnes Academy, St. Anthony's Young Men's hall, and hundreds of houses in the parish demonstrated that nothing was spared to do honor to the occasion.

ST. MARY'S.

The feast of the Immaculate Conception in this beautiful Church, dedicated in a special manner to Our Lady of Good Counsel, presented a striking figure on the 8th instant, when the Children of Mary and the pupils of the convent lined up in a grand procession of the Living Rosary. An impressive sermon was preached on the occasion by Rev. Father Connolly, S.J. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given by Rev. Father Cullinan and Rev. Father McDonald presided at the recitation of the beads. High Mass was sung at ten o'clock by Rev. Father Brady, P.P.

ST. MICHAEL'S.

Solemn High Mass was celebrated by Rev. Father Ethelbert, assisted by Rev. Father Kiernan and Callahan as deacon and sub-deacon respectively. The new gold vestments worn for the first time on this occasion, were the special gift of a member of the parish. The Blessed Virgin's altar was tastefully and elaborately decorated for the occasion. The sermon was given by the Rev. Fa-

ther Kiernan, who took his text from the Book of Judith, as follows: "Thou the glory of Jerusalem and the joy of Israel and the honor of our people."

In the afternoon, solemn Vespers were sung by the Rev. Chaplain of the Carmelites, assisted by Rev. Fathers Kiernan and Callahan.

In the evening, both church and presbytery were grandly illuminated, as were also many of the residences in the parish.

CHURCH OF THE GESU.

The Church of the Gesu, Bleury street, had very imposing celebrations during the day. At the High Mass, the beautifully illuminated altars, the grandeur of the ceremonies, and the soul-inspiring music—all lent an additional charm to the great event. In the afternoon, at a special service for young men of the Sodality, Rev. Louis Lalande, S.J., gave a stirring exhortation.

The Marquis de Maisonneuve, said the speaker, the dauntless soldier who founded Montreal, had consecrated himself to the imitation of the Mother of God and had dedicated the whole colony to her. In his life he made edifying practice of the virtues of his exemplar—her unquestioning loyalty and obedience to Divine inspiration and to the right, her purity, her industry and charity as they have come down in the living traditions of the Church.

Then in forcible language Father Lalande exhorted his hearers to practice, as Maisonneuve did, a virile devotion to Mary; to spend their lives in industry, purity and loyalty to the good; to the individuals to live up to their own conscience; to be obedient everywhere to legitimate authority, but to truckle to no man, and never to lower themselves by crowding for petty places.

They were to aim to be individuals, to be the echo of no other man; individuals worthy first of all of their own self-respect. They could not be otherwise than worthy human children of Mary, and good citizens, unafraid to stand alone if need be against corruption and debasing bribery and perjury. They would then bear themselves as men in a period of political decadence.

In conclusion, Father Lalande asked the young men to train themselves away from being acrobats in principle, to scorn the ability that consisted in hiding one's flag or principle in the pocket. "Show your colors, boys, and always the colors of the true citizen, the true Christian. Work for this end with the unflinching industry of the Mother of God. Do not fall asleep as the Apostles did in the garden, for while the well-meaning sleep, some Judas in the darkness is active preparing a sad surprise for the good citizen. In the battle waged between the cities of good and evil, it is not enough for the good, surprised with defeat, to throw the blame on Judas. They are themselves in fault. Their own forces had weakened while they slept."

In the evening solemn Vespers and Benediction were held, after which a special display of fireworks took place from St. Mary's College, which was gorgeously decorated and beautifully illuminated.

A pretty feature of the occasion was the presentation by the gentlemen who had followed the exercises of the retreat in anticipation of the feast of a magnificent colossal statue of the Blessed Virgin.

AT LOYOLA COLLEGE.

The fiftieth anniversary of the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was celebrated at Loyola College in a manner worthy of so great a festival. Under the management of the Director and officers of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, the various functions and ceremonies of the day were executed without a hitch. At 7.30 a.m. the boys assembled in the College Chapel to assist at Mass and receive Holy Communion. The Rev. Rector, Father Turgeon, officiated. During Mass, the Sodality, divided into two sections, day pupils and boarders, recited the Office of Our Lady and sang several hymns with a fervor that showed how fully they appreciated the solemnity of the occasion.

The Rev. Dr. G. McShane, S.S., opened the afternoon services with a beautiful sermon on the dogma that was being commemorated. It was spoken with real warmth of feeling, and was listened to with rapt attention by even the youngest members of the congregation. After the sermon 39 new members were admitted into the Sodality by the Rev. Director, assisted by Messrs. Regan, Vanier, Boyce and Wickham, the four highest dignitaries of the Society. Throughout the different ceremonies in the evening solemn Vespers and

necessary for this impressive function, the boys acquitted themselves of their parts with striking piety and almost military precision.

The reception of new members was followed by Solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, after which diplomas were distributed to old and new members of the Sodality, and pretty souvenir cards to all present.

During the evening the College was brilliantly illuminated, especially over the main entrance, where the words "Maria Immaculata" in blue and white electric lights were surrounded by a frame of dazzling brightness.

Much credit is due to the students of the College for the earnest and pious spirit with which they strove to perform the various duties assigned to them in the preparation and execution of this memorable celebration.

FRANCISCAN CHURCH.

The early Masses at the Church of St. Francis were largely attended by devout congregations, and hundreds approached Holy Communion. The solemn High Mass was sung at 8 o'clock, and a sermon preached. The mellow tones of the monks chanting behind the altar was soul-inspiring. The church had been specially decorated for the occasion. Electric lights were hung around and extended into the sanctuary. Large streamers of colored bunting hung from the ceiling, and also was festooned around the Church. Flowers, candles and colored lights decorated the main altar, and made the scene one of grandeur.

In the evening the church was at its best with its innumerable lights. The scene inside and outside the Monastery was worthy of record. In colored letters the words "Vive, Marie Immaculee," were beautifully illuminated in the windows, while on the tower a large cross formed of Chinese lanterns lit up the scene. On the outside of the grounds on Dorchester street rows of lanterns extended right to the doors of the church. St. Anthony's Villa was a gem of art, and the grand display of colored electric lights around the statue of the Immaculate Conception, and the many lanterns in the windows, reflected great credit on those in charge, and was admired by the passing hundreds. The Franciscan Convent was also tastefully decorated and illuminated.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH.

At the Church of the Immaculate Conception the feast had a double significance; it was parochial and universal. Solemn High Mass was sung at 10 o'clock. Rev. Father Fouillet, S.J., delivered the sermon. The rev. preacher gave a masterly oration on the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Not infrequently, said he, have Roman Catholics been taxed with having added new articles of belief to the ancient creeds of the Apostles and the Fathers. This was an unwarranted accusation. Some dogmas had, it is true, lain, as it were, dormant or in a semi-conscious state in the minds of the faithful; but neither the doctors of the Church, nor the simple laymen admitted that since the death of the last Apostle, any new article of faith had gone to swell the deposit confided by Christ to His Apostles. With the demise of St. John, the beloved disciple, revelation closed; and in his own expressive words, "if any man shall add to these things God shall add unto him the plagues written in this book." (Apoc. Chap. 22, v. 18). True, this dogma of Mary's sinless conception was officially defined only fifty years ago. Up to that date a Roman Catholic might have been rash enough to refuse his assent to this revealed truth. He would have shown his ignorance thereby, seeing that the great consensus of opinion among both the doctors and the laity was in favor of the dogma—but he would not have been a heretic on that account.

Now, however, it was not so. The unerring word of Peter's successor had gone forth even to the ends of the earth. He had spoken and the faithful must hearken to his voice or consider themselves without the pale of the Church over which by divine appointment he presided.

This dogma of Mary's sinless conception was intimately bound up with other Roman Catholic truths. Mary was exempt from original sin even in her conception. Her soul alone—among all the children of Adam—was enriched with the precious gift of grace from the moment it came forth from the Creator's hands. Mary alone was conceived immaculate.

In the evening solemn Vespers and

Benediction were held, and the church and altars were brilliantly illuminated. After the church service a special display of fireworks took place, and the houses of the parishioners were gaily decorated and illuminated.

ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL.

The following cable was received late Wednesday night by Mgr. Racicot, Administrator of the Archdiocese:

Rome, Dec. 7, 1904.

Rt. Rev. Mgr. Racicot, Administrator.

According to the desires of the Most Rev. Archbishop of Montreal, the Holy Father blesses the clergy, religious communities, and the faithful who, in conjunction with Rome, are celebrating the Jubilee of the Immaculate Conception.

(Signed) CARDINAL MERRY DEL VAL.

At 10 o'clock Pontifical High Mass was celebrated by His Lordship Mgr. Archambault, of Joliette, Assistant at the throne, Rev. Canon Martin; Deacons of Honor, Fathers Piette and Martin; deacon of Office, Rev. Mr. Singleton; sub-deacon Rev. Mr. Lavigne. Preacher, Rev. Father Fournier, Prof. of Belles-Lettres, Montreal College. The assistant priest and the bearers of the various insignia assisted in copes. The professors and students of both faculties of Laval University attended in academic gowns. After the Mass a grand dinner was served to those present.

NOTRE DAME CHURCH.

The historic Church of Notre Dame has often been seen magnificently decorated, but on Thursday the grandeur was unsurpassed. Around the galleries were the words of the "Magnificat" in large blue letters on white cloth. From the pillars hung large blue silk banners. The statue of the Immaculate Conception presented to the church some years ago by the late Pope Pius IX. was decorated with colored electric lights, candles and flowers. This particularly beautiful statue is of Carrara marble resting on granite pillar, and is the work of a Bavarian artist. The main altar and sanctuary were flooded with hundreds of electric lights, that shed their radiance over the gorgeous decorations. The music was well rendered, the boys' voices being heard to good advantage. Solemn High Mass was sung by Rev. Abbe Troie, S.S., assisted by deacon and sub-deacon. In the afternoon solemn Vespers were sung, and Rev. Father Brosseau, chaplain at Mount St. Louis College, preached the sermon. Solemn Benediction closed the proceedings.

In the evening the Nocturnal Adoration Society held a special service. At all the services the vast edifice was thronged.

ST. PETER'S CHURCH, VISITATION STREET.

Here the feast of the Immaculate Conception was preceded by a triduum preached by the Rev. Father Valiquette. Every night the Church was crowded, and on the night immediately preceding the feast, eight confessors were kept in the church until midnight. On the feast itself there was a continual stream of people during all the Masses, giving a consoling manifestation of their faith in the feast which was being so triumphantly placed before the eyes of the world. High Mass was celebrated by the Rev. Father DeGuire, O.M.I., assisted by Rev. Fathers Berneche and Blanchard, as deacon and sub-deacon respectively. The altar was tastefully and artistically decorated. The choir, under the direction of Mr. Whalen, rendered a harmonized plain chant Mass with full orchestra accompaniment. Miss Laurier presided at the organ, and an impressive and eloquent sermon was given by Rev. Father Tourangeau, Provincial of the Order. The general solemnity continued until night, when the ceremonies were brought to a close by the singing of the Te Deum.

St Anthony's Catechism Children's Concert

Next Wednesday afternoon and evening will witness one of these grand gatherings when the children of St. Anthony's Catechism classes will hold their annual concert. The Catechism classes are under the direction of Father T. Heffernan, and while too much praise cannot be given him for his efforts in this respect, we wish both himself and the children all the enjoyment they can anticipate on this occasion.