

their own condemnation. Thus by conferring His Priesthood, Jesus Christ gave His apostles the necessary power to continue His mission not only as Priest but as Teacher and Sanctifier of souls. They became "the ambassadors of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God." After His resurrection Jesus confirms their mission and directly gives them power to forgive sin, and the authority to teach.

On the very day that He arose from the dead Christ came to that cenacle in which He had consecrated them His priests for ever, and again announces their mission. He said: "As the Father hath sent me I also send you," and confers on them the second office of sanctifier of souls, giving them power over sin. "He breathed on them," says St. John the Evangelist, and said to them "Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins ye shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins ye shall retain they are retained." (St. John xx. 22. 23.) Thus did Christ, who came to call not the just but sinners, give to His Apostles his mission of mercy—His power to forgive sin and sanctify souls.

During the forty days He remained on earth after His resurrection, He taught them concerning the Kingdom of God, the Church of Jesus Christ. When about to ascend from Mount Olivet to the Father who had sent Him. He once more commissioned them. He had said to them: "As the Father hath sent me I also send you." Now He declares "All power in heaven and earth is given me." There is no limit to the power Jesus Christ received for the fulfilment of His mission. That power He gives to His apostles, and because they possess it He adds: "Going *therefore* teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." (Matt. xxviii, 19 and 20). They are to teach with his authority. "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth Him that sent me. (St. Luke x. 16). Thus did Jesus Christ bestow on His apostles His office of teacher.

The apostles had received their mission to continue the work of Jesus Christ as priest, sanctifier of souls and teacher, yet He bade them remain in Jerusalem until He would send the Holy Ghost. They need more than ordinary supernatural strength to begin their work. They had the whole world to overcome and bring into subjection to the sweet yoke of Jesus Christ. They were to suffer as their Master had suffered. They were to teach all truth. The Holy Ghost would enlighten their understanding, would bring to their minds all things whatsoever Christ had spoken, abide with them for ever, and strengthen them in persecution to lay down their lives in testimony of the faith they preached. To place the heavenly seal on their commission the Holy Ghost descended visibly on them and they were, says the scripture, filled with the Holy Ghost. They were now fully prepared and at once went forth to teach, to baptize, to remit sin and to offer sacrifice, to be for all time "the ambassadors of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God."

The mission of the apostles has ever continued in their successors the Bishops of holy church who have received it by the imposition of hands as did