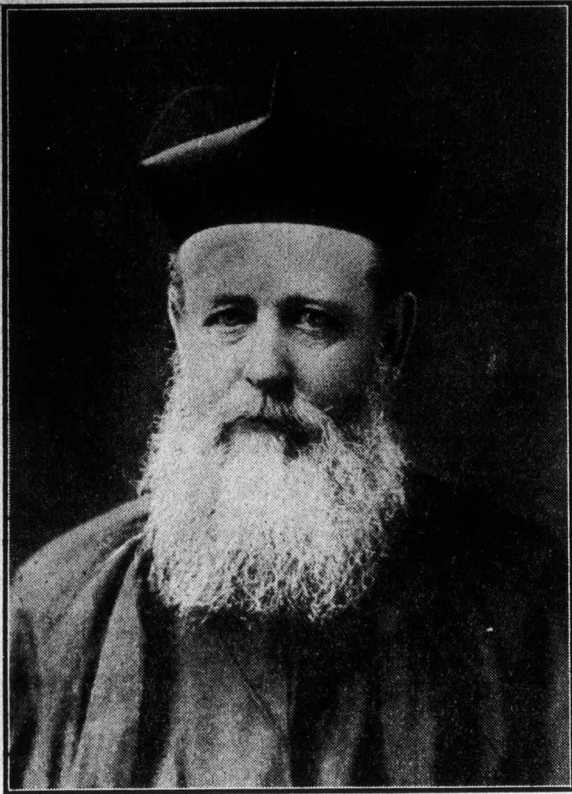


# Lenten Sermons and Missions

BY OUR OWN REPORTER.



REV. WILLIAM DOHERTY, S.J.

AT THE GESU—On Sunday evening Rev. Father W. Doherty, S.J., began his series of Lenten sermons, which he preaches each Sunday evening at eight o'clock. The subject, or rather general theme that Father Doherty will treat in these instructions is—"The Church of the Living God." We might say that this year's sermons constitute a continuation of the series preached by the same eminent theologian last Lent. The particular subject of last Sunday's sermon was "The Church of the Living God, as The Pillar and Ground of Truth." The sermons given last year on Faith, as the foundation of our justification, led up to this consideration of the Church. We have in that Church the guide of Truth, and as such we should understand the Divine Institution, in order to be more prepared to follow its teaching on the all important question of Truth. We will, thus, examine in these sermons the nature of the Church of the Living God, its attributes, its constitution and system of government, and finally its relations to society. The preacher characterized this vast subject as the very sublimest in the domain of speculative thought. The subject, then, of the Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Ground of Truth suggests at once a necessity of knowing its nature.

The first evidence of the Church, to which all must belong, being Divine in its origin, and therefore the depository of Truth, is to be found in its antiquity, and the unbroken record that it presents throughout the long ages that have elapsed since the beginning of Christianity. In the earlier days the nature and truth of the Church were made manifest by miracles that are as numerous as they are incontestably avouched. But we need no miracle to-day to prove the wonderful character of that matchless system. It is a spiritual, visible and social organization, the most numerous in point of membership, and the most perfectly constituted and organized establishment on earth. Alone, in all the world, the Catholic Church is the perfect

model of unity, compactness and strength. Her government, her constitution, and her influence upon those who have the happiness to belong to her fold, suffice to establish her unique claim to the title of the Pillar and Ground of Truth. The world has never witnessed so perfect a system of spiritual government. Its symmetry and harmony are such that the destruction of the smallest particle in her system would entail the ruin of the entire fabric. The world has changed; empires, kingdoms, republics, have come and gone; but the Church has remained ever the same, and she is more powerful at this hour than she ever has been since the commencement of her existence. Her sway includes all men, of all classes, and has exercised its influence over the greatest intellects of the world.

At this point the preacher quoted from the beautiful and erudite pages of Cardinal Wiseman, to demonstrate the attributes and glories of the Catholic Church, the perfection of her doctrines, and the evidences that she can be none other than the Church of the Living God.

As there were two natures combined in Christ, the human and the divine, so in the Church, His spouse, are there two natures—that which has its human characteristics and that which has its divine qualities. These are intimately united in one great body. In the ordinary Catechism we learn the nature of the Church as an institution, and especially from its human side; but we need a closer study to grasp the nature of the Church as a divine institution. Our Lord, the Founder of the Church of the Living God, referred numberless times to her, when in the beautiful language of the parable, He spoke to the first Apostles and Disciples. In that parable of the vineyard, Our Lord compares Himself to the wine; in that of the shepherd, He styles Himself the shepherd; He tells of the temple as the House of God; and when He

compares the Church to the Kingdom He is the King that rules. But He has gone farther in parable and has called the Church the Bride of the Lamb. He is the Lamb of God, and His Spouse is the Church. That Spouse must be immaculate, without stain of error, in order to be worthy of the Divine Bridegroom. St. Paul, following in the avenue traced for him by Our Lord, calls upon husbands to love their wives even as Christ loves His Church. The great Apostle again makes a comparison in which he figures the union of the human and the divine in the Church, for he says: "Know you not that you are the members of the body of the Church of which Christ is the head." Take then, the mystic union of the divine and human natures in Christ, and you have the illustration of the same kind of union of two distinct natures in the Church. Even without ascending to Christ, we have in man the miracle of a union that truly exists but which none can comprehend—in man we have the mortal that must perish and the immortal that cannot die—the body and the soul. Even so is it in the Church; there is the human side that will pass away with the ending of time, and the immortal and divine side, that will live on as a Church Triumphant throughout eternity. St. Augustine tells us that "The Church of the Living God, is Christ Jesus incarnate."

In his peroration Father Doherty resumed all he had said regarding the nature of the Church, indicated how the next sermon would fit in as a continuation of the present one, and declared the Church to be an organization that is worthy of divinity—for it is the Church of the Living God, who is the Father; it is the Spouse of Christ, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity; and it is the temple of the Holy Ghost, the third Person of that adorable triune Deity. It is the city on the hill, that cannot be hidden from the eyes of men. That is to say, the City of God, and, as such, it has remained immutable through all the changes of time—the most bold, most holy, most sublime pyramid in the desert of ages.

AT NOTRE DAME—"The Word of God," was the subject announced by Rev. Father H. Delor, O.P., who commenced on Sunday last the Lenten sermons at Notre Dame Church. On his arrival in Canada the eminent preacher had fallen ill with la grippe, but not wishing to disappoint the thousands that flocked to hear him, he made a supreme effort, and ascended the pulpit, as announced, at High Mass last Sunday. Evidently he was not prepared to see an audience of about ten thousand people, the greater number being men, and he experienced emotions of a very natural character. In France to-day the great preachers are not used to seeing large churches filled with men. But in Canada it is another story, and the surprise is all the more agreeable. The preacher is young, of fine appearance, and a gesture inimitable. He gives evidence of his early training as a lawyer and of his subsequent extensive experience as a preacher. He announced that his sermons would deal with the "Word of God." But before touching upon the immediate theme of his series of Lenten instructions he delivered an exordium calculated to win the attention and hearts of all who heard him. He spoke of the profound emotion that he experienced in beholding such a

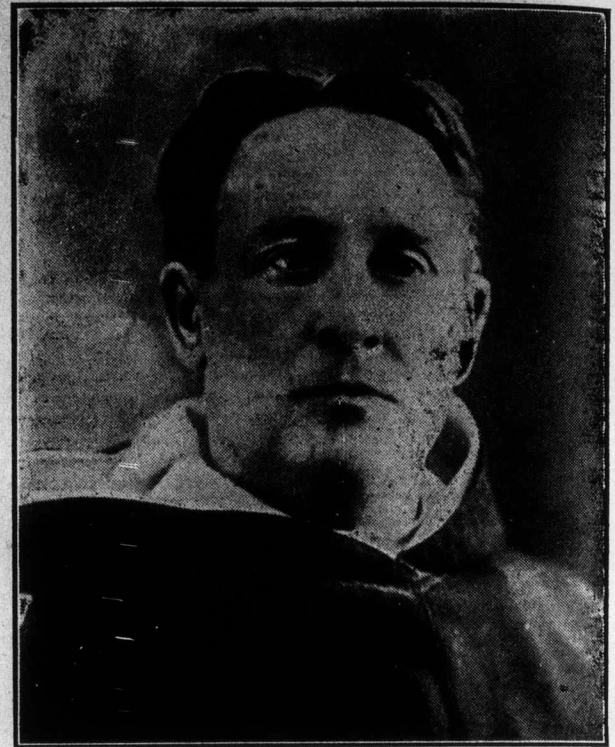
vast throng. His emotions were both patriotic and religious, and they made him forget that he had left the expansive ocean between himself and France, and had come to a new France, where he found the same blood, the same language and the same faith. And he then cried out: "No I am not a stranger amongst you, for from this pulpit I will speak my mother tongue, the beautiful French language, with the certainty of being understood not only by a few of you, but by all who listen to me, understood as perfectly as if I were speaking in the heart of Paris. No; I am not a stranger, for I can give vent to the deepest sentiments of my heart and the dearest convictions of my life, with the assurance of finding an echo in all your hearts, which, like my own, live by the same faith, in the same hope, and by the same love. And I feel that the word "Brethren," which I have addressed to you, as it passed over my lips was no vain or meaningless word."

He then announced that he came here with the Word of God. God, then, has a Word. God has made man hear that Word. And man can repeat to his fellowmen the Word of God. Why did God speak to man? What did He teach man? What does He ask in return for His Word? What has he ordered us to do that we may attain the object He has set before us? Such are the questions that will be answered in this series of sermons. It will be a study of the Happiness, of the Faith, of the Love of God, and of the Charity of men.

While it seems to be a most natural assertion that God has spoken to man, yet no assertion has ever been more bitterly combated by the audacious of our age. We live in an age of negation; therefore, in a time when more than ever we need to harken to the word of God. The Word of God is a living doctrine, that millions are speaking all over the earth in countless temples. It is not a doctrine born yesterday and destined to perish to-morrow; it is one as old as history, as old as the world, written in the sublimest of all books, the Bible. Let us take up that Bible and see what it tells us.

It tells us that if sin came to put an end to the sweet conversations between God and primeval man, that God did not abandon the human race. He selected, from time to time, great men to be the instruments of His revelations to man; He even selected an entire people to be the guardians and transmitters of His Word through long ages; He raised up prophets; who for ten centuries, ceased not to speak in His name to the human race. Finally that Book teaches us that the prophets and patriarchs were only the precursors, and that after them came a Man, who not only spoke of God, but who said that He was God made man, for the purpose of speaking directly with humanity. That Man is Jesus Christ. No matter how unbelieving the free-thinker may be, he must admit that history has to reckon with Christ, for he constitutes the culminating point of all history. What did Christ do? For thirty years He lived in obscurity and silence; and for three years He went about speaking the Word of God. He said things that no human being had ever before dared to say. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us," says St. John—and that Word was Christ, the Son of God—the Word of God incarnate.

The preacher then takes up the



REV. H. DELOR, O. P.

words of Christ as we read them in the New Testament, and in a most beautiful style tells of the one who goes forth to sow the few grains in the field; of the loaded wagons and bursting barns when that seed becomes a crop, a harvest. And he adds: "Sublime is the gesture of that sower. So for the word of Christ is the jestura sublime. He gathered around Him a handful of men, humble as the grains of seed, poor fishermen, and He said to them, 'Go ye forth and teach all nations, preach My word to all creatures, behold I am with you unto the end of time.' And those men went out over the world, in all lands, and in all tongues, to repeat what they had heard. After nineteen centuries that handful of men became the great Catholic Church of to-day, which sends out missionaries all over the world to preach the Word of God.

Father Delor then turned to the necessity of God's Word. No matter how learned man may be, science has its limitations. Beyond the material world, with which science has to do, there is another world—that of the soul. What is God, this wonderful and mysterious Being, that has had no beginning and can have no end? Why did He create this world. Why did He create man? What does He want with us? Why has He loaded us with the burden of this life? Why must we suffer? Why sorrow? Why must we die? Science cannot answer all these. We must, then, turn to the Word of God for the replies that we seek. What was there for me the day before my birth? What will there be for me the day after my death? The Word of God will answer all these important questions.

AT ST. PATRICK'S—The first week of the Mission, now being conducted by four members of the Paulist Order—Rev. Fathers MacConry, Kennedy, Devine and Moran—at St. Patrick's for the married women, has been well attended every morning and evening.

The closing sermon of the week will be preached to-morrow afternoon.

The unmarried women will enter upon their week to-morrow evening at 7.30 o'clock. It is expected that the attendance will be representative of every household in the parish.

AT ST. ANTHONY'S—The Lenten Mission in this parish, which opened for the married and unmarried women on Sunday last, has been a great success. The exercises are under the direction of the Rev. G. O'Brien, S.J., and Rev. O. B. Devlin, S.J., two of the best known missionaries in English-speaking districts in Canada.

Next week the sterner sex will have their turn. It is to be hoped that they will respond in an enthusiastic manner.

AT ST. ANN'S—Much care has been displayed by the zealous Rector, Rev. Father Caron, C.S.S.R., in the preparation of the order of exercises for the Lenten season. The following is an outline:

Every Sunday, at 3.30—Special sermon for married women. At 7.30, Rosary, sermon by Rev. Father Connolly, S.J., and Benediction, for all the parishioners.

Every Monday, at 8 p.m.—Sermon for unmarried women, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Every Wednesday, at 8 p.m.—Rosary, Sermon and Benediction, for all the parishioners.

Every Thursday, at 8 p.m.—Sermon for the men and boys of the parish—Benediction.

Every Friday, at 7.30 p.m.—Stations of the Cross.

There will be a Low Mass every morning at 8 o'clock.

The attendance at the various exercises is characteristic of the past reputation of our co-religionists in old St. Ann's.

## Centenary of St. Gregory the Great

The circular issued by the committee for the thirteenth centenary of the death of St. Gregory the Great reproduces in fac simile the autograph encouragement sent by His Holiness. These words of the Sovereign Pontiff were the following: "We bless the promoters of the centenary celebration in honor of the Holy Pontiff, Gregory the Great, in the fervent hope that their efforts will be crowned with success. From the Vatican, August 27, 1903. Pius PP., X." The circular is as follows: "Encouraged by the blessing of the Vicar of Christ, the committee for the festivities in honor of the thirteen-hundredth anniversary of

St. Gregory I., the Great, appeals with confidence to all who hold dear the glorious memories of the Church or who have at heart the welfare of Christian society to help as far as lies in their power the worthy celebration of this great event.

Gregory, Pontiff and Saint, by his many-sided activity, left his impress broad and deep on the Church, not only of his own day, but also of succeeding ages. The solemn celebration of his thirteenth centenary cannot, then, be a mere transient demonstration of joy; by enabling us to look more nearly upon his noble figure, to realize more intimately his personality, his spirit, his work, it will teach us many lessons of lasting profit to our own times. Rome is the natural centre of these celebra-

tions, as the birthplace of the Holy Pontiff, the chief scenes of his labors and the spot hallowed by his sacred remains. But the generous co-operation of other lands is looked for, especially of England, which claims the Great Gregory as her Apostle, and which of all countries outside of Italy was the most favored by his affectionate solicitude.

The principal season of the festivities will be in the Easter and Low weeks (April 6-13), at which time the Holy Father will pontificate in the Basilica of St. Peter's, with a grand choir of the students of all the national colleges in Rome to sing the Mass in plain song. There will be scientific reunions under the presidency of Mgr. Duchesne, in which distinguished men from different coun-

tries will treat of matters of history, liturgy, sacred art, and church music which have some point of contact with St. Gregory, and of Christian Archaeology of the sixth and seventh centuries.

Associated with the illustrious French historian in organizing this scientific tribute to the Saint are the following persons resident in Rome: Father Ehrle, S.B.; Professor Ludwig Pastor, Dom. L. Janssens, O.S.B.; Father A. De Santi, S.J.; Professor G. Mercati, and Professor P. Franchi De Cavalieri. It is hoped that the benefactions sent to the committee for their work will be sufficient to enable excavations to be made under the Church of St. Gregory on the Coelian Hill, where it is supposed important remains of the

paternal maison of the Saint lie awaiting discovery. Contributions for this special purpose will be gratefully accepted.

The project of excavating the Church of San Gregorio al Celio has been under way for several months. The level of Rome rose everywhere, within doors as well as without, during the Middle Ages and modern times, and the name of St. Gregory has been generally taken as marking the beginning of the medieval era. That the probabilities of discovering important remains of his paternal mansion under the level of the present church (which is of the sixteenth century) are very strong is clear from the fact that the Saint's paternal domus was of preceding classic era. But some of the optical indications are stronger still.

The Church of Saints John and Paul stand at less than a stone's throw from the temple which St. Gregory dedicated to St. Andrew, and the excavations made in the former by Padre Germano di San Stefano have been the most remarkable undertaken since Father Mulhooly discovered the lower Church of St. Clemente. It may seem surprising then, that nothing has been attempted at San Gregorio, but this is not precisely the case. Cardinal Manning, who was titular of the Church in his day, as Cardinal Vaughan was afterwards, desired to devote a considerable portion of his jubilee fund to this grateful task, but difficulties were made by the Municipality or Government, on account— it is said—of his attitude about the dependence of the Holy See.

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