

with child of the Holy Ghost," and the angel's assertion, recorded by the Evangelist, "That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost;" only so can we grasp, as it should be grasped, the revelation in the Gospel according to St. John, "The Word was God; and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth."

This true doctrine of the Incarnation is not only the cardinal and fundamental doctrine of the Christian Faith, but it includes and involves all of our Lord's redemptive work; His one Sacrifice for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; His Resurrection from the dead; His Ascension into heaven; His Intercession; and the glory of His eternal Kingdom. When the grace of God is poured into our hearts to know the Incarnation of His Son Jesus Christ, it leads us, by His Cross and Passion, to the glory of His Resurrection.

Of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Church teaches, in the Creeds commonly called the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, that "the third day He rose again from the dead according to the Scriptures;" and in the fourth Article of Religion that He "did truly rise again from death, and took again His body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature." The teaching of the New Testament gathers the whole fact and force of the Apostolic evidence about this truth. The Apostles were ordained to be "witnesses of the Resurrection." By every test of enmity overcome, of unbelief converted, and of love and longing satisfied and convinced, Christ moves through the New Testament Scriptures, "the First Begotten of the dead"; His voice, His wounds, His words, and His familiar ways all testifying to His identity: "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; handle Me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have;" "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep; after that, He was seen of James, then of all the Apostles; and last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."

This Church nowhere teaches, and does not tolerate the teaching, that the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ was a so-called spiritual resurrection, which took place when the vital union of His mortal body and His human soul was dissolved by death, and that the fleshly tabernacle saw corruption in the grave and was turned to dust. This would be to make the Resurrection take place from the cross and not from the sepulchre. This would make void the purport and the power of the great argument of the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews, as to the eternal priesthood of the risen and ascended Lord who "ever liveth to make intercession for us," who "by His own Blood entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us," and by the power of His prevailing intercession has given us "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say His flesh;" it would mar the Human Nature of Christ, and tend to the dividing of His one Person, or to the commingling of His two Natures; it would blot out the vision vouchsafed to the Apostle and Evangelist St. John, of the "Lamb as it had been slain," and it would silence the unceasing song of the redeemed: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy Blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

We have not undertaken to discuss these

great doctrinal questions in detail; nor are we delivering our private and personal opinion on these vital subjects. We are speaking, not as truth-seekers, but as truth-receivers, "ambassadors in bonds;" even as St. Paul says, "That which we also received deliver we unto you." Our sole inquiry is: What does this Church teach? What is the declaration of God's Holy Word?

And here we rest; for the priest's vow is to minister the Doctrine, as well as the Sacraments and the Discipline of Christ, "as this Church hath received the same," and because she hath received it "according to the commandments of God." And the true lover of God, the Theophilus, who would "know the certainty of those things" wherein he is instructed, who would have "a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us," must receive them as they "delivered them unto us which were eye witnesses and ministers of the Word."

It should be borne in mind by all, Bishops, priests, deacons, and laymen, that the facts and truths which lie at the basis of the religion of Christ are eternal facts and eternal truths, stamped with the assurance which Divine infallibility gives. A revelation, the conditions of which should be pliable to the caprices of speculative thought, would be thereby voided of all that makes revelation final and sure. A creed whose statements could be changed to accord with the shifting currents of opinion or sentiment, or with the trend of thought in each succeeding generation, would cease to command and guide the loyalty of the people, and would not be worthy of the respect of mankind. The Creeds of the Catholic Church do not represent the contemporaneous thought of any age; they declare eternal truths, telling what God has taught man and done for man, rather than what man has thought out for himself about God. They are voices from above, from Him "with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," and, as such, are entitled to our implicit faith. Grave peril to souls lies in the acceptance of the letter of the Creeds in any other than the plain and definitely historical sense in which they have been interpreted by the consentient voice of the Church in all ages. Fixedness of interpretation is of the essence of the Creeds, whether we view them as statements of facts, or as dogmatic truths founded upon and deduced from these facts, and once for all determined by the operation of the Holy Ghost upon the mind of the Church. It were derogatory to the same Blessed Spirit to suggest that any other than the original sense of the Creeds may be lawfully held and taught. It becomes us, moreover, to consider that Christianity reconstructed as to its Faith must logically admit a reconstruction of the ethics, the spiritual life, the worship, the ministerial and sacramental agencies, and the good works which have ever been the benign products of the ancient truths. Such results we see in unhappy abundance all around us; and they do not encourage us to think that it is possible to improve the Christianity of our Lord and Saviour. There is no Christ save the Christ of the Catholic Faith, and it is the blessing of this Christ, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," upon this Faith, "once for all delivered to the Saints," which assures to the Church and the world all that ennobles, beautifies, and saves man.

## II. THE INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

There is a manifest analogy between the embodiment of the revealed Word of God in the terms of human thought and the tabernacling of the Personal Word of God in our flesh. Yet, at the threshold of our consideration of the Holy Scriptures, we are constrained to observe this plain and evident distinction; that while the Church, in her Creeds and Standards, has clearly and precisely defined not only the fact, but the method, of the Incarnation of Christ, she has

confined herself to a positive assertion of the fact of the inspiration of the Holy Scripture, without any definition of its mode, or the exposition of any theory concerning it. Nevertheless, the declaration of the fact of inspiration is unequivocal. The Creed expressly declares that "the Holy Ghost spake by the Prophets;" the sixth Article of Religion teaches that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation;" the Declaration for Orders signed by every authorized teacher of the Church commands him to teach that "the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God"; and the ordination vows solemnly taken, in the presence of God and of His Church, by every priest and bishop, bind them to the statement that the same Scriptures "contain all Doctrine required as necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ."

Certain points must be first fixed in the consciousness of all reverent students of God's Holy Word. Concerning the Scriptures of the elder Covenant, our Lord authenticated the teaching of the ancient Church, to which were "committed the oracles of God," by his public and official use of the Canon of the Old Testament Scriptures, as we know it to have been read in the synagogue worship of the Jews of His time. Nor may we forget that He Himself, after His Resurrection declared that these Scriptures testified of Him, specifying them in detail to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, when, "beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself," and more fully still, when, standing with the assembled Apostles, He said: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me."

The Scriptures of the New Covenant contain equally strong and clear statements of the inspiration of the whole Canon; as when St. Paul says: " whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning;" and St. Peter, "Holy men of God spake as they were moved (borne on) by the Holy Ghost;" and again St. Paul, with direct reference to the Scriptures of the New Covenant, declares in the First Epistle to the Corinthians: "Which things we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing (combining) spiritual things with spiritual." This is but the realization of our Lord's promise, from which all examination of the meaning of the peculiar and unique inspiration of the writers of the New Testament Scriptures ought to begin. It is the men who are inspired, and not primarily the book: and it was to the men that our Lord gave the promise and assurance of inspiration, when He said: "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My Name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you;" "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth;" "He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you." Thus we may have full assurance that the Faith which was taught by the preaching, has been preserved in the writings of men to whom, "through the Holy Ghost," Christ gave commandment that they should "teach all nations to observe all things whatsoever" He had commanded, and to whom the authority committed on the day of the Ascension was confirmed and quickened into active exercise by the power given on the day of Pentecost, when "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

Meanwhile, it has not been left to modern criticism to discover that God's revelation of Himself to man was a progressive revelation, until "in these last days He hath spoken unto us by His Son," who is "the brightness of His glory and the express image of His Person;" so