

the prayers of his flock at *Ephesus, Thessalonica, Colossus*, and elsewhere. Eph. vi. 19. 2 Thess. iii. 1. Col. iv. 4. Rom. xv. 30. Did this apostle then do a vain thing in having recourse to the prayers of the faithful? Or, may we not recommend ourselves to the prayers of holy persons, through a pretence, that God being ready to hear our petitions, there is therefore no need of employing the intercessions of others? Now, if it is not a vain thing to recommend ourselves to the prayers of the saints that are living, neither is it a vain thing to recommend ourselves to the prayers of the saints deceased. For, why I may lawfully desire a holy person to pray and intercede for me while he is in his mortal life, but not after he is glorified, the most subtle Protestant alive would be puzzled to give a good reason.

They return to the charge once more: that to employ the intercession of the saints is injurious to God, because it seems as if we really believed the saints would be more merciful and good to us than God; otherwise why do we rather choose to address ourselves for help to them, than to him who is the Author of all our good, and the Giver of all good gifts?

This objection, which to Protestants seems so very plausible, is, notwithstanding, directly contrary to the plain words of their Bible, as will appear by what follows: "Now, therefore, restore the man his wife: for he is a prophet, and shall pray for thee and thou shalt live." So *Abraham* prayed unto God, and God healed *Abimelech* and his wife, and his maid servants, and they bare children." Gen. xx. 7.

"And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken these words unto *Job*, the Lord said to *Eliphaz the Temanite*: My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends, for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant *Job* hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks, and seven rams, and go to my servant *Job*, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering. And my servant *Job* shall pray for you, for him will I accept; lest I deal with you after your folly, in that you have not spoken of me the thing that is right, like my servant *Job*." Job xliii. 7, &c.

These words of God utterly overthrow all objections of Protestants against the invocation of saints. For, do we not here read, that God himself sent wicked men to the saints to intercede for them? Yet no one pretends to conclude from hence, that these saints were more eminent in mercy and goodness than God himself; but we rather conceive it was through his mercy these great saints were found to intercede for the wicked, and, by their prayers, save them from destruction: through his mercy it is, that we have such powerful and illustrious advocates to shield us against his anger. Even those sinners, who are hardened against all that is good, and are come to that pitch, as to be delighted with the slavery of the devil, unwilling to go out of it,

and therefore, cannot be supposed to pray for themselves, have still this relief left, that the saints and angels in heaven, as well as the servants of God upon earth, pray zealously for them, and often prevail upon God to touch them with his grace more powerfully, and convert them. And, when this happens, is it not owing to the Mercy of God, that you have some powerful saint, who has more interest at the court of heaven, and intercedes for you, when you are past the thought of praying for your own salvation? If the question be put, Why God, who is infinitely merciful to us himself, is better pleased to receive addresses for sinners from the saints, than to receive addresses from sinners themselves? the holy Scripture gives this answer, (*James* v. 16.) That the prayers of the just are more prevalent with God than the prayers of the wicked; the order of his justice so requiring: at the same time, his mercy for the wicked most eminently appears, in sparing them at the intercession of the just.

TENETS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH FAIRLY EXPLAINED.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE MASS.

If the subject of the last chapter be clearly understood, the sacrifice of the Mass will present few difficulties. The Mass is the solemn sacrifice of the Catholic church, and the ascence of her worship.—During this service, the sacrifice of the New Law is performed and offered. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that sacrifice is indispensable to true religion, for the numerous sacrifices of the old law were prefigurative of the great sacrifice of the Christian dispensation, which the prophet says, 'will be offered from the rising of the sun, to the setting of the same, in every place.' Mal. i. 10, 11. Sacrifice, properly so called, is the destruction of something performed in honour of the Creator, acknowledging him to be the author of life and death. This destruction takes place during the Mass; the substances of bread and wine, by the words of consecration, are changed into the body and blood of Christ.

The officiating priest acts in the person of Christ, and with power delegated from him; he is commissioned to represent the mystery of our redemption, and the church has established the ceremonies of the Mass to convey the memory of this mystery more efficaciously to our minds. Ceremony must be admitted to be essentially necessary to a religion, which is instituted for man; for his soul receives its perceptions and impressions through the organs of sensation. 'If we were disembodied souls,' observes St. Chrysostom, 'a sensible religion were unnecessary,' but encumbered as the