

THE PORTIUNCULA INDULGENCE.

On the second day of August every year since 1223, may be seen in every Franciscan Church and chapel in the world...

They are making the visits required to gain the plenary indulgence of the Portiuncula—the Grand Pardon of Assisi, as it is called.

Would that men knew and appreciated it more, as they certainly would if they stopped to think about it.

That glorious son of St. Francis and seraphic doctor of the Church, St. Bonaventure, wrote glowingly of this wonderful privilege bestowed on men, through the mother of God and St. Francis.

The Irish Franciscan historian, Luke Wadding, chronicled the wonders of grace that flowed from it.

We are told in the life of St. Bridget of Sweden, that she thought very highly of the great pardon of St. Francis, and even doubted the truth of its divine origin and efficacy.

"My daughter, falsehood is not found where the fire of divine charity dwells, Francis my faithful servant, possessed the truth."

And that is the whole of the Portiuncula Indulgence. St. Francis praying for the conversion of sinners was told to ask a favor of Heaven and it would be granted.

This special privilege and special token he asked in his great zeal for the welfare of his fellowmen.

value of that sentence! Oh, that we could realize the need above all else in the world we have of what divine assurance! We would go with our empty hands to the rich free treasury of the Church and return filled with faith and hope and charity...

St. Francis is on earth still in his thousands of sons and daughters, and the age of miracles is not passed at all. Thousands of eager souls will on the coming second of August in all simplicity and earnestness seek the churches where St. Francis' pardon is held out to them and obtain for themselves and their departed friends from the generosity of Him who has said: "Ask and you shall receive" the wiping out of all their debts except that of gratitude.

The letter of it is: The first condition is to make a contrite confession—for only in the state of grace may a soul merit the remission of the temporal punishment due to sin even after it is forgiven.

The second condition is to receive Holy Communion (this was added to the condition of confession for all churches outside the Church of Portiuncula) on the first or second of August.

The third condition is to visit devoutly a church privileged with the Indulgence any time from 3 p.m. on the first to sunset on the second of August.

This visit may be repeated as often as one has time and inclination to return to the church and at each visit the Indulgence may be gained for a helpless soul in Purgatory.

The fourth condition is to pray for the intention of the Holy Father. Any prayers may be said, but it is usual to say five times the Our Father and Hail Mary—and these should be said with the lips, as well as with the heart.

It is a great opportunity to help the souls in Purgatory which no humble, sincere Catholic may lightly neglect. Make an effort to find out the nearest church to you privileged with this singular indulgence, and without interfering with your business or even your legitimate pleasure you can pay a tribute of respect to the Giver of all good by claiming for yourself and for your beloved dead this great grace, the free and full pardon of all your sins and the penalties awaiting them in this world or the next.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

A MANLY BOY.—Some of our boys in Montreal should read the following story and take the lessons it contains to heart:

Several days ago I happened to board a car which was crowded. A little man—perhaps he was twelve years old—offered me his seat with a charming bow and smile. He soon found a seat, but popped up when another woman entered, pulled off his cap, which was fringed with rags, and with such a jolly, wide smile, made room for the newcomer.

The boy heard this remark and looked around to see who was manly.

ANXIOUS TO LEARN.—Many children consider it a hard task to study their lessons. Let them appreciate the opportunities they now enjoy after reading the following:

Some years ago a few kind people made up their minds to try to get hold of all the chimney sweeps in Dublin and give them an education.

One day a little fellow who came was asked if he knew his letters. "Oh, yes," he answered. "Can you spell?" "Oh, yes."

"What books did you learn from?" "Please, sir, I never had a book." "Then who was your school master?"

"I never went to school, at all." The gentleman started, for it seemed very strange that a boy should be able to read and spell, and yet never had a master.

The little boy smiled and linked his arm in that of a sweep somewhat older than himself. "Please, sir, Jim taught me the letters over the shop doors, as we went to our work; but now I know all the words off by heart, and if you'd kindly let us have some books to read and teach us to do sums and writing, we'd be very thankful."

Can't you fancy what good pupils those two boys became?

A HERO OF DUTY.

If Catholic men, and Catholic women, too, would apply the moral of the following story to their own lives, how many troublous moments might be averted. It is as follows:

Part of the north of Holland is not protected from the sea by a natural barrier. Some two hundred years ago the Dutch undertook the big task of building enormous walls or dykes of granite blocks and clay to keep out the sea.

One afternoon in November, a long while ago, a furious wind was blowing from the northwest increasing every moment. The engineer in charge was a young man engaged to be married, whose friends and family lived in Amsterdam.

He thought of his dyke and all that depended on it. It would be a dreadful disappointment not to go. But the dyke! His friends would all be expecting him, watching for him.

It is six o'clock. The sea is rising. But at seven he must set out for Amsterdam. Shall he go? His heart says Yes; duty says No.

He then runs to the dyke. It is a scene of the utmost confusion. His two hundred men are bewildered. The storm has become a hurricane.

"Here is the master! God be praised! Now all will be well!" The master places each workman at his post, and a desperate battle begins between man and the enraged ocean.

"Help! Help!" "What is the matter?" "Four stones carried away at a blow!"

The master does not lose a moment. He fastens a rope around his body, four workmen do the same; and forty brave fellows throw themselves into the waves to repair the damage.

"Stones," cried one. "There are no more." "Mortar!" "There is no more."

"Take off your clothes!" cries the master, tearing off his own. "Stop the holes with them!"

Meanwhile the people of Alkmond ate and danced, little thinking that there were but a few inches of mason work between them and death.

Thousands of lives had been saved because one man had done his duty.

TOTAL ABSTINENCE. Avoid as you advance in years the special temptations that come to young men. I am not going to mention all of them, only one—intemperance.

As you go through the world and watch your fellow-men, you find the majority of failures in life due to intemperance.

This vice of intemperance attacks the weak and the strong, the educated and the ignorant. It is generous, open-hearted men that are most exposed to this curse.

Many people willfully or ignorantly abuse the eyes more than any other part of the body. When there is a dull, heavy pain in the lower part of the head, with sharp irregular pains extending over the back of the neck, above the ears, and also around the eyeballs, with more or less throbbing pains through the temples, you may be sure the eyes need rest and glasses.

The symptoms mentioned are usually more noticeable after an evening at the theatre, or any place where an effort is made to concentrate the sight on a given point for any length of time.

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