

name under heaven whereby he must be saved. Finally, we often sign ourselves with the sign of the cross, pronouncing the words, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" thereby attesting our belief in the blessed Trinity, and in the incarnation and death of our Saviour.

HOLY, OR BLESSED WATER.

From the history of the earliest ages of the Church, we are informed, that it was the practice to bless all inanimate things destined for the use of man, and particularly such as were used in the services of religion. Such a blessing was pronounced over the water and oil used in the sacred institution of the sacraments. Besides this, water mixed with salt it had been blessed, was placed at the porch of churches, with which the faithful washed their hands and signed their foreheads as they entered, and with the same water, they and other things were often sprinkled by the minister. — Of this ancient practice much still remains in the Catholic Church, influenced as she is by the religious motives, which actuated the founder of her discipline. Salt, mingled with water, is the emblem of prudence and incorruptness; and the water denotes purity and innocence of heart; while he who enters a place of worship, and applies it, with the sign of the cross, to his forehead, is admonished by the action, that with cleanliness of heart and hand, he should appear in the presence of his Maker.

ON LATIN IN THE SERVICE OF THE CHURCH.

That the Apostles celebrated the holy mysteries in the language of the people they converted, seems to be a point generally admitted. The languages at that time most dominant, were the Greek, Latin, and Syriac, in which the Liturgies, or forms of public prayer, would be compiled; while the Armenians, Copts or Egyptians, Ethiopians, and others, enjoyed also their particular liturgies. But when changes took place, and new tongues were spoken, the old retained the place of honour; and the Church, ever zealous of antiquity, judged it proper not to depart from the forms which she had received. The deposit of her faith was interwoven with the primitive expression of her liturgies. Thus, when Greek ceased to be spoken in nations that formerly constituted the Greek church, and even, as now, was not understood, the language of the liturgy remained; as is the case among the Syrians, Copts, Armenians, and Ethiopians. The service is every where celebrated in a tongue no longer known to the people. On what grounds then is it required, that the western church should have followed another rule; particularly as in this church the Latin language, in the early ages, was every where understood, if not spoken? — And when the northern nations were reclaimed to the Christian faith, the established rule was not altered.

The general accord among all nations professing the Catholic faith, not to admit any

change in the language of their liturgies, is a curious and important fact, and must have rested on a real motive, worthy of all. They say, that the experience of every day confirms, that in modern languages we have to change, while those ceased to be spoken, from this circumstance, and from the valuable works written on them, were cultivated by the learned, and became permanently subtle. They say, that the necessity of religious worship would be best maintained, when no vulgar philosophy should be the object; that the use of the same language which a Chrysostom spoke at Constantinople, and a Jerome at Rome, would unite, in a suitable selection, modern with ancient things; and that the mere fact of the identity of language would be a convincing proof of the antiquity of the Catholic faith. They say, that as this faith was every where one, so should there be, as far as might be, one common language, whereby the members professing it might communicate with one another, and with their ecclesiastical superiors, whether in council, or in any other form of intercourse. And they say, though some inconvenience would arise to the people from their inability to comprehend the words of the liturgy, that this inconvenience would be removed, should all instruction in sermons and catechisms be delivered in their own tongue; and all parts of the service be expounded.

It is gratifying, and profitable, from this uniformity of language, when a catholic travels in distant countries, that he should every where find a service celebrated, to the language and ceremonies of which his ears and eyes had been familiar. Thus, although a thousand miles from home, the moment he enters a church, in the principal offices of religion he ceases to be a stranger.

The western Church has been particularly desirous that her people might not suffer from this abandonment of her mysteries; and the council of Trent thus ordains: "Though the sacrifice of the mass contains great instruction for the faithful, the fathers judged it not expedient that it should be celebrated in the vulgar tongue. Each church, therefore, will retain its ancient and approved rites. But that the clergy of Christ may not hunger for want of food, and that little ones may not ask for bread, and none be to break it to them, the holy synod orders all pastors, and those who have the care of souls, frequently, and especially on Sundays and festivals, to expound some portion of what is read and some mystery of the holy sacrifice." *Sess. xxii. p. 194.* Besides this, and the other instructions, the church-service is translated into the language of each country, read, together with a variety of prayers, on all occasions and states of life, placed in the hands of the people. Thus is our western church, one in faith and one in language, united in the same bond of communion with all the faithful of modern and ancient times.

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