

PRIMACY OF THE POPE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE FIVE

Acts: St. Peter took the initiative in the election of the successor of Judas, he was the leader of the apostles on Pentecost when the Church began her mission, he worked the first miracle, he defends the Church before rulers, he utters the first anathema, his shadow works miracles and he even raises a woman from the dead, he is the first to receive the Gentiles into the Church, he teaches the other apostles the catholicity of the Church, he is, as a result of the prayer of the whole Church, miraculously released by God from prison, and finally he lays down the principle which solves the problem under question at the council of the apostles at Jerusalem. So evident is the primacy of Peter over the apostles and the whole church, that the inspired author of the Acts, St. Luke, does not hesitate to write: Peter with the Eleven, Peter and the Apostles. (Acts, 2, 14, 5, 29.)

An attempt is made by non-Catholics to weaken the evidence of these words and these facts by an appeal to St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. Yet, on the contrary, three slight indications of Peter's primacy are found in this very epistle. Thus St. Paul writes "I went to Jerusalem to visit Cephas," (1, 18) thus leaving us to infer that Peter was the person to whom one must report. He adds that God entrusted Peter "with the gospel of the circumcision" (2, 7) thus placing Peter over all the original twelve apostles. His phrase that he saw "James and Cephas and John" (2, 9) is not a gradation list, as no one maintains, that James was made head of the apostles. St. Paul may have seen St. James first and then met St. Peter and then St. John, and hence mentioned their names in that unusual order. For in every other instance in the New Testament, and 25 of these are found in the Gospel alone, in which all or some of the apostles are mentioned, Peter is given the place of honor. Thus St. Paul himself when wishing to indicate rank writes in an evident climax, in the 9th chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, "the rest of the apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas." Finally St. Paul's reference to resisting Cephas at Antioch, when St. Peter's conduct was imprudent, (Gal. 2, 11-14) shows St. Peter's importance, even when he was unwise in his conduct. "Withstanding Peter to his face" would have no meaning unless Peter's primacy were assumed. It is true that St. Paul nowhere in his epistle says that St. Peter was the Rock upon which the Church was built, or the Pastor of the Flock of Christ; but likewise St. James mentions nowhere in his Epistle the Blessed Trinity. No book of the New Testament pretends to give the whole of Christianity. It is more than sufficient if a truth is contained in any one book of the bible. Yet the doctrine of the primacy of Peter is stated categorically in three of the gospels and clearly enough indicated in the other gospel. St. Peter's own written by his disciple Mark, where through humility the three great promises made him are passed over. In addition to this witness of the four gospels, St. Paul's epistle to the Galatians and his first to the Corinthians contains echoes of the exercise of this authority, and the Acts of the Apostles relates the history of its part in the shaping of the history of the Infant Church. The Primacy is taught in the New Testament at least as clearly as is the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity.

THE PRIMACY OF PETER IN HISTORY

A few brief words must here suffice as to the primacy of Peter's successor, the Bishop of Rome. The material for the proof would fill many books, but my time is limited. That St. Peter went to Rome, and that he and St. Paul were martyred there, is no longer denied by the scholars who are enemies of the Church. That the authority granted Peter as Chief Shepherd in the Church would be required after Peter's death is a postulate of late reason. The Church was to last till the end of time; hence till the end of time the Church would need the Rock upon which she was built, the apostle who confirmed her and the Shepherd who rules and feeds her. If this was needed during the lifetime of the apostles, all of whom were saints and infallible in their doctrine, it would be needed ten times more during the lifetime of the successors, the bishops, none of whom were by no means saints. Now there is only one bishop in the world today who claims to be the successor of Peter and the holder of his primacy: that is the Pope, the Bishop of Rome. The whole Catholic Church accepts that claim and teaches that Blessed Peter the Apostle was appointed visible head of the whole Church militant and has, by divine right, a perpetual line of successors in the Roman Pontiff. She teaches that the Roman Pontiff, as successor of Peter, has full and supreme and immediate jurisdiction over the universal Church and every member thereof in faith, morals and discipline. She teaches that when this successor of Peter the Roman Pontiff speaks ex cathedra, that is as Pastor and Teacher of all Christians, defining a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the Universal Church, he is, by the divine assistance prom-

ised to him in Blessed Peter, possessed of that same infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that His Church should be endowed. Thus taught the Vatican Council in our father's time, thus the Catholic Church teaches today. One bishop, the successor of Peter in the see of Rome, claims to be successor of Peter in the primacy. No other bishop claims it. Yet it is essential to the Church, and the whole Catholic Church proclaims it. What greater proof could we have?

Those who wish may trace this doctrine up the centuries. They will see in every century from the twelfth to the first the Roman Pontiff claiming and exercising this Primacy of Peter.

It was as the successor of Peter that Benedict XV. promulgated the Code of Canon Law, that Pius X. overthrew Modernism and reestablished Daily Communion, that Leo XIII. taught the world by his great Encyclicals and that Pius IX. presided over the Vatican Council and defined the Immaculate Conception. These four Popes have done as much for the Church as did the first four General Councils. Their immediate predecessor Gregory did not exercise in the nineteenth century greater power than did Pope St. Gregory VII. in the eleventh century or Pope St. Gregory I. in the end of the sixth. From the thirteenth Leo who died in 1093 to the first Leo who died in 401 the most outstanding fact in the history of civilization which no enemy of the Church, who is sufficiently educated to know history, can deny. That Pope St. Leo I., who died in 401, four hundred years after Peter, claimed and exercised full papal authority over the whole Church as the successor of Peter is a fact which even Protestants do not dispute. Between Pope St. Leo in the middle of the fifth century, and Pope St. Sylvester, in the first quarter of the fourth, Pope after Pope, and doctor of the Church after doctor of the Church, Hilary, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine and Optatus, Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen and Chrysostom, Julius I., Damasus I., Siricius, Innocent I. and Zosimus, bear witness by word and by deed to the exercise of the primacy of the Roman Pontiff. In the ante-Nicene Church, that is, before the year 325, despite the extreme paucity of documents which have survived, the primacy of the Roman Pontiff is seen to have been exercised in every crisis which arose. Pope St. Dionysius judges his namesake of Alexandria, the second bishop in Christendom, about the year 268 and this great Alexandrine hastens to correct his doctrinal inaccuracy. St. Cyprian acknowledges in his writings the primacy of the Roman Bishop and when he himself fell into error he was judged by Pope St. Stephen in 256. Pope St. Callistus (219-223) condemns the heresy of Tertullian and, as this heretic bitterly witnesses, by a peremptory edict as bishop of bishops and supreme pontiff over the whole Church exercises the power of binding and loosing given to Peter. Pope St. Victor (189-198) orders that Easter must be celebrated on Sunday throughout the entire Church and threatens to cut off from the common unity some bishops in Asia Minor who followed a different practice. St. Irenaeus, the disciple of St. John the Apostle, teaches in the second century the primacy of the Roman See, and the necessity of agreeing with its tradition, gives the list of its bishops from Peter to his twelfth successor, the Roman Bishop of that day, St. Eleutherius (174-189) and states that through them the tradition of the Church has come down from the Apostles. In the middle of the second century a bishop of Corinth speaks of the letter of Pope Soter to the Corinthians as that of a loving father to his children. St. Ignatius, the disciple of St. John, who was martyred in Rome under Trajan (98-117) writes to the Church of Rome with extraordinary veneration, stating that "it presides over the love, that is, over the whole Catholic Church. Still more remarkable during the very lifetime of St. John the Apostle, in the year 96, St. Clement, Bishop of Rome, sends a letter to the Church of Corinth, in which he commands the Corinthians with authority from God. He demands obedience to "the words spoken by God through us," "to the things written by us through the Holy Ghost." This authority he possessed as a successor of Peter. The same essential power, neither greater nor less, was claimed and possessed by the Bishop of Rome, Pope Benedict XV., who has just passed to his eternal reward, and the same is claimed and possessed by his successor, Pius XI.

Time has given the primacy of Peter an opportunity for legitimate growth, but it has not changed its nature. Its growth and development are similar to that of all Catholic dogmas. It is the true progress of faith and not a change. In the words of St. Vincent of Lerins, "it belongeth to progress or growth that each thing should be increased unto its own self; it belongs on the contrary to change, that one thing should be changed into another." This saint's general doctrine of development may be applied to the Primacy of Peter and his successors. "The religion of souls should follow the nature of bodies, which though they unfold and develop, yet remain the same that they were. The limbs of babies are small, those of youths are big, but they are identical. Children have the same number of members as men; if there be any which are produced by nature, they are already there after the manner of seed." The Primacy of the Pope has had this organic growth. It has in the course of years unfolded and brought to fruition what previously existed after this manner of seed. It has been consolidated by years, enlarged by time, uplifted by age, yet it has admitted no change and has suffered no loss of its own character.

To sum up, The Church established by Christ for the salvation of mankind, which is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic, is also Roman. It is Roman in its centre and Catholic in its extent or circumference. It is apostolic because it has in the See of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, its centre of authority and source of unity. It is apostolic because Roman, and Roman because apostolic. Roman simply means Petrine. The Church of Christ is Roman because it is ruled by his vicar, Peter. If we follow the guidance of this Shepherd given us by Christ he will guide us and rule us, and bring us, by the mercy of Christ, to eternal salvation.

JOHN J. O'GORMAN.

NEGRO CHURCH SCENE OF BIG ANNUAL SERVICE

Washington, D. C., Jan. 23.—St. Augustine's Church for colored Catholics was chosen by the Washington section of the Holy Name Society for the annual vesper service of that organization, which brought to an end the campaign for five thousand new members in the District of Columbia.

The assembly of the vast throng including several high government officials in St. Augustine's was a striking example of the faith that binds men under the banner of the church that "teaches all nations." The Rev. Alonzo J. Olds, pastor of St. Augustine's, officiated at the Benediction service and the sermon was preached by the Rev. Ignatius Smith, O. P. Members of St. Augustine's Branch, headed by their president, Professor Eugene A. Clark, of Howard University, acted as a reception committee for the visiting members.

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"OVER THE HILL AND FAR AWAY"

The priest who leaves the ordered routine of parish work for the ups and downs of missionary enterprise is often obliged, as the French say, "to take his courage in both hands." The first difficulty is that of isolation from clerical brethren, and of loneliness in the round of daily life. Out here in Edson we have no accommodation for a housekeeper—even if we could find some devoted soul who would mind the empty house while the Fathers were away. The consequence is that the two slacks which lean against each other behind the beginnings of our basilica are cold and lonesome places to come back to—especially in the small wee hours of a wintry night. The door-key, inserted by half-frozen fingers, admits us to an interior which feels several degrees colder than the snow-bound world outside. Our first thought is for the stove—and we are in luck if we have been far-sighted enough to leave some kindling behind us, or if some good neighbor has been in to lay in the wood and coal for us. If it is very cold the Blue Flame stove will help to thaw out the glacial atmosphere, and we look around then to see if any of our companions has been for the mail since we left. If so we are soon engrossed in the newspapers in forgetfulness of the untimely hour. The Register, of course, is scanned quickly to see if our last effusion has appeared, and to find out if there are any misprints. Finally sleep begins to invade us. The bed invites us to refresh our wearied limbs, and we prepare for it with one eye on the behaviour of the stove. Our trusty Little Ben is instructed not to wake us too early, and then, in a silence relieved by the crackling of the stove we fall to sleep.

II. Morning, with all its round of spiritual and material things, does not seem in a riveting. The stove with luck, is still at work, and we need not lose much time beginning Mass—a lonely Mass without a single solitary soul to breathe an answer to our "Dominus vobiscum." As the final "Benedicite vos" is pronounced in the silence of the empty room we hope that its fruition may go forth far and wide upon the hundreds of souls committed to our care in a territory which has almost as many miles as souls! As soon as Mass is over the Blue Flame stove begins its useful work. While the kettle boils we may take a run down to the post office, and perchance purchase a tin of milk to replace the frozen remnant which we found on our kitchen table. When we get back the kettle is steaming and the bacon strips begin to thaw out and sizzle in the pan. In a few moments we have toasted our very dry bread, and are sitting down to breakfast in a "monarch-of-all-I-survey" mood, which makes

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us reflect that Robinson Crusoe with a dog and a parrot to beguile his solitude had a certain advantage over us!

There is little time, though, for lonely musing. Dishes must be washed, the bed made, the floor swept, the stove replenished, and correspondence attended to. During the afternoon we may hear footsteps in the snow and the sound of a tired voice which informs us that "It is only Father Louis." Then we may be spurred on to fresh endeavours in the culinary line. It is proverbially hard to eat alone and much easier to arouse one's enthusiasm for "mulligan" when it is to be shared with a companion. For dessert we may regale ourselves with some dainty or other which our lady friends (God bless them!) have sent over to the lonely bachelor shack! Then we will sit back and, like old soldiers, fight our spiritual battles over again.

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JOHNSON.—At Ottawa, Ont., on Friday, February 10, 1922, Mr. Silas A. Johnson. May his soul rest in peace.

M-INNIS.—At St. Martha's Hospital, Antigonish, Sept. 27th, of blood poisoning, John Francis McInnis, dearly beloved adopted son of Mr. and Mrs. John Archie Cameron, Glengary, Inv. Co., N. S., in the sixteenth year of his age. May his soul rest in peace.

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