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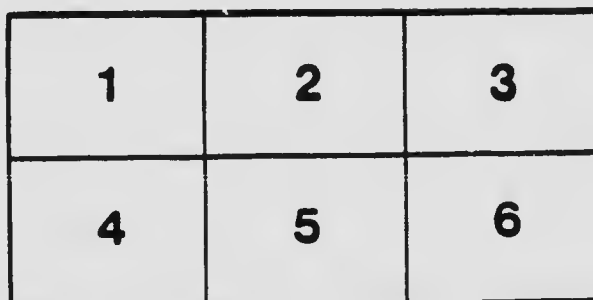
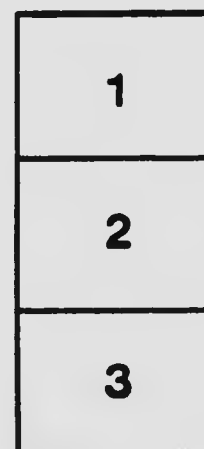
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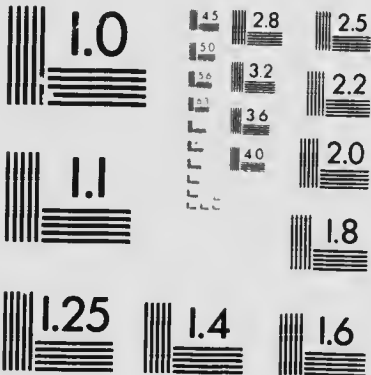
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# PASTORAL LETTER

ADDRESSED TO

## The Clergy and Laity

OF THE

### DIOCESE OF ST. JOHN

BY THE

### Right Reverend T. CASEY, D.D.

### Bishop of St. John



ST. JOHN, N. B.

THE SAINT JOHN GLOBE PUBLISHING COMPANY, LIMITED.

1908

# Timothy

By the Grace of God and Favour of

The Apostolic See

Bishop of Saint John.

To the Clergy, Religious Orders and Laity of  
the Diocese:

Health and Benediction in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED:

The question was raised a few years ago by one whose intellect was admittedly great among the greatest of the nineteenth century, Leo XIII., whether, perchance, there could be found among Christians nowadays some who, if asked, were those of old by Saint Paul, if they had received the Holy Ghost, might answer in the same way: "We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost."—*Acts XIX.*, 2. While it is scarcely conceivable that any can be found among us so deficient in knowledge on a point of such moment in the Christian religion, yet it is much to be feared that there are many all around us whose knowledge of the Third Divine Person of the Blessed Trinity is but vague and superficial. As their faith and their piety must depend entirely on their knowledge, it follows that, when this is defective, faith and piety can be but weak and inoperative. Such persons may be found at times to be

especially devoted to our Blessed Lord, because He seems nearer to them by the great fact of the Incarnation ; reverential to His ever Blessed Mother and to the Saints, because they are members of the human family ; but, the Holy Ghost being a pure Spirit and appealing in no way to the human senses, they seem afraid to inquire about His Divine Person, and about His work for the sanctification of the world. This is to be deplored, all the more from the fact that our Lord committed to the Holy Ghost the office of completing His own divine work for the salvation of men, and of applying to their souls, individually, the saving graces which He purchased for them by the outpouring of His precious Blood.

Therefore, it may be truly said that we are living in the age of the Holy Ghost ; for the action of this Divine Spirit is the distinguishing mark of the Christian era. To this era — the time after Christ — which is the last age of the world, the whole burden of the psalms and prophecies of the Old Testament is directed in types and figures. By the divine action of the Holy Ghost in the Church and through the Sacraments, the prophecies that foreshadowed such splendid things to come, are fulfilled ; the figures that were so vague to men of the olden Dispensation, are realized. Nor, will it profit men ever to look for any fuller revelation of God. His last word has been spoken in committing to the Church His Spirit as the Guardian and Dispenser of the deposit of Christian faith. The Descent of the Holy Ghost is God's last effort for the sanctification of the world : it is Christ's very best for the human family.

All this may be clearly seen from the excellence which Christ attributes to our era, noting its superiority over the time when He Himself was dwelling among men, at the very moment that He gave His disciples assurances and promises than which nothing can be more consoling to us all : " It is expedient to you that I go : for if I go not, the Paraclete

will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.”—*John XVI., 7.* It was to comfort them in their affliction at His departure, and to make them aware of the wonderful graces they might expect from the presence of this Divine Spirit, that our Lord gave them this assurance but a little while before He left them. The house on Mount Sion, in which the Apostles were assembled and persevering in prayer, waiting to be endued with power from on high, was, on the day of Pentecost, all filled with the Holy Ghost.—*Acts II., 2, 3.* This house, at that moment, in a sensible manner most truly represented the Christian Church: “The Church is a habitation of God built together in the Spirit.”—*Eph. II., 22.* From that day till this the Church is the true dwelling place of the Holy Ghost, which He entirely fills.

We wonder at the marvellous things related in the Acts of the Apostles; but, after all, if we separate the few miracles, as appealing to the senses, which were necessary as credentials for the Apostles at that time, the same marvels have been operated in the Church through the Sacraments in every age since then, are proceeding at this moment, and will not cease until the end of time: for, the Book of the Acts is but the first page in the history of the Church. Another name, too, has been given to this Book, and justly so; it has been called the Gospel of the Holy Ghost; for frequent mention is made of Him, and the great works performed by the Apostles are ascribed to Him. The four Gospels, containing the history of our Lord, were completed when His life's work was done; the Gospel of the Holy Ghost is to be finished only when the last soul required to complete the number of the elect shall have been sanctified, and the Church Militant on earth will have been transformed into the Church Triumphant in Heaven: “And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you forever, the Spirit of truth.”



Living as we are, in an era marked by the special action of the Holy Ghost, under His guidance and in particular relationship with Him, it behooves us to strive with all our might to know and appreciate the immense benefits that He has conferred, and is daily conferring upon us. It is doubtless to the want of knowledge of the Divine Spirit dwelling among us and in us, pouring out upon us incessantly His inestimable graces, that is to be attributed our coldness and indifference in His regard. He is the Spirit of Truth, whose office it is to lead us into all truth. By remaining, then, in ignorance of Him, we expose ourselves to the danger of wilfully resisting the truth and turning away from it, thereby contracting the guilt of that enormous sin against the Holy Ghost, which, our Lord told us, can never be forgiven. There is but too much reason to fear that this sin is quite common in the world to-day. Witness the prevalence of Naturalism and Rationalism without the Church, setting up blind Nature and proud Reason as objects of worship, and entirely ignoring the Divine Author of both the one and the other. Witness within the fold, even in the very Sanctuary and in the Seminaries set apart for the formation of priests, the astonishing inroads of that "Synthesis of all heresies,"—Modernism. One shudders at the outlook, lest God should be preparing to execute upon the world the fearful judgments predicted by Saint Paul: "God shall send them delusions so seductive that they shall believe a lie."—*II. Thess. II., 10.* "In the last times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to the spirits of error and the doctrines of devils."—*I. Tim. IV., 1.* To guard us against such a misfortune and to remind us of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost within us, to warn us of our duty of attending to His inspirations and movements to good, the same Apostle exhorts us: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed."—*Eph. IV., 30.*

But, it is not enough to avoid grieving so great a Benefactor; we must make every effort to become pleasing to Him. Of these efforts, the first is necessarily to know Him; for from knowledge will follow appreciation, gratitude and love; and, therefore, the fulfilment of the law. Our Lord has deigned in His gracious goodness to become at once our Guide and Exemplar for this happy consummation. All sinless as He was, He would, as if defiled, descend into the waters of the baptism of penance. Then did the Holy Ghost appear, coming down visibly upon Him under the form of a dove. Was Christ but then receiving the Holy Spirit? It would be blasphemy to assert it. He was God; and, therefore, from the moment of His Incarnation, He was filled with every gift and grace of the Holy Ghost. The Divine Spirit appeared, nevertheless, in conspicuous form over Him at the time of His baptism. These two things are of supreme moment, as, indeed, is everything pertaining to Christ:—the Holy Spirit was always, though invisibly, dwelling in our Lord's soul, and He appears in a signal manner over Him at the time of baptism. They foreshadowed, according to Leo XIII., after St. Augustine, the twofold mission of the Spirit, namely, His outward and visible mission in the Church, and His secret indwelling in the souls of the just. To enable us, therefore, to attain the knowledge of the Holy Ghost that we are so eagerly seeking, our Lord has deigned to give a figure in Himself, as an illustration of how we are to proceed: namely, to study His divine action in the Church, and in individual souls.

There is a twofold aspect to the operation of the Holy Ghost in the Church:—the first and most important of which is the proclamation of the true faith to the world, so that any not accepting it will be without excuse: "You shall be witnesses unto me," said Christ to the Apostles, "in Jerusalem and in all Judea."—*Acts I., 8.* And, speaking of the Holy

Spirit as operating through the Church in all future time, our Lord said : "He shall give testimony of Me."—*John XV., 26.* The second aspect is of but little less moment :—to defend the deposit of faith from the encroachments of rising heresies unto the end of time ; for what would it avail the faithful to hear the truth, if errors were allowed, uncondemned, to go side by side with it? And no less than an inspired Apostle foretold that, "there must be heresies."—*I. Cor. XI., 19.*

Now, mindful of this twofold aspect of the Spirit's operation among men and of the special nature of modern errors, the necessity of understanding that the Holy Ghost is a Person, a Divine Person, living in the Church and dwelling in us, while we remain in His grace, becomes immediately evident ; for none other than a person can teach a doctrine ; and, besides, and especially, because the thinkers of our day pretend to have demonstrated that God is not a person, but a Principle, or Power,—as Nature, or Reason, or Mentality. And as the great mass of men is too much engrossed in business to have any pretension to profound thought, but is easily carried away by the natural inclinations to evil and falsehood, more especially when these are upheld and pushed onward by the ravings and vagaries of the professed thinkers, as they are called, the evil becomes great and widespread. To guard against being carried away with the tide of errors, we must look to the moorings of our "faith, which was once delivered to the Saints ;" and above all we must learn to know and love the Divine Person of Him whose office it is to proclaim and defend the deposit.

The better to understand the Divine Personality of the Spirit of God, it is well to fix in our mind the true idea of a person. Everyone has such an idea, more or less correct ; for there is no one who is not persuaded that *he* is not some other person. He reasons to this conclusion, and finds that

*he* is a being apart from all his fellows. Here we have the most illiterate conversant with the three essential elements of personality—being, reason, and individuality. Now comes into evidence the absurdity so prevalent in our times: there are many who recognize a Supreme Being, while they would deny Him personality, which each one of us inferior beings is known to possess. Such absurdity is shown by pure reason; but the Supreme Being has made a revelation of Himself, has made known to us that He is not *one*, but *three* in personality, a marvel that pure reason could never have discovered; has even revealed the Three Divine Persons by name—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. They are but one God, though distinct in personality, each one possessing the Divine Nature in its entirety. Though one in Nature, they differ in origin, and thence arises the distinction in Person. The Father owes His origin to no Person; but to His infinite Knowledge of Himself He gave the fulness of the Divine Nature, thereby generating the Son. Now the Father and the Son seeing, each in the other, the fulness of the Godhead, loved, one the other, with an infinite love. This infinite Love received from both the fulness of the Divine Nature, and thus proceeding from the Father and the Son, found expression in the Person of the Holy Ghost.

Thus, the Spirit is rightly called the Person of Love. He is also called the Gift, or pledge, because He is the pledge of mutual love between the other two Divine Persons. He is consequently the Prototype and the Author of all gifts, and is Himself the highest Gift of God to men. Now, perhaps better than ever before, since we know our Divine Guest better, do we understand what an epoch that first Pentecost marked in the history of the world, when as St. Cyril of Jerusalem tells us, the Paraclete "sat upon the Apostles as though new spiritual crowns were placed upon their heads in

tongues of fire." Then did He at once begin His two-fold office in the Church, of fostering the germs of faith and doctrine in order to their growth and extension for the welfare of the people, and of guarding the deposit of faith from the incursions of error and heresy. It is in this latter office particularly that the Holy Spirit has performed most beneficent works for the preservation of truth in the world. From the apostolic age itself when the Gnostics, eager for novelties and given to superstition, caused some anxiety to the very Founders of Christianity, down to the last efforts of erring humanity which found expression in the synthesis of all heresies — Modernism, history furnishes abundant proof of St. Paul's prediction, that "there must be heresies." And, in the whole range of history, there is not found a more complete overthrow of error, or a more triumphant vindication of Christian truth, than that displayed in the Syllabus of Pius X. and in his immortal Encyclical condemning Modernism.

Never before was the Church so covertly and insidiously attacked by the spirit of error, as in these, our own days, and that with a persistence that promised her extermination. The heresiarchs of history rarely attacked her on more points than one; the many-sided Modernist, rising up from within her own bosom, made a simultaneous attack all around her, and his success meant her annihilation. Nothing could be more profitable to us or more fitting for our age than the minute and careful study of the great Encyclical itself; for it shows us at once both the erring spirit of the times and the divine action of the Holy Ghost in guarding through His Pontiff the deposit of faith. Lest this may not be convenient to all, and that no one may be ignorant of its leading features, it is well to note the Modernist's chief points of attack. He would deny the historical truth of revealed Christianity as found in the Gospel to-day, and deprive

Revelation of the Inspiration that makes it of divine certitude. Again, he would present our Lord to us as divested of His Divinity, inasmuch as He showed ignorance of many things, to deny the knowledge of which to God would be blasphemy. What is of equal moment with these destructive denials, the Modernist asserts that Christ our Lord did not found the Church, and did not institute the Sacraments. Again, he denies that God ever sanctioned the dogmas of the Christian Creed, or that they are even necessarily or perpetually true. Finally, he maintains that the Pope and the Bishops derive their authority to rule and feed the flock of Christ, not from God, but from the assembly of the Christian people. No one can fail to see how any one of these errors, pushed to its last conclusions, must operate for the final destruction of revealed religion ; while their combined power, working insidiously and without check on the minds of the people, must utterly destroy the Christian faith.

The vigilant Pontiff sleeps not on the watch tower. He sees the Modernist lurking in the fold, nay, even in the very Sanctuary ; and, rising in the might of his apostolic office, strikes the invader with the sword of the Spirit, cutting him off effectually from the living body of the Church. The world goes thinking, as perhaps it never thought before. Some praise, others censure the pontifical action ; all admire the courage of the Pontiff, and agree that he stands for a doctrine whose moorings he is not afraid to secure, and which stands for something tangible in the world. Among us, happy in the bosom of the great family of which he is the mighty Head, there is nothing but admiration for the Holy Father and joy at the new vindication of Christian truth. Thus proceeds the Gospel of the Holy Ghost with the progress of the Church's history down the ages.

The sentiments with which these reflections should inspire us are beautiful and impromptu. We can but touch them,

for there are yet many things to say. The first is a great reverence for the Divine Spirit who guards us, as also for His representatives in the teaching office of the Church. Our confidence in the Faith should know no bounds, since it is thus divinely safeguarded. Our appreciation of it and our gratitude to its Divine Author should incite us to love Him with our whole heart, and to give expression to that love by the exercises of a Christian life.

This brings us to the consideration of our Divine Guest in more personal relationship with ourselves, viz., His operation in individual souls. While it would seem that this should be more simple because more particular, it is, notwithstanding, more difficult because entirely invisible, and, therefore, more secret in its method of proceeding. The first effect of such divine operation is produced in the soul by the Sacrament of Baptism. It is known that we were "born children of wrath," and it is only by the generous favour and power of God that we could be raised from our state of bondage. Hence the Fathers, following the Sacred Writers, signalized our elevation and our new condition after Baptism as a new birth, a regeneration, a participation of the divine nature; attributing, all the time, these wonderful effects to the action of the Holy Ghost: "the Spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: Abba, Father."—*Rom. VIII., 15.*

This, our happy regenerated state, is developed and greatly extended through the more abundant outpouring of the Divine Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Already possessed of the Holy Ghost through Baptism and grace, a just man is endowed through Confirmation with the *gifts* which, enlightening and strengthening him, render him attentive and obedient to the interior movements and inspirations with which the Holy Spirit favours him. All internal and secret as they are, these divine words and movements

are essential to our sanctification and salvation. Without them there is no beginning, no growth, no perfection in the spiritual life ; and no one, in any way concerned about the things of eternity, can fail to observe them. By attention and obedience to these secret inspirations, we may joyfully run on in the way of God's commandments.

In spite, however, of these lights and graces, we are still liable, through human frailty, to fall by the way. Though our Divine Guest may have been driven from our souls by our own perfidious act of sin, even then, being Love personified, He does not entirely abandon us. He awakens the sense of remorse for our ingratitude and alarm at our danger of ruin ; He excites in us a desire to return to duty, to God ; He will not be put off, but repeats without ceasing : "Behold, I stand at the gate, and knock."—*Apoc. III., 20.* And when, at last overcome by the warnings and admonitions of divine Love, we turn to Him with true repentance for our sins, it is He who restores us to God's grace and friendship : "He is the remission of all sins." He gives back our lost birthright, takes up His residence anew in our souls, proceeds, as if nothing had happened, with the work of our sanctification ; for to this end did our Lord breathe Him forth into the pastors of His Church : "Receive ye the Holy Ghost ; whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained."—*John XX., 22, 23.* It is through the Sacrament of Penance that we recover the graces of Baptism and Confirmation, which, unhappily, we lost by sin, and are restored to the favour of our Father in Heaven. And, again we may experience His divine and paternal love ; for "The Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our Spirit that we are the sons of God."—*Rom. VIII., 16.*

Unspeakable and incalculable blessings follow from this, our union with God. He sees His spirit in us, and that,



therefore, we are partakers of the divine nature. As our body and our soul are ours, so is the Holy Ghost ours. This infinite condescension on the part of God, demands recognition from us : we are bound in return to direct towards Him our heart's best love and devotion. This obligation will be fulfilled easily and sweetly, if we but give heed to the secret whisperings of the Holy Spirit in our soul. Is He not our perpetual Guest, and, too, the Person of Love? Nothing is, therefore, so lovable as He ; and all the while He is upholding us for the fulfilment of the divine commandment : "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength."—*Deut. VI., 5.* Since He is God, this commandment applies to Him, and He supplies the grace for its observance.

After offering to our divine Benefactor the sweet homage of our warmest love, we have no other way to give Him greater pleasure than by His frequent invocation. While He desires to pour out His favours upon us, He has attached to them the condition of our asking for them. Here again, we have but to attend to Him, give heed to His secret movements, pray in union with Him ; for, "The Spirit Himself asketh for us with unspeakable groanings."—*Rom. VIII., 26.* Our merit, our salvation, our crown, are inviolably attached to prayer : the Holy Ghost directs us, joins us in the petition, "Give the merit of virtue the acquirement of salvation, give joy everlasting." Thus does the Spirit pray in the Church for and with us, entreating God to wash us from all stain, to warm us with divine love, to heal our every wound. No more effectual means of sanctification can be thought of than this habit of frequent ejaculatory prayer, and especially as addressed to the divine Spirit, the "Father of the poor," the "Giver of gifts," the "Light of hearts." Through Him we may follow joyfully the way of the Cross, upheld by the assurance of attaining the Crown, for He is "the pledge of our inheritance."—*Eph. I., 14.*

To foster the salutary devotion and to obtain the Divine blessing for the promotion of piety towards the Holy Spirit, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament may be given, where convenient, every evening during the novena preceding Pentecost in every Church of the Diocese.

As already published, the new legislation in regard to marriage will go into effect right after Easter of the present year. Details will be forthcoming in Circular Letters and in the *New Freeman*.

The regulations of Lent will be the same as last year.

Prayer and self-denial should be generously practiced during the Holy Season, especially frequent invocation of the Divine Spirit, and abstinence from unnecessary amusements and the use of liquor.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus be with you all, Brethren.

This pastoral shall be read in every Church of the Diocese on the first Sunday after its reception that the Pastor officiates therein.



† T. CASEY,  
Bishop of Saint John.

A. W. MEAHAN,  
Secretary.

Given at Saint John, Feast of S. Matthias, Apostle,  
February 25, 1908.

