

# The Church Guardian

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## Special Notice.

**SUBSCRIBERS IN ARREARS** are respectfully requested to remit at their earliest convenience. The LABEL gives the date of expiration.

### CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER.

Dec. 5th—2nd Sunday in Advent.

" 12th—3rd Sunday in Advent.—(Notice of Ember Days.)

" 15th }  
" 17th } EMBER DAYS.  
" 18th }

" 19th—4th Sunday in Advent.—(Notice of St. Thomas and Christmas.)

" 21st—St. Thomas, A. & M.

" 25th—CHRISTMAS DAY.

Pr. Psa. M., 19, 45, 85: E. 89, 110  
132—*Athanasian Creed*. Proper Preface Com. Service till 1st of January inclusive.

" 26th—St. Stephen—The first Martyr.

1st Sunday after Christmas.—(Notice of St. John, Innocents' Day and Circumcision.)

" 27th—St. John, A. & E.

" 28th—Innocents' Day.

### THE COMING OF THE END.

"The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer."—1 St. Peter iv. 7. (*Epistle*.)

In the latter Apostolic times it was widely believed that the second advent of our Lord was at hand. Probably the repeated warnings giving by Christ to prepare for it may have given rise to this idea, which was certainly general, as we see by St. Paul's frequent references and allusions (Rom. xiii. 12; Philippians iv. v; Hebrews x. 25). The petition "Thy kingdom come" in the Lord's Prayer may also have helped to spread the belief. Men lived in daily expectation of it, thinking that it might come at any moment, and watched earnestly for it, trying to be prepared.

If by the "day of the Lord" and the end of all things" we understand the Second Advent alone, then it may not be close at hand as men judge time. It must, of course, be nearer than in Apostolic days; and the necessity of watching is equally urgent. St. Paul tells us we "shall not all sleep," and we know that Christ will come to "judge the quick and the dead. But virtually it comes to us at death, as far as our final destiny is concerned. After death, although we do not at once enter the final state, yet we are in certain anticipation of it, awaiting, in bliss only less than only less than that of Heaven, or despair little better than that of hell, the sentence of the Judge. There can be no change from the one state to the other after death (St. Luke xvi. 26). With our last breath, time vanishes into eternity. We shall no longer use time in measuring the interval until the day of judgment. For us,

therefore, there remain at most but a few years until the "end of all things."

If we would not be taken unawares, we must take the advice of the Apostle, and be "sober" and "watch unto prayer." Our business, pleasures, and in fact our whole lives, must be sober, or restrained, and we must give way to neither labour nor enjoyment so completely as to forget all else. If we are conscious that if God the Son were to appear at any moment He would approve of what we are doing, we are doing that thing soberly. His presence being a restraint upon us lest we go too far, it ought not to detract from our thoroughness either in work or enjoyment to know that God approves of them.

Again, we must "watch unto prayer." We must not only watch for His coming, which may be delayed, but is none the less certain (St. Matthew xxiv. 48); we must also watch ourselves that we do not become lethargic or indifferent. We can, if we will, live in prayer, for prayer is not the expression of the lips, but the desire of the heart. We cannot always be praying in words to God, but we can so live in a state of desiring Him (Psalm xiii. 1) that our very condition is one of prayer, just as the dry and parched ground seems to be always mutely asking for rain. If we try to live thus, we shall not be among those who are taken by surprise, dismayed and terrified at the coming of the Bridegroom, but shall go out with joy to meet Him, our lamps burning brightly, as those who have long expected and desired Him.—*Selected*.

### APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

[Paper read by the Rev. Canon Brock, M.A., President of King's College, at the meeting of the Avon Deanery, held in Windsor on St. Andrew's Day, 1886. Published by request of the Chapter.]

It may be well to begin with a definition of Apostolical Succession. Blunt, in his Dictionary of Doctrinal and Historical Theology, defines it as "The transmission, through the Episcopate, of the power and authority committed by our Lord to His Apostles for the guidance and government of His Church." In his Household Theology, the same author says, "The regular transmission of ministerial powers and authority from our Lord to the Apostles, from the Apostles to the Bishops whom they ordained, from these Bishops to others and so on to our own day, is called Apostolical Succession."

Apostolical Succession, therefore, in one aspect may be regarded as a fact, a historical fact, resting on a verifiable basis of history. As a fact it might be stated thus: The ministerial commission which our Blessed Lord gave His Apostles as the rulers of His Church, the Apostles entrusted to others, Timothy, Titus, and others who were the successors of the Apostles; these successors of the Apostles (who from the opening of the second century were universally called bishops), gave the commission they had received from the Apostles to others; and these last, Bishops as St. Ignatius, the disciple of St. John, repeatedly calls them, entrusted the original commission to others; and so through the numerous lines of Bishops of the churches of the East and West, the ministerial commission which the great Head of the Church gave His Apostles eighteen and a half centuries ago has come down to the Bishops and Priests of our day.

This is a historical fact capable of being verified in the records of that great Society which our Blessed Lord founded on earth—His Church. Its verification in reference to our

own branch of the H. C. Church I shall presently recur to. I want to show you that Apostolical Succession (I.) is *Scriptural*; (II.) is *vitally necessary*; (III.) is *held by our own Church*; and (IV.) is *not uncertain in the Anglican Church*.

#### I.—APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION IS SCRIPTURAL.

The Risen Saviour thus addresses His Apostles: "As my Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." Was the authority here given to the Apostles to die with them? Was the ministerial commission which these words, and the words they stand connected with convey, to cease with Christ's Apostles? If so, what would become of the Church of Jesus which the Apostles founded? As a Divine Society it would need Divinely appointed rulers not only for its commencement, but also for its *continuance*. We are not left, however, to inferences in this matter. On another occasion the Risen Saviour thus addresses His Apostles: "All power hath been given unto Me in Heaven and on earth. Go, ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and lo! I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the world."

Our Saviour's blessed presence is here pledged to be with His Apostles to the latest days of His Church's warfare, even unto the consummation of the age. This promise could not have been fulfilled unless our Lord was to be with the successors of His Apostles. A few years would pass away and every one of that band of Apostles would be gathered into the blessed rest of Paradise. But the Church would not die, nor would her rulers pass away. Therefore, when our Risen Lord pledged to that Church and her Rulers His perpetual presence, He contemplated the transmission of the authority and power which He gave His Apostles, in other words, the prescient eye of Jesus saw the fact which we now call Apostolical Succession. On this ground, therefore, I hold that it is scriptural.

#### II.—APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION IS VITALLY NECESSARY.

Every one, I suppose, will admit that no one can authoritatively preach the Gospel of God, or administer the Holy Sacraments, to which Jesus Christ has annexed the promises of grace and pardon, *without a Divine Commission*. This admitted, the question arises, *How* is Divine Commission to be given? I only know of two possible ways.

First, by a miracle—that is, God designating by some miraculous sign those whom He sets apart and appoints to the ministerial office in His Church. God has not been pleased to adopt this mode. Indeed we could hardly have expected the ordinary government of His Church would be carried on by miraculous means.

We are shut up, therefore, to the other mode by which a Divine Commission can be given. The original commission which the great Head of the Church gave His Apostles must be transmitted, handed on, that is, by those who have authority, as the successors of Christ's Apostles, to call and send ministers into Christ's Church. Apostolical Succession, therefore, is absolutely necessary if the Church is to have a body of men who are the duly commissioned ambassadors of God the Father, and the duly accredited ministers of God the Son.

Do you think that God would send ambassadors to entreat men to be reconciled to Him, and not give these ambassadors clear credentials—credentials not only clear to *themselves*, as the inward call which our ordinal insists on presupposes, but clear *especially* to those to whom God sends them? Surely the Lord Jesus, who had received from the Father all authority and power, would take care that the ministers He sent to act as the ambassadors