

The Catholic Record.

"Christianus mihi nomen est, Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname).—St. Pacian, 4th Century.

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A Legend of Bethlehem.

In lowly Bethlehem's darkling cell
King David's harp in silence hung,
So sadly mute, its chords ne'er fell
Of joy, since he who oft it strung,
From earthly realms called away
Left none who might his loss repay.

But when one thousand gliding years
Their rapid course had noiseless run,
The One bequeathed by nation's tears,
God's uncreated, equal Son,
Within that cell on winter's night,
As man first saw this world's pure light.

Unknown, unloved, e'en by His own
A score of days the Child had dwelt
In that retreat and stranger grown
The wind's chill cold no longer felt:
And on His Virgin Mother's knee
Passed the long hours in childish glee.

A playful lullaby fitting through
The humble cell, tipped with its wing,
As 'gainst the silent harp it flew,
A long untroubled but thrilling string
Which gave a sweet melodious sound,
Whilst charmed and scared the bird flew round.

Again its glistering plume wakes
A tender, low and lulling note,
The bird moved by the sound, it is
With rapid wing the melody-note
And sang to Mary while they play
This simple, short, but dulcet lay.

"In every land, o'er every sea,
Thy blessed name shall be extolled
While thousand suppliant bend the knee
To honor her, whom God foretold
As one whose virgin had should tread
And crush the very serpent's head.

"The mourners round the bed of death
Sad gazing on the loved one there
Warned by the sufferer's shortened breath
Shall turn to thee in earnest prayer,
And thou wilt stay the parting soul
Or guide it to its final goal.

"When children call upon thy name
To help them on the road to God—
To keep them from the depths of shame
To guide them on the path thou trod:
A loving mother, thou wilt fly,
With help in answer to their cry."

Thus sang the lullaby as it flew
Around the harp, and Jesus smiled:
"Thy tuneful words," He said, "are true,
Each one must be my mother's child
Who serves her here in childlike love
Shall reign with her and Me above."

—C. O'Brien, Archbishop of Halifax

ARCHDIOCESE OF KINGSTON.

Establishment of Separate School No. 18, Marysville—Sermon by His Grace the Archbishop.

Last Saturday Most Rev. James Vincent Cleary, Archbishop of Kingston, came to Marysville, and was received at the railway station by Rev. John S. Quinn, pastor. Right Rev. Mgr. Farrelly, V. G., had already arrived at the Presbytery to receive His Grace. Next morning the Archbishop celebrated early Mass, and at 11 o'clock presided at the Parochial Mass. After the Communion he delivered a lengthy instruction to the people on the supreme importance of the Christian education of youth and the consequent necessity of providing Catholic schools for the children in every district of the diocese where it can be done. The Public Schools in this country, he said, are grievously defective, inasmuch as they exclude religious teaching, and thus leave the youth of Ontario unenlightened and untutored in regard of the highest order of knowledge, and the most essential discipline of the mind, on which the formation of character and the development of Christian virtue can alone be solidly based. Hence the general ignorance of the doctrines of revelation and the laws of Christian life that unhappily prevails all round us.

The Catholic Church, on the contrary, insists on the knowledge of God and Christ, and the fear and love of Him, and the duty of observing all His commandments and obeying His Holy Church in all her precepts ordained for the salutary direction of life and the attainment of salvation, as the primary object and true final aim of all education of youth. She proclaims that this should hold the first place of importance in the cause of instruction; and should leave all secular instruction, guarding it against manifold error, and directing it in all its stages to the great end of all, which is the assimilation of man's mind and heart to God in the perfection of truth and goodness. The Apostle St. Paul announced this principle to the converted Romans in a very comprehensive and forcible sentence: "Whom God hath foreknown, he hath also predestined to be made conformable to the image of His son, that He (Christ) may be the eldest Son among many brethren." The Archbishop explained and developed the lesson of this text. None shall be counted among the foreknown elect of God, the Father, unless they exhibit in their souls the likeness of Jesus Christ, His first-born Son. The children of divine predilection, that is, those who are to be numbered among the saints in the Kingdom of Eternal Glory, must be distinguished by the family likeness of the Son of God, as manifested in Jesus Christ, the eldest son in the family. It is in this likeness, the child, born of woman in the corruption of Adam, is regenerated in the font of baptism; and, because of the image of Jesus impressed upon its soul and all its faculties by sacramental operation of water and the Holy Ghost, is then and there adopted by the Heavenly Father as a brother of Jesus and co-heir of His glory in the kingdom of Heaven. The Mother receives back from the baptismal font, not the child of sin and corruption and death, but the child of God, the brother of Jesus, the heir of Eternal Glory. Now she has received a higher trust and an infinitely more weighty charge, the command from Heaven to rear her child in accordance with its Heavenly

destiny, as a future Prince of the Court of the Most High, the companion of angels, the brother of Jesus, the Eternal Son of God.

Have you ever asked yourselves why God the Father, in sending His Son to this earth to teach mankind the way to Heaven, and make atonement for the sins of all the children of Adam, did not present Him to the eyes of men at His first appearance in the fulness of mature manhood, but rather in the puny, helpless, speechless form of a babe, that was to grow from infancy to childhood and boyhood and gradually to manhood. The first Adam, our common Father in nature, was a perfect man, the most perfect of men, in the very first moment of his existence. Our mother Eve was a perfect type of womanhood in the fulness of womanly grace and beauty in the hour in which she breathed her first breath. Why did not the Son of God, the second Adam, present Himself in the perfection of His manhood on the day of His first appearance among men, to whom He came as a teacher of divine truth and a mediator of reconciliation with His Father? He came to us a babe, like other babes, and was pleased to pass through the several stages from infancy to adolescence, even as we do, submitting to the weaknesses and little sorrows of childhood, and made "like unto us in all things, except sin."

This is a mystery of the wisdom and goodness of God in our behalf. We needed a model of Christian rearing. The world Christ came to save had been long steeped in ignorance and vice of the grossest kind. Human nature had been so shamefully degraded and deformed, that regeneration, another birth and rearing, was absolutely necessary, and man's whole being needed to be formed anew, and society to be re-organized and established from base to summit in a new form and character, worthy of the children of the God of all holiness. The thorough and radical change of human character in the great mass of men, involving a transformation of mind and heart, of thought and feeling and principle, and standards of judgment, and rules of conduct for private and public life, must of necessity begin from the dawn of reason, and be worked out to completion by the slow and laborious and continuous process of religious education throughout the entire period of youth's growth, while the habits that will govern the future course of life are being steadily formed. Now this can be effected, not by printed lessons only, but by constant and unwearying inculcation of God's own revealed principles and maxims of truth and virtue, and by edifying example of life in the family and in the school and in the sphere of daily companionship; and by instruction and exhortation and gentle correction in season and out of season; and these lessons and practical rules of conduct must be enforced upon the wayward minds of children by the power of authority exercised by parents and teachers and priests under God's sanction, and thus be made to enter deeply into the brain and heart of the child, and become permanent and ever active habits of thought and action by which the entire course of mature life shall be governed and guided to the end. Every teacher of youth, every parent knows this. A model of this training and effective formation of character in youth was required to be set up before men for imitation by all nations and generations; and this model the Heavenly Father has in His goodness supplied to us in the person of His own divine Son, the boy Jesus of Nazareth, "growing in wisdom and age and grace before God and men," under the guidance of the Virgin mother and her Holy Spouse, the good St. Joseph. Mary and Joseph are the model parents, to whom all the Christian fathers and mothers must look for the true pattern of the God-like rearing of their children; and the Child Jesus Himself, "growing in wisdom and age and grace before God and men," because of His entire and cheerful obedience to His parents, is the true and perfect model to which all children should be taught to look for example of youthful life and conduct every day and every hour of the day. Thus your children will likewise grow in wisdom and grace as they grow in age, and will fulfil in their lives the divine ordinance uttered by St. Paul, as I quoted for you a while ago, to make themselves conformable to the image of God's Son, that He may be our eldest brother in the family of God.

This is the end to which Catholic education in our Separate schools is directed. The end is indispensably necessary, and Catholic education in our schools is the sole means whereby this end is effectively and surely attained. The Catholic Church lays it as a primary obligation on all parents to supply their children with Catholic education, whenever it is possible for them to do so. I am happy, said His Grace, and thankful to God, to be able to state here publicly, that I find no necessity for compelling or commanding the parents in my diocese to fulfil this first and gravest of their obligations towards their offspring. They do it of their own accord and cheerfully, knowing it to be a Christian duty, not

only to God, the Heavenly Father, but also to their children, whose welfare for time and eternity is nearest to their hearts. And wheresoever I go, as I have come to you to-day, to establish a Separate school, the parents and the full congregation of the parish gather around me, as you do to-day, to welcome me with gladness and enthusiasm, as the bearer of a blessed message to them and their families, and as a pastor who has not received in vain the mandate of Jesus Christ, "Feed My lambs, feed My sheep."—Feed the whole flock, but most particularly feed and protect and nourish the tender lambs of the fold. Hence it is that I have had all to present myself to the people in all the parishes where I signified my intention to establish Separate schools (five of which I established last Christmas, and am establishing eight more this Christmas), when the whole Catholic population of each parish came forward to meet me, as the father and guardian of their children's best interests, their contentances beaming with joy and delight, and they welcomed me as an angel of God.

Careful attention to this Sovereign duty of religious training of our youth in our Separate schools does not, as everybody knows, interfere in the smallest degree with due attention to their education in all requisite and suitable subjects of profane knowledge. Our Separate schools in this Province supply secular education as fully and effectively as the Public schools of the same rank, whether in the country or in the towns and cities. The ungodly men, who, for purposes of political faction, make a contrary statement, know they speak untruth. They utter false statements of this kind with supreme audacity at the approach of every parliamentary election, with a view to stirring up agitation against the civil and religious rights of the Catholic minority in this Province. But no one believes them except the most ignorant and the willfully blind among the bigots. All the cunning and all the malice of the paid libellers of the Catholic Church and Catholic people have failed to invent a single argument in support of their assertion, that the religious training of youth is inconsistent with their advancement in secular knowledge, or that our Separate schools in Ontario are any wise inferior to the Public schools of the same grade, in efficiency of instruction in the ordinary course of secular education. Every Catholic parent knows this; and no intelligent person, Protestant or Catholic, Conservative or Liberal, gives the least credence to the concocted and malevolent misrepresentations of no-Popery declaimers and well-paid newspaper scribes, whose stock-in-trade is calumny and slander of God's Church, and artful appeals to prejudice and vilest bigotry of secret societies and the dull mass of ignorance that will too commonly be found among the multitude.

Your children, therefore, will henceforth receive in this parish as good and useful a secular education in your new Separate school as they have heretofore received in the same school-house, and from the same teachers in what has hitherto been called Public School No. 18. They will receive, in addition, a sound religious training from Catholic teachers according to the discipline prescribed by God's Holy Church. In the children's hands, from day to day in the school, and from evening to evening in your homes, will be the Catholic school books prepared for this Province, and excellently suited for the daily food of their minds. You well know that the healthful condition of your horses and cattle depends chiefly on the kind of fodder you supply to them. If it be not nutritious, they will be low in condition; your horses will be unable to work; your cattle will fail to give you milk and meat. Now, the daily food of your children's minds is drawn from the school books that they are continually handling and reading and committing to memory; and it is by such reading, their minds and memories, their imagination and tastes and standards of judgment, and their estimate of what is true or false, good or vicious, honorable or dishonorable, lovely or hateful, is gradually formed in them and becomes part and parcel of their very existence for all time. In these books, from the earliest spelling lesson to the last chapter of the book in the highest form of God's inspired everywhere, and His presence is recalled, and the sense of duty to Him is awakened, and His infinite greatness and goodness and majesty and power and justice and mercy are set forth in direct teaching or incidental reference; or in anecdote or parable, or what is best of all, in historical sketches and biographical summaries of the lives and noble deeds and sacrifices of the sainted heroes of Catholicism, who did in truth and reality show forth in themselves the image of the Son of God, their eldest brother, and have placed all mankind of every age and nation under obligation to them for the splendid part they took in framing the civilization we now enjoy throughout Christendom, and restraining the arbitrary despotism of Kings and the licentiousness of feudal lords and wringing from

crowned tyrants the Constitutional guarantees of individual liberty and parental rights, and, in short, bequeathing to us their teaching and example of virtuous life, as men, as Christians and as citizens. The Archbishop then gave the congregation certain practical advices, chiefly in relation to the home training of children, and the special duties devolving on the mother, to whom God has given the more immediate charge of the formation of the minds and manners of her youthful offspring, and to whom the Apostle St. Paul addressed the emphatic and pregnant declaration, "The woman shall be saved by the bringing up of her children."

His Grace in conclusion invited the ratepayers of school section No. 18 to remain in the church after Mass for conference with him. He arranged with them the order of proceedings in regard of the organization of a Separate school, and promised to be with them the following morning at the school house, eight miles away, for direction in carrying out the legal formalities at 10:30 o'clock. Accordingly on Monday morning he proceeded with Father Quinn to the school-house, eight miles distant, over a road covered with snow two feet deep. All the ratepayers of the section were present, and were extremely delighted at being honored by the presence of their Archbishop amongst them. The whole work of legal organization was done with complete unanimity, and there is joy in the parish.

ENCYCLICAL LETTER

Of Our Holy Father by Divine Providence Pope Leo XIII.

ON THE STUDY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

To Our Venerable Brethren, all Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and Bishops of the Catholic World, in Grace and Communion with the Apostolic See, Pope Leo XIII.

Venerable Brethren, Faith and Apostolic Benediction.

The Providence of God which, by an admirable device of love, raised at the beginning the human race to a share in the divine nature, which afterwards re-established in his primal dignity man relieved from original sin, and snatched him from destruction, has brought to that same man a precious support that there may be opened to him by supernatural means the concealed treasures of its divinity, wisdom and mercy.

Although it should be understood that in the divine revelation of truths, which are not inaccessible to human reason, and which consequently have been revealed to man, "in order that all may recognize them easily, with a firm certitude, and without mixture of error; nevertheless, this revelation cannot be declared necessary in an absolute fashion, but because God in His infinite mercy has destined man to a supernatural end. This supernatural revelation, according to the faith of the Universal Church, is enclosed as much in unwritten traditions as in the books called holy and canonical, because, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have God for author, and have been delivered as such to the Church."

This has not ceased to be taught and professed publicly on the subject of the Books of the Old and the New Testament. Very important ancient documents are familiar which indicate that God spoke first by the prophets, next by Himself, afterwards by the Apostles that He also gave us written matter styled canonical, which is none else than divine oracles and words; that it constitutes, as it were, a message vouchsafed by the Heavenly Father to the human race journeying far from their country, and which have been transmitted to us by their sacred authors.

This origin plainly shows what is the excellence and the value of the writings which, having for author God Himself, contain indication of His most exalted mysteries, designs, and works. Hence it results that the portion of theology, which concerns the preservation and interpretation of these divine works, is of the highest importance and utility.

We have it at heart to secure the progress of other sciences, which appeared to us suitable to the aggrandisement of divine glory and the salvation of mankind. Such has been the text of frequent letters and numerous exhortations on our part which with God's aid, have not remained without result. For a long time we have had the idea of reviving and recommending the noble study of the Holy Writings, and of directing it in a fashion more conformable to the necessities of the actual epoch.

The solicitude of our Apostolic charge binds us, and in a sense pushes us, not only to wish to open more surely and largely, for the advantage of Christian people, this precious source of Catholic revelation, but still more to tolerate that it should be troubled in any manner, either by those who are urged by an impious audacity openly to attack the Scrip-

ture or by those who abet deceitful and imprudent innovations.

We do not ignore, Venerable Brethren, that, as a fact, certain Catholics, rich in science and in talent, consecrate themselves to the ardent defence of the Holy Writings or to the better circulation and understanding of them. But whilst naturally praising their labors and the results they obtain, we cannot fail to exhort others whose ability, science, and piety promise splendid success in the same department to discharge the sacred task and merit the same eulogy. We frequently desire that a greater number of the faithful should undertake, as becoming the defence of the Holy Writings, and attach themselves to it with constancy; and, above all, we desire that those who have been admitted to the Holy Orders by the grace of God should daily apply themselves more strictly and zealously to read, meditate, and explain the Scriptures. Nothing can be better suited to their state.

In addition to the excellence of such knowledge and the obedience due to the word of God, another motive impels us to believe that the study of the Scriptures should be counselled. That motive is the abundance of advantages which follow from it, and of which we have the guarantee in the words of Holy Writ, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." It is with this design that God gave man the Scriptures; the examples of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles show it. Jesus Himself, who conciliated authority by miracles, merited faith by authority, and gained the multitude by faith, was accustomed to appeal to the Holy Writings in testimony of His divine mission. He employs the Sacred Books on occasion to declare that He is sent by God and God Himself; He borrows arguments for them to instruct His Disciples and to enforce His doctrines; He invokes their evidence against the calumny of His enemies; He opposes them to the Sadducees and Pharisees, and turns them against Satan himself, who impudently makes appeal to them; He employs them again at the close of His life, and, when resurrected, explains them to His disciples until He ascends to the glory of His Father. The Apostles were faithful to His word and to the teaching of the Master, and although He Himself had granted that signs and miracles should be operated by their hands, they depended on the Holy Writings as a great means of action for spreading afar among the nations Christian wisdom, overcoming the stubbornness of the Jews, and crushing incipient heresies. This circumstance is patent from their discourses, and foremost from those of St. Peter. They composed them in great degree from the words of the old Testament as furnishing the firmest support of the new law. This is not the less evident from the Gospel of St. Matthew and St. John and the Epistles called Catholic, and, above all, from the testimony of Him who glorified Himself before Gamaliel for having studied the law of Moses and the Prophets in order that, forfeited with spiritual arms, He might say with confidence, "The arms of our troops have nothing of earthly force; they are the power of God." It is our aim that all, particularly the soldiers of the sacred host, should understand from the example of Christ and His Apostles the respect they owe to the Holy Writings, and with what zeal and reverence they should approach, so to speak, this arsenal. In short, those who wish to spread either amongst the learned or the ignorant the truth of Catholicity will find nowhere else more lavish and spacious information about God, the supreme and perfect good, and upon the works which put in a strong light His glory and His love. As to the Saviour of the human race, no text is more fruitful and more stirring, regarding the subject, than those to be found in the entire Bible, and St. Jerome was right when he stated that ignorance of the Scriptures was ignorance of Christ. "There one sees, vivid and animated, the image of the Son of God, and this spectacle in an admirable manner relieves misfortune, inclines to virtue, and invites to divine love."

As far as regards the Church, her institution and character, her mission and her gifts, there are in her favor arguments so solid and appropriate that St. Jerome could say with reason, "He who confidently relies on the evidences of Holy Writ is the buttress of the Church." If precepts touching morals and the proper conduct of life are sought, apostolic men will find magnificent and valuable resources in the Bible, advice full of goodness, exhortations combining benignity and energy, examples illustrating every form of virtue, to which are added the promise of eternal rewards and the threat of punishment in the other world, promises and threats made in the name of God and on the basis of His words. This is the special and most remarkable virtue of the Scriptures, arising from the divine breath of the Holy Ghost, which confers authority on the speaker in sacred places,

inspires him with an apostolic liberty, and equips him with a vigorous and convincing rhetoric. Whoever imparts to his sermons the spirit and strength of the divine word, speaks not only in the word, but also in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. In like way, it may be said that they act in an awkward and careless manner who treat of religion and enounce divine precepts without invoking other authorities than those of science and human wisdom, confiding in their own reasoning rather than on divine arguments. In fact, their eloquence, although brilliant, is necessarily feeble and cold, inasmuch as it is deprived of the fire of the Word of God, and lacks the virtue which is conspicuous in the language of the Most High. "For the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit." On the other hand, even the learned must themselves agree that there exists in the sacred literature an eloquence, varied, rich, and worthy of the highest objects. St. Augustine understood and proved that beyond cavil, and experience bears him out in the pronouncements of pulpit orators. Their reputation is due to their constant study and meditation on the Bible, and they have testified their gratitude for it to God. Thoroughly acquainted with the riches of these sources, and largely utilizing them, the holy Fathers never tired of panegyric of the Sacred Scriptures and the benefit they drew from them. In many passages of their works they speak of them as the precious treasure of heavenly doctrines, the eternal fountains of safety, and compare them to fertile meadows and delicious gardens where the flocks of the Lord find vigor and pleasure. These are the words of St. Jerome to the clerk Nepotian, "Often read the Holy Scriptures; better still, never lay aside the Holy Book; learn what you should teach; the language of the priest should always be founded on the reading of the Scriptures." Such is likewise the sense of the words of Gregory the Great, who more than pointed out the duties of the pastors of the Church. "It is necessary," said he, "that those who apply themselves to the office of preaching should never neglect the reading of the Holy Scriptures." Here, nevertheless, it pleases us to recall the advice of St. Augustine, "He will never be a true preacher of the Word of God who does not hear it within himself." St. Gregory also counselled ecclesiastics to examine themselves and not to be neglectful while taking notice of the actions of others of how they stand themselves. That is requisite before one carries the divine word to others. This had already been put into relief by the word and the acts of Christ, who began by acting and teaching, and by the voice of the Apostle who, addressing not only Timothy but all classes of ecclesiastics, announced this precept, "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine, continue in it, or in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee." Assuredly, both for one's own sanctification and that of others there is a precious resource in Holy Writ, particularly in the Psalms. All the same, those only can profit who not only give a due and attentive ear to the divine word, but edifying piety and a perfect good will. These books, dictated by the Holy Spirit, contain very important truths hidden and difficult to interpret in many points. In order to understand and explain them we shall always need the presence of the same Spirit—that is to say, of His light and His grace, which, as the Psalms warn us, can only be implored by human prayer accompanied by a holy life.

It is in this that the foresight of the Church is luminously apparent. She has multiplied at all times institutions and precepts that the treasure of Holy Writ, which the Holy Spirit granted to men with a sovereign liberality, should not be neglected. She has decreed not only that great portions of the Scriptures should be read and meditated by clergymen in the daily Office but that the Scriptures should be taught and interpreted by properly instructed men in the cathedrals, in the monasteries, and in the convents, where training could be profitably carried on. She has also ordained by Rescript that on Sundays and days of solemn festival the faithful should be nourished by the saving words of the Gospel. Thus, thanks to the wisdom and vigilance of the Church, the study of the Holy Scriptures is kept up flourishing and fecund in fruits of salvation.

To strengthen our arguments and our exhortations, we are gratified to recall how all the men remarkable for the sanctity of their lives, and for their knowledge of the divine truths, have always assiduously cultivated the Holy Scriptures. We see that the nearest disciples of the Apostles, among whom we shall cite Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp, then the Apologists, especially Justin and Irenaeus, have in their letters and their books, either tending to the preservation or the propagation of the divine dogmas, introduced the teaching, the force, and the piety of the Holy Writings.

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inspires him with an apostolic liberty, and equips him with a vigorous and convincing rhetoric. Whoever imparts to his sermons the spirit and strength of the divine word, speaks not only in the word, but also in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. In like way, it may be said that they act in an awkward and careless manner who treat of religion and enounce divine precepts without invoking other authorities than those of science and human wisdom, confiding in their own reasoning rather than on divine arguments. In fact, their eloquence, although brilliant, is necessarily feeble and cold, inasmuch as it is deprived of the fire of the Word of God, and lacks the virtue which is conspicuous in the language of the Most High. "For the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit." On the other hand, even the learned must themselves agree that there exists in the sacred literature an eloquence, varied, rich, and worthy of the highest objects. St. Augustine understood and proved that beyond cavil, and experience bears him out in the pronouncements of pulpit orators. Their reputation is due to their constant study and meditation on the Bible, and they have testified their gratitude for it to God. Thoroughly acquainted with the riches of these sources, and largely utilizing them, the holy Fathers never tired of panegyric of the Sacred Scriptures and the benefit they drew from them. In many passages of their works they speak of them as the precious treasure of heavenly doctrines, the eternal fountains of safety, and compare them to fertile meadows and delicious gardens where the flocks of the Lord find vigor and pleasure. These are the words of St. Jerome to the clerk Nepotian, "Often read the Holy Scriptures; better still, never lay aside the Holy Book; learn what you should teach; the language of the priest should always be founded on the reading of the Scriptures." Such is likewise the sense of the words of Gregory the Great, who more than pointed out the duties of the pastors of the Church. "It is necessary," said he, "that those who apply themselves to the office of preaching should never neglect the reading of the Holy Scriptures." Here, nevertheless, it pleases us to recall the advice of St. Augustine, "He will never be a true preacher of the Word of God who does not hear it within himself." St. Gregory also counselled ecclesiastics to examine themselves and not to be neglectful while taking notice of the actions of others of how they stand themselves. That is requisite before one carries the divine word to others. This had already been put into relief by the word and the acts of Christ, who began by acting and teaching, and by the voice of the Apostle who, addressing not only Timothy but all classes of ecclesiastics, announced this precept, "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine, continue in it, or in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee." Assuredly, both for one's own sanctification and that of others there is a precious resource in Holy Writ, particularly in the Psalms. All the same, those only can profit who not only give a due and attentive ear to the divine word, but edifying piety and a perfect good will. These books, dictated by the Holy Spirit, contain very important truths hidden and difficult to interpret in many points. In order to understand and explain them we shall always need the presence of the same Spirit—that is to say, of His light and His grace, which, as the Psalms warn us, can only be implored by human prayer accompanied by a holy life.

As far as regards the Church, her institution and character, her mission and her gifts, there are in her favor arguments so solid and appropriate that St. Jerome could say with reason, "He who confidently relies on the evidences of Holy Writ is the buttress of the Church." If precepts touching morals and the proper conduct of life are sought, apostolic men will find magnificent and valuable resources in the Bible, advice full of goodness, exhortations combining benignity and energy, examples illustrating every form of virtue, to which are added the promise of eternal rewards and the threat of punishment in the other world, promises and threats made in the name of God and on the basis of His words. This is the special and most remarkable virtue of the Scriptures, arising from the divine breath of the Holy Ghost, which confers authority on the speaker in sacred places,

inspires him with an apostolic liberty, and equips him with a vigorous and convincing rhetoric. Whoever imparts to his sermons the spirit and strength of the divine word, speaks not only in the word, but also in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. In like way, it may be said that they act in an awkward and careless manner who treat of religion and enounce divine precepts without invoking other authorities than those of science and human wisdom, confiding in their own reasoning rather than on divine arguments. In fact, their eloquence, although brilliant, is necessarily feeble and cold, inasmuch as it is deprived of the fire of the Word of God, and lacks the virtue which is conspicuous in the language of the Most High. "For the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit." On the other hand, even the learned must themselves agree that there exists in the sacred literature an eloquence, varied, rich, and worthy of the highest objects. St. Augustine understood and proved that beyond cavil, and experience bears him out in the pronouncements of pulpit orators. Their reputation is due to their constant study and meditation on the Bible, and they have testified their gratitude for it to God. Thoroughly acquainted with the riches of these sources, and largely utilizing them, the holy Fathers never tired of panegyric of the Sacred Scriptures and the benefit they drew from them. In many passages of their works they speak of them as the precious treasure of heavenly doctrines, the eternal fountains of safety, and compare them to fertile meadows and delicious gardens where the flocks of the Lord find vigor and pleasure. These are the words of St. Jerome to the clerk Nepotian, "Often read the Holy Scriptures; better still, never lay aside the Holy Book; learn what you should teach; the language of the priest should always be founded on the reading of the Scriptures." Such is likewise the sense of the words of Gregory the Great, who more than pointed out the duties of the pastors of the Church. "It is necessary," said he, "that those who apply themselves to the office of preaching should never neglect the reading of the Holy Scriptures." Here, nevertheless, it pleases us to recall the advice of St. Augustine, "He will never be a true preacher of the Word of God who does not hear it within himself." St. Gregory also counselled ecclesiastics to examine themselves and not to be neglectful while taking notice of the actions of others of how they stand themselves. That is requisite before one carries the divine word to others. This had already been put into relief by the word and the acts of Christ, who began by acting and teaching, and by the voice of the Apostle who, addressing not only Timothy but all classes of ecclesiastics, announced this precept, "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine, continue in it, or in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee." Assuredly, both for one's own sanctification and that of others there is a precious resource in Holy Writ, particularly in the Psalms. All the same, those only can profit who not only give a due and attentive ear to the divine word, but edifying piety and a perfect good will. These books, dictated by the Holy Spirit, contain very important truths hidden and difficult to interpret in many points. In order to understand and explain them we shall always need the presence of the same Spirit—that is to say, of His light and His grace, which, as the Psalms warn us, can only be implored by human prayer accompanied by a holy life.

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