

INSTRUCTIONS ON THE JUBILEE.

QUESTION. What is understood by a jubilee?

ANSWER. Jubilee means a time of joy and gladness, on account of some signal and public blessing.

Q. How many kinds of jubilee are there?

A. Two. 1. The jubilee proclaimed by Moses to the Hebrew nation; 2. The jubilee which the pope, the visible head of the church, and vicar of Jesus Christ, occasionally grants to the Catholic world.

Q. In what did the Mosaic Jubilee consist?

A. In the year of the jubilee, 1. All Hebrews who had been sold as slaves to their brethren, recovered their freedom. 2. All those who, compelled by poverty, had alienated the lands inherited from their fathers, re-entered into the possession of them. 3. All those who were involved in debt were protected from the pursuit of their creditors.

Q. Why did God establish the law of the jubilee?

A. Almighty God, having rescued the Hebrews from the bondage of Egypt, and introduced them into the land of promise, would suffer none to be forever deprived of these blessings. Therefore he enacted a law by which they were, every fiftieth year, to enjoy the privileges of the jubilee, which we have just enumerated.

Q. What do you mean by the jubilee granted by the head of the church?

A. I mean certain considerable spiritual benefits conferred on all the faithful throughout the Catholic world.

Q. What is the principal of these benefits?

A. The principal consists in a plenary indulgence.

Q. What do you understand by a plenary indulgence?

A. A plenary indulgence means the total remission of the temporal punishment which sinners have still to undergo after having obtained the pardon of their sins.

Q. Is not sin also remitted by the indulgence of the jubilee?

A. No. The only means instituted by Jesus Christ, in the law of grace, for obtaining the remission of our sins, is the sacrament of penance.

Q. How do you prove that a sinner, after having obtained the pardon of his sins, has still to undergo a temporal punishment?

A. It is proved, 1st, from Scripture, which contains many instances in which the forgiveness of sin was not attended by the relaxation of temporal punishment. Moses offended God by his diffidence at the water of contradiction, (Numb. xx. 12.) and though his sin was undoubtedly forgiven him, yet the Lord declared to him that, in punishment of his unbelief, he should not enter into the land of promise.—David sinned: a prophet announced to him that *the Lord had taken away his sins*, (2 Kings, xii. 13.) but that he would, nevertheless, be visited by numerous and severe afflictions. 2. By the constant doctrine and practice of the church; from the time of the apostles to the present day she has always taught, as an article of faith, that satisfaction is an integral part of the sacrament of penance. She has always required of her ministers to impose penitential works upon sinners who have recourse to them in the sacred tribunal. She moreover exhorts them forcibly to inculcate from the pulpit the indispensable necessity, incumbent upon all, of satisfying the divine justice, and daily to offer the holy sacrifice of her altars, to alleviate the sufferings of such of her children as depart this life before they have fully undergone the temporal punishment due to their sins.

Q. Why does Almighty God inflict temporal punishment on penitent sinners, whom he has pardoned and received into his friendship?

A. To deter them from falling again into sin. God displays the full extent of his infinite mercy towards sinners only once, and this in the sacrament of baptism. For, every adult who worthily receives this sacrament is not only cleansed from original and actual sin, but also exempted from both the eternal and temporal punishments which they deserve. God treats with much greater severity those who transgress his divine law, after having been raised by baptism to the dignity of his adopted children, of brothers of his divine Son, and co-heirs to his kingdom. They may, it is true, obtain in the sacrament of penance the remission of the guilt and of the eternal punishment of their sins; but they are bound to satisfy the divine justice, either in this world, by the laborious works of penance, or in the next, by the sufferings of purgatory.