

In the holy Eucharist, they bring down Jesus Christ himself to our embraces.

In penance they inspect and heal the leprocy of the soul, which is sin. Lev. 13.

In extreme unction, they, the true shepherds of Christ's fold, defend his sheep against the ravenous wolf; and beat him off at the critical moment when he is on the point of seizing his prey; rescuing them often from his murderous fangs; and snatching them from his very jaws, already gaping to devour them.

In holy orders they shed on others, set apart for the sacred ministry, the sanctifying, fortifying, inspiring and enlightening grace of the Holy Ghost so requisite to them in their pastoral calling: the same, which the Saviour himself imparted to his first pastors, the apostles; when breathing upon them, he said: *receive the Holy Ghost, &c.*

In matrimony they consecrate the conjugal state; and render the union of man and wife, a blessed emblem of Christ's indissoluble union with his Church, his chosen bride and sole beloved: the mother of all his spiritual children.

They are the proper spiritual physicians, whose chief study is, how to preserve and promote the health of our better half, the soul; and how to cure its soreful distempers: not merely by holding forth a general weekly random lecture on the subject; but by examining minutely the various cases of the several patients; and prescribing for them accordingly.

They are the appointed guardians of the weak and poor: of the orphan, and the widow against their oppressors: the commissioned inculcators of every virtue, and the teachers of truth: God's deputed heralds, and ambassadors; bearing in their hands the authentic credentials of their divine mission to man.

These are an efficient clergy dispensing heavenly counsel, consolation, peace and benediction to all around them, wherever they go. Unincumbered with wives and families, and all unnecessary worldly concerns, which might anyways impede the proper discharge of their pastoral duties: and wholly uncalculating, as they were designed, for the instruction, sanctification and salvation of their fellow beings. They are the very soul of God's people; that portion of themselves, whose function it is to think for the rest; and stir them up to think on the main business of life, the only one indeed, for which they were created, and sent into this world: on the proper consideration of which their fate for an eternity depends.

The object of such a clergy in taking orders, is not, like that of the Anglican, or of any other, to secure to themselves a temporal living; but, by their many privations of worldly enjoyments, and the zealous discharge of their laborious and disinterested duties, to win a better and more lasting living with God and his saints in the world to come.

From the extreme sanctity of their Clerical functions in the administration of the sacraments; and particularly in the celebration of the mass: the fear

of committing sacrilege, by performing them in the state of sin, subjects them oftener than the rest of the faithful, to the humbling duty of confession. Their fastings are unavoidably more frequent and rigid, than those of others. To say nothing of their duty of attendance on the sick from every distance; in all seasons of the year, and at every hour of the night or day: lest the disease be ever so contagious: and all this without earthly fee or reward: besides, what is known only to themselves, their painful toil, and mental exertions in the confessional: where they must adapt their advice and instructions to the age, capacity, circumstances and situation of their several penitents. Nor is their daily recital of the *breviary*, which occupies, more or less a couple of hours, a light obligation; and yet it is a binding one, where none greater interpose to prevent it. It cannot then with truth be said of them, that they lay weightier burthens on others, than what they consent to bear themselves.

Their sermons too are not *read* but *spoken* from the abundance of the head and heart: and the finest samples afforded in the world of christian exhortation, and pulpit eloquence, have confessedly flowed from their lips, and pen. No wonder: besides the goodness of their cause, and divine inspiration; their course of studies is a long and laborious one; embracing all that any ways tends to raise up human nature from its fallen, blind and debilitated condition; and exalt man, as a rational being and a christian. In their study of theology they have also the pre-eminent advantage of drawing their information from more ancient, authentic, universal and purer sources, than the muddy puddles of such various colour, taste and flavour, formed on particular spots, by the many dissentient reformers; from which our Anglican, and all protestant divines, derive and must drain all their ecclesiastical knowledge. *They have left me the fountain of life*, says Almighty God; *and have dug for themselves cisterns; broken cisterns, that can hold no water.* Jerem. 2, 13.

The Catholic priesthood therefore bears in itself the most evident marks of its divine origin; and is easily distinguished by the sincere seeker of truth, as the only one of the Saviour's institution. That some of its members are spied unworthy of the sacred character which they bear, is a melancholy truth denied by none: but the order itself cannot be degraded by the wicked or worldly conduct of such; nor the Church justly blamed for the infringement of her precepts. Such unhappy casualties, and yet but few, in proportion to the immense body of her clergy, only shew, that man is man: fallible and subject to sin in every situation of life. Besides, the Saviour, though he assures us that the *gates of hell shall not prevail against his church*, declares that *scandals must come*; but he lays his weighty yoke on the wretched beings who occasion them.

To compare then the Catholic priesthood, or the Catholic Church, with the Anglican, or any other protestant sect or clergy; would be like comparing Jesus Christ with Barabbas: Nor was the preference given by the Jews to the felon over their king

and Messiah, more unaccountable and monstrous than that given by this, and a few other countries over the one, holy, Catholic and apostolical church, her, whom, according to Saint Paul, Eph. 5. 27 Christ has presented to himself, *holy and without blemish: to whom the beloved in the canticle of Canticles, 4, 7, so enamouredly exclaims; thou art all fair, O my love; and there is no spot in thee!*

ORIGINAL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN GUARDIAN.

Sir,

I must repeat, what I mentioned in my last letter to you, that we cannot think of admitting into our paper, to the exclusion of more regular and interesting discussion, your long, desultory; illogical and merely opinative Communications: which my reply, (if any formal or precise reply could be given to such incoherent, piece-meal argumentation) would more than double; were I but barely to notice your many quirky and conjectural comments on the said text, which, like every other negative of the Catholic, or universal faith, you so twist and torture into your own private and particular meaning; and also the many false, or purposely mangled and misinterpreted quotations from the ancient Fathers of the Church; which you seem to gather from your *No Popery* writers; an interested crew of prevaricating Translators; who dare foist their impositions on the unthinking, ignorant and careless Many which none but the learned and diligently investigating few, are capable of detecting. Why sir, your only purpose seems, by holding forth to me a mere *Ignis fatuus*, to engage me in fool's chase after its fitful ramblings; and leave me entangled amid the murky mazes of your uncertain guessing and conjectural labyrinth. In our forthcoming Numbers we shall have occasion to show from the purest sources what the real, and joint opinion of the Holy Fathers, from the earliest ages has been, on the very point in question, the Catholic Doctrine of Transubstantiation.—It is not the unopposing Catholic, but the opposing Protestant, or adversary, who dares to grapple with this *Master Subject*. To you therefore, and every Protestant, must belong that *Giant mind*, with which, in solemn mockery you are pleased to dub me, To you indeed it will rightfully belong, if you can but bring down to the lowly level of your understanding and shew within the pigmy grasp of your comprehension, what Catholics (as wise & learned as protestants are) consider the most sublime and incomprehensible of God's revealed Mysteries; though of a 11 others the most explicitly indicated; and the clearest of any proposed to our belief. As for me, and those of my persuasion, we are only wisdom's *Little ones*, the *unwise*, and simple ones, whom she invites to her prepared feast: prov. 9. 4. 5. *fools in the opinion of the worldly wise for so unhesitatingly relying upon her word and promise, for casting down as the Apostle exhorts, every height, that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God: and bringing into captivity every understanding unto the obedience of Christ.* 2. cor. 10. 5.