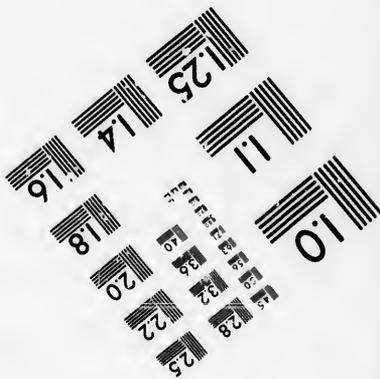
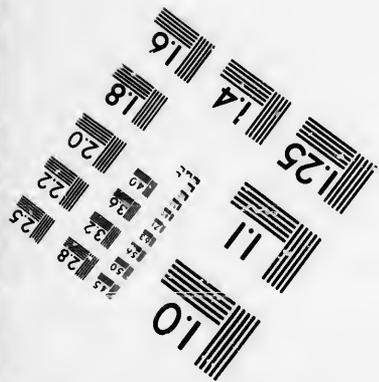
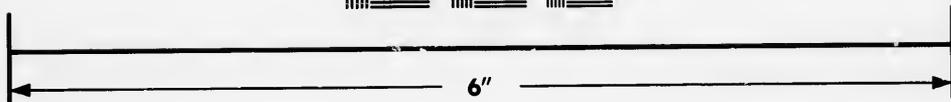
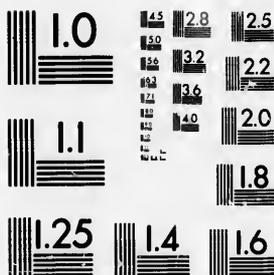


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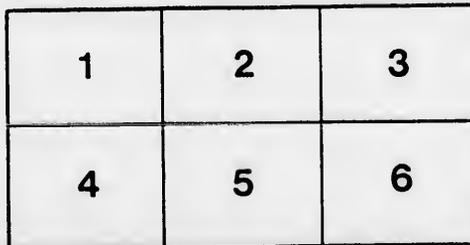
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# PRACTICAL CATECHISM

OF THE

SUNDAYS, FEASTS, AND FASTS,

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

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# PRACTICAL CATECHISM.

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## PART I.

### OF SUNDAYS, HOLY-DAYS, FEASTS, AND FASTS IN GENERAL.

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#### SECTION 1.—*Sunday.*

Q. WHY did God appoint a Sabbath or day of rest?

A. 1. In memory of his having accomplished the creation of the world in six days, and his resting on the seventh. *Gen. ii. 2, 3.*

2. That man might not only give rest to his body, by a seasonable interruption of his labours, but to his soul also.

Q. How to his soul?

A. By calling off his mind from the cares and pleasures of this life, to attend to higher and better things; namely, the consideration of the eternal sabbath, or rest in the world to come, and of the means that lead to the possession of it, the avoiding evil, and doing good.

Q. Why is the word *remember* prefixed to this, above all the other commandments?

A. To signify how prone man is to forget his

God, and the worship which he owes him; and how apt the world is to take such firm hold of his mind, as to engross all his time and thoughts, and to drown the remembrance of divine things.

Q. Which day of the week did God appoint for the Jewish sabbath?

A. The seventh, or our Saturday. *Mark*, xvi. 1. *Luke*, xxiii. 56., xxiv. 1.

Q. Does the New Testament any where discharge Christians from the duty of keeping the Jewish sabbath?

A. Were the Scriptures our only guide, one would rather think the Jewish sabbath was still of obligation, from *Matt.* xix. 17., xxiv. 20. And though there be several hints in the Scripture (as *Rev.* i. 10., *Acts*, xx. 7., *1 Cor.* xvi. 2.) that the first day, or Sunday, was *kept holy* by Christians in the apostolical age, yet there is not any plain proof thereof.

Q. What warrant then have we for keeping Sunday, and not Saturday, so directly contrary to the word of God in the Old Testament? *Lev.* xix. 3, 30.

A. We have the warrant of the Holy Catholic Church, the beloved Spouse of Christ, which he has promised to assist continually, and by his Holy Spirit to guide into all truth. *Matt.* xxviii. 20., *John*, xiv. 16, 17., xvi. 13.

Q. Why is Sunday chosen for the Christian sabbath?

A. In memory of our Saviour's resurrection, and the coming down of the Holy Ghost on that day.

Q. How is the Sunday, the Christian Sabbath, or day of rest to be sanctified?

A. 1. By abstaining from servile works, which either necessity or charity does not require, and from profane or worldly employments.

2. By applying ourselves to acts of religion and devotion.

Q. What works are to be accounted servile?

A. All such bodily labours as are commonly undertaken for a livelihood. The works of sin we are to abstain from every day, but more especially on this, and the like.

Q. What is meant by profane or worldly employments?

A. 1. All proceedings in courts of judicature, all traffic, unnecessary buying and selling, and the like. 2. Diversions, &c. which hinder us in our application to the duties of the day, or which give scandal, are so far to be accounted unlawful.

Q. Why are bodily labours and worldly employments forbidden?

A. Because they are generally inconsistent with the Christian duties of the day.

Q. What are these duties?

A. 1. To assist with attention and devotion at the holy sacrifice of the Mass, (from which nothing but sickness or absolute necessity should detain us,) at Vespers, and at other public prayers; and this in the spirit of adoration of the sovereign majesty of God, and of praise and thanksgiving for all his benefits, &c.

2. Attention to the word of God, heard or read by us with respect, docility, and a desire of spiritual profit.

3. To reconcile ourselves to God by an humble and sincere confession, and to seek new strength by approaching to the blessed Sacrament.

4. To enliven our faith and desires of that heavenly rest, into which Christ entered by his resurrection.

5. To consider and make choice of proper means for the subduing of our predominant passion, and for advancing in the ways of virtue.

6. To dispose and make an offering of the following week to God's Glory.

7. To improve the remainder of the day in doing good works, spiritual or corporael. *Matt. xii. 12.; James, i. 27.*

Q. Is not the hearing of a Mass sufficient for the sanctifying of the Sunday?

A. Though the Church by her precept requires her members to hear Mass on Sundays, she nowhere tells them this is the whole duty of the day. Hence in the Catechism *ad Parochos*, set forth by order of the Council of Trent, though hearing Mass be first mentioned, yet, conformably to the practice of antiquity, there are other duties very much urged; *viz.*, hearing the word of God, learning such things as are necessary for a Christian life, and the doing works of charity.

Q. Why say you *conformably to the practice of antiquity*?

A. Because in ancient times the sacrifice of the Mass was accompanied with so many prayers, instructions, lectures, and works of charity, as kept the faithful at church a considerable part of the day. *Acts, xx. 7. St. Justin's Apology.*

Q. What then is to be said of those who having heard Mass, spend the remainder of the day in drinking, gaming, or in other worldly diversions?

A. It is much to be feared that they have not satisfied the command of God, nor complied

with the intention of the Church, and this in a matter of weight. Hence St. Augustin says, that they are more criminal in the sight of God, than if they spent the day in digging. *Serm. 2, in Psalm xxxii.* (and 91.)

Q. But do all satisfy the obligation as to hearing Mass, who are present at it?

A. No: 1. Some sin against this obligation, by not being present with attention and devotion. 2. Others, by not hearing one whole Mass. 3. And not a few by taking little or no care that their children or servants be present at it.

Q. What is generally the consequence of misspending Sundays?

A. An irregular life, abandoned to many heinous sins.

~~~~~

SECT. 2.—*Feasts in general.*

Q. WHY are Feasts instituted?

A. 1. For a grateful remembrance of God's special mercies.

2. That on them we might glorify God in his Saints.

Q. Has the Church any warrant for these institutions?

A. She has; 1. The example of God himself, who in the old law appointed several days to be kept holy besides the weekly sabbath, forbidding on them all servile work. *Exod. xii. 16., Lev. xxiii. 6, 7, 8., Deut. xvi. 8.*

2. The example of Jesus Christ, who was present at the feast of the dedication, which yet was instituted without any special command of God. *John, x. 22., 1 Mac. iv. 59.*

3. The example of the apostles, who observed the third, sixth, and ninth hours of prayer, received only by Jewish custom. *Acts*, ii. 15., iii. 1., x. 9.

4. The example of the first and purest ages. *Orig. contra Cels.* l. 8., *Hom.* 3. in *Matt.*

Q. Are Christians obliged in conscience to observe the feasts of the Church?

A. They are.

Q. For what reason?

A. In obedience to their spiritual superiors; which, as a Protestant confesses in this case, is a duty owing to the fourth commandment, as immediately and directly as chastity is to the sixth. *Pract. Cat.* l. 2, sect. 12.

And Mr. Thorndike, another Protestant writer, (in his book of *Just Weights and Measures*, c. 17,) says, *The Lord's Day is observed by the authority of the Church; therefore other festivals and times of fasting are to be observed.* From whence it follows, that if Christians be not obliged in conscience to keep the festivals which the Church appoints, they may without sin do servile works on Sundays.

Q. Did the primitive Christians look upon themselves to be under any such strict obligation?

A. Most certainly they did. For St. Austin preaching to his people says, that *All who acknowledge themselves sons of the Church, observe the festivals of the Church; (Serm. de Temp. 253.)* and Arius was censured, as for other heresies, so also for opposing and condemning the Church's festivals.

Q. Since the Scripture says, that six days in the week we shall work, and do what we have to be done, how can the Church oblige us to rest on one of those six days? *Deut.* v. 13.

A. The Scripture by those words can mean only this, that in the *ordinary* course of the week there are six days allowed for work : or God himself, having set apart some other days to be sanctified as well as the sabbath, would have contradicted his own commandment by a contrary institution. *Exod.* xii. 16., *Lev.* xxiii. 15.

Q. What then is our obligation as to feasts ?

A. The Church makes no difference between the Sunday and Holy-day of obligation. We are consequently to abstain from servile works on feasts, and spend them in religious duties, as on Sundays, see pages. 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Q. What else is proper to be done on these days ?

A. 1. To inform ourselves concerning the mystery or Saint whereof the feast is kept. 2. To excite in our souls, pious sentiments agreeable to the occasion. 3. To meditate on the virtues recommended to us, and to beg them of Almighty God.

Q. What is the meaning of *Octaves* ?

A. An octave is the space or period of eight days allowed for the celebration of certain feasts, and those the most considerable and solemn, such as Christmas, Easter, Whitsuntide, &c.

Q. What precedent have you for them ?

A. The example of Moses and Solomon. *Lev.* xxiii 36., 2 *Paral.* vii. 9.

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SECT. 3.—*The Feasts of Jesus Christ in general.*

Q. WHAT feasts of Jesus Christ does the Church keep ?

A. His Conception, \* Nativity, \* Circumcision,

\* Epiphany, Presentation, in the temple, Transfiguration, Passion, Resurrection, \* Ascension, and the feast of the blessed Sacrament, or \* Corpus Christi.

Q. What are we to consider on any of these feasts?

A. 1. What it is that Christ has done for us.  
2. What return he expects at our hands.

Q. Do these mysteries supply us with any motives that may raise our affections?

A. Yes. The consideration of any one mystery is enough, with the help of God's grace, to move all the affections of our soul.

As for example :

It will move us, 1. To love God, who has done so much for us. 2. To hate sin, as the cause of Christ's sufferings and humiliation, and of our separation from him. 3. To rejoice in the manifestation of God's glory, power, wisdom, goodness, and other attributes. 4. To lament our own and the world's ingratitude. 5. To hope for and desire heaven, which Christ has purchased for us at so dear a rate. 6. To disdain the honours, pleasures, riches, and vanities of this world, &c.

Q. And may we not employ ourselves in the acts of several virtues?

A. Yes. There is scarce any virtue, but what on these occasions may be considered as reduced to practice.

---

#### SECT. 4.—*The Feasts of Saints in general.*

Q. WHICH do you call the feasts of Saints?

A. The feasts dedicated to God in honour and memory of the Saints.

Q. On what day is their memory kept?

A. Generally on the day of their death, which, in the Church's language, is called their nativity; because they were then born into heaven, and entered upon a life of everlasting glory.

Q. Are these feasts of ancient date?

A. The most ancient church records, make mention of them.

Q. Can you give me an account of the antiquity of any of them?

A. Yes. Origen, one of the first writers, mentions the feast of the *Holy Innocents*, as commanded by the holy Fathers, according to the will of God, to be for ever celebrated in the Church. *Hom. 3. in Matt.*

2. The feasts, of St. Ignatius the second bishop of Antioch after St. Peter, and of St. Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, were kept by the Christians of those places immediately after their martyrdom. *Ruinart, p. 708. Euseb. l. 4, c. 15.*

Q. When did these Saints suffer for the faith of Christ?

A. St. Ignatius suffered in the year 107, and St. Polycarp in the year 166.

Q. May we not then suppose the feasts of the Apostles to be still more ancient?

A. They are doubtless more ancient. As to the feast of SS. *Peter and Paul*, it was kept by the primitive Christians with very great solemnity. Constantine, the first Christian emperor, erected a church to God at Constantinople, in honour of those two great apostles. (*Euseb. de Vita Const. l. 4, c. lviii.*) And St. Austin tells us, that in his time there was at Ancona, a town in Italy, an ancient chapel of St. Stephen, which was thought

to have stood from the time of the apostles. *Ser.* 322, 323. *De Diver.* 31, 32.

Q. Can you prove from scripture, that we should honour the saints?

A. I think I can. For the children of the prophets worshipped Elisæus flat on the ground, because God had given him the spirit of Elias: now if saints upon earth are worthy of honour, much worthier, certainly, are they whom God has made perfect in heaven. *4 Kings*, ii. 15.

Q. Do the saints pray for us?

A. Protestants themselves confess it. *Melanc-thon, Loc. Com.*

Q. How do you prove it?

A. Since their charity never fails, and that in heaven they are still one body with us under Christ, and like the angels, most certainly they pray for us. *1 Cor.* xiii. 8. *Luke*, xx. 36. For we read that an angel prayed for the Israelites. *Zach.* i. 12.

Q. May we beg the prayers of the saints?

A. St. Paul begged the prayers of the faithful on earth; no question then but we may beg the prayers of St. Paul, and of other saints now in heaven. *2 Cor.* i. 11, *Eph.* vi. 19., *1 Thess.* v. 25.

Q. Was this the practice of the primitive church?

A. It was, as appears from the ancient liturgies and writings of the holy fathers. *S. Bas. Or.* 20. *in 40 Mar. Greg. Naz. Or. fun. de S. Bas. Chrys. h. 26. in 2 Cor. S. Amb. L. de Viduis.*

Q. But how can the saints know when we ask their prayers?

A. As God in his justice permits the desires of sorcerers to be known to evil spirits; so doubt-

less in his mercy he reveals to his saints the desires and supplications of the faithful.

Q. What scripture have you for it?

A. Christ assures us, that there is joy in heaven for the conversion of a sinner; Therefore, the pious motion of the sinner's heart, wherein his conversion consists, is made known to those heavenly citizens; and if his actual conversion, why not his desire of their helpful prayers in order to obtain it? *Luke, xv. 7.*

Q. What is the church's intention in these feasts?

A. 1. To honour God in his saints, and *them* in him, by offering him our hearty thanks for the grace and glory bestowed upon *them*; and for the favours he has done her by *their* example, labours, or intercession.

2. To propose them to us, as encouraging patterns of christian virtues. *Heb. xi. 4, &c.*

Q. How does the example of the saints encourage us to virtuous practices?

A. By shewing us that virtue and its reward may be attained, since we are like to meet with no other difficulties than what they have conquered; and that we have all those helps which enabled them.

Q. What then does the church remind us of on those days, besides praising and thanking almighty God?

A. 1. To humble ourselves for falling so far short of the saints in discharging our duty to God, to whom we have no less obligations than they had.

2. With great earnestness to beg of God those virtues which were most eminent in the saint whose feast is celebrated.

Q. How are we to excite in ourselves an earnest desire of those virtues?

A. By considering the comeliness, the advant-

age, the necessity, the reward of them; and how they are pressed upon us by the doctrine and example of our blessed Saviour and his saints. *Ps. i. xxxiii. cxliv.*

Q. May we desire the saints to *give* us any virtue, or to *make* us chaste, humble, or the like?

A. It were an error to imagine that the saints, strictly speaking, can either *give* us any virtue, or *make* us chaste, &c.

Q. Does not the church make use of such expressions?

A. Sometimes indeed she does: but her meaning is never any other, than that they would beg of God Almighty such graces or favours for her children. *Cat. Conc. Trid. par. 4. Quis orandus.*

Q. How does the church commonly express herself when she immediately addresses the saints?

A. In these or the like words: *Pray for us, Intercede for us, Obtain for us, &c.*

Q. What is her usual method of begging the saints' intercession?

A. Her constant method in the collects of the mass, (which are the most solemn model she proposes to her children,) is to address herself to Almighty God, and to beg of him by the intercession of the saints, *through the merits of Jesus Christ*, the graces she hopes to obtain.

Q. Is it sufficient that we pray for ourselves on those feasts?

A. By no means. It is our duty to pray for all our neighbours; especially for those countries where the saint (whose feast it is) lived or preached; and more particularly for those that are engaged in the same state of life as the saint adorned with his virtues.

Q. Give an instance.

A. That is to say, if the saint was on earth a king or queen, we ought then to pray for all princes, (our own especially,) and for all persons of quality; if a soldier, for all soldiers; if a bishop, for all the prelates and pastors of God's church, and particularly for our own; if a doctor of the church, for all universities, colleges, scholars; if a religious, for all of his order, &c.

Q. And what are we to ask for them?

A. 1. That God would preserve them from such and such sins, as are most incident or dangerous to persons of their rank. 2. That he would give them such virtues as may render them (as they did the saints) instrumental to God's glory, and to their neighbours', as well as their own salvation.

Q. What is proper to be read on the feasts of saints?

A. Their lives or some part of their writings, which seem most suitable to our present circumstances.

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SECT. 5.—*Feasts of the Blessed Virgin in general.*

Q. WHAT feasts of the blessed Virgin does the church command us to sanctify?

A. Her \*Conception, Nativity, \*Annunciation, Purification, and \*Assumption. Two days are also set apart in memory of her Presentation and Visitation, but they are not Holy-days.

Q. Why does the church celebrate these feasts with a more than ordinary devotion?

A. Because of the blessed Virgin's excellency, and her incommunicable title.

Q. What title do you mean?

A. The title of *Mother of God*.

Q. What advantage has she by this title ?

A. Of being in a special manner united to the whole blessed Trinity.

Q. In what manner ?

A. To the Father, by their Son, Jesus Christ ; to the Son, as being his Mother ; to the Holy Ghost, in as much as he descended upon her to frame the body of Jesus Christ out of her purest blood.

Q. What then are we to believe of the blessed Virgin ?

A. That God replenished her with his graces, and prepared her to be a fit habitation for his Son. *Luke, i. 28.*

Q. May we not hope to gain great favours by her intercession ?

A. We may most certainly, since God has been pleased to give us by her the very Author of Grace, provided we do not actually affront her, while we beg her prayers. *John, ii. 3.*

Q. Who may be thought to affront the blessed Virgin, while they beg her prayers ?

A. They who imagine she will stand their friend, while their obstinacy in sin renders them the enemies of her Son and Saviour.

Q. In what then consists that true and solid devotion which all good christians ought to have to the blessed Virgin ?

A. In two things. 1. In daily recommending ourselves to her intercession, by saying the beads, her litanies or office, &c.

2. In a constant endeavour to copy out in our lives, the virtues that were so illustrious in this queen of saints.

Q. What virtues has she recommended to us ?

A. 1. The love of God. 2. Fidelity to his graces. 3. Conformity to his divine will. 4. The spirit of prayer, adoration, and thanksgiving. 5. Humility. 6. Obedience. 7. Chastity. 8. Modesty. 9. Recollection and retirement, and many more.

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 SECT. 6.—*Feasts of Apostles in general.*

Q. WHAT were the apostles?

A. Persons called by Jesus Christ to be the witnesses of his miracles, the depositories or guardians of his doctrine, and the first pastors of his church.

Q. Can you tell the number and names of them?

A. They are twelve in number, and their names are these: Peter, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, James the Less, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon, Thaddæus, and Matthias, who was chosen in the place of the traitor Judas.

Q. How are we sure, that their testimony deserves our belief?

A. 1. Because they confirmed it by miracles, and sealed it with their blood. 2. The conversion of the gentile world bears evidence for them.

Q. How were they qualified for the great work of converting the world?

A. As to all human appearances, they seemed entirely unqualified.

Q. How so?

A. They were but a few men, who had neither power, credit, reputation, courage, nor learning, to support them.

Q. Was the doctrine they were to preach, of such a nature as would be apt to find abettors?

A. On the contrary, it contradicted the received opinions and darling passions of mankind.

Q. The world then was not inclined to receive such doctrine?

A. As averse to it as a general pride of mind and corruption of heart could make them.

Q. By what methods was this doctrine to be propagated?

A. By the apostles flying, suffering, dying for what they taught; and by promising those who should be believed, almost nothing in this world but persecutions and adversity.

Q. How then came the world to receive the gospel?

A. By the divine power of its author, Jesus Christ, who by his grace enabled his apostles to discharge their duty, and over-ruled the hearts and minds of men.

Q. What may we conclude from this wonderful propagation of the gospel?

A. 1. That Jesus Christ is true God, and the world's Messiah. 2. That our faith is true. 3. That we ought to live up to the maxims of the gospel. 4. That we ought to have a great confidence in Jesus Christ, as to the discharging of the duties of the state to which he has called us, and as to every good action that is undertaken to his honour.

Q. How is the dignity of the apostles represented in the holy scripture?

A. By Twelve precious stones upon which the city of God, that is, the church, is built; and upon which were written the names of the twelve apostles. *Apoc. xxi. 14, 19.*

Q. Why are they accounted the foundation of the church?

A. Because the church is built upon their doctrine.

Q. How is the apostolical doctrine perpetuated?

A. By the ministry of bishops, their successors, who have delivered it through all ages down to our days, and will so continue it to the end of the world. *Mat. xxviii. 19, 20. Eph. iv. 11, 12.*

Q. What does the church recommend to our imitation on the feasts of the apostles?

A. 1. Their resolution, in forsaking all to follow Christ. 2. Their belief and practice of his gospel. 3. Their courage, patience, labours, and self-denials. 4. Their zeal for God's honour, and the salvation of their neighbour, even of their enemies. 5. Their contempt of this world, and longing desire of the next.

Q. How are we to direct our devotions on these feasts?

A. We are—1. To thank God for the graces and glory bestowed upon the apostles, and for having brought us by their means to the knowledge of himself and of his divine truths; and for the means he has appointed to deliver us from all doubts, and securing us from the weakness and uncertainty of our own private judgment. *Luke, x. 16. Mat. xxviii. 20. John, xiv. 16. Acts, ii. 47.*

2. To humble ourselves for having lived with so little conformity to their doctrine and example; and perhaps in a very culpable ignorance of the rules they have laid down for the conduct of a christian life; especially for our great cowardice and weakness, in being so often tired with ordinary difficulties, so afraid of mortifications, so impatient in sufferings, so dejected with temptations, and so frequently overcome in weak assaults.

3. To resolve to promote the true faith by all

the ways and means God has put into our power, and particularly by our good example.

Q. What are we to beg of God by their intercession?

A. 1. The virtues recommended by their example. 2. Grace to continue firm and steadfast in the catholic faith, and to live according to the maxims of the gospel, the truths delivered to us by his apostles; that we may not dishonour our profession, by joining a wicked life to a holy faith.

Q. And what must we beg besides?

A. 1. An apostolical zeal and spirit for all the pastors of God's church, and particularly for those to whose care he has entrusted us; that God would direct and bless them in all their labours, and that none may undertake this sacred function, but such as are called to it by Jesus Christ.

2. The conversion of nations to the faith of Christ, and of those particularly where the apostle preached, whose feast is kept.

3. That all heresies and schisms being removed, the true faith of the catholic and apostolical church may every where be re-established.

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SECT. 7.--*Feasts of Evangelists in general.*

Q. WHOM do you call evangelists?

A. The inspired authors of the four gospels, which contain an account of the life and doctrine, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.

Q. Who is the first of them in the order of time?

A. St. Matthew, a publican, that is to say, a

tax or toll gatherer to the Romans, and afterwards an apostle.

Q. When and upon what account did St. Matthew write his gospel?

A. While he was in Judæa or Palestine, about six years after our Saviour's death, at the entreaty of the Jewish converts, and, as St. Epiphanius relates, commissioned by the apostles?

Q. Who is the second evangelist?

A. St. Mark, a disciple of St. Peter, who wrote his gospel at Rome about the year of Christ 43, or rather later, at the request of the converts there, who, as Eusebius relates, (book ii. ch. xiv.) not content to have heard St. Peter preach, pressed St. Mark to pen an historical account of what St. Peter had delivered to them by word of mouth; which, when finished, was ratified by St. Peter's authority, that it might be read publicly in their religious assemblies.

Q. Who is the third?

A. St. Luke, a physician of Antioch, the companion and disciple of St. Paul.

Q. When and with what view did he write his gospel?

A. About the year of Christ 52, partly to expose the false and fabulous relations which already began to be obtruded upon the world; (*Luke*, i. 1.) and partly to supply what seemed wanting in St. Matthew and St. Mark; relating several facts and discourses, as also the reasons and occasions for many things being done or spoken, wholly omitted by them. He has left us the fullest account of our Saviour's conception, birth, and infancy.

Q. Did St. Luke write any thing besides the gospel that bears his name?

A. The *Acts of the Apostles* are also of his composing, written at Rome, and designed as a continuation of his former history.

Q. What is the subject of the *Acts of the Apostles*?

A. There he gives us an account of the church in her infancy, and relates both the actions and sufferings of some of the chief apostles, especially of St. Paul, whose attendant he was.

Q. Who is the fourth evangelist?

A. St. John, the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ, an apostle, an evangelist, and a prophet.

Q. When and upon what occasion did he write his gospel?

A. About the year of Christ 96, and at the importunity, as St. Jerome says, of the Asian bishops; partly to oppose certain heretics, who began to deny the divinity of Christ; partly to supply several passages of the gospel history, which had been omitted by the other three evangelists; especially from the beginning of our Saviour's public ministry to the death of St. John the Baptist.

Q. What other writings did this apostle leave behind him?

A. His three *Epistles* and his *Apocalypse*, or book of Revelations. It is on account of the work last mentioned, that he is esteemed a prophet, as it contains a mysterious prediction of many future events relating to the state of the church, down to the latest period of time.

Q. Did our Saviour command the gospels to be written?

A. The sacred penmen who wrote them, give us no account of any such commission.

Q. What inference do you make from their silence in this matter?

A. I infer that Christ never designed the scripture alone for the rule of our faith. (See Protestant Objections refuted.)

Q. How prove you this inference to be good?

A. Because the gospel shows us a rule of faith appointed by Jesus Christ, (without any mention of a written one,) which was to continue invariably the same, from the first sermon of St. Peter to the end of the world.

Q. What rule of faith do the gospels mention, as appointed by Jesus Christ, for all the faithful?

A. They mention this, *The doctrine of Jesus Christ, as it was to be preached and delivered by the apostles and their successors to the end of the world.* *Matt. xxviii. 19, 20., Mark, xvi. 15, 16., Luke x. 16.*

Q. Who have always stood to this rule of faith?

A. The Roman Catholics; that is to say, the Catholic Church, which in all ages has held communion with the bishop of Rome.

Q. And what is the rule of faith which all sects have held?

A. The material books of the Scriptures, or the words therein contained, as they themselves understand them, be it right or wrong, without regard to tradition.

Q. Why has the Church used some restriction as to the reading of the Scriptures?

A. That the *unlearned and unstable* may not expose themselves to the weakness and uncertainty of their own private interpretations, and pervert the sacred food into poison.

Q. What is the Church's motive in this

restraint, to keep the people in ignorance, or to prevent a discovery of supposed errors ?

A. Nothing can be more ridiculous than this slanderous imputation ; for every one is at liberty to read the Latin *Vulgate*, where the *learned* might with ease discover those errors, were any such asserted by the Church. So that this restraint upon the weakest and most ignorant part of Christians, is only an effect of the Church's charity, to prevent the mischiefs they might otherwise do themselves, in wresting the Scriptures to their own perdition.

Q. With what disposition then ought Catholics to read the holy Scriptures ?

A. Having their pastor's leave for reading them, they are to invoke the Holy Ghost for light and grace to understand and practice what they read.

Q. And this being done, how are they to read them ?

A. Rather in the spirit of prayer, than by way of study ; with love, respect, docility, humility, and a perfect submission to the judgment of the church.

Q. Why are the Scriptures to be read with so perfect a submission to the Church's sentiments ?

A. Because to read them with a self-confidence and presumption, without a dependence upon the Church, is to follow the footsteps of all the heretics that have ever revolted from the Church of God.

Q. Why so ?

A. Because, as St. Austin says, *There would be no heresies, nor perverse doctrines, that ensnare souls, and throw them into hell, but that the Scriptures, good in themselves, are ill understood, and what is ill understood is rashly and audaciously asserted.* Tract. 18. in Joan.

Q. How are we to pray on the feast of an evangelist?

A. 1. That the gospel may be written in our hearts, and be the rule of our lives.

2. For all that read the Scriptures, that they may not through rashness or presumption pervert them to their own destruction.

In short the devotion recommended for the feast of an apostle, will be also suitable to that of an evangelist. *See page 17.*

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SECT. 8.—*Feasts of Martyrs in general.*

Q. WHAT saints are called martyrs?

A. They who have borne witness to the truths or maxims of the gospel at the expense of their own lives; having given the greatest mark that is possible of their love to Jesus, by dying for his glory. *John, xv. 13.*

Q. Has the number of the martyrs been great?

A. Unaccountably great, during three hundred years of persecution, which were almost continual and universal; besides many thousands who have suffered since under infidels and heretics.

Q. How did these saints prepare themselves for the crown of martyrdom?

A. By the exercise of humility, patience, and peaceable submission under such difficulties as daily fell to their lot.

Q. Are Christians now-a-days exposed to trials and persecutions?

A. St. Paul assures us, that all who design to live piously, and according to the maxims of Jesus Christ, will meet with persecutions. *2 Tim. iii. 12.*

Q. Why so?

A. For as much as christianity is nothing else but a participation and application of the mysteries of Jesus Christ, suffering in the world, and dying upon the cross.

Q. Where do we meet with these trials and persecutions?

A. 1. In contradictions, reproofs, censures, injuries, and provocations. 2. In the loss of goods, parents, children or friends. 3. In time of pain or sickness. 4. In public calamities. 5. From our spiritual enemies and unruly passions. And lastly, In time of peace, from the flatteries of friends and worldly enjoyments, which often blind the christian's eyes, and carry him to very sinful extravagances.

Q. What are we to learn of the holy martyrs?

A. 1. To live to God, for whom they died; and to fear him more than man.

2. To contemn the world, and all its comforts, and overcome the apprehension of death by a lively faith and a confident expectation of happiness in the world to come. *Psal. lxxii.*

3. Not to be ashamed of the cross of Christ, but on the contrary, to value it as the greatest blessing.

4. Courageously to assert the cause of truth, justice, and piety.

5. To suffer with meekness, patience, and submission, and to love our enemies. *Psal. lxi.*

6. To endeavour to save our souls, whatever it may cost us.

7. To trust in God, that as he strengthens the martyrs, he will also be our helper, either in delivering us from our troubles, or in giving us grace

to go through them, and therefore to leave it to him to do what he knows is best for us.

Q. What comfort have the servants of God to sweeten their afflictions?

A. The comfort of a good conscience, the prospect of that weight of glory which God has promised to such as persevere to the end, the certainty of all temporal evils being soon to end, and that a peaceable submission to such evils may be a means of escaping those which are eternal.

Q. What may we learn besides from those martyrs who suffered together?

A. To encourage one another to live, and labour, and suffer for Jesus Christ; and where the cause of God is concerned, to afford mutually good example, advice, and help.

Q. What is our duty upon these feasts?

A. Besides studying and begging grace to practise the aforesaid lessons, we are—1. To adore and praise the wisdom of God, who by the blood of martyrs, as by so much seed, has multiplied the number of the faithful.

2. To examine how we bear reproaches and contempts, how we submit to the daily difficulties of our state, or to the distempers with which God is pleased to visit us; to humble ourselves for our impatience under the common trials of life, and resolve to suffer somewhat this very day with more than ordinary meekness.

3. To pray for all that are suffering in any kind, for the sake of justice or truth, that God would give them the spirit of patience, meekness, and constancy. To pray for all those who, wanting courage, are ready to sink under the weight of their troubles, that God would be their support

and send them comfort. *Ps.* iii. iv. x. xxiv. xxx. xxxviii. lxx. lxxviii. lxxxix.

4. To pray we may never be so unhappy, as through obstinacy, blindness, prejudice, or envy, to cause any persecution to God's servants. *Ps.* xciii.

5. That we may be jealous of all accusations, and never help to spread reports which may do an injury to truth and innocence.

Q. What is proper to be read on the feasts of martyrs ?

A. *John*, xv., *Matt.* v., 1 *Pet.* ii., 2 *Cor.* xi., *Imit. Chr.* l. 2. ch. xii., *St. Fran. Sales, Introd.* part 3. c. iii. and viii.

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#### SECT. 9.—*Feasts of Bishops.*

Q. WHAT is to be observed on these feasts ?

A. Much the same as has been said (p. 17) of the feasts of apostles ; bishops being their successors in the government of Christ's flock.

Q. What must we ask of God for the pastors of his church ?

A. 1. A true zeal and piety answerable to their charge.

2. That by word and example they may be so many lights to the faithful.

3. That they may cheerfully bestow their study and care, their labour and life too, if need require it, upon their flock ; and may constantly make war against all vice and injustice.

4. That no human respects may over-rule them ; that flattery or fear, interest, favour, or faction, may never prevail with them, to prostitute their character to the promoting of evil, nor awe them into a treacherous silence.

Q. What other prayers are we to make for them ?

A. That no human consideration of favour, interest, party, or dependence, may make them betray the gospel by flattery or compliance; but that by word and example they may be as so many lights of the world, in dissipating the darkness of error and vice, and may conduct the faithful to a happy eternity.

Q. For whom besides are we to pray ?

A. For the people whom this saint enlightened with his doctrine and example; that they may be steadfast in the doctrine he preached; or, if they be fallen from the Church, that may return to her faith and communion.

Q. What are we to ask for ourselves ?

A. That God would bless us with good pastors and directors, and mercifully exclude all those from being pastors of his flock, who are not by him called to this function, and fitted for the just discharge of all its obligations.

2. Grace, that we be not wanting in our duty to them.

Q. What is the people's duty to their pastors ?

A. 1. To honour and respect them as the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers or stewards of the mysteries of God. *1 Cor. iv. 1. 1 Thes. v. 12, 13.*

2. To pray daily for them, and especially when they are exposed to any danger or persecution, or are engaged in any difficult affairs for God's honour or the Church's good. *Col. iv. 3.*

3. To provide for their subsistence. *Matt. x. 10. 1 Cor. ix. 7. 1 Tim. v. 17.*

4. To pay obedience and submission to their

orders and directions. *Matt.* xxiii. 2, 3. *Luke*, x. 16. *Heb.* xiii. 17.

5. Not rashly to censure their doctrine or proceedings, nor to publish their faults; but where they seem to be of dangerous consequence, to reveal them to their superiors. *Exod.* xxii. 28. *Num.* xii. 10, xiv. and xvi.

Q. How does God punish his people when they are disobedient or disrespectful to his ministers?

A. Sometimes in a visible manner; and frequently by removing good pastors, and suffering others to come in their place, that are not governed by the spirit of truth and piety. *Osee.* xiii. 11. *Isa.* lvi. 10. *Zach.* xi. 16.

Q. What are the people to do, when they are so unhappy as to have bad pastors?

A. This being an effect of God's anger, they must endeavour by penance, and by humble and earnest prayer, to appease his indignation.

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SECT. 10.—*Feasts of Confessors.*

Q. WHAT saints are called confessors?

A. In the primitive Church, martyr and confessor were names of the same import, and were given to those that suffered banishment, loss of goods, torments, or imprisonment, for the faith of Christ.

Q. Is this the meaning of the word confessor at present?

A. No. For these many ages all pious and godly men in general have been called confessors, who, by holiness of life, without suffering death, have confessed the faith of Christ, and borne testimony to the maxims of the gospel.

Q. What are we to do on these feasts?

A. We are seriously to consider those virtues which made them Saints, and to beg of God, by their intercession, grace to imitate them.

Q. What virtues may we reasonably suppose to have been in all confessors ?

A. A lively faith, a great love of God, humility, prayer, patience, mortification, retirement, a contempt of the world, charity to the poor, and such other virtues as were agreeable to their state of life.

Q. What may we learn from such saints as worked at a trade ?

A. To work for heaven as well as for bread, by daily offering our labours to God, and joining the exercise of religious duties to those of our profession, as prayer, fasting, watching, and alms.

2. To be faithful in what we have undertaken, not only in regard of our neighbour, by avoiding whatever may be to his prejudice, but likewise to God, and our own soul, by a watchful care against all the suggestions of a covetous, worldly, or solicitous temper.

3. To espouse on all occasions the cause of virtue, piety, justice, and truth.

Q. What may we learn from saints who have been falsely accused and slandered ?

A. When with peace and moderation we have justified ourselves, if our plea be not received, we are then to imitate the silence and humility of Jesus Christ, and submit to the scourge God is pleased to lay upon us ; which is just, from his hand, though not from them who appear against us.

Q. What admonition may be taken by married persons, from Saints that lived in the conjugal state ?

A. That being God's vicegerents in the government of their family, they must give an account of

all the disorders, whether in children or servants, occasioned by their ill example or neglect.

2. That no pretext of solicitude or worldly care must hinder them from those duties which are necessary for their eternal good.

Q. For whom are we particularly to pray on these feasts?

A. For those that are members of the same religious order, or are engaged in the same functions or charges, as the Saints were, whose feast it is.

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SECT. 11.—*Feasts of Virgins.*

Q. WHAT is our duty on these days?

A. 1. To encourage ourselves in the service of God, and in a contempt of the vanities, flatteries, and pleasures of the world. 2. To beg a share of those graces which raised them to so eminent a degree of sanctity.

Q. What virtues may we suppose to have been the ornaments of these poor souls?

A. The same as we have considered in the confessors.

Q. For whom in particular are we to pray on these feasts?

A. 1. For virgins who by a solemn obligation have dedicated their bodies and souls to God, that they may be constant in their engagements.

2. For young virgins, who are yet disengaged, that in all proposals of changing their condition they may conclude on nothing, without first consulting heaven in fasting and prayer; and that they may have courage against the threats and flatteries of the world, and rather choose the humility

and contempt of the gospel, than the offers of great honour and riches, to the hazard of their souls.

3. For those under the temptation of their youthful age, any ways exposed through necessity, heedlessness, or levity; that vanity, self-love, curiosity, prodigality, levity, and the desire of being esteemed, may never over-rule their hearts nor make them to forget that they are soon to be reduced to dust and clay, and that they are made for a better world.

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SECT. 12.—*Feasts of Widows.*

Q. HOW are we to keep their feasts?

A. 1. We must thank God for calling persons of all states to a holy life.

2. Encourage ourselves after their example to an exact compliance with the duties of our state.

Q. What instructions do these Saints give to widows?

A. To mortify their senses, to contemn all unnecessary and vain ornaments, to govern their tongue, give a true Christian education to their children, and to employ their money and time in the relief of widows, orphans, and the sick.

Q. What ought married women to consider on these feasts?

A. Their obligations with respect to their husbands their children, and their servants.

Q. Why so?

A. Because we find no widows in the calendar of Saints, but what were first sanctified in the state of marriage by a faithful discharge of the three aforesaid duties.

**Q.** What then are the duties of married women to their husbands?

**A.** They owe then respect and honour, obedience and submission whatever temper they may be of. *Col.* iii. 18 *Eph.* v. 22, &c. *Tit.* ii. 4, 5.

2. They are to endeavour (by their example, patience, regularity of life, and by all means possible) to invite them to the ways of truth and virtue. *1 Pet.* iii. 1.

3. They are not to dispose of the goods, nor to give any considerable alms out of the common purse, without their husbands' permission.

**Q.** How are married women to go in clothes?

**A.** According to their condition and the rules of modesty, without painting, patching, or whatever else betokens a vain and wordly spirit. *1 Tim.* ii. 9, 10. *1 Pet.* iii. 3.

**Q.** What are the duties of mothers to their children?

**A.** They are obliged to give them, 1. Instruction, 2. Good example, and 3. Seasonable correction. *See the feast of St. Anne, July 26.*

**Q.** What is the duty of a mistress of a family in regard to her servants?

**A.** She is to take care, 1. That they be obedient to God and his Church.

2. That they be instructed in the principles of religion, and be not absent from prayers. *1 Tim.* v. 8.

3. That they be not addicted to any vice.

4. That there be no familiarities or intrigues between those of a different sex.

5. That she be not harsh nor peevish to them, nor yet be too familiar with them; and by no means must she suffer them to be familiar with her children.

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6. That their wages be exactly paid them.—*Lev.* xix. 23. *Deut.* xxiv. 15. *Tob.* iv. 15. *Jam.* v. 4.

SECT. 13.—*Feasts of Holy Penitents.*

Q. WHAT is to be done on these feasts?

A. We are, 1. To adore and praise the mercy of God, who desires not the death of sinners.

2. To thank him for sparing them and ourselves, while by sin we were his enemies.

3. Not to be discouraged, whatever sins we have committed, (for no crime is more provoking than a distrust of his goodness,) but to place an humble confidence in the mercy of God, who offers his grace to all, and upon a sincere conversion never fails to change vessels of weakness into vessels of honour.

4. To recruit our confidence, in consideration of the mercy of God shown them, and to beg the like for ourselves.

5. To humble ourselves for our niceness and self-love, and from their example to invigorate our resolutions of doing worthy fruits of penance, of amending our lives, and avoiding all occasions of sin for the future, as also for repairing, by our good example, the scandals we may have given.

6. To seek out our predominant sin, that immediately we may set ourselves to the rooting of it out.

7. To resolve upon withdrawing from whatever is dangerous, unprofitable, or unbecoming our state, and learn from the example of the Saint, what methods should be taken to overcome habitual sin.

Q. What method have they recommended?

A. Some proper retirement, where the sinner, sheltered from all occasions of sin, by application to prayer, meditation, and spiritual reading, and the frequent visits of a charitable director, may have the opportunity of remedies proportioned to the diseases of the soul: and, with God's grace, work a true change in his heart, without which there cannot possibly be a true repentance.

Q. Whom are we to pray for on these feasts?

A. 1. For ourselves, and all engaged in sin, that God would give us the spirit of penance.

2. For all we ever have scandalized.

3. For all those dejected souls whose immoderate fears keep them at a distance from God.

4. For all seduced by vice and error, that they may not be obstinate against the light; and that neither the thoughts of what the world may say, nor the difficulty of changing, may hinder them from entering into the ways of salvation.

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SECT. 14.—*Dedication of a Church.*

Q. WHAT mean you by the dedication of a church?

A. A ceremony whereby a material edifice is consecrated by a bishop to the service of God alone, and to be the house of prayer.

Q. Why is this ceremony performed with so much solemnity?

A. Because it is a figure of that dedication, which is to be made in heaven, of the living Church of the Saints, which Christ shall one day *present to his Father, pure and spotless*, to be for ever employed in praising his majesty and his mercy. *Eph. v. 27.*

Q. Why is there an annual commemoration of this ceremony?

A. 1. To thank God for vouchsafing to appoint a place where he is pleased to hear our prayers, and to feed us with his word, and the adorable body of Jesus Christ.

2. To increase our reverence to this holy place, and to the sacred mysteries that are therein daily celebrated.

3. To put us in mind that we are the temples of God, and that we are one day to make a part of the spiritual edifice in the heavenly Jerusalem.

Q. Is this ceremony of the dedication of churches of ancient date?

A. God himself commanded the dedication of Solomon's temple. And it has been in use amongst Christians ever since they had the liberty of building temples for God's service. *Euseb. l. 10. c. iii.*

Q. What is required of Christians to the due celebration of this feast?

A. 1. That they renew the respect, due to the house of God.

2. That they give proof of this respect, by contributing, to the best of their power, to the adorning of it.

3. That they choose the church before all other places, for the making of their prayer.

4. That they consider themselves as the living temples of God; that they renew the promises made in baptism, when they were first consecrated; and resolve never more to defile their souls by any sin.

5. That they beg of God to do with them as he pleases, upon earth, even to cut and hew and wear them with afflictions, provided they may have a place in the Church of heaven.

SECT. 15.—*Of Fasting and Abstinence in general.*

Q. WHAT do you mean by fasting?

A. To fast, is to abstain from certain meats, and to make but one meal in 24 hours.

Q. From what kind of meats are we to abstain on fasting days?

A. From the flesh of animals, that live either on the earth or in the air.

Q. To what purpose do you abstain from these meats?

A. To mortify the body, (these being more nourishing than other kinds of food,) and by that means do penance for our sins.

Q. Is not this contrary to St. Paul, who bids us *eat whatsoever is sold in the shambles*. 1 Cor. x. 25.

A. St. Paul in that place speaks not to Christians who abstained for mortification sake, but to some who scrupled to eat any such meat, for fear it might have been offered to some idol, and for that reason be unclean.

Q. Have you any warrant from the holy scriptures for this Catholic practice of abstaining from certain meats?

A. In the holy scriptures we find abstinence commanded, commended, and rewarded.

Q. Where is abstinence commanded?

A. 1. God forbade Adam to eat of the tree of knowledge. 2. Noe and his children to eat flesh with the blood in it. 3. The Israelites to eat, or so much as to keep leavened bread, during the seven days of their Pasch.. 4. He commanded such as consecrated themselves to his service to abstain from wine and all inebriating liquors. 5. The first

christians abstained from blood-meats, pursuant to the orders of the apostles. *Gen.* ii. 17. ix. 4. *Exod.* xiii. 7. *Lev.* vi. 3. *Jud.* xiii. 14. *Acts,* xv. 20.

Q. Where is abstinence commended ?

A. 1. *He shall be great* (says the angel, speaking of St. John Baptist) *in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink.* 2. *His food was locusts and wild honey.* 3. *Tobias, when others ate of the meats of Gentiles, took care of his soul, and was never polluted with their meats.* *Luke,* i. 15. *Matt.* iii. 4. *Tob.* i. 12.

Q. Where is abstinence rewarded ?

A. *I ate* (says Daniel) *no pleasant bread ; neither came flesh nor wine in my month, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.* *And I* (Daniel) *alone saw the vision, for the men that were with me saw it not.* *Dan.* x. 3, 7.

Q. At what hour may one dine on fasting days ?

A. Not much before noon.

Q. Is a collation at night allowed ?

A. The church allows it, provided it exceed not the fourth part of a moderate meal : but there ought to be nothing in it contrary to the approved custom of the country, or that is too nourishing or costly.

Q. Who are obliged to fast ?

A. All that are past their one-and-twentieth year, unless they be lawfully dispensed with.

Q. What persons may be lawfully dispensed with ?

A. Nurses that give suck ; women with child ; such as are sick or worn with age, or employed in labours inconsistent with fasting ; and, in short, all that cannot fast without ruining their healths.

Q. Can a physician dispense his patient from fasting ?

A. The physician can tell us when fasting may be prejudicial to our health, but he can give us no dispensation.

Q. Why not?

A. Because none can be exempted from the laws of any state, but by those who have a share in the government of that state.

Q. What then must be done, when the physicians tell us that fasting is inconsistent with our health?

A. We must apply ourselves for a dispensation to the pastors of the church, since they alone have power to dispense with her laws.

Q. How may we make our fasting acceptable to God?

A. By accompanying it with prayer, alms-deeds, and other good works; and by avoiding sin with our greatest care. *Isai. lviii. 2, &c. Tob. xii. 8. &c.*

Q. Are such as cannot fast, under no other obligation?

A. Yes: they ought, in all they can, to enter into the spirit of the church, by prayer, alms, mortifying their passions, and by abridging themselves of some lawful satisfactions.

Q. What sin is it, wilfully and without a lawful dispensation, to break the fasts of the church?

A. A mortal sin.

Q. But if I have once broken the fast, may I not for that day eat as often as I please, without being guilty of any more sin?

A. No; for as many times as one eats contrary to the church's law, there are so many sins committed.

Q. Which are the fasting days appointed by the church?

A. 1. All the days in Lent, except Sundays. 2. The Ember-days, being the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday of the first week in Lent, of Whitsun-week, of the third week in September, and of the third week in Advent. 3. The Wednesdays and Fridays of the four weeks in Advent. 4. The Vigils or Eves of Whitsuntide, of the Feasts of SS. Peter and Paul, of the Assumption of the B. V. M., of All Saints, and of Christmas-day. When any fasting day falls upon a Sunday, it is to be observed on the Saturday before.

Q. Which are the days of abstinence ?

A. 1. The Emberdays. 2. Every Friday throughout the year. 3. All vigils which are observed as fastdays. 4. Ash-Wednesday and the three following days. 5. The Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays of the first five weeks in Lent. 6. Palm Sunday and the six days of Holy-week. 7. The Wednesdays and Fridays of Advent.

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SECT. 16.—*Ember-Days in general.*

Q. WHAT are Ember-days ?

A. They are fasts, which the church commands to be kept in some one week of each of the four seasons of the year, on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

Q. Whence comes the name ?

A. From the primitive custom of using hair-cloth and ashes in times of public penance, or because on these days the Christians fasting till night, did then content themselves with a cake baked under the embers or ashes, which was called *Panis subcineritius*, or *Ember-bread*.

Q. When were these fasts instituted ?

A. They were observed in the Church of Rome before the fifth age ; and St. Leo, who was then Pope, affirms them to be of apostolical tradition.

Q. For what reasons are they observed ?

A. For three reasons.

Q. What is the first reason ?

A. To consecrate and sanctify every season of the year, by a penance of some days. The Church thereby giving us to understand, that the spirit of penance is always to be preserved, and that the exercise of it is from time to time to be resumed.

Q. What is the second reason ?

A. To make by abstinence a kind of sacrifice of the fruits which the earth by God's blessing has produced ; to thank him for them ; to beg he would please to preserve what he has already bestowed, and give a blessing to what we next expect.

Q. What is the third reason ?

A. To beg good pastors of God for his Church : her ministers being generally ordained at these times.

Q. Why is the whole Church engaged in prayer and fasting for the obtaining of good pastors ?

A. Because the salvation of the people depends in a great degree upon their pastors. God sends them good pastors out of his pure mercy ; and he suffers bad in punishment of the people's sins — *Isa. lvi. 10. Zach. xi. 16.*

Q. For what intentions then are we to pray and fast on Ember-days ?

A. For the intentions of the church, as they have just now been explained.

Q. What prayers are proper on these occasions ?

A. The penitential psalms, the long litanies,

and such as the manuals afford us, for the pastors of the church and fruits of the earth.

Q. When do the Ember-days occur ?

A. They are always the first Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after the first Sunday in Lent, after Whitsunday, after September 14th, and after December 15th.

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SECT. 17.—*Of Vigils.*

Q. What is meant by a Vigil ?

A. The day next before certain holy-days, *viz.* before the feast of the Nativity, Epiphany, and Ascension of our Saviour ; Pentecost ; the Purification, Assumption, and Nativity of the blessed Virgin ; the feasts of St. John the Baptist, the Apostles, St. Laurence, and of All-Saints.

Q. Why are the days before those feasts called Vigils ?

A. From the Latin *Vigilia*, watching ; it being customary in the primitive times for the people to meet at church, and spend a considerable part of the night that preceded certain holy-days in watching and prayer.

Q. What is the Church's design in appointing them still to be observed, though the custom of watching be generally laid aside ?

A. That by penance, humiliation, and prayer, we may prepare our souls for a due observation of the ensuing solemnity. But fasting is commanded only on the vigils of such festivals as are holy-days of obligation. *See Page 39.*

Q. Why are fasting, humiliation, and prayer prescribed on these days of preparation ?

42 FIRST AND LAST DAY OF THE MONTH.

A. 1. To cure our pride and self-love, the greatest obstacles to the grace of God.

2. To punish past faults.

3. To appease God's anger.

4. To dispose ourselves for receiving the effects of his mercy.

SECT. 18.—*First and Last Day of the Month.*

Q. HOW ought we to begin the month ?

A. In such a manner that, if it should be our last, it may be the beginning of a happy eternity ; and in order to this we should make an offering of ourselves to God, and beg his assistance for the faithful discharge of our duty in it, and the amendment of all the failings of the last.

Q. How ought we to end it ?

A. By thanking God for all his blessings, and asking pardon, with a contrite and humble heart, for all the sins and failings of the month.



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## A PRACTICAL CATECHISM.

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### PART II.

#### OF THE FEASTS OF JESUS CHRIST, AND OTHER OBSERVANCES THAT ATTEND THEM.

##### SECT. 1.—*Advent.*

Q. WHEN does Advent begin ?

A. It begins on the Sunday which is nearest to the feast of St. Andrew, whether before or after.

Q. Why are the four weeks before Christmas called Advent ?

A. Because the Church during this time would have us to prepare for the worthy celebrating of our Saviour's Nativity.

Q. How is this preparation to be made ?

A. By frequently acknowledging how much we are in want of Jesus Christ, upon account of our weakness and transgressions. *Matt. i. 21.*

Q. What effect ought the due consideration of our sins and weaknesses to have upon us ?

A. It should move us, as it does the Church, to sigh and long for Jesus Christ, as the patriarchs and prophets did ; and earnestly to beg of him, that he would come and cure us. *Gen. xlv. 18. Exod. iv. 3, 13. Isa. xxxiii. 2.*

Q. Ought we not likewise frequently to direct our devotion to Jesus Christ in the womb of his blessed Mother?

A. Yes: it should be our daily practice, during this holy time, to join with the blessed Virgin in acts of adoration, thanksgiving, humility, love, confidence, &c. to Jesus, in that his retirement.

Q. Are more than ordinary diversions suitable to this time?

A. They are directly contrary to the spirit of the Church.

Q. What is the spirit of the Church?

A. As she desires that at the holy feast of Christmas, Christ Jesus may be formed anew in all her children, by an increase of faith, charity, and other virtues, she would have them in a more than usual retirement to apply themselves to prayer, penance, and the consideration of divine truths, for the obtaining this grace.

Q. Why does the Church begin her instructions at this time, by representing to us the second coming of our Saviour to judge the world?

A. That the consideration of his justice upon unrepenting sinners may move us to a speedy and true conversion of our hearts to him, and to lay hold of his mercy while time is offered to us.

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SECT. 2.—*Ember-days in Advent.*

Q. WHAT are we to ask of God for the ministers of his Church that are ordained on Ember-Saturday?

A. 1. That he would fill them with the spirit of St. John Baptist, which the Church so frequently

proposes to the faithful during Advent. 2. That he would prepare them, as he did that Saint, with innocence, penance, and retirement, for entering upon their functions. 3. That he would give them that humility, zeal, and courage, which hereafter may be needful for the discharge of their duties.

Q. What is to be done as to the fruits of the earth?

A. We are to return our humble thanks for what has been gathered the last autumn. 2. To beg his blessing upon the seed that is newly sown.

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SECT. 3.—*Christmas-Day.—December 25.*

Tit. ii. 11, 15. Tit. iii. 4, 7. Heb. i. 1, 12. Luke, ii. 1, 14. Luke, ii. 15, 20. John, i. 1, 14.

Q. WHAT is the spirit of the Church on this solemnity?

A. She would have us, 1. To adore our new born Saviour. 2. To pay him our best acknowledgments. 3. To learn the lessons he has given us in the circumstances of his Nativity.

Q. What were the chief circumstances which accompanied his Nativity?

A. 1. He was born upon the blessed Virgin's journey. 2. At midnight. 3. In Bethlehem. 4. In a stable. 5. In the severest season of the year. 6. He gave notice by his Angels of his birth to a company of poor shepherds, who came and adored him.

Q. What does our Saviour teach us by these circumstances?

A. 1. To be humble and obedient.

2. To look upon ourselves as travellers upon earth.

3. To love poverty and retirement.

4. To contemn honours, pleasures, and riches, and not to busy ourselves in the vain pursuit of worldly conveniences.

5. To value sufferings, and to overcome our natural inclinations to a life of ease and sensuality.

6. The whole gospel in abstract.

Q. What is the sum or abstract of the gospel which our Saviour teaches us in his Nativity?

A. It is all reduced to these three points: 1. That we are to love God. 2. To hate sin. To fight against concupiscence.

Q. Why are three masses said on this solemnity?

A. To honour the three Nativities of the Son of God.

What mean you by that?

A. I mean, 1. That *Jesus Christ* is born of his Father from all eternity. 2. Was born in time of the blessed *Virgin Mary*. 3. Is every day born spiritually in the souls of the just, by grace.

Which of these Nativities are we to honour at the first mass?

A. His temporal Nativity of the blessed *Virgin*.

Q. How are we to assist at it?

A. In the spirit of the blessed *Virgin* and *St. Joseph*, with faith, joy, and admiration; adoring the Word made flesh, as the light that shines in darkness, and that comes to enlighten the whole world; imagining the altar to be the manger.

Q. What Nativity are we to celebrate at the second mass?

A. Christ's spiritual Nativity in the souls of the just.

Q. How are we to assist at it?

A. We are, 1. To join with the angels in their canticles of joy. 2. With the shepherds in adoring

our Infant God in the manger, as the Sun of Justice, that rises to direct our steps in the way of salvation. 3. To offer up our hearts, as a homage due to him.

Q. What canticle did the angels sing?

A. That which the church so frequently repeats in the holy mass, and which on this occasion should be said with a more than ordinary joy and tenderness.

Q. How has the scripture expressed it?

A. In these words, *Gloria in excelsis, Deo, et in terrapax hominibus bonæ voluntatis*; that is, *Glory be to God on high, and peace on earth to men of good will.*

Q. Who made the rest of that canticle, as it is now said?

A. The holy Fathers of the Church.

Q. What Nativity are we to celebrate at the third mass?

A. His divine Nativity, by which he is born of his heavenly Father, God of God, light of light, from all eternity.

Q. How are we to assist at it?

A. We are to join with the holy choirs of angels, who adore the Son of God in heaven, who thank him for his benefits bestowed on mankind, and who, as St. Paul assures us, paid their homage to him at the moment he was born into the world. *Heb. i. 6.*

Q. Are all the faithful obliged to assist at these three masses?

A. No; but it would be very commendable so to do.

Q. What work of piety is most suitable to this Solemnity?

A. There is nothing more conformable to the mystery of the day, than to clothe some poor child or indigent person, or at least to give an alms, in honour of him who clothed himself with our miseries, and became poor to enrich us.

Q. What are the abuses Christians ought chiefly to be cautioned against at this season ?

A. Intemperance, and a variety of other disorders which are the natural consequence of it, ushered in under the pretence of joining with the Angels in the joyful celebration of our Saviour's Nativity.

Q. But may not a more than ordinary relaxation be allowed ?

A. Yes, provided nothing be done that clashes with moderation, decency, innocence, and order.

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SECT. 4.—*The Circumcision.*—Jan. 1.

Tit. ii. 11, 15. Luke, ii. 21.

Q. WHAT was Circumcision ?

A. A sacrament of the old law, which was given to male children the eighth day from their birth.

Q. Why was it instituted ?

A. To distinguish (as baptism now does) the people of God from the rest of mankind.

Q. When was it instituted ?

A. When God made a covenant with Abraham. *Gen. xvii. 10.*

Q. What was intended by it ?

A. 1. To signify that man's nature was corrupted by original sin. 2. To be a remedy for that sin.

Q. Was Christ then subject to the law of circumcision ?

A. Not at all ; for he was sanctity itself.

Q. Why would he receive it ?

A. Because, having taken upon himself the figure of sinful man, he was pleased to undergo the punishment due to our sins, and to expiate them with his blood. *Phil.* ii. 7.

Q. What name was given him at his circumcision ?

A. The name of Jesus.

Q. For what reason ?

A. The Angel had told the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph that he was to be called Jesus, because he came to save us from our sins. *Matt.* i. 21, *Luke*, i. 31.

Q. For what other reason ?

A. Because he that humbleth himself shall be exalted ; and therefore Christ having in a manner annihilated himself by becoming man, his Father bestowed upon him this glorious name, at which the apostle says, *every knee shall bow.* *Phil.* ii. 10.

Q. What does this holy name of Jesus require at our hands ?

A. It calls for our respect, love, and confidence.

Q. What is to be done according to the spirit of the Church on this solemnity ?

A. 1. We are to pray for grace to comply with all the laws of God.

2. To thank God for glorifying his Son with the name of Jesus.

3. To beg pardon for the little or no good use we have made of that saving name, and for the many times we have profaned it.

4. To say and meditate upon the Litanies of Jesus, for an increase of respect, love, and confidence towards him.

5. To resolve on the spiritual circumcision of our hearts.

Q. What mean you by a spiritual circumcision?

A. I mean, we are to follow the advice of St. Paul, in renouncing all impiety and worldly desire; to cut off all habitual sins with their occasions, and to live in a strict conformity to the rules of temperance, justice, and piety, in expectation of the happiness we hope for in the world to come. *Deut. x. 16., xxx. 6. Jer. iv. 4. Rom. iii. 29. Col. ii. 1 1. Tit. ii. 12.*

*New Year's Day.*

Q. This being likewise the first day of the new year, what are to do upon that account?

A. We are to consecrate ourselves anew to God, our beginning and last end, by an act of love, and an obligation of all that we have and are.

Q. Ought not this to have been done so soon as we attained the use of reason?

A. Yes. But because most persons are so unfortunate, as to have been at that time wanting to this duty, it highly concerns us now at least to make amends for that neglect.

Q. What are we to do besides?

A. We are 2dly, to reflect on our past years in the bitterness of our soul, and with sentiments of gratitude and repentance to make some holy resolutions of spending in a better manner the new year. *Isa. xxxviii. 15, 16.*

Q. By what means may we render our resolutions more effectual than hitherto they have been?

A. By having no dependence on ourselves, but placing our whole confidence in the mercy of God, and the merits and promises of Jesus Chris;

humbly and fervently begging his divine grace, by saying the *Veni Creator*, or some such prayer; not forgetting daily to renew our good purposes in our Morning Prayer.

SECT. 5.—*The Epiphany.*—Jan. 6.

Isa. lx. 1, 7. Matt. ii. 1, 12.

Q. WHAT is the meaning of the word *Epiphany*?

A. It is a Greek word, which signifies the same as *appearance* or *manifestation*.

Q. Why is this feast so called?

A. Because on this day we celebrate three great mysteries, whereby Jesus Christ has manifested his glory to the world.

Q. What three mysteries are they?

A. 1. The adoration paid to our Saviour by the three wise men. 2. His baptism. 3. The miracles he wrought at the marriage of Cana, by changing water into wine.—*Matt. ii. 1, iii. 13. John, ii. 1.*

Q. Who were the three wise men?

A. Persons of note among the Gentiles.

Q. Why did Christ call them?

A. To show the time was come of bringing the Gentile world to the knowledge of the true God.

Q. How did he call them?

A. By the appearance of a new star, and the help of an extraordinary revelation, which gave them to understand that the King of Heaven and Earth was born.

Q. Whither came they to adore him?

A. To Bethlehem, where he was born.

Q. How did they know he was born at Bethlehem?

A. They went first to Jerusalem, which was the chief city of Judæa, and the principal seat of the Jewish Church; and there they were informed by the priests, that, according to the prophets, the Messiah was to be born at Bethlehem.

Q. Since God could have guided them directly to Bethlehem, why did he first lead them by a star to Jerusalem?

A. Because he will have his servants to know the truth and the ways of salvation, and to go to Jesus Christ by the ministry of his Church. *Isa.* ii. 3. *Mich.* iv. 2. *Acts,* ix. 7; x. 5, 6:

Q. Did the priests who informed the wise men, go along with them to Bethlehem?

A. They showed them the way to find Christ, without making any advantage of their knowledge for their own souls.

Q. What does this teach us?

A. 1. That when the ministers of God do not practice what they preach, we are, nevertheless, in imitation of these wise men, to walk by the lights they give us, without heeding their example.

2. That a great many are backward in going to Christ, and in embracing his truths, biassed by the consideration of interest, reputation, dependence, and a variety of other private and human motives.

Q. What did the wise men do upon finding Jesus Christ?

A. They adored him, and made him an offering of gold, as to their King; of incense, as to their God; of myrrh, as to a mortal.

Q. What virtues do these offerings represent to us as an acceptable sacrifice to our blessed Saviour?

A. Charity, prayer, and mortification.

Q. In what spirit are we to celebrate this feast?

A. 1. We are to thank God for calling us, out of his pure mercy, to the faith of *Christ*.

2. To adore Jesus Christ with these wise men, and to offer him a sacrifice of our goods, by alms; of our hearts, by prayer; and of our evil inclinations, by mortification.

3. To beg pardon for the many times we have neglected God's inspirations, and followed the suggestions of interest, passion, and self-love.

4. To resolve, in spite of all worldly arguments to the contrary, to follow courageously and readily the lights of faith, the directions of our spiritual guides, and the inspirations of almighty God; begging grace so to do.

5. To pray for all that as yet sit in the darkness of vice, error, or infidelity,

Q. Are profane diversions suitable to the day?

A. They are the inventions of the devil, for the shutting out of our souls those graces which a due observance of the festival would procure us.

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SECT. 6.—*First Sunday after Epiphany.*

THE HIDDEN LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST.

Rom. Xii. 1, 5. Luke, ii. 42, 52.

Q. CAN you give me a short account of the wonders that happened in the beginning of our Saviour's life?

A. The angels praised God at his birth; the shepherds adored him in the manger; the wise men brought presents to him: and when he was presented in temple, he was acknowledged and glorified by holy Simeon, and by Anna the prophetess.

Q. What happened afterwards?

A. Then began his persecutions, and his parents

were forced to carry him into Egypt, to avoid the malice of Herod, who designed to murder him.

Q. Why was this Divine Infant to be persecuted from his cradle?

A. Because his portion on earth was no other than the cross.

Q. How came they to the knowledge of Herod's wicked design?

A. An angel in a dream discovered it to St. Joseph, and ordered him to fly into Egypt out of Herod's territories. *Matt. ii. 13.*

Q. Why did the Infant Jesus draw these afflictions upon his parents?

A. Because he gives a share of his cross to those he loves.

Q. When did he return from Egypt?

A. After Herod was dead, St. Joseph had instructions from the angel to bring him into the land of Israel. *Matt. ii. 19.*

Q. Did he remain in Judæa?

A. He did not, for fear of Archelaus, the son of Herod, who inherited his father's evil intentions.

Q. So that the Divine Child had always enemies?

A. Yes, great enemies; no less than kings.

Where did he live after his return?

A. At Nazareth, a little village of Gallilee, with his parents.

Q. And after these first days did nothing happen that might convince the Jews of their Messiah being come?

A. Nothing at all, till he was twelve years old.

Q. And what happened then?

A. Jesus being gone to Jerusalem in company of the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, he secretly

withdrew from them, and after three days was found by them in the temple. *Luke*, ii. 42, &c.

Q. What did he there?

A. He was sitting amidst the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions, and they were astonished at his wisdom and answers.

Q. What do you remark here?

A. That Jesus has given on this occasion a lesson to children, how they ought to put their difficulties, and to answer their instructors.

Q. Why then was Jesus seated in the midst of the doctors?

A. Because he was in effect their master, though he did not as yet exert all the authority of his function.

Q. Why did he make his wisdom apparent at the age of twelve?

A. To show that his hidden life from that day forward was his own choice.

Q. Till what age did he continue in his retirement?

A. Till about the age of 30, when he was pleased to be baptized by his precursor, St. John. *Luke*, iii. 23.

Q. What account have we of him as to all that time?

A. Only this: 1. That as he increased in age, he gave more remarkable instances of his wisdom. 2. That he was obedient to his mother, and St. Joseph, his supposed father. 3. That he worked under St. Joseph, and passed in the opinion of his neighbours for a tradesman. *Luke*, ii. 51, 52. *John*, vi. 42.

Q. At what trade did he work?

A. At the carpenter's, as we are informed by tradition.

Q. Was this a calling becoming God incarnate ?

A. Yes, because it was for man's instruction

Q. What instruction has he given us by this his hidden life ?

A. 1. That we should not show ourselves to the world, till God orders us so to do. 2. That we are to love a life of secrecy, labour, and poverty.

Q. And what further instructions has he given to children ?

A. That their virtue and perfection chiefly consists in obedience to parents and superiors. 2. That they ought to be at church and school, hearing their teachers, putting their doubts and difficulties to them, and answering to their questions.

Q. And when may this be practised ?

A. At catechism, where they are to hear and answer.

Q. May they also ask questions ?

A. Yes, in order to learn what they do not know.

Q. And what advantage will they reap thereby ?

A. After the example of little Jesus, they will increase in wisdom, as they grow in age.

Q. Was not Jesus's wisdom perfect from his infancy ?

A. Most certainly it was ; but he gave daily more and more evidence of it, to teach children how they ought constantly to advance.

Q. How did the blessed Virgin live ?

A. A life no less retired than Jesus Christ.

Q. How did she employ her thoughts ?

A. In meditating upon what Jesus did, and upon all that was said of him.

Q. In what then consisted the sanctity of Jesus's family ?

A. In frequenting the temple at times appointed by the law; in obeying God without reserve; in doing their work, and in retirement.

Q. And what does this teach us?

A. That true sanctity does not consist in great and glorious actions, but in sanctifying ourselves in our profession, with humility, and a perfect disengagement from this world.

Q. But why have the Evangelists given us so short an account of Jesus and his holy family?

A. They have said enough, for our instruction; and have said no more, to teach us not to be too curious.

Q. What use must we make of all they have written or passed by in silence?

A. We are to make our profit of what we know by their means; and humble ourselves as to what is not written, or not understood.

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 SECT. 7.—*Second Sunday after Epiphany.*

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS CHRIST,  
 AND HIS CHANGING WATER INTO WINE.

Rom. xii. 6. 16. John, ii. 1, 11.

Q. YOU told me the Church celebrated on the Epiphany two other mysteries besides that of the adoration of the Wise Men, wherein Christ manifested his glory: which are they?

A. One of them is our Saviour's baptism.

Q. When and by whom was he baptized?

A. About the age of 30, by St. John the Baptist. *Matt. iii. 13.*

Q. What was signified by that baptism?

A. Penance and remission of sins.

Q. Had Christ then any need of it?

A. No, for he was sanctity itself. He was pleased yet to receive it, that he might bear the likeness of sin, which he came to expiate; and likewise to consecrate the water for the use of his more holy and effectual baptism.

Q. What happened most remarkable at our Saviour's baptism?

A. 1. The Holy Ghost descended upon Jesus Christ in the form of a dove, as a testimony of his meekness. *Matt. iii. 16.*

2. A voice was heard from heaven, saying: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Matt. iii. 17.*

Q. What did these wonders signify?

A. The union and manifestation of the three Divine Persons in baptism.

Q. In what manner?

A. The Father manifested himself in the voice; the Son in his own person; the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove.

Q. What is the other mystery that is commemorated on the Epiphany?

A. The changing of water into wine at the marriage of Cana, which is likewise read in the gospel on this Sunday. *John, ii. &c.*

Q. What was signified by this change?

A. The approaching change of the law of Moses into that of Christ.

Q. What is meant by the wine?

A. The spiritual joy and holy fervour with which the children of God are animated, through the grace of Jesus Christ.

Q. How was Christ manifested by this miracle?

A. His disciples, upon seeing this first miracle,

believed in him, as St. John assures us. *John*, ii. 11.

Q. How are we to honour these mysteries ?

A. By reflecting on our baptism, and renewing the promises we then made.

Q. How is this to be done ?

A. By protesting that we will with our whole hearts believe in Jesus Christ; and by renouncing all the pomps and works of the devil.

Q. What is signified by the works and pomps of the devil ?

A. All vanities, and all the corruptions and false maxims of the world.

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SECT. 8.—*Candlemas-Day*.—*Feb. 2.*

Mal. iii. 1, 4. Luke, ii. 2, 32.

Q. WHAT feast is kept on the second of February ?

A. The feast of Christ's Presentation in the Temple, and of the blessed Virgin's Purification.

Q. Who was it that presented or offered Jesus Christ in the temple ?

A. The blessed Virgin his Mother.

Q. When was this Presentation made ?

A. On the 40th day from his Nativity, in compliance with the law of Moses, which ordered that the eldest son of each family of the Israelites should be carried on the 40th day to the temple, and there be consecrated to God; and then a ransom paid for him to the priest. *Lev. xii. 6. Numb. xviii. 15.*

Q. Why did God make this law ?

A. To put the Jews in mind, that when their forefathers were delivered by him out of Egypt,

he killed the first-born of the Egyptians, and saved theirs. *Exod. xiii. 2.*

Q. What did Jesus on this occasion ?

A. He offered himself to his eternal Father, as the only victim capable to appease his anger, and reconcile him to mankind. *Heb. x. 5, 6.*

Q. Did any thing remarkable happen at the temple ?

A. Yes, Jesus was acknowledged for the Messias by Simeon, a venerable old man, and by Anna, a widow and a prophetess. *Luke, ii. 25, 36.*

Q. What did Simeon ?

A. He took Jesus in his arms, and in a rapture of joy uttered that divine canticle, (*Benedictus*), which the Church daily makes use of for part of her night prayers.

Q. What was this canticles ?

A. It was this : *Now let thy servant, O Lord ! according to thy promise, die in peace : for my eyes have seen the Saviour of the world, whom thou hast sent to be the light of nations, and the glory of Israel thy people.*

Q. Why is this canticle inserted in the Complin ?

A. To put us in mind, that in order to prepare for death, we must contemn this world, and sigh after the possession of Jesus Christ.

Q. And what did Anna the prophetess ?

A. She spoke of Jesus Christ to all that expected the redemption of Israel. *Luke, ii. 38.*

Q. What mean you by the Purification of the blessed Virgin ?

A. The purification was a ceremony appointed by the law of Moses, which all women were to comply with, on the 40th or 80th day from their delivery. *Lev. xii.*

Q. What was the meaning of this purification ?

A. It was to acknowledge, by an expiatory sacrifice, the unhappy impurity of our birth since the sin of Adam.

Q. Did these laws oblige Jesus and Mary ?

A. Not in the least. For Jesus was the Son of God ; and the Virgin Mary conceived of the Holy Ghost, and was delivered of her only begotten, without prejudice to her virginal integrity.

Q. Why then did they submit to them ?

A. Because as our Saviour's miraculous conception and birth were secrets, not as yet ripe for discovery, both the Mother and the Son were, in the eye of the world, within the letter of the law.

Q. What may we learn from this instance ?

A. Humility, a punctual obedience to the commands of God and his Church, and particularly to beware of sins of scandal.

Q. What sacrifice were women to offer at their purification ?

A. The rich offered a lamb, and the poor a pair of turtles or pigeons. *Lev. xii. 6, 8.*

Q. Why does the gospel mention only the turtles or pigeons ?

A. Because Mary and Joseph, being poor, made their offering, as other poor people used to do.

Q. What does this teach us ?

A. To love poverty, which makes us resemble the family of Jesus Christ.

Q. How would the Church have us to sanctify this feast ?

A. By contemplating, praying for, and resolving to imitate the virtues of Jesus, Mary, Simeon, and Anna.

Q. How are we to imitate Jesus Christ ?

A. We are to offer ourselves with him (especially at the holy mass) to his heavenly Father, to do his will, as obedient children, on all occasions.

Q. What do we learn of the blessed Virgin?

A. 1. Humility, and not to value the opinion of men. 2. Obedience. 3. That we are to purify ourselves from all iniquity, and even from the least stain of sin, by the spirit of penance.

Q. What do we learn of Old Simeon?

A. Earnestly to aspire after Jesus Christ; to follow him as our only light; and to undervalue all the world beside.

Q. And what from the prophetess Anna?

A. To love to converse with God in the church, as she did in the temple; and to make Jesus Christ the subject of our thoughts and words.

Q. And what besides?

A. To believe and rejoice; to thank, admire, and praise almighty God and his Son Jesus Christ, as Anna and Simeon did.

Q. What is further to be recommended to parents who have children under their charge?

A. That they offer up their children to God, in union with the offering *Christ* made of himself, by the intercession of the blessed Virgin; and teach such of them as are capable, to make an offering of themselves.

Q. But why is this feast called Candlemas-day?

A. It is so called from the blessing and distributing candles, which ceremony was in use above twelve hundred years ago.

Q. Why are candles distributed to the faithful on this day?

A. To express the share they have in Simeon's holy joy, and that they believe Jesus Christ to be the light of the world.

Q. For what reasons does the Church bless candles and other inanimate things?

A. 1. Because it is decent and fitting, that whatever things are set apart for the service of God should be offered, and in a particular manner consecrated to him.

2. That God may give a particular blessing to such things as are thus consecrated to him, that those who use them with faith in his name and power, may find his assistance against temporal and spiritual evils, and against the snares of the devil.

SECT. 9.—*Septuagesima-Sunday, and the intervening Days till Lent.*

Q. HOW does the Church call Shrove-Sunday?

A. She calls it *Quinquagesima*, because it is the fiftieth day from Easter.

Q. How is the foregoing Sunday called?

A. It is called *Sexagesima*.

Q. And the Sunday before that?

A. *Septuagesima*.

Q. What then is *Septuagesima-Sunday*?

A. It is the first of those days the Church has set apart for penance, in memory of Adam's sin, and in order to prepare the faithful for the duly keeping of Lent, and solemnizing of Easter, which is the most solemn of all her feasts.

Q. Is the spirit of God very different from the spirit of the world as to the spending of these days?

A. As different as light from darkness.

Q. What effect has the spirit of the world on this occasion upon those that are led by it?

A. Because Lent is approaching, which will put

a restraint upon the methods of a sensual and carnal life, the men of the world endeavour to be beforehand with it, by abandoning themselves to all manner of diversions and excesses.

Q. What does the spirit of God and his church require of us?

A. To spend those days in sobriety, prayer, and penance, and in discovering and subduing our vicious habits, that in Lent we may more seriously and sincerely do penance for them.

Q. How are you sure that this is the spirit of the Church?

A. It is evident from the instructions which (during this time) she proposes to her children, and from the prayers she offers for them; as likewise from her clothing her altars and priests in purple, which is her mourning, and laying aside all her canticles of joy.

Q. What then is her opinion of worldly diversions at this time?

A. She looks upon them as so many cups of poison presented to her children by the enemy of their salvation, in order to prevent those spiritual advantages, which she intends they should receive by their devotions and mortifications during Lent.

Q. What effect ought the consideration of the horrible abuses committed at this time, to have upon the hearts of pious Christians?

A. 1. It ought to carry them to the feet of Jesus, that there they may lament the condition of their sinful brethren, and implore the mercy of God upon them; and by humble prayer and adoration, make some reparation and atonement for the many affronts he receives from them.

2. It should move them to use all the means that zeal and prudence can inspire, to withdraw them from their sinful excesses.

SECT. 10.—*Lent.*

Q. WHEN was the fast of Lent instituted !

A. Lent is a fast of apostolical tradition, which in all ages has been constantly observed through the whole Church of God.

Q. Why was it instituted ?

A. 1. To honour and imitate our Saviour's fast in the desert.

2. That the faithful might prepare themselves by prayer, penance, and fasting, for the duly celebrating the adorable mysteries of his passion and resurrection.

3. To consecrate to God by a penance of forty days, the tenth of our lives, as an acknowledgment that our whole life ought to be so spent.

Q. What other obligations does *Lent* bring along with it ?

A. It obliges us to a spiritual fast.

Q. In what consists this spiritual fast ?

A. 1. In abstaining from sin and its immediate occasions, an obligation from which the Church never dispenses any one ; and such occasions are gaming, balls, comedies, &c., in regard to a great part of mankind. 2. In subduing our vicious habits and inclinations. 3. In retrenching and taking off somewhat from our sleep, conversation, recreations, and in short from every thing that is pleasing to our senses.

Q. This I understand to be the negative part of our duty ; now what is the affirmative ?

A. 1. To expiate and blot out our sins by tears, proceeding from a love of God; and by worthy fruits of penance, prepare in time for a good confession.

2. To give alms.

3. To apply ourselves to prayer.

4. To nourish our souls by reading, hearing, and meditating on the word of God.

5. To make a spiritual harvest; that is to say, such a provision of virtues and graces, as may last us the whole year.

Q. What is chiefly to be recommended for the subject of spiritual reading and meditation?

A. The epistles and gospels, which the Church changes every day for our instruction. And 2dly. such subjects as may best help us to the subduing of our predominant imperfections, and the attaining of the virtues we most need.

Q. What prayers are most proper for the time?

A. The prayers and hymns of the Church, with the seven penitential psalms and litanies of the saints.

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SECT. 11.—*Ash-Wednesday.*

Joel, ii, 12, 19. Matt. vi. 16, 21.

Q. WHY is the first day of Lent called Ash-Wednesday?

A. From the ceremony of putting ashes upon the heads of the faithful.

Q. Whence had this ceremony its origin?

A. From the practice of the primitive Church, which she took up from the example of the Ninivites, recommended by our blessed Saviour. *Jonas*, iii. 6. *Matt.* xi. 21.

Q. What was the custom of the primitive church ?

A. At the beginning of Lent, the bishop, or his penitentiary, used to cast ashes upon sinners, that came in sackcloth to the church to perform their penance, in hopes of being reconciled and absolved at the end of Lent.

Q. Why does the Church now use the ceremony upon all the faithful ?

A. Because Lent is a time of public penance for all, without exception.

Q. What does the Church beg of God at the blessing of the ashes ?

A. She begs for all her children the remission of their sins ; and to that end, the spirit of compunction, and grace to employ as they ought, the time of Lent, in doing penance.

Q. What then are the faithful to do during the blessing of the ashes ?

A. They are to join with the Church, and to beg for themselves a contrite and humble heart, (represented by the ashes,) and that wholesome fear of God's judgments, which is the beginning of true wisdom and penance.

Q. What does the priest say in putting the ashes upon our foreheads ?

A. He bids us to remember the sentence pronounced by almighty God upon Adam and his posterity, which is this : *Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.* *Gen.* iii. 19.

Q. What is the intention of the Church in using these words ?

A. It is to excite her children to penance from the consideration of death, which is the punishment of sin.

Q. In what spirit then are the faithful to present themselves to receive the ashes?

A. With a profound humility, seriously reflecting that their bodies are but earth, and will by death be reduced to corruption and dust.

Q. And what are they to conclude from this reflection?

A. That by consequence that life is a mere vanity; and that the only true wisdom is to disengage ourselves from earthly things, to love and fear God, to keep his commandments, and by doing penance to prepare for death.

Q. What are we to pray for at the holy Mass?

A. That God would be pleased to preserve these sentiments in our hearts during Lent, and the remainder of our lives.

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SECT. 12.—*Ember days in the first Week of Lent.*

Q. IS their any thing in particular to be observed as to these days?

A. They being upon a double account assigned to fasting and penance, our penance should be so much the more fervent and complete, our fasting the more severe, and our good works the more numerous.

Q. What ought we chiefly to beg for such as are ordained at this time?

A. The spirit of penance and compunction, which is necessary for those God has charged with the sins of the people, that they may frequently

lament at the holy altar their own sins and those of their flock.

Q. Why are the ministers of Christ called the Clergy?

A. Because those who are devoted to the service of the altar, have always been esteemed God's *lot* and *inheritance*, which the word signifies in the Greek; they at the same time making a solemn profession of taking the Lord for their inheritance and portion for ever. *Psalm xv. 5.*

SECT. 13.—*Second Sunday in Lent.*

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS CHRIST.

1 Thess. iv. 1, 7. Matt. xvii. 1, 9.

Q. WHEN was our Saviour transfigured?

A. His whole life upon earth was a miraculous *Transfiguration of Humility*, whereby he covered and veiled that glory which was due to him.

Q. Is this the mystery the Church proposes to us this day?

A. No. What she now proposes is that *Transfiguration of Glory*, when Jesus Christ, some time before his passion, appeared between Moses and Elias in glory upon Mount Thabor, to Peter, James, and John, his face shining as bright as the sun, and his clothes as white as snow. *Matt. xvii. 2.*

Q. Why would Jesus give his disciples this passing view of his glory?

A. 1. To let them see how much he felt for them, and what obligation they owed to him.

2. To strengthen their weakness, and prevent the

scandal they were likely to take at the ignominies and humiliations of his passion.

3. To encourage them by the prospect of future glory, to suffer courageously the crosses and persecutions they were to meet with upon his account.

Q. Of what did our Saviour speak with Moses and Elias?

A. Of his approaching passion. *Luke, ix. 31.*

Q. What does this teach us?

A. That amidst the greatest joys and prosperity of this life, death ought constantly to be before our eyes, as the necessary means and sacrifice whereby we attain the joys of heaven.

Q. How are the three apostles affected with the sight of their Master's glory?

A. So ravished were they with it, that St. Peter cried out: *Lord! it is good for us to continue here.* But the gospel remarks, that he knew not what he said. *Luke, ix. 33.*

Q. Why so?

A. Because it is not for a disciple of Jesus Christ to think of arriving at rest and glory any otherwise than by labour and suffering; since to gain heaven we must merit it by the cross.

Q. What happened besides during Christ's transfiguration?

A. A voice from heaven said, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.* *Matt. xvii. 5.*

Q. What does this voice give us to understand?

A. That we cannot be acceptable to God the Father, but by attending to Jesus Christ, as our model and our master.

Q. How does Jesus Christ speak to us?

A. Several ways; viz. by his life and death; by

his mysteries and gospel; by his Church and servants; by his benefits, punishments, and inspirations.

Q. What said our Saviour to his apostles when he descended from the mount?

A. He forbid them to speak of what they had seen till after his resurrection. *Matt. xvii. 9.*

Q. What does this teach us?

A. That such as are truly humble, will take care to speak as seldom and to as few as possible, of the extraordinary graces they receive of God.

2. That those are guilty of a *proud transfiguration*, who are continually endeavouring to set in view whatever they take to be considerable in themselves, and at the same time to cover and disguise all their weaknesses and imperfections.

Q. And what may we conclude from hence?

A. That the whole world is under a kind of transfiguration, which will not be removed till the general resurrection.

Q. How do you mean?

A. My meaning is, that at present we neither see the beauty of those regenerate souls, in whom God dwells by his charity and holy spirit, nor the dreadful deformity of such as are under the dominion of sin and the devil.

Q. How comes this to pass?

A. By reason that human frailties conceal the beauties of pious souls, or so disfigure them in our eyes, that frequently the wicked seem as agreeable as the virtuous: on the other side, certain natural qualifications, and some advantages which we gain by the wicked, keep the corruption of their hearts so greatly out of sight, that we are apt to set them upon a level with the virtuous.

Q. Since the Church has assigned the 6th of August to the honour of this mystery, why does she make a commemoration of it at this time?

A. That the faithful, by the contemplation of that glory which is to be the reward of their sufferings, may with fresh courage pursue the ways of penance which they have begun.

Q. What are we to beg of God on this occasion?

A. 1. Those eyes of faith, whereby we may perfectly discover the hope of our vocation, and what those riches of glory are which he hath designed for the inheritance of the Saints. *Ephes. i. 18.*

2. That he would show us the beauty of that kingdom which he holds in pious souls, and the misery of a soul in sin; that we may aspire after the former, and decline the latter. *Psalm. xxxvi.*

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SECT. 14.—*Saturday before Passion-Sunday.*

Q. WAY take you notice of this Saturday?

A. Because the Church has assigned it for the ordination of her ministers.

Q. What then is the duty of this day?

A. The faithful are to offer up their fasting and prayers to obtain worthy ministers of almighty God, who may prove themselves, after Christ's example, to be both priests and victims.

Q. How are you to pray that priests may be likewise victims?

A. I mean we are to beg grace for them, to live continually in a spirit of sacrifice, that on all occasions they may study, and preach, and glory in nothing but Christ crucified; may be fastened with him to the cross; may rejoice in being

crucified to the world, and that the world is crucified to them.

SECT. 15.—*Passion Sunday.*

Heb. ix. 11, 14. John, viii. 46, 59.

Q. WHY are the crucifixes and altar pictures veiled from this day forward?

A. To express the church's deeper mourning for the passion and death of her Spouse and Saviour.

Q. Is not the whole Lent dedicated to our Saviour's passion?

A. Yes. But because the Church has in a more particular manner consecrated the two last weeks to the honour of that mystery, therefore is this day called *Passion Sunday*, and the week, *Passion week*.

Q. Are all other offices and instructions laid aside?

A. No. But this week being designed as a preparation for the next, the Church in every part of her office takes care to renew the memory of our Saviour's passion.

Q. What then ought the faithful to do in compliance with the Church's spirit.

A. They ought to let no day of these two weeks pass, without reading and meditating upon some part of our Saviour's passion.

Q. How may this be done?

A. By dividing all the circumstances of it into fourteen parts, as so many subjects of meditation. As for example :

*On Passion Sunday*, we may consider Jesus entering in triumph into Jerusalem, in order to suffer for the sins of all the world.

*On Monday*, Jesus washing his apostles' feet, even Judas's among the rest, and instituting the blessed Sacrament.

*Tuesday*, Jesus going into the garden of Gethsemani, praying there and sweating blood.

*Wednesday*, Jesus betrayed by Judas; seized on by the Jews; and abandoned by his disciples.

*Thursday*, Jesus examined by the High-Priest; receiving a blow on the ear; denied by St. Peter; and abused by the servants.

*Friday*, Jesus compared with, and postponed to, Barabbas; and scourged at the pillar.

*Saturday*, Jesus crowned with thorns, exposed to the people, and by them demanded to be crucified.

*On Palm Sunday*, Jesus declared innocent by Pilate, and yet condemned as guilty, and loaded with the cross.

*Monday in Holy Week*, Jesus carrying his cross up to Calvary; there stripped of his clothes, and nailed to the cross.

*Tuesday*, Jesus hanging on the cross; blasphemed by one of the thieves, and confessed by the other.

*Wednesday*, Jesus despised by passengers; ironically solicited to come down; his praying for his persecutors and executioners.

*Thursday*, Jesus recommending his blessed mother and St. John to each other; suffering thirst, and having gall and vinegar given him to drink.

*Friday*, Jesus abandoned by his Father; expiring on the cross; and receiving the wound in his side.

*Saturday*, Jesus taken down from the cross, and laid in the sepulchre.

SECT. 16.—*Holy Week.*

Q. WHY is the last week in Lent called *Holy Week*?

A. Because the great mystery of our redemption was completed in it.

Q. How should we dispose of ourselves and our time during this week?

A. We ought, 1. To fast more regularly, if we are able. 2. To pray more frequently. 3. To be more retired. 4. To enliven our affection towards our suffering Redeemer. 5. To assist at the church offices. 6. To dispose ourselves for the well receiving of the sacraments of Penance and the holy Eucharist.

SECT. 17.—*Annual Confession.*

Q. WHAT obligation does the Church lay upon us as to Confession?

A. To confess our sins at least once a year.

Q. Why has she laid this obligation on us?

A. That we may not live in sin, but take care to convert ourselves to God.

Q. Are children under this obligation?

A. All children that are come to years of discretion, and capable of sinning mortally, are obliged to confess.

Q. When may a child be thought to have come to years of discretion?

A. When he can distinguish between good and bad; will blush at a lie; commend obedience, discommend disobedience and disrespect to parents and the like.

Q. But what if children have been so ill educated, as to be capable of sinning mortally, and be not yet disposed nor prepared to go to confession?

A. Parents, pastors, and superiors must take care to instruct and prepare them as soon as they possibly can.

Q. What sin is it wilfully to transgress this command of the Church?

A. A mortal sin: for, *if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen or a publican*, says our Saviour. *Matt. xviii. 17.*

Q. What persons sin against this precept?

A. They that pass twelve whole months without making one valid and good confession.

Q. But in case I have already been one whole twelvemonth without making a good confession, and therefore committed a mortal sin by my disobedience to the Church, may I not still defer it some months without incurring the guilt of a new sin?

A. No. Such a person will be under strict obligation of confessing with all speed.

Q. Should we not confess more than once a year?

A. Most certainly we should.

Q. Why so?

A. Because it is clear from experience, that such as do not confess oftener, live not as Christians ought to do; and therefore the Church exhorts us to frequent confession?

Q. What rule may be given as to the frequency of confession?

A. There can be no general rule that will suit all persons, save only this; that each one is in this matter to follow the advice of a good confessor.

Q. May we not sometimes be obliged to go to confession, notwithstanding we have complied with the Church's precept of annual confession?

A. Yes. For in all probable dangers of death we are obliged to make a confession, if a confessor can be had.

Q. Who may be said to be in probable danger of death, and therefore obliged to confess?

A. 1. Persons that by reason of sickness seem to be drawing towards their end.

2. Soldiers that are about to engage in a siege or battle.

3. Such as are going upon a dangerous voyage.

4. Women that are nigh their time of being delivered of their first child; as also afterwards on the like occasions, if they have found themselves to be in danger.

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SECT. 18.—*Paschal Communion.*

Q. WHAT does the Church command as to the receiving of the holy communion?

A. To receive it once a year, and that at Easter; that is to say, on some one of the fifteen days between Palm-Sunday and Low-Sunday.

Q. At what age are children obliged to communicate?

A. As soon as the pastors judge them to have sufficient discretion, and that they are so well instructed as to be capable of profiting by it.

Q. Does one satisfy this duty of Easter by a sacrilegious communion?

A. By no means. On the contrary, one incurs the guilt of a double sin, by violating both the law of Christ and the law of the Church.

Q. What if a person foresees, that in all probability, by reason of some necessary voyage or journey, he shall not have the opportunity of communicating within the fifteen days ?

A. In such a case he is obliged to communicate before his journey or voyage, in order to satisfy his Easter duty.

Q. What if one has neither communicated at Easter, nor before it, to satisfy his paschal duty ?

A. He must communicate as soon as he can afterwards.

Q. Are all that desire to communicate, immediately to be admitted ?

A. No. The Church orders confessors to defer the paschal communion of such as are not, in their judgment, sufficiently disposed.

Q. What ought the penitent to do whose communion is deferred ?

A. He ought to dispose himself for it, by an entire conversion of his heart to God, and by doing worthy fruits of penance.

Q. Why has not the Church determined these fifteen days for the annual confession, as well as for annual communion ?

A. Because she knows that a great many Christians stand in need of a longer preparation for their Easter communion ; and for that reason she desires they would confess at the beginning of Lent, or sooner, in order to fit themselves for the discharging of their Easter duty.

Q. What punishment does the Church threaten, or pronounce, against those that are wanting to this duty ?

A. To exclude them from the house of prayer

during life; and when they die, to give them no Christian burial.

Q. Ought Christians to content themselves with communicating once a year?

A. No: to correspond with the Church's spirit and desire, Christians ought to live in so pious a manner, as to be qualified for a frequent use of this sacrament of love. *Conc. Trid. Sess. xiii. Ch. viii.*

Q. Is it advisable to communicate more than once within the term of the fifteen days?

A. As for such persons as make their salvation the earnest business of their life, they would do well to celebrate a part by different communions. 1. The institution of the holy Sacrament. 2. The passion of our Saviour. 3. His resurrection.

Q. What advice do you give them that have formerly made their first communion at Easter?

A. To sanctify the anniversary day of that great action by a more than ordinary devotion, and by communicating, if they can; renewing with all the vigour of their souls, their first fervour; repairing all past defects, and pouring forth their souls in acts of gratitude.

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SECT. 19.—*Palm Sunday.*

Ex. xv. 27.—xv. 6. Phil. ii. 5, 11. Matt. xxi. 1, 10.  
Matt. xxvi.—xviii.

Q. WHY is the last Sunday in Lent called *Palm Sunday*?

A. From the ceremony of blessing palm branches, and distributing them to the faithful, who carry them in their hands during the procession which is made in Catholic countries.

Q. What is intended by this ceremony?

A. To celebrate the triumphant entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem, six days before his passion.

Q. What were the circumstances of his triumph?

A. He was pleased to make his entry upon an ass; the common people and children went to meet him, and strewed the way he was to pass with boughs and their own garments, and carrying branches in their hands, accompanied him with joyful acclamations.

Q. What was the meaning of this triumph of our Saviour so short a time before his death?

A. To intimate that by his death he would triumph over the devil, the world, and the flesh, and open heaven to us.

Q. Why would he make his entry upon an ass?

A. 1. To show how much he contemned all human greatness, and to teach us to do the same.

2. To fulfil an eminent prophecy, which had some ages before pointed out the Messiah by such an approach to Jerusalem. *Zach. ix. 9. Matt. xxi. 5.*

Q. Did any persons of learning, power or riches, go to meet Jesus?

A. None at all that we read of.

Q. What do you learn from this their neglect?

A. That learning does not usually dispose men to an obedience of faith; nor riches, to a love of poverty; nor honours, to humility; and that by consequence they are not to be coveted by the true disciples of Jesus Christ.

Q. What does the people's covering the way with branches and with their garments intimate to us?

A. That all worldly conveniencies and pretensions are to be thrown away and trampled upon,

to the end that Christ may reign and triumph in our hearts.

Q. What learn you from their joyful acclamations?

A. That God accepts of the simplicity and praises of innocent souls?

Q. Did the people continue long in these pious sentiments?

A. No. Though they applauded Christ at his entry, as the Son of God and the world's *Messias*, within a few days they turned against him, postponed him to Barabbas, and cried out, *Crucify him, Crucify him.*

Q. What does this teach us?

A. 1. That we are not to depend upon worldly applause.

2. Nor upon that sensible devotion or zeal for truth which may appear in us in time of peace and security.

3. That we are constantly to implore God's strengthening grace, lest we desert his cause when it brings us into danger.

Q. What is the spirit of the Church as to this solemnity?

A. She would have us, 1. To consider *Jesus Christ* triumphing over the devil, sin and death?

2. To take part in his triumph, by submitting to his reign and giving him entrance into our hearts.

3. That we entertain our minds with these thoughts; the blessing of the palms, and during the rest of the office.

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 SEC. 20.—*The Office of Tenebræ.*

Q. What is the Office in Holy week, which is performed on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday in the afternoon, called *Tenebræ*?

A. Because in ancient times it was performed at midnight; and, the *Latin* word *Tenebræ* signifies *darkness* or *dark night*.

Q. What mean the fifteen candles that are set upon a triangular candlestick?

A. The highest of them represents Jesus Christ, who says of himself, *I am the light of the world*; (*John*, viii. 12.) and the rest represent his apostles and disciples, to whom he was pleased to communicate his own prerogative of being *the light of the world*. *Matt.* v. 14.

Q. Why are these candles successively extinguished during the office?

A. To represent how the apostles fled and disappeared at the time of our Saviour's passion.

Q. For what reason at the end of the office is the lamp put out, and the white candle which represents our Saviour, hid under the altar?

A. To express our Saviour's death and passion.

Q. Why are these candles placed upon a triangular candlestick?

A. A triangular figure is commonly made use of to represent the most blessed Trinity; and therefore the setting of the candles upon such a candlestick, is to give us to understand, that the light of truth, which shined to the world from the life and doctrine of Christ and his disciples, was derived from the same blessed Trinity and was intended to proclaim God's glory.

Q. What means the noise made, after some silence, at the end of the office?

A. The silence signifies the hope of our Saviour's death; and the noise, the rattling of the rocks, and the confusion the world was in at that time.

SECT. 21.—*Mauudy Thursday.*

1 Cor. xi. 20, 32. John, xiii. 1, 15.

Q. WAY is the last Thursday in Lent called *Mauudy Thursday*?

A. It is so called from those words of our Saviour, *Mandatum novum do vobis, &c. ; I give you a new command (or mandate,) that you love one another, as I have loved you, (John, xiii. 34.)* which to day is sung in the churches, when the prelates begin the ceremony of washing the people's feet, in imitation of Christ's washing the apostle's feet before he instituted the blessed Sacrament.

Q. When did our Saviour institute the blessed Sacrament?

A. On Thursday in the evening, which was the day before his passion?

Q. What did he after that sacred institution?

A. He made a most divine sermon, set down by St. John which he intented for all Christians, as well as his apostles. *John, xiii. xiv. xv. and xvi.*

Q. How did he conclude his sermon?

A. With a prayer for himself, for his apostles, and for all the faithful. *John, xvii*

Q. And his prayer being ended, what did he then do?

A. He went with his apostles into the garden of Gethsemai, near Mount Olivet; where taking Peter, James and John apart, and exhorting them all to arm themselves with watchfulness and prayer against the approaching danger, he, at a distance from the three fell to prayer.

Q. What happened during his prayer?

A. Having charged himself with our sins, he was pleased to undergo the humiliation and punishment

due to them ; and therefore he suffered so deep a sorrow to seize upon his human nature, that he fell into a bloody agony.

Q. Did the apostles watch and pray the mean while ?

A. No. They fell asleep.

Q. What did Christ when he ended his prayer ?

A. He went to meet Judas and the Jews ; he suffered Judas to betray him with a kiss ; the Jews to seize and bind him, and to drag him as a criminal to the House of Caiphas the high-priest.

Q. Did the apostles follow him ?

A. They all fled from him. But afterwards St. Peter, reflecting probably on his late resolution of not leaving him, followed at a distance to the high-priest's house.

Q. What treatment did our blessed Saviour meet with ?

A. He suffered from the high-priest, his council, and his servants, and from St. Peter.

Q. What did he suffer from the high-priest and his council ?

A. He was examined by them concerning his doctrine and disciples, as if he had been a factious and seditious man ; and because he professed himself the Messiah, he was condemned as guilty of death.

Q. What did he suffer from the high-priest's servants ?

A. One of them struck him, when he was examined ; and as soon as Caiphas and his council had declared him guilty, they spit in his face, buffeted him, and loaded him with all manner of injuries.

Q. What did he suffer from St. Peter ?

A. He was thrice denied by him.

Q. How would you advise Christians to spend this day?

A. 1. By a devout communion to commemorate Christ's love to us in the institution of the blessed sacrament, and in his passion.

2. At some hour before dinner, to read or hear, with the attention and spirit of the holy apostles the sermon and prayer of our Saviour. *John, xiii. &c.*

3. In the evening to accompany him with their best affections, in his agony, and in his way to the house of Caiphas.

4. To dedicate some hour of the night to the contemplating of all he suffered the night before his passion, from Caiphas, his council, and his servants, and from St. Peter.

Q. Why are no bells rung from Thursday to Saturday in Catholic countries?

A. To express the deep sorrow the Church is in for the death of her Spouse.

Q. Why are the altars uncovered?

A. To put us in mind how Jesus, whom the altar represents, was stript of his garments at the time of his passion; and therefore, while the priest uncovers them, he says the 21st Psalm, which is a clear prediction of our Saviour's passion.

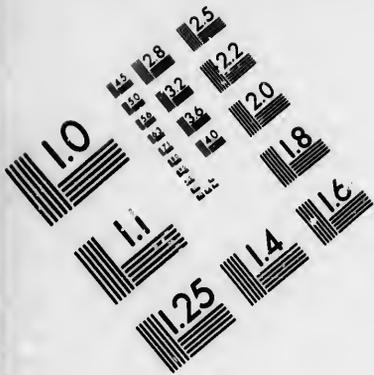
Q. Why do the faithful visit churches to-day and on Good Friday?

A. For a more lively commemoration of our Saviour's sufferings, while they accompany him in spirit through all his stations from the garden to Calvary.

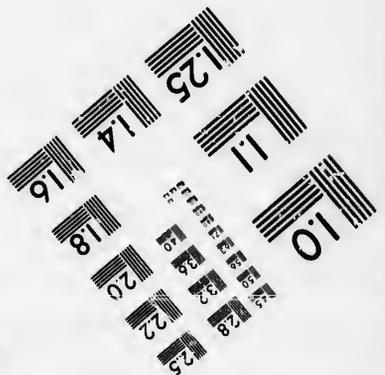
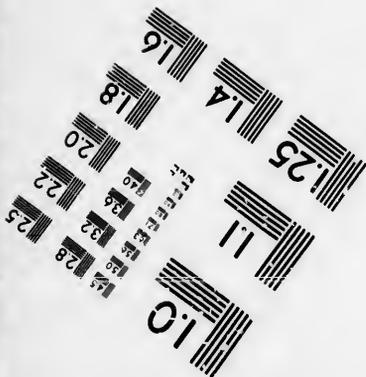
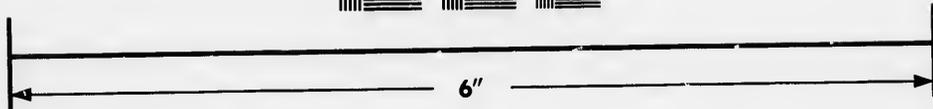
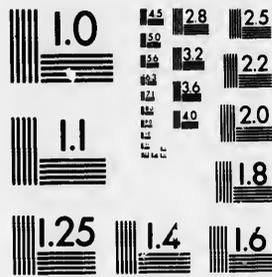
Q. Why is the blessed Sacrament reserved for to-morrow?

A. For the priest's communion, there being no Mass to be said on Good Friday.



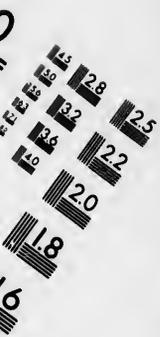


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Q. Why so?

A. Because the Church looks upon the celebration of Mass as a ceremony of joy; whereas on Good Friday she is all in mourning for her Saviour's death, and for the sins of her children, that occasioned it.

SECT. 22.—*Good Friday.*

Os. vi. 1, 6. Ex. xii. 1, 11. Jo. xvii. 1. to xx.

WHY is the last Friday in Lent called *Good Friday*?

A. Because on that day the Church keeps a solemn memorial of the infinite mercy and goodness God showed to man in the death of his beloved Son.

Q. What became of our Saviour on Friday morning?

A. He was led bound to Pilate, and there falsely accused of raising seditions, forbidding tribute to be paid to Cæsar, and of aspiring to be king.

Q. What did Pilate do?

A. Pilate finding him innocent, and yet fearing to offend the Jews, sent him to Herod, who clothed him in derision in a white garment, and so sent him back to Pilate.

Q. How was Jesus treated at his return?

A. He was postponed to Barabbas, a thief and a murderer, and ordered to be scourged, which was most unmercifully executed.

Q. Did not the soldiers do more than they were ordered to do?

A. Yes. After they had whipped him in a barbarous manner, they threw over his torn and bloody body a purple cloak, pressed upon his sacred

head a crown of thorns, put a reed in his hand for a sceptre, and then striking him on his head and face, they in scorn bent the knee before him, saying, *Hail, King of the Jews.*

Q. What followed after this barbarity?

A. *Pilate*, in order to appease the Jews, shewed them Jesus in this condition, saying, *Behold the man.* But for fear of incensing them, (they having told him he was no friend to Cæsar if he absolved Jesus,) he delivered him to be crucified; and immediately Jesus was loaded with a heavy cross, and led, in company with two thieves, to Calvary.

Q. At what time of the day was Christ crucified?

A. About noon; when began a miraculous eclipse of the sun, which lasted for three hours.

Q. What did the Jews who were spectators of this tragedy?

A. They reviled and scoffed at Jesus.

Q. What did Jesus upon the cross?

A. 1. He prayed for his enemies, saying, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

2. He said to the good thief, *This day thou shalt be with me in paradise.*

3. To the blessed Virgin, in favour of St. John, *Behold thy son*; and then to St. John, *Behold thy mother.*

4. To his Father, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

5. He expressed the thirst he suffered.

6. He said to his Father, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.*

7. He said, *It is consummated, or, finished*; and then expired.

Q. What wonders happened at his death, before the darkness above-mentioned?

A. The veil of the temple was rent; the earth trembled; rocks were split; graves opened; and several that were dead, rose and appeared.

Q. What was the veil of the temple?

A. A sort of curtain, which separated the sanctuary from the rest of the temple.

Q. What was signified by the rending of the veil?

A. 1. That the sacraments and figures of the old law, understood by so very few that lived under it, were now unveiled, and fulfilled by the death of Christ. *S. Leo, Serm. 8. de Pass.*

2. That heaven, the true sanctuary, where the majesty of God resides, was opened to us by the death of Jesus Christ.

Q. Why did God work so many wonders at the death of his Son?

A. As a testimony against the Jews, and against us too, if we do not profit by his death.

Q. What did those do that profited by his death?

A. They returned striking their breasts, and saying. *This man was truly the Son of God.*

Q. What was done to our Saviour after he had expired?

A. A soldier pierced his side with a lance; and immediately from the wound came water and blood.

Q. What was signified by this water and blood?

A. The sacrament of baptism, in which the Church is washed in water by the blood of her Saviour.

Q. How was Jesus buried?

A. In the evening Joseph of Arimathea, a nobleman, and Nicodemus, a Pharisee that feared God, having taken the sacred body down from the cross, wrapt it in fine linen, and with perfumes laid it in a new sepulchre, which was cut in a rock.

Q. How are we to spend this day?

A. Besides what has been said above, to render ourselves agreeable to Christ crucified, we ought to be glad of any opportunity of suffering somewhat for his sake; of pardoning an injury; of remitting some debt to such as are indigent; of giving alms: of visiting the poor, the sick, or imprisoned; or of comforting the afflicted.

Q. Why has the Church instituted the ceremony of venerating the cross?

A. To express how, with St. Paul, she glories in the cross of Christ. *Gal. vi. 14.*

Q. What would she have us do during this ceremony?

A. She would have us, in prostrating and kneeling before the cross, to adore Jesus Christ, who died upon it for our sakes.

Q. Are we not to adore the cross itself?

A. If by adoring, be meant that supreme worship which is due to God alone, neither the cross nor any creature whatever is to be adored.

Q. Why then, in the office of the day, is it said, *Crucem tuam adoramus, Domine; We adore thy cross, O Lord.*

A. The Latin word *Adoro*, as likewise the Greek and Hebrew words which answer it, are of a larger acceptation than the word *adoration* seems, by common usage, to be in English.

Q. How do you prove it?

A. From Scripture, where those words often import no more than *prostration*, or an outward reverence that may be exhibited to creatures; as it is said of Abraham, *Adoravit filios Heth; He adored*, that is, he fell prostrate before, *the sons of Heth.* It is not therefore by the bare words we

are to judge of the Church's faith, but by the sense in which she takes them.

SECT. 23.—*Easter-Eve.*

Col. iii. 1, 4. Matt. xxviii. 1, 7.

Q. WHAT is the spirit of the Church as to this day?

A. She continues her mourning, and contemplates Jesus dead and lying in his sepulchre, till *None* is said.

Q. How does she then apply herself?

A. She then begins to celebrate the joyful festival of Easter with an office, which was heretofore performed the night following.

Q. Why on this day is the fire blessed?

A. It was the custom of the primitive Church to bless it as often as it was used for the lighting of the candles; it being her general practice to bless what she makes use of in her public service.

Q. Why is the custom retained for this day in particular?

A. To represent Jesus Christ, the light of the world, extinguished by his death, and shining again by his resurrection.

Q. What means the paschal candle?

A. It represents Christ risen from the dead.

Q. Why are five grains of incense put into five holes of the candle?

A. The five holes represent our Saviour's five wounds; and the incense, the piety of Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, &c. who embalmed his body.

Q. What is the substance of the prayer that is said for the blessing of the candle?

A. The Church by her minister first publishes the inestimable benefit of our redemption in the mysteries of Christ's death and resurrection; then she exhorts the faithful to celebrate the same with due devotion; and afterwards having presented to God and lighted the candle, she prays for all her children, and begs grace for them to spend their Easter well.

Q. Why is water for baptism blessed to-day and on Whitsun-Eve?

A. Because these two days were formerly set apart for the solemn administration of that sacrament.

Q. Why are so many prophecies or lessons read before the blessing of the baptismal font?

A. They are a summary of religion, and were read for the instruction of such as were to be baptized.

Q. Why is *Alleluia* so frequently repeated in the Mass?

A. *Alleluia* signifies, *Praise ye the Lord*; and the Church re-assumes it to-day, to express her joy for the resurrection of Jesus-Christ.

Q. What are the faithful to do at the blessing of the paschal candle?

A. To adore Christ risen from the dead, and to join in prayer with the Church for all her children.

Q. What during the prophecies?

A. To read or attend to them, if one understands the Church's language; or at least to make acts of faith concerning this and the other mysteries, which effectually do all depend upon this.

Q. And what the blessing of the font or baptismal water?

A. 1. To give God thanks for having made us members of his Church by baptism.

2. To renew the promises we then made, of renouncing the devil and all his pomps and works.

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SECT. 24.—*Easter-Day.*

1 Cor. v. 7, 8. Mark, xvi. 1, 7.

Q. WHY is the feast of Easter called the Christian Passover?

A. For the relation it has to the Jewish.

Q. What was the Jewish passover?

A. A feast in memory, 1. Of the *passage* of the angel that destroyed the first-born of the Egyptians, and saved those of the Israelites. 2. Of their *passage* out of Egypt, and their deliverance from the slavery of Pharaoh.

Q. Wherein consists the relation between our passover and that of the Jews?

A. In this: that Jesus Christ at his resurrection *passed* from death to life, by re-uniting his glorious body to his soul; and by this passage triumphed over the powers of hell, rescued us from their tyranny and from eternal death, and opened a passage for us to life eternal.

Q. Why is this feast kept with so much solemnity?

A. Because Christ by his resurrection completed the work of our redemption.

Q. What is required for the due celebration of it?

A. 1. That with sentiments of joy and gratitude

we adore Jesus Christ in his immortal state.  
*Psalm*, viii. 64, 65. 2. That we rise with him.  
*Col.* iii. 1.

Q. What is it to rise with Christ?

A. It is to enter, as he did, upon a new life; so as never to die more, by relapsing into sin.  
*Rom.* vi. 4, &c.

Q. In what consists this new life?

A. In renouncing all sin, and in living for the future to God alone.

Q. How may we know whether we have renounced sin or not?

A. 1. By our aversion to it. 2. By our care in shunning its occasions, and using proper means for the breaking off ill habits. 3. By our practice of the opposite virtues.

Q. When may we be said to live to God alone?

A. When we contemn what the world most admires and seeks after, as honours, pleasures, riches, and vain dresses; and when we relish nothing but the goods of heaven.

Q. What is it, to have a relish for the goods of heaven?

A. It is to love God, and whatever leads us to him; as prayer, spiritual reading, hearing the word of God, assisting at divine service, and, in short, all the exercises of a solid piety.

Q. What virtues ought we principally to exercise on this feast?

A. Faith, hope, and charity.

Q. What motives are there, that may excite us to acts of faith?

A. Christ has given us undeniable proofs of his resurrection; his resurrection bears evidence

to his divinity ; and, by consequence, to all the truths, maxims, and promises of his gospel.

Q. What motives of hope ?

A. Our head being risen, it is to be hoped that we, his members, shall be one day united to him in glory ; provided that we now resemble him in his life by an imitation of his virtues ; and in his death, by the mortification of our senses and our passions.

Q. What motives of charity ?

A. It will inflame our love, to consider that Christ, *as he died for our sins, so he rose again for our justification.* Rom. iv. 25.

Q. Is Monday in Easter-week a day of obligation ?

A. No ; it is a day of particular devotion only ; but there was formerly an obligation of sanctifying it, and anciently the whole week, as parts of one and the same solemnity with Easter-day.

Q. Why does the Church in the office of this week put us daily in mind of our baptism ?

A. That we may not forget through the whole octave, 1. To thank God for having regenerated us by Jesus Christ out of his pure mercy. 2. To humble ourselves for the little care we have taken to preserve our baptismal innocence. 3. To renew the promises we made at baptism, of renouncing the devil, and of following Christ.

Q. Did the primitive Christians during the Paschal Time (or from Easter to the Ascension) pray standing ?

A. Yes ; as also on all Sundays throughout the year, in testimony of their joy for our Saviour's resurrection, and for their own from sin by his grace ; both symbolically represented by that

posture—a custom observed in the choir to this days.

Q. Why is the first Sunday after Easter called Low Sunday?

A. Because it is the lowest or latest day that is allowed for the satisfying of our Easter obligation, viz. the worthily receiving the blessed Sacrament.

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SECT. 25.—*The Three Rogation-days.*

Q. WHEN do these occur?

A. They are always the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday immediately before the Ascension.

Q. Why are they called *Rogation-days*?

A. From the extraordinary public prayers and supplications offered to God by the Church at this season, to avert those judgements our sins may have deserved.

Q. When were they established?

A. They are suggested and advised by St. Paul, (1 *Tim.* ii. 1.) But this season before our Lord's ascension was appointed for them by St. Mamer-tus, Bishop of Vienne, in the 5th century; and the success that attended them, induced the Church to make them of general observance, to move God to bless the fruits with which the earth is at this time covered, &c.

Q. What other reason may be assigned for placing them immediately before the Ascension?

A. To intimate, as it were, that Christ being about to ascend to heaven, the Church commends to him all her vows and wishes, as the only Mediator between God and man.

Q. Are they fasting days?

A. No. For the Church during the Paschal Time did not anciently allow of strict fasting, as not being suitable to a time of joy.

Q. What is to be our intention in our prayers on these days?

A. To obtain of God, 1. The remission of our sins. 2. Grace to serve him. 3. The blessings of peace and plenty.

Q. Are the faithful on these day obliged to assist at Mass and Litanies?

A. Though there be not the same obligation of assisting at divine service on these days as on holy days, yet persons can have but little reason to look for any share in the blessings of almighty God, who will not join with the rest of his children in praying for them.

#### SECT. 26.—*Ascension-Day.*

Acts, i. 1, 11. Mark, xiv. 14, 20.

Q. WHY did our Saviour converse with his apostles for the space of forty days after his resurrection?

A. 1. To prove the truth of his resurrection. 2. To recruit his apostles' courage. 3. To cure their unbelief. 4. To give them all the instruction necessary for the preaching of his gospel.

Q. Where was Christ during these forty days, when he did not actually appear to his disciples?

A. It is not for us to enquire after what God has not been pleased to reveal.

Q. What did he do on the fortieth day?

A. Appearing to his disciples, he assured them he was invested with all power in heaven and

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earth, and therefore commanded them to teach and baptize all nations: he promised them and their converts the gift of miracles, and that he would be with his Church to the end of the world. *Matt.* xxviii. 18, 19, 20. *Mark.* xvi. 17.

Q. What did he promise them besides?

A. That he would send down upon them the Holy Ghost; ordering them to continue in Jerusalem till they had received him. *Luke*, xxiv. 49. *Acts*, i. 8.

Q. What followed?

A. He then led them to that part of Mount Olivet, which from being nearest to Bethania, went under the same name, and was about a mile from Jerusalem; here, while he gave them his blessing, he raised himself from earth towards heaven, and at last a cloud took him out of their sight. *Luke*, xxiv. 50, 51.

Q. And what happened then?

A. While the apostles and other disciples stood gazing up to heaven, two angels in the shape of men, and in white apparel, came and informed them that Jesus would one day return in the same visible manner as he had ascended. *Acts*, i. 10.

Q. Did the ancients pay any reverence to the place from whence he ascended?

A. St. Augustin assures us, that the people went to Judea to worship the footsteps which remained on the spot of earth on which our blessed Saviour had last set his feet. *Hom.* xlvii. *in Joan.*

Q. How long did these footsteps remain?

A. They were visible at the end of the 4th century, notwithstanding the faithful out of devotion were continually carrying away some of the earth on which the impression had been left. *Hier. vel*

*Author de locis sanctis. Sulp. Sev. l. ii. c. xlvi.*  
*Paulin. Ep. xi. Venerable Bede (de locis sanctis)*  
 says they were still to be seen in the 8th century.  
 And St. Fra. of Sales (*Amour de Dieu, l. vii. c.*  
*xii.*) gives a most admirable account, out of St.  
 Bernardin of Sienna, of a person of quality, that  
 having visited all the holy places of Palestine,  
 died with a transport of love, after he had  
 revered the said footsteps.

Q. What is our duty to Christ as he is seated  
 at the right-hand of his Father?

A. 1. Frequently and more especially on this  
 feast, to adore him, as doing there for us the func-  
 tions of Mediator, Advocate, and Priest; and to  
 rejoice in his glory. *Heb. ix. 15, 24. 1 John, ii.*  
*2. Psalm xlvi.*

2. To beg a share in that blessing he gave this  
 day to his apostles.

3. To encourage ourselves to serve God faith-  
 fully in prospect of heaven, which our Lord opened  
 to us on this day.

4. To live in a continual expectation of the Son  
 of God's return to us. *John, xiv. 3. 1 Thess. i.*  
*10. Tit. ii. 13. Luke, xii. 36.*

5. To despise this world with all its vanities, as  
 a place of banishment, and raise our hearts towards  
 heaven our country, where Christ, as our precur-  
 sor, entered on this day. *John, xiv. 2. Heb. vi.*  
*20., ix. 24., xi. 13. Col. iii. 1, 2. 1 Pet. ii. 11.*  
*Psalm xxiii. xli. lxxii. lxxxiii. cxxi. cxxxvi.*

Q. What think you then of the Protestant cus-  
 tom of employing this day in examining and fixing  
 the marks and limits of their lands?

A. Their solitude for the earth on a day, which  
 of all others admonishes them to fix their thoughts

on heaven, shows they have retained nothing of that spirit of the ancient Church, which, as St. Austin says, (*Epist.* 118.) did yearly celebrate with great devotion the ascension of our Saviour.

Q. Is there any thing more to be done ?

A. We are from this day to begin our preparation, as the apostles did, for the receiving of the Holy Ghost, by retirement, prayer, spiritual reading, and fraternal charity. *Acts*, i. 12, 13, 14. *Luke*, xxiv. 53.

Q. What is proper to be read on this feast ?

A. The first chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles*, and *ch.* xlvii. xlviii. xlix. of the third book of the *Following of Christ*.

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SECT. 27.—*Pentecost.*

Q. WHEN did the Holy Ghost descend upon the apostles ?

A. On *Pentecost-day* ; that is to say, *Whitsunday*, the fiftieth day after Easter, about nine in the morning. *Acts*, ii.

Q. Where were the apostles at that time ?

A. In Jerusalem, assembled together at prayers, in company with the blessed Virgin, several holy women, and the rest of the disciples.

Q. How did this descent happen ?

A. A great noise was heard, like a violent wind from heaven, which filled the room where the disciples were assembled.

Q. And what followed ?

A. The Holy Ghost in the appearance of fiery and divided tongues, rested upon every one of the company, enabled them to speak all languages, and filled them with zeal and courage.

Q. Did the Jews hear this noise ?

A. Yes ; and upon hearing it came to see what the matter was.

Q. And what did they find ?

A. They found that the apostles were no longer afraid of them, but publicly proclaimed the wonders of almighty God, and the name of Jesus, in all languages.

Q. Were the Jews sensible that they spoke all languages ?

A. Yes. For Jews of all nations were then assembled at Jerusalem to keep their feast of Pentecost.

Q. What was the Jewish Pentecost ?

A. A feast in memory of the law given on Mount Sinai, in thunder and lightning, fifty days after the deliverance out of Egypt ; and on this day they made a solemn offering to God, of bread made of the first fruits of their wheat harvest. *Exod. xix. 16, &c. Lev. xxiii. 16, &c.*

Q. What relation had the Jewish Pentecost to our ?

A. It was a type or figure of ours. For on this day the Holy Ghost writ the new Law, accompanied with a new kind of noise and fire, in the hearts of the faithful, and by their mouths published it to the world. The first fruits likewise of the apostles' spiritual harvest were this day offered to God.

Q. What meant the noise of a violent wind ?

A. It signified that religious terror, which makes way for divine love ; and also the effects of the Holy Ghost upon those that receive him.

Q. What meant the fire ?

A. That the Holy Ghost is a spiritual fire, which enlightens the soul, purifies and inflames the heart,

consumes whatever is corruptible in it, and raises consecrates, and sacrifices it to God.

Q. Why tongues of fire, with the gift of languages?

A. To express how the Holy Ghost inspired the apostles with science and zeal, in order to enlighten and inflame the minds of men, and to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world.

Q. What were the first fruits of the apostles spiritual harvest?

A. Three thousand souls, that were converted by St. Peter's first sermon; and five thousand by his second. *Acts, ii. 41., iv. 4.*

Q. How did the first converts live?

A. A life of admirable sanctity.

Q. In what was it admirable?

A. 1. They all seemed to have but one heart and soul.

2. They lived in common, selling all they had, and giving their monies to the apostles, to be distributed according to every one's necessities.

3. They rejoiced in suffering for the sake of Christ.

4. They met daily to pray, to hear the apostles preach, and to receive the blessed Sacrament.

Q. But what was most to be admired in the new framed Church?

A. The strange alteration in the apostles.

Q. What kind of men were the apostles before they received the Holy Ghost?

A. Ignorant and fearful.

Q. But afterwards?

A. So learned as to be able to expound the Scriptures and divine mysteries; so courageous as openly to proclaim Christ's resurrection, which

they confirmed by miracles, and by suffering persecution and death itself, in testimony of the truth they preached.

Q. How are we to sanctify this feast?

A. 1. By adoring the Holy Ghost.

2. By begging he would vouchsafe to write upon our hearts the law of God and the maxims of Jesus Christ; to give us a love and lively faith of them, and courage to confess them in our way of living.

Q. What are we to beg besides?

A. Grace to imitate the first Christians.

1. In cheerfully suffering injuries and persecutions.

2. In fraternal charity.

3. In attending to prayer and the word of God.

4. In contempt of earthly riches, and in giving alms.

5. In frequenting with due dispositions the holy Communion.

Q. What particular intention ought we to have on this feast, in approaching to the blessed Eucharist?

A. To receive with the adorable body of Jesus Christ his holy and life-giving spirit, without which his flesh, as he says, *avails nothing*; and this in order to obtain the before-mentioned graces. *John vi. 64.*

Q. Is there any thing else to be done?

A. It is advisable to meditate upon and to renew the obligations we contracted in receiving the holy sacraments of baptism and confirmation.

Q. What is the sum of these obligations?

A. That we demean ourselves as the children and soldiers of Jesus Christ, and labour for such

a purity of soul as becomes the temples of the Holy Ghost.

Q. What is proper to be read on this feast?

A. The sermons which made the first converts, and their lives and conversations, in the *Acts of the Apostles*, ii, iii. iv. The obligations and effects of baptism. *Rom.* vi. And the *Following of Christ*, b. iii. c. v.

Q. Is Monday a holy-day of obligation?

A. No: It is a day of particular devotion only; but was formerly a holy-day of obligation, for the reason assigned in the answer to the same question with regard to Easter week, p. 94.

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 SECT. 28.—*Ember-Days in Whitsun-Week.*

See Part 1. Section 16.

Q. WHAT is the reason that the Paschal time and the feast of Pentecost is concluded with three days' fast?

A. To give us to understand that the principal fruit we are to reap from the Church's solemnities, and from those graces the Holy Ghost communicates to us, is the spirit of penance and mortification.

Q. What are we to beg for those whom the Church at this time promotes to holy orders?

A. That they may be, like her first ministers, irreproachable in their lives; filled with wisdom, fortitude, charity, and all the other gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Q. What are we to do in regard to the fruits of the earth?

A. 1. To thank God for his blessing upon

them during the spring season. 2. To beg he would be pleased to carry them through the summer to maturity.

Q. And what must we beg for ourselves?

A. That God would enable us, by the practice of good works, to bring forth the *fruits* of his holy Spirit, and of all those *graces* he has shed upon us in the festivals we have been celebrating.

SECT. 29.—*Trinity Sunday.*

Rom. xi. 33, 36. Tatt. xxviii. 18, 20.

Q. WHAT mystery does the Church celebrate on the first Sunday after Pentecost?

A. The prime mystery of our faith, namely, that of the most blessed *Trinity*.

Q. Is this the only day on which we adore the blessed Trinity?

A. Far be it from us to be guilty of so heinous a neglect.

Q. At what other times are we to adore the blessed Trinity?

A. Every day, especially every Sunday and holy-day, as being the sovereign object of our worship and adoration.

Q. Why then is this feast instituted?

A. That the faithful may excite and confirm their faith, make a public profession of their belief, and preserve themselves from those pestilential errors, which sap the very foundation of Christianity.

Q. Why is this feast kept on the octave of Pentecost?

A. To signify that the works of our redemption

and sanctification are common to all the three persons.

Q. What do you believe of the blessed Trinity?

A. I believe that the most blessed Trinity is one God in three distinct persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; who essentially possess the same greatness, power, wisdom, and eternity; and, in fine, an exact equality in all their infinite perfections.

Q. Why do we so frequently repeat these words, *In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?*

A. To put ourselves in mind, 1. That we were baptized in the name of one God in three distinct persons. 2. To dedicate all our actions to his honour. 3. To beg his grace for the well performance of them.

Q. Can this mystery be comprehended by human reason?

A. No. It is infinitely above the reach of our shallow reason.

Q. Why are we then obliged to believe it?

A. Because God has revealed it to his Church.

Q. Why does God oblige us to believe what we cannot comprehend?

A. Because his divine Majesty is pleased by this means to exercise our faith.

Q. What do you think of such as refuse to believe this or other mysteries, because their reason cannot comprehend them?

A. They foolishly act against the same reason they pretend to stand by.

Q. Why so?

A. Because their reason tells them that God in his own nature, power, and wisdom, must

certainly transcend their weak capacity; since even the effects of nature (which are the works of his hand) are above their comprehension.

Q. Is Faith then superior to all human reasoning?

A. Much so; because it has no other foundation than the truth of God himself; and therefore admitting no doubts, can no ways stagger through unbelief.

Q. What is to be done on this solemnity?

A. I. We are to call to mind what the Church teaches concerning the most blessed Trinity; to make acts of faith as to all she teaches; and for that purpose to say devoutly the Apostles', or Nicene, or St. Athanasius's Creed, or the *Te Deum*.

3. To acknowledge with gratitude, that all that has been done in our behalf, has been the work and mercy of the most holy Trinity.

3. To adore the divine goodness, power, and wisdom, and to thank the blessed Trinity for the work of our redemption, the memory of which we have now celebrated in all its mysteries.

4. To confess that we are bound to love, serve, seek, and honour one God in three Persons.

5. To beg the grace of God, that by a constant fidelity and zeal in all that belongs to his commandments and service, we may acknowledge the power he has over us, the blessing we have received, and the entire dependence we have on his holy will.

Q. What beside?

A. It is likewise proper to exercise our faith as to all the other incomprehensible mysteries of our religion, and to make an humble and entire

submission of our reason to God and to his Church, whose children we are by baptism.

Q. What ought we farther to consider on this feast?

A. 1. The dignity and honour we receive by baptism, by a near relation to the most blessed Trinity. 2. The obligations which arise from that same dignity.

Q. What is our relation by baptism to the blessed Trinity?

A. By receiving that sacrament we become the children of God the Father, the brothers, co-heirs, and members of Jesus Christ, and the temples of the Holy Ghost.

Q. What does each of the divine persons expect from us upon account of the aforesaid dignity?

A. 1. The Father expects from us a filial love and fear, an exact obedience, a zeal for his glory and for the interest of his kingdom.

2. Jesus Christ, a strict conformity to his doctrine and example.

3. The Holy Ghost, that we preserve a great purity of conscience; that we faithfully comply with his graces and inspirations; and that with particular care we avoid those sins which stand in the greatest opposition to his purity and goodness.

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SEOT. 30.—\**Feast of Corpus-Christi.*

1 Cor. xi. 23, 30. Job. vi. 55, 59.

Q. WHAT is the intention of this feast?

A. To commemorate and give thanks for that great mystery of mercy which Christ left us at his last supper; when, consecrating the bread

and wine, he gave us his Body and Blood under those appearances, for the remembrance of his passion, for the comfort of his Church, and for the food of our souls.

Q. When is this feast kept?

A. On the first Thursday after the octave of Pentecost.

Q. Why has the Church made choice of that day?

A. Because having celebrated at Pentecost the feast of her own birth, she applies herself in the week following to the honouring of that great mystery, whereby she is nourished, strengthened, and perfected.

Q. Did she not commemorate the institution of the blessed Sacrament on Maundy-Thursday?

A. She did. But being then principally taken up in contemplating the sufferings of her spouse, our Saviour, she has thought fit to dedicate another day to the memory of so amiable a mystery.

Q. When was this feast instituted?

A. It was instituted in the 13th age, in opposition to those heretics who began to attack the Church's ancient faith of this divine mystery.

Q. How may we sanctify this feast and its octave?

A. 1. By strengthening our faith of this mystery. 2. By devoutly assisting at the Church's service. 3. By a holy communion. 4. By considering what Christ requires of us in relation to the Holy Sacrament, and what he teaches us as he resides there. 5. By a daily visit to him in the same holy mysteries.

Q. How are we to strengthen our faith of this mystery?

A. 1. By thoroughly informing ourselves of the many wonders that are here wrought. 2. By making acts of faith as to all the Church teaches.

Q. To what parts of her divine service does the Church in Catholic countries call the faithful on this solemnity?

A. To the holy Mass, benediction, sermon, vespers, and procession.

Q. How are we to make our communion?

A. With respect, gratitude, charity, and joy; and with such exactness as may help to repair all past neglects, and be a model for the future.

Q. What does Jesus Christ require of us in relation to the blessed Sacrament?

A. That we examine into, and reform our defects in hearing Mass, in communicating, and in our behaviour at church.

Q. What does he teach us in the blessed Sacrament?

A. Charity, patience, and humility on all occasions, especially in the church; to make a sacrifice of our body and soul, and of all that we have, to God; to unite with him in endeavouring with all assiduity to destroy sin, since it was for its destruction that he died on the cross.

Q. What then must be said of those who obstinately persevering in a sinful course, pretend to join with the Church in paying homage to Jesus Christ in the holy Sacrament?

A. They must certainly be wicked children, disloyal servants, and false adorers, who, whilst they bow down before God, only serve the devil.

Q. Why are we to visit Jesus Christ in the blessed Sacrament?

A. Because gratitude and our interest oblige us to it.

Q. In what manner ought we to address ourselves to him?

A. With respect, love, gratitude, confidence, and all the other pious affections that are apt to ensue, from the consideration of the titles he bears with reference to us.

Q. What are those titles?

A. Our king, mediator, redeemer, advocate, high-priest, and victim.

Q. What other titles has he?

A. He is our head, our father, brother, spouse and master; our guide, pastor, comforter, and physician.

Q. Has he any more?

A. Yes. He is the way, the truth, and the life; the light, the door, the vine, the bread of life, and, in fine, our judge and our last end.

Q. What use is to be made of the consideration of those titles?

A. During each visit we should converse with Christ, as present under one or two of them, in order to learn our duty to him, and what we are to hope for and beg of his divine mercy.

Q. Why is the blessed Sacrament reserved in the tabernacle?

A. 1. That whenever it is necessary, it may be carried to the sick, according to the primitive custom of the Church.

2. That the faithful may have the comfort of coming to adore their Saviour where he is present for their sakes.

Q. Why is the blessed Sacrament exposed at certain times?

A. 1. To invite the faithful to come and adore Jesus Christ.

2. In public calamities to present to God this pledge of his love towards us ; that in regard of his beloved Son he may be moved to show us mercy.

Q. Why is the blessed Sacrament carried in procession ?

A. 1. To celebrate a kind of triumph in honour of Jesus Christ. *Jos.* vi. 25.

2. Thereby to repair the many affronts and irreverences offered to him in this blessed Sacrament.. *2 Kings*, vi. 1., *Easth.* vi. 11.

3. To obtain by his presence a blessing upon all the places through which he passes.

Q. What is the *Benediction* ?

A. A service introduced by the Church in these later ages, in order to enliven the faith and devotion of her children.

Q. Whence has it the name of *Benediction* ?

A. The word *Benediction*, as likewise the French word, *Salut*, are two names borrowed from the two Latin words *Salus* and *Benedictio* in the hymn of the blessed Sacrament.

Q. Does the Priest's making a cross with the holy Sacrament upon the people, give grace to their souls ?

A. No ; for it is not a sacramental action.

Q. Why then is it done ?

A. To excite them, 1. To a public profession of their faith by acts of adoration.

2. To an increase of love and confidence, by reminding them, that for love of them he resides in the blessed Sacrament.

3. To beg his grace and blessing upon their souls, and particularly strength to carry their cross after him.

SECT. 31.—*Ember Days in September.*

Q. WHEN do these fall?

A. On the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after the 14th day of September.

Q. What does the Church read for the gospel on Saturday, when her ministers are ordained?

A. The parable of the fig-tree, which, being ordered by the master for its barrenness to be cut up, was at the gardener's request permitted to stand another year, in expectation of its bearing fruit.

Q. What does the Church intend by making choice of this parable?

A. She seems thereby to intimate, that the faithful ought to beg for her ministers an industrious and tender charity for their flock.

Q. Why are they to beg this charity for them?

A. That by their prayers, penances, and labours, they may obtain pardon for sinners, whom God in his justice is ready to condemn; and that they may spend the time they have gained for a reprieve, in bringing these poor souls to a sincere conversion, which shows itself in worthy fruits of penance.

Q. What notice is to be taken of the fruits of the earth?

A. We must thank God for the harvest that has been reaped, and beg grace to make a right use of it; as likewise to labour for that spiritual and incorruptible nourishment, which will bring us to a state of immortality.

## A PRACTICAL CATECHISM.

### PART III.\*

#### THE FEASTS OF THE SAINTS.

SECT. I.—*St. Andrew, Apostle*†—*Nov. 30.*

Rom. x. 10, 18. Matt. iv, 18, 22.

Q. WHAT was the manner of St. Andrew's vocation?

A. Hearing what St. John Baptist had said of Christ, he followed him, and soon after brought his brother Peter to him. *Jo. i. 35, &c.*

Q. What does this teach us?

A. That we are to imitate the charity of St. Andrew, in communicating to our neighbours those lights of divine truth which God has mercifully shed upon us.

Q. What had St. John said of Christ?

A. That as for himself, he was not worthy to untie his shoe; that Christ was the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, and the Son of God—*v. 27, &c.*

Q. What farther account have we of him from the holy Scripture?

A. That at his and his brother St. Peter's request, Jesus cured the mother-in-law of St. Peter, who was ill of a fever. *Mark, i. 30. 31.*

Q. And what does this teach us?

A. *It shows us, says St. Ambrose, how much*

*Jesus Christ is inclined to hear the prayers which the angels, apostles, and martyrs offer him, for the spiritual health of those who make themselves worthy of their intercession. De Vidius. t. 4. p. 505.*

Q. What was St. Andrew's death?

A. After he had preached the faith of Christ, he suffered for it upon a cross.

Q. How was he affected to the cross?

A. Upon seeing it (as he was led to his execution,) he is said to have cried out, *O beloved Cross! which for this long time I have most earnestly desired, receive the disciple of him who died upon thee.*

Q. What became of St. Andrew's body?

A. It was, in the year 357, removed from Patras, in Achaia, where he suffered, (together with the body of St. Luke,) to Constantinople, and having wrought great miracles in all places where it stopped on the way, it was received with incredible joy by all the people. *St. Paulin. Car. xxvi. S. Hier. Chron. et Vir. Illus. c. 7. In Vig. c. 2.*) It is stated that it now remains at Amalsi, in the kingdom of Naples, where there constantly distils from his tomb a medicinal liquor; and Baronius assures us, that this miracle is attested beyond contradiction.

Q. What devotion is most suitable to this feast?

A. 1. To encourage ourselves to follow Christ by the consideration of the same motives which made St. Andrew his disciple.

2. After the example of this Saint, to accept of crosses and afflictions for sake of Christ.

Q. How are we to suffer crosses?

A. Not only with patience and resignation, but with joy and gladness, as this Saint did.

Q. Why with patience?

A. Because our sins deserve more afflictions than the whole world can bring upon us.

Q. Why with resignation ?

A. Because nothing happens but by the permission or appointment of our omnipotent Father ; who best knows what is for our good.

Q. Why are we to rejoice in afflictions ?

A. 1. Because by them we become more nearly associated to our head Christ Jesus. 2. We have the best security of our being in the way to heaven ; and 3, of receiving there an unspeakable weight of glory.

Q. What are we to beg this day ?

A. 1. Grace to be always in readiness to advance the spiritual good of our neighbour, that so he may never suffer through our indifference or neglect. 2. Courage and resolution to break through all those oppositions that would prevent us from following Christ. 3. Constancy and perseverance in carrying our cross for his sake.

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SECT. 2.—\**Immaculate Conception of the B. V. Mary.—December 8.*

Prov. viii. 22, 25. Matt. i. 1, 16.

Q. WHY has the Church appointed this day as a festival of joy and thanksgiving ?

A. Because she looks on the blessed Virgin, in this first moment of her existence, as the morning star, which, after the long night of sin that had covered the earth for so many thousand years, began to rise, and foretell the near approach of day.

Q. Was the Conception of the blessed Virgin immaculate ?

A. Yes ; “ *It is a dogma of faith that the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace of God, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, was preserved, exempt from all stain of original sin.*”

Q. Does the Church compel us to believe this ?

A. Yes, the words which I have just repeated are the exact words of the definition, as decreed by the Church, through its visible Head on earth, Pius the IXth.

Q. When was this Dogma proclaimed ?

A. On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the 8th of December, A. D. 1854.

Q. Why did the Church proclaim this Dogma ?

A. To silence the clamours of the *impious*, and *heretical*, who blasphemously opposed a truth, believed in, by the faithful in all ages.

Q. What reasons induced the faithful to believe in the Immaculate Conception of the B. V. Mary ?

A. 1. Her being preserved (according to the belief of the Church) her whole life-time from the least venial sin.

2. That as God had designed her to be the mother of his only begotten Son, it is highly improbable he would suffer that flesh to be polluted with sin, from which the body of his Son was to be framed.

3. It is but reasonable to believe that the blessed Virgin was more favoured than St. John Baptist, who was sanctified in his mother's womb.

Q. If the blessed Virgin was conceived without sin, how can Jesus Christ be a Saviour with regard to her ?

A. Because she had been subject to original sin, had not the grace of Jesus Christ preserved her from it.

Q. What advantage was this to Mary?

A. God having taken the entire possession of her this first moment, she was freed from concupiscence, and ever after exempt from the least fault, being always careful, not only to preserve this grace, but to merit an increase thereof, by faithfully corresponding with it.

Q. What instruction may we gather from thence?

A. That we ought to use all possible care to preserve in our souls the sanctifying grace which we received in baptism, or recovered by the sacrament of penance, that we may imitate the blessed Virgin in the esteem she had of divine grace.

2. That if it be a misery to be guilty of original sin, it is a much greater, nay absolute madness, wilfully to make ourselves God's enemies by the commission and diabolical perseverance in the state of mortal sin.

Q. How comes it that many Christians so easily commit and continue in mortal sin?

A. It is because they do not consider what it is to be the object of an infinite hatred and omnipotent anger.

Q. What other instruction do you find?

A. That we cannot begin too soon to sanctify our souls, in order to prepare them for the receiving of Jesus Christ in the holy Sacrament, and that he may be formed in us by his grace.

Q. How is this preparation to be made?

A. By practising those virtues by which the blessed Virgin prepared herself for receiving the message brought her by the angel Gabriel.

Q. What were those virtues ?

A. 1. An ardent love of God and her neighbour. 2. A contempt of the world. 3. A perfect hatred of impurity and all other sins. 4. Humility 5. Conformity to the will of God, &c.

Q. How may these virtues be acquired ?

A. By daily recommending ourselves (but particularly on this feast, and during the rest of Advent) to the blessed Virgin, that by her intercession, the Holy Ghost, who overshadowed her, may come and plant them in our souls.

SECT. 3.—*St. Thomas, Apostle.* †—*Dec. 21.*

Eph. ii. 19. John, xx. 24, 29.

Q. WHAT does the Scripture remark concerning this apostle ?

A. His courage, his incredulity, and his repentance.

Q. On what occasion did he signalize his courage ?

A. Upon our Lord's communicating to his disciples his design of returning into Judea, (where he had lately been ill treated by the Jews,) for the raising his friend Lazarus from the dead. *John, xi. 8.*

Q. What was the consequence of this declaration of our Lord ?

A. When the rest of the apostles dissuaded him from the journey, lest the Jews should stone him, as they had before attempted, St. Thomas encouraged them to follow their Master, in these words: *Let us go too, and die with him. John, xi. 16.*

Q. When was St. Thomas incredulous ?

A. After our Saviour's resurrection ; when, notwithstanding the other apostles assured him

they had seen their Master alive again, he openly declared, that unless he had the utmost evidence of sense, by putting his finger into the holes in his hands and sides, he would not believe it. *John*, xx. 25.

Q. What did St. Thomas upon this ?

A. He immediately believed and confessed Christ's divinity, exclaiming, *My Lord ! and my God !*

Q. And what reply did our Saviour make to this profession of Thomas's faith ?

A. That his believing, after such a demonstrative evidence, was neither so praise-worthy nor meritorious as the faith of those who had not the like sensible conviction. *John*, xx. 29.

Q. What do we learn from St. Thomas's courage ?

A. Not to be frightened by any dangers, (whether of life, interest, or reputation,) from our resolution of following Christ ; but to encourage ourselves with those words of the Saint, *Let us go and die with him.*

Q. On what other occasion may we use those words ?

A. As often as we go to Mass, thereby to put ourselves in mind, that we are to die to the world, and to make an offering of ourselves with the sacrifice of the altar.

Q. What does St. Thomas's unbelief teach us ?

A. 1. It convinces us beyond all doubt, by the most sensible evidence, that the very same body in which our Lord suffered, was raised again to life.

2. That we are firmly to believe whatever the Church teaches, without expecting miracles, or consulting our senses of seeing or feeling, for a confirmation of her doctrine.

3. That we are to live by faith, whether spiritual comforts be given or denied us.

Q. What use may be made of St. Thomas's confession, *Dominus meus et Deus meus*; *My Lord and my God*?

A. It is an aspiration very proper to be used on all occasions; especially when we are under trouble of mind, or assaulted with temptations against faith or hope; or when we are approaching to the blessed Sacrament.

Q. Where did St. Thomas preach the Gospel?

A. In Parthia; and his relics were kept at Edessa, in Mesopotamia, where there was, in the fourth age, a famous church of his name. *Euseb. l. 3. c. i. Rufin. l. 11. c. v. Socr. l. 4. c. xviii.*

Q. What further account of him have we from ancient history?

A. That Abgarus, king of Edessa, having desired Jesus Christ to come and cure him of a disease, our Saviour answered him by letter, that after his ascension he would send one of his disciples to perform the cure; and that afterwards St. Thomas was directed by an inspiration to send St. Thaddeus, one of the seventy disciples, who, curing Abgarus, converted him and the whole town, which preserved its faith for several ages. *Euseb. l. 1. c. xiii.*

Q. What ought we to beg by the intercession of this Saint?

A. 1. Courage to overcome all difficulties in the way of salvation.

2. A firm and lively faith for ourselves, and for all who labour under doubts or unbelief.

3. That if unhappily we should fall into sin, Christ by his grace would quickly call us back to repentance.

SECT. 4.—*St Stephen.* †—*Dec. 26.*

Acts, vi. 8, 10, and vii. 54, 59. Matt. xxiii. 34, 39.

Q. WHO was St. Stephen?

A. One of the seven first deacons, and the first martyr for the faith of Christ.

Q. What account does the Scripture give of him?

A. That he was full of faith and the Holy Ghost, of grace and courage, Whereby he did great wonders; and that he was endued with an irresistible wisdom when he preached the faith of Christ. *Acts*, vi. 5, 8, 10.

Q. Did he then convert all that heard him?

A. He confounded them, but they were not converted; though at the same time they saw his face shine like that of an angel—*v.* 15.

Q. Did he suffer the people to continue in their sins and errors, for fear of incurring their displeasure by speaking the truth?

A. No; he severely rebuked them for their obstinacy; and Christ, to reward and increase his courage, appeared to him through the opened heavens. *Acts*, vii. 51.

Q. What did the Jews, when St. Stephen told them he saw Jesus in heaven?

A. They could bear him no longer, but dragged him out of the city, and stoned him to death as a blasphemer. *Acts*, vii. 56.

Q. What did St. Stephen while they were stoning him?

A. He prayed for himself and his enemies.

Q. How for himself?

A. In these words: *Domine Jesu, suscipe spiritum meum; Lord Jesus, receive my soul.*

Q. How for his enemies?

A. In these words : *Lord, do not lay this sin to their charge.*

Q. What was the effect of this prayer ?

A. The miraculous conversion of St. Paul, who by taking care of the clothes of those that stoned St. Stephen, in a manner stoned him by the bands of them all.

Q. When did St. Stephen suffer ?

A. The same year as our Saviour ; and his feast was solemnly kept in the fourth age (at the latest) the day after Christmas-day.

Q. Why the day after Christmas-day ?

A. To intimate that men would never have had courage to die for God, if God had not been made man, to die for men.

Q. How are we to celebrate this feast ?

A. By thanking Almighty God, 1. For the grace, courage, and wisdom with which he inspired this Proto-martyr. 2. For the crown of glory with which he has rewarded his sufferings. 3. For the example he has given us in this saint of so many admirable virtues.

Q. What are we to beg of God by the intercession of this Saint ?

A. 1. The spirit of wisdom. 2. Zeal for truth. 3. Courage and patience under persecution. 4. Grace to pardon injuries, and love our enemies.

Q. Which is that virtue which the Church seems most desirous we should learn of him, by inserting a prayer for it in the Collect of the Feast ?

A. The forgiving of injuries.

Q. Why are we to pardon injuries ?

A. Because our Saviour requires it, as a condition without which we cannot expect the pardon of our own sins from him, and he has consequently

made it a necessary condition of our salvation. *Matt.* vi. 15. ; xviii. 35. 1. *Cor.* xiii. 2.

Q. Wherein does this duty consist ?

A. Not only in wishing and doing our enemies no harm, but in being ready to show them all offices of charity, because they are men and Christians, our neighbours and our brethren.

Q. When may it be hoped that we have sincerely pardoned injuries, and that we love our enemies ?

A. 1. When by a civil letter, a proper mediator, or a friendly conference, we endeavour to compose the difference.

2. When we seek occasion of speaking to them, and do it with easiness and freedom.

3. When we speak well of them, to such especially as are like to inform them of all we say.

4. When we seek opportunities of being serviceable to them, or to their friends.

Q. For whom must we pray besides ourselves on this feast ?

A. For such as are obstinate against truth ; for all that are at variance, and particularly for our own enemies ; and for all that are chosen to any Church ministry, that they may resemble St. Stephen in charity, courage, and zeal for the truth.

Q. When was the body of St. Stephen found ?

A. In the year 415 ; and innumerable miracles were wrought by his relics, many of which are attested by *St. Evodius*, l. 1. c. i. ii. iv. *St. Augustin de Civ. Dei.* l. 22, c. viii. *Ep.* ciii. *Serm.* cclxxxvii. *Serm.* cccxvii. *Serm.* cccxix. *Serm.* lxxix. *Serm.* xciv. *St. Prosp.* l. 4. *de Promiss.* c. v.

Q. How were these miracles wrought ?

A. As all others have been, in the name and by the power of Jesus Christ; for it is from him that we receive favours by the saints; and therefore, that our piety may not degenerate into superstition, we must always distinguish the servant from his Lord, and without stopping at the Saint, advance by him to God himself; for the Saint *prays* in the quality of a servant, and it is God who, as Lord and Master, *grants* what and to whom he pleases. *St. Aug. Serm. cccxviii. cccxix.*

SECT. 5.—*St. John, Evangelist.* †—*Dec. 27*

Eccl. xv. 1, 6. John xxi. 19, 24.

Q. WHAT account does the Scripture give of him?

A. It tells us that St. John, with his brother St. James, being invited by Christ to follow him, they immediately left their father and all they had, to be his disciples. *Matt. iv. 21.*

Q. At what age was St. John called?

A. In the five or six and twentieth year of his age.

Q. What lesson is this to young people?

A. That they ought, without loss of time, to apply themselves to a virtuous life, and suffer no human consideration to be a hinderance to their good designs.

Q. How was St. John favoured by Jesus Christ?

A. He was chosen, with his brother and St. Peter, to be an eye-witness of his transfiguration, of his agony, and of his raising to life the daughter of Jairus. *Matt. xvii. 1. Mark xiv. 33. Luke viii. 51*

Q. What may we gather from hence?

A. 1. That we are not to look for spiritual comforts any farther than the may be necessary to support us in afflictions.

2. That to encourage ourselves under trials, we must look up to the glory of the next life.

3. That to rise from mortal sin to the life of grace, our contrition must be grounded upon motives of love.

Q. What name did our Saviour give to St. John and his brother ?

A. He called them *Boanerges* ; that is to say, the Sons of Thunder, in consideration of their zeal for his glory. *Mark*, iii. 17.

Q. But did not their zeal sometimes carry them too far ?

A. Yes. Christ twice reprehended them for it.

Q. On what occasion ?

A. 1. Meeting with one who cast out devils, though he was not of the number of Christ's followers, they forbade him ; but Christ told them they did wrong. *Luke*, ix. 49, 50.

2. The Samaritans happening once not to entertain our Saviour, they were for calling down fire from heaven to destroy them ; but our Saviour said to them : *You know not to what manner of spirit you are of ; the Son of man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them.* *Luke*, ix. 54, 55, 56.

Q. What doctrine do you infer from these reprehensions ?

A. 1. That we are not to envy others for doing good ; nor be so proud as to think nothing well done, but, what we ourselves have a hand in.

2. That if the injuries done to Christ will not warrant our revenge, much less should we be exasperated for any affront done to ourselves.

3. That we must be very careful not to lessen the reputation of God's ministers.

Q. What sin can it be in me, to relate what I have heard others say of them?

A. It may be a very great sin; for it may in effect prevent them from being instrumental in casting devils out of the souls of men.

Q. What other instances are there in holy Scripture of Christ's singular regard to St. John?

A. Our Saviour deputed him, with St. Peter, to prepare the Paschal Supper, (*Luke*, xxii. 8.) at which he granted him the privilege of leaning upon his breast; (*John*, txxi. 20.) and from the cross he substituted him the Son of the blessed Virgin in his own stead, committing him to her care when he was leaving the world. xix. 26, 27.

Q. What lessons have we here?

A. 1. That a lively faith and ardent charity are requisite for a due preparation to communion; and that we are to entertain our Saviour with a most tender affection.

2. That if we hope to obtain the favour of Jesus, and the motherly protection of the blessed Virgin, we must with our utmost care avoid (even on its least appearances or occasions) the sin of impurity.

Q. Why so?

A. Because it was St. John's perpetual virginity that endeared him so much to our blessed Saviour. *St. Hier. l. contra Jovin.*

Q. What virtues has St. John particularly recommended in his writings?

A. A love of Jesus, of truth, and of our neighbour; and an aversion to sin and the world.

Q. What are we to beg of God by his intercession ?

A. The aforesaid virtues.

Q. Where did St. John exercise his apostolical office after our Saviour's ascension.

A. Chiefly at Ephesus, and in its neighbourhood; whence he was sent bound to Rome, for his faith, and there, by Domitian's order, cast into a cauldron of boiling oil, but was miraculously preserved.

Q. Had this miracle any influence on the emperor ?

A. It did not hinder him from banishing him into the island of Patmos, from whence he returned to Ephesus, at that emperor's death, eighteen months after; and died there in the year of our Lord 99.

Q. What may we gather from hence ?

A. 1. That Christ exempts not his greatest favourites from sufferings.

2. That miracles, without the grace of God, are insufficient to conversion. *John vi. 44.*

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SECT. 6.—*The Holy Innocents.* †—*Dec. 28.*

Rev. xiv. 1, 5. Matt. ii. 13, 18.

Q. WHAT were these Innocents ?

A. The infants murdered by Herods's orders, when among the rest he hoped to destroy our new-born Jesus. These the Church has, in all ages, revered as real martyrs of Jesus Christ, though massacred before the use of reason.

Q. What may we learn from the sufferings of these Innocents ?

A. That whatever injury God permits the wicked to exercise against the just, it is for the good of those that suffer it; and therefore, that we should never yield to an excess of grief or disquiet when visited by afflictions, but rather wait with patience under all the appointments of God, in hopes of the recompense he has promised.

Q. Why does the Church express a kind of mourning on this feast, by the ornaments of her altars?

A. 1. To express the sorrow she still conceives upon remembering Herod's barbarity.

2. Because she looks upon this first persecution raised by Herod against Christ, as a prelude to those that were to follow, till his death and passion.

3. In testimony of her sorrow to see so many Christians imitate the Jews and Herod, in persecuting Jesus from his very birth.

Q. What Christians do you mean?

A. 1. Those who by sin put Christ to death, almost as soon as he has begun by grace to live in their souls.

2. Those who by bad example destroy the baptismal innocence of children.

3. Those who upon festivals pretend to unite in devotion with the Church, but effectually murder Christ by their sacrilegious communion.

4. The great number of mothers, who prove no better than so many Herods to their children.

Q. How does this happen?

A. 1. By laying them in the same bed with themselves or their nurses; where, every night, for many months, they are in danger of being overlaid.

2. By unnaturally sending their children out to be nursed by a stranger, not without danger to

their health and life, and frequently to their salvation. Those two cases, however, admit of many exceptions, where necessity occurs.

3. By an excessive fondness and yielding to their children's inclinations; which renders them ungovernable, to the destruction of both soul and body.

4. By bad example, or a mere worldly education or, by giving them no education whatsoever.

Q. What are parents to do on this feast?

A. 1. To examine how they have discharged their duty to their children, and resolve upon an amendment of past neglect.

2. To offer up their children to almighty God, and to beg he would rather take them out of the world, than suffer them to pursue evil ways and rebel against him.

Q. And what are children to do?

A. 1. To beg that God would reward their parents for the care they have taken in their education; or pardon them, in case they have neglected it.

2. To offer themselves to be his faithful servants, and to beg they may rather die than ever live to offend him by any mortal sin.

Q. What may all in general beg of God by the intercession of the Holy Innocents?

A. 1. That no one, in any of the aforesaid ways, may be guilty of Herod's sin.

2. That we all may be qualified for heaven, by becoming as *children* in humility and simplicity, in docility and submission; and in being strangers to all that is sinful. *Matt. xviii. 3.*

SECT, 7.—*St. Thomas of Canterbury.* †—Dec. 29.

Heb. v. 1, 6. John, x. 11, 16.

Q. WHO was St. Thomas ?

A. An Archbishop of Canterbury, who after a tedious banishment, was murdered in his own cathedral at Vespers.

Q. What was the occasion of his sufferings ?

A. His refusing to subscribe to such laws as he judged injurious to the Church.

Q. What proofs are there for his death having been *precious in the sight of God* ?

A. The many glorious miracles performed at his tomb, which were deservedly received by our ancestors as so many authentic attestations from heaven of his sanctity and the justice of his cause.

Q. What lesson has this martyr left us ?

A. A lesson of constancy and courage in the discharge of our several duties ; and that no human respects ought to over-rule our conscience.

Q. Whom are we to pray for ?

A. 1. For the prelates and pastors of the Church of God. 2. For all who suffer for justice sake. 3. For our sovereign and our country.

Q. What are we to beg for our country ?

A. 1. That peace and charity may be established among us.

2. That we may be united in one faith, and live according to the gospel.

3. That God would remove his scourges from it ; preserve it from atheism and infidelity ; and make us all zealous for the propagation of justice, virtue, and truth.

SECT. 8.—*St. Sylvester.*—Dec. 31.

2 Tim. iv 1, 18. Luke xii. 35, 40.

Q. WHO was this Saint ?

A. He was a Bishop of Rome, in whose time Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, settled the Church in peace, after a persecution of three hundred years.

Q. What is the duty of this day ?

A. 1. To thank God for the peace of the Church.

2. To resolve to contribute, on our part, towards the extirpation of what remains of idolatry.

Q. What remains of idolatry do you mean ?

A. 1. The spending Sundays and Festivals in excesses and profaneness. 2. The preparing for Lent by a carnival of sinful extravagance and intemperance. 3. The abuse of churches in loose and worldly conversation. 4. The making use of charms for the recovery of health ; superstitious observations of days as lucky or unlucky ; going to fortune-tellers, believing dreams, &amp;c. All these are so many remnants of idolatry.

Q. For what are we to pray ?

A. For the peace of the Church, and the propagation of its faith among heathens and unbelievers ; and against both speculative and practical Arianism and other heresies.

Q. What was Arius's heresy ?

A. He denied the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Q. Where was he condemned ?

A. By the Bishops of the Catholic Church assembled in a Council at Nice.

Q. What mean you by practical Arianism ?

A. I mean those errors in life and practice,

which are so opposite to what Christ thought, that they seem to be an implicit denial of Christ being God.

Q. Can you point out some of those errors ?

A. The errors of pride, ambition, love of pleasure, interest, and ease, are all directly contrary to the maxims of God Incarnate.

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 SECT. 9.—*St. Bridget.*—*February 1.*

Ps. xlv, 14, 15. Wisdom, iv. 2.

Q. WHO was St. Bridget ?

A. The first abbess, and foundress of nunneries in Ireland.

Q. From whom did she receive the religious veil ?

A. From St. Mel, nephew and disciple of St. Patrick.

Q. Where did she establish her first residence, after embracing the religious life ?

A. At Kildare, under a large oak, where she built herself a cell, thence called Killdara, or the cell of the oak.

Q. What account has history handed down to us of her life and virtues ?

A. Though there are five different relations of her life, they contain little more than an enumeration of her wonderful miracles.

Q. Is she mentioned among the saints in the ancient martyrologies ?

A. She is, so early as the time of the venerable Bede, among the Saints of the 6th century ; and many churches in England and Ireland are dedicated under her name.

Q. Where was her body interred ?

A. At Downpatrick, where it was found in the year 1185; with the bodies of St. Patrick and St. Columb-Kill, and thence translated to the cathedral of the same city. But their monument was destroyed in the impious and sanguinary reign of Henry the VIII. The head of St. Bridget is now supposed to be in a college of Irish priests at Lisbon.

Q. What should we demand of God through the intercession of this saint ?

A. That he would vouchsafe to inspire all women with similar sentiments of religion, piety, and purity; which may render them, as well in the single as married state, like St. Bridget, ornaments of Christian society, and examples of every sublime virtue.

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SECT. 10.—*St. Matthias, Apostle.* †—*Feb. 24.*

Acts, i. 15, 26. Matt. xi. 25, 30.

Q. UPON what occasion was St. Matthias taken into the number of the apostles ?

A. Upon St. Peter's declaring, in a public assembly of all the faithful at Jerusalem, (as their head and guide,) the necessity of choosing one into the place of Judas, whose self-murder had occasioned a vacancy in the college of the apostles *Acts, i. 16, 20.*

Q. What recommended St. Matthias to the apostleship ?

A. A constant attendance upon our Saviour, from his baptism by St. John, till his ascension. *Acts, i. 21, 23.*

Q. What method was taken in the choice of this saint?

A. The whole assembly joined in prayer to God, *the searcher of hearts*, that he would point out to them which was the most acceptable.

Q. What may we learn from hence?

A. 1. In all difficult cases to consult God by prayer for direction.

2. That it highly concerns the faithful to be earnest in their supplications to almighty God, for such bishops and pastors as may inherit the spirit of the first apostles.

Q. Why does this so much concern the faithful?

A. Because our Saviour tells them, that *if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch. Matt. xv. 14.*

Q. What think you then of such as take no care to discharge their duty in this point?

A. They have great reason to fear, lest one time or other they should fall into the conduct of Judas, who would not pray for a Matthias.

Q. What devotion is suitable to this day?

A. 1. We are to thank God for the choice he made of this saint.

2. To humble ourselves in consideration of Judas's fall; and to place our whole confidence in God, who alone can support our weakness.

3. To beg that no motive of private interest, however fairly painted, may ever draw us from the obligation of truth and justice.

Q. And who ought particularly to make this prayer?

A. Wives, children, stewards, lawyers, overseers of the poor, and all that have undertaken any place of trust.

Q. What must we beg of God by the intercession of this saint, for the pastors of the Church ?

A. 1. That none may engage in the sacred ministry, but by the choice of heaven.

2. That he would be pleased to preserve such as are engaged, from Judas's avaricious spirit, and endue them with the disinterested, laborious, and zealous spirit of his holy apostles.

3. That he would inspire such as nominate to funds or benefices, to overlook all human respects, and present the persons they think best qualified.

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 SECT. 11.—*St. Patrick.* †—*March 17.*

Acts, xxii. 21 : vi. 10.

Q. IS St. Patrick's day a day of particular devotion ?

A. It is.

Q. Why so ?

A. Because he converted all Ireland to the faith of Christ, and thereby became its apostle.

Q. Of what country was St. Patrick ?

A. In a work of his still extant, called his Confession, he informs us that he was born at *Bonaven Taberniæ*, which seems to be the town of Kirk-Patrick, on the mouth of the river Cluyd, in Scotland, between Dunbriton and Glasgow.

Q. What means did Divine Providence make use of, to prepare him for the conversion of Ireland ?

A. It permitted him to be led away captive, in his sixteenth year, by barbarians, who took him into Ireland, where he was obliged to keep cattle, on the mountains and in the forests, in hunger

and nakedness, amidst rains, snows, and ice; while God, to whom he fervently prayed, filled him with an interior grace, which enabled him to bear his afflictions with patience, resignation, and holy joy.

Q. Did St. Patrick, after his freedom from captivity, receive any celestial admonitions to prepare him for the conversion of Ireland?

A. God manifested to him, by divers visions, that he destined him to that great work. He even thought he saw all the children in the country, even new-born infants, stretching out their hands, and piteously crying to him for relief.

Q. By whom was St. Patrick ordained bishop, and appointed to preach the faith of Christ in Ireland?

A. By Pope Celestine, about the year 431.

Q. What success attended the apostolic labours of St. Patrick?

A. He not only converted the whole country by his preaching and miracles, but by the assistance of Heaven, rendered it an island of Saints, which title it justly merited, and retained many ages.

Q. How long did St. Patrick continue his apostolic labours?

A. To the year 493, when, after preaching in every province, and in every particular part of the kingdom ordaining a necessary number of bishops, priests, &c. to serve the altar restoring sight to many blind, health to the sick, and raising nine dead persons to life, being 121 years old, he died, and was buried at Down, in Ulster, where his body was found, in a church of his name, in 1185, and translated to another part of the same church.

Q. What should we ask of God through his intercession ?

A. That he would preserve those rays of pure faith, which still subsist in this kingdom ; that he would open the eyes, and melt the hearts of those who persecute the catholics of Ireland for their holy Religion, and bring them back again to the bosom of the Church.

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SECT. 12.—*St. Joseph.*—*March 19.*

Eccl. xlv. 1, 6. Matt. i. 18, 21.

Q. WHO was St. Joseph ?

A. A poor carpenter, descended from the royal family of David ; the spouse of the blessed Virgin, and foster-father to the Son of God.

Q. What account does the Scripture give of him ?

A. It gives him the character of a *just man*.  
*Matt. i. 19.*

Q. What may we learn from hence ?

A. That sanctify and perfection is very consistent with a life of toil and labour.

Q. How may this sanctity be acquired ?

A. By setting St. Joseph before our eyes as a pattern for our imitation.

Q. As how ?

A. St. Joseph being just, we may conclude,  
1. That he joined innocence with his labour.

2. That he sanctified his work by daily prayer, and repeated oblations to almighty God.

3. That he discharged all the obligations of his calling with a cheerful submission to the will of God, who has enjoined labour as a penance upon the sons of Adam.

Q. How did St. Joseph behave himself to the blessed Virgin, before he was acquainted with the mystery of the Incarnation?

A. He had thoughts indeed of leaving her, but yet in so quiet a way, as not to cast the least blemish on her reputation; and this method he designed to take, because he was a *just man*. *Matt. i. 19.* And God was pleased to permit St. Joseph to be seized with this surprize, that this very suspicion of his, might be a proof to us of the Virgin's purity. *St. Chrysos. Hom. 4. in Matt.*

Q. What lesson does he here give us?

A. Not rashly to censure in thought, much less expose in words, whatever has an ill appearance in our neighbour's conduct.

Q. Why is so much care to be taken in the point of thinking or speaking ill of our neighbour?

A. That we may be *just*, as St. Joseph was.

Q. Where is the injustice in the liberty of censuring others?

A. It is an injustice, 1. With regard to God, as being an encroachment upon his divine prerogative of seaching the heart of man.

2. To our neighbour, for it is not doing as we would be done by.

3. To ourselves, since it provokes the severe judgment of God and man against us; for it is generally observed, that censorious persons are guilty of greater and more visible imperfections, than those upon whom they so freely cast their verdict. *Matt. vii. 2.*

Q. Did God leave his servant under these perplexities?

A. No: an angel was sent to inform him of the mystery, and that he should give the name of

Jesus to the infant God, *because he was to save his people from their sins.* *Matt. i. 21.* Thus assuring him both of the fidelity of his spouse and of the eminent dignity of the fruit of her womb.

Q. What gather you from hence ?

A. That the intercession of St. Joseph must certainly be much available towards our reconciliation with God, and to render Christ effectually a Jesus, or Saviour to us.

Q. What comforts did St. Joseph receive after this information of the angel ?

A. Of seeing our new-born Saviour adored by the wise men.

Q. But did his comforts continue for any long time ?

A. No. The providence of God, which always interweaves bitters and sweets in the lives of his saints, to try them by the one and support them by the other, soon sent an angel to St. Joseph, to forewarn him of Herod's bloody design, ordering him to fly into Egypt, with the infant *Jesus* and his virgin Mother.

Q. What did Joseph thereupon ?

A. Without consulting private interest or inclination, or asking any questions, he immediately obeyed the orders given him. *Matt. ii. 14.*

Q. What instruction may we receive from this example ?

A. That we ought, 1. Readily and without reply to obey the commands of God and our superiors.

2. Rather to quit country, friends, relations, and the whole world, than endanger the loss of Jesus Christ.

Q. What virtues ought we on this feast to

study, and beg of God, by St. Joseph's intercession?

A. 1. A lively faith in the mysteries of our redemption. 2. Purity. 3. Charity towards our neighbour in concealing his seeming defects. 4. Obedience to the will of God. 5. So tender a love of Jesus, as may prompt us to keep him always in our company and in our hearts.

Q. What besides?

A. 1. Married persons ought to beg grace for themselves and their children. 2. And all, an exact fidelity in discharging the duties of their state.

Q. How are Christians to behave themselves in marriage?

A. With prudence, decency, and purity, and not after the brutal manner of infidels, who know not God, and abandon themselves to their irrational passions. *Tob. viii. 5, 9. 1 Thess. iv. 5.*

Q. What are the mutual duties of married persons?

A. To love and bear with one another; to live peaceably, and conspire in all things, according to God's pleasure, to the good of their family. *1 Cor. vii. 2 Pet. iii.*

Q. What are the faults they must beware of?

A. 1. Excessive fondness, so as to flatter one another in their sins. 2. Jealousy. 3. Unfaithfulness. 4. Quarrelling, impatience, &c.

Q. What is the duty of husbands to their wives?

A. 1. Love, protection, kind treatment. 2. Condescension to their weakness and infirmities. 3. Good example. 4. To allow them, as far as prudence directs, the government of the family, without permitting them to domineer.

SECT. 13.—*The Annunciation.\*—March 25.*

Isa. vii. 10, 15. Luke, 1, 26, 38

Q. WHAT feast does the Church celebrate to-day?

A. The Conception or Incarnation of Jesus Christ.

Q. Why then is it called the Annunciation, or Lady-day?

A. Because on this day, the angel Gabriel *announced*, or declared, to the blessed Virgin the mystery of the Incarnation, and that she was chosen to be Mother of the world's Redeemer.

Q. What virtues has our Saviour recommended to us in this mystery?

A. 1. A most profound humility. For being equal to his Father, and one God with him, he in a manner annihilated himself in becoming man, and assumed the appearance of a slave.

2. A perfect obedience to the will and decrees of his eternal Father.

3. An infinite love to mankind, his enemies.

4. A hatred to sin.

5. Poverty and a contempt of worldly greatness.

6. Chastity.

Q. How did the blessed Virgin receive the news the angel brought her?

A. With admirable modesty, humility, faith, and submission to the will of God?

Q. In what did she manifest her modesty and love of chastity?

A. In being troubled at the sight of the angel, who appeared as a young man; and being willing

rather to forego the dignity of mother of God, than to be wanting to her vow of chastity.

Q. In what her humility ?

A. In declaring herself the handmaid of our Lord, when she was advanced to be the Mother of God.

Q. Her faith and submission ?

A. When she said, *Be it done unto me according to thy word.*

Q. What followed upon the blessed Virgin's consent ?

A. She immediately received Jesus Christ in her chaste womb, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, who framed a body for Jesus Christ out of her purest blood, and united a soul to it; and this body and soul was at the same moment united to the second Person of the most blessed Trinity.

Q. Why did Almighty God require the blessed Virgin's consent to this mystery ?

A. That Mary's obedience might atone for the disobedience of Eve.

Q. Draw a parallel between Eve and Mary ?

A. 1. Eve was tempted by a bad angel; Mary was saluted by a good one.

2. Eve yielded to the temptation, disobeyed God; Mary obeyed him, by believing the angel.

3. Eve presented to Adam the fruit of death; Mary has given us the fruit of life.

4. Eve began our ruin; Mary our salvation.

Q. What may we conclude from hence ?

A. That as Jesus is the second Adam, so is Mary the second Eve; that is to say, the true *mother of all living.* *Gen. i. 20.*

Q. How may we join with the Church in this double solemnity of Jesus and Mary ?

A. 1. By adoring the eternal word annihilated

in becoming man. 2. By thanking his infinite mercy for so doing. *Psalm* xliv.

3. By lamenting our common misery, in so little corresponding with the divine mercy; resolving to pay him our homage and fidelity for the remainder of our life, and joining with Jesus Christ in making war against pride and concupiscence, against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

4. By endeavouring to answer the design of our Saviour's being made man, which was, that we might become *like* to God, and *be made partakers of the divine nature*. *Matt.* v. 48. *2 Pet.* i. 4.

4. By duly considering and estimating the virtues recommended to us by *Jesus* and *Mary*, and praying for grace to practice them.

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SECT. 14.—*St. George*.—*April* 23.

2 *Tin.* ii. 8, 10; iii. 10, 12. *John*, xv. 1, 7.

Q. HOW comes *St. George's-day* to be a feast throughout England?

A. Because *St. George* is the ancient patron of that nation.

Q. What was *St. George*?

A. A soldier of *Jesus Christ*, and an illustrious martyr under the emperor *Dioclesian*.

Q. Why did the English nation make choice of him for their patron?

A. Upon account of his courage in his military profession, and of his constancy in suffering for truth and justice.

Q. What are we to beg of God by his intercession?

A. Courage and constancy, that, like valiant soldiers of Jesus Christ, we may overcome all enemies and obstacles between us and heaven.

Q. What need have Christians now-a-days, of any extraordinary courage?

A. 1. That they may not yield to the sinful customs and ill example of the world.

2. Nor to interior temptations, nor to dejection.

3. That they may bear with a Christian spirit, afflictions, injuries, sickness, &c.

4. That they may not be daunted with the difficulties which occur in the discharge of their respective duties.

Q. What else must we pray for?

A. That God would be pleased to unite the English nation in the profession of that primitive faith, for which this Saint suffered death.

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SECT. 15.—*St. Mark. †—April 25.*

Ezech. i. 10, 14. Luke, x. 1, 9.

Q. WHO was St. Mark?

A. A disciple of St. Peter, and one of the four Evangelists.

Q. Is this a feast of obligation?

A. No. But it is however a day of devotion and prayer.

Q. What particular prayers are said on this day?

A. The long litanies are said publicly in the churches.

Q. What means the word Litany?

A. The same as Rogation, and they both signify prayers and supplications.

Q. Why is this day in particular chosen for devotion and prayer?

A. In imitation of St. Mark's disciples, the first Christians of Alexandria, who under this Saint's conduct were eminent for their great prayer, abstinence, and sobriety.

Q. By whom was this day first set apart for abstinence and public prayer?

A. By St. Gregory the Great, called the apostle of England, as an acknowledgment of the divine mercy in putting a stop to a mortality in his time in Rome.

Q. For what intention are we to offer our prayers and devotion?

A. 1. To appease God's anger, provoked by our sins.

2. To prevent and deprecate all contagious and pestilential distempers.

3. To obtain the blessings of heaven upon the fruits of the earth.

Q. Why these three?

A. Because famine, and dearth, and mortality, which is caused by them in men and beasts, are the scourges of Almighty God.

Q. Is there any great necessity at present of appeasing God's anger.

A. Very great. For scandals multiply, luxury and disorder gain ground in all conditions, and the law of God is in a manner trodden under foot.

Q. How do the processions which are made in Catholic countries, help to appease God's anger?

A. They help to make the Church's penance more public, and, as it were, proclaim in the streets and country, *Do penance, and beg pardon of Almighty God.*

SECT. 16.—SS. *Philip and James*. †—*May 1.*

Wisd. v. 1, 5. Job, xiv. 1, 13.

Q. WHAT account can you give me out of the holy Scriptures of these two apostles?

A. First as to St. Philip, he was so overjoyed to have found the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, that he imparted immediately the happy news to his friend Nathaniel, and conducted him to him. *Job, i. 45.*

Q. What said Nathaniel?

A. He seemed to undervalue what St. Philip had told him, by saying, *Can any thing good come out of Nazareth? v. 46.*

Q. What reply did St. Philip make?

A. He said no more than, *Come and see*: thus showing on this occasion a meekness, prudence, and steadiness worthy of an apostle.

Q. Did he bring any others to Jesus Christ?

A. Yes. Some Gentiles desiring to see our Saviour, St. Philip with St. Andrew gained admittance for them. *John, xii. 21, 22.*

Q. What does this teach us?

A. That it should be our care by word and example, and by all other means, to bring unbelievers to the faith of Christ, and sinners to repentance.

Q. What further account is there in the gospel of this apostle?

A. Our Saviour designing by a miracle to feed five thousand men, asked St. Philip, in order to try his faith, by what means bread could be provided for so great a multitude.

Q. And what answer did he make?

A. He answered, that two hundred penny-worth would not suffice to give every one a little morsel. *John*, vi. 5, 7.

Q. What does this intimate?

A. That such as are in distress are not to fix their thoughts upon their wants, but upon the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, who bids us hope in him.

Q. Is any thing else related of him?

A. He afterwards made this petition to our Saviour: *Domine, ostende nobis Patrem, et sufficit nobis; Lord, show us the Father, and that will satisfy us. John*, xiv. 8.

Q. And what answer made our Saviour?

A. He answered in these words: *Have I been so long with you, and you have not known me yet? Philip, he that sees me, sees my Father. v. 9.*

Q. May we not take these words as spoken to ourselves?

A. Yes; and it ought to be a confusion to us, that whereas God has been so long present to us by his power, wisdom, and goodness; by his inspirations, blessings, and chastisements; by his holy word and sacraments; we have taken almost as little notice of him, as if we had not known him.

Q. What use may be made of St. Philip's petition, *Domine &c.*

A. It is a proper aspiration to express our desire of seeing God in his glory, and our contempt of all earthly vanities.

Q. What further is related of him?

A. 1. That he was a married man, and had several daughters, and yet care of his family did not hinder him from meditating continually on the law and the prophets, which taught him to

expect and to discover the Messias. *Eus. l. iii. c. 31. St. Chrys. Hom. xix. in. Jo.*

2. That he and St. John the Evangelist appeared to the Emperor Theodosius, and promised him victory over Eugenius, which was gained the next day by a visible miracle. *Theod. l. v. c. 24.*

Q. Now what account can you give me of St. James?

A. St. James the Less, surnamed the Just, was near kinsman to our Saviour, and the first bishop of Jerusalem; a person of extraordinary sanctity, mortification, and prayer; and at last for preaching Christ, was by the Jews thrown down from the pinnacle of the temple. *Matt. xiii. 55. Gal. i. 19. Joseph. Antiq. l. xx. 8.*

Q. Did he write any thing?

A. He has left us a divine epistle, which is part of the holy Scripture; wherein he so plainly teaches the necessity of good works in order to salvation, that Luther (the first founder of the Protestant heresy, and an enemy to all good works) would not suffer his followers to receive it as a part of Scripture. *Luth. de Cap. Bat. t. ii. fol. 86.*

Q. What are we to ask of God by the intercession of these two apostles?

A. 1. A lively faith. 2. The spirit of prayer and mortification. 3. The conversion of unbelievers, and especially of such of our relations as may be engaged in sin or error.

SECT. 17.—*Finding of the Holy Cross.* †—May 3.

*Phil. ii. 5, 11. John, iii. 1. 15.*

Q. WHAT is the meaning of this feast?

A. It is a festival in memory of that day

wherein St. Helen, mother of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, found the Cross of Christ, in the year 326, about 180 years after it had been buried by the heathens.

Q. Why did St. Helen go as far as Jerusalem to seek the Cross ?

A. Because she looked upon it as a relic that deserved her pains in seeking it, and her veneration in case she found it.

Q. Did the primitive Christians pay any respect to relics ?

A. Yes. They paid them a relative honour, as Catholics now do.

Q. What mean you by a *relative* honour ?

A. I mean such an honour as we give to material churches, or to books of Scripture, or to sacred vessels ; that is to say, we honour and value them, as things that in some particular manner *relate* or belong to God.

Q. What proof have you of any veneration paid to relics in primitive times ?

A. This very fact is a sufficient proof. For as St. Helen would never have sought the cross of the bad thief, as being in all respects a thing of no value ; so she would never have sought for the cross of Christ, but that she had some veneration for it.

Q. What other instances of this relative honour given to relics do you find among the ancients ?

A. 1. The bones of St. Ignatius the martyr, were kept with great veneration at Antioch, as *an inestimable treasure* ; and so were St. Polycarp's at Smyrna. *Acta Sincera S.S. Ignat. & Polyc.*

2. Vigilantius, in the fourth age, was condemned as a heretic, for denying that a veneration is due to relics. *Hier. contra Vigil.*

Q. What are to be our sentiments on this feast?

A. 1. Of gratitude and love of God. 2. Of penance and detestation of sin. 3. Of humility, patience, and submission to the will of God.

Q. How does the cross recommend to us gratitude and a love of God?

A. By putting us in mind, that all our Saviour's sufferings were for love of us, and for our redemption.

Q. How does it invite us to penance and a detestation of sin?

A. By reminding us, that our sins were the cause of our Saviour's passion; and that if Christ did penance for sins which were not his, we ought to do it for our own.

Q. What motives does the cross suggest, of humility, patience, and submission?

A. It sets before us the example of Jesus Christ, who humbled himself and was obedient, even to death upon the cross.

Q. Ought we frequently to remember the cross of Christ?

A. Yes. We are daily to renew the memory of it, by devoutly saying the creed, by often making the sign of the cross, and by contemplating the crucifix upon the altar, or in our oratory.

Q. Why are we often to make the sign of the cross?

A. That as it was with it we were baptized, so by the same we may consecrate the day, and all our actions, to the honour of Christ crucified, and obtain his blessing on all we do.

Q. Was this the practice of the primitive Christians?

A. Yes. At our going out of doors (says

Tertullian,) when we put on our clothes or shoes, when we wash ourselves, or sit down to table, when we light up candles, when we go to rest, in short, whatever business we are about, we make upon our foreheads the sign of the cross. *De Corona Mil. c. iii.*

Q. What other use did the primitive Christians make of the sign of the cross?

A. St. Athanasius, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Epiphanius, and other holy Fathers, assures us, it was successfully used against the molestations of evil spirits.

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SECT. 18.—*St. John Baptist.* †—June 24.

Isa. xix. 1, &c. Luke, i. 57, 68.

Q. WHAT was St. John Baptist?

A. A man sent by God to prepare the way for the Messiah, and was therefore styled his precursor, or forerunner.

Q. Did any thing extraordinary happen before his birth?

A. 1. The angel Gabriel gave notice of his birth to his father Zachary, a holy priest.

2. St. Elizabeth miraculously conceived him in her old age.

3. Jesus Christ, when in the womb of the blessed Virgin, made him a visit, to sanctify him before he was born.

Q. What direction is this for mothers?

A. It directs them to pray for their children before they are born, that God would give them such a natural temper and constitution, as may dispose them hereafter to receive the seeds of virtue.

Q. What wonder happened at his birth?

A. His father, St. Zachary recovered his speech, which he had lost for not believing the angel's message, and uttered that admirable canticle, *Benedictus*.

Q. What is the sum of this canticle?

A. It is this: That upon the birth of this holy precursor, at which the light of Jesus Christ began to break forth, the world ought to rejoice as at the approach of day.

Q. What was his life?

A. A life of admiration innocence, mortification, humility, and zeal.

Q. What proof have you of his innocence?

A. His early retiring into the desert, where he led both a solitary and mortified life; and thus became a pattern of that solitary life, which in all succeeding ages has furnished the Church with Saints. *Luke*, i. 80.

Q. In what appeared his mortification?

A. In his meat, and drink, and clothing; for his drink was water; his food, locusts and wild honey; and his garment, camel's hair and sackcloth. *Matt.* iii. 4.

Q. What instances are there of his humility?

A. 1. He declared himself to be no more than *the voice of one crying in the desert*; the lowest of all the characters which the prophets had described him by. *Jo.* i. 23.

2. He disowned the honour of being accounted a prophet or the Messiah, when the Jews imagined him to be either the one or the other, and that Christ himself said, he was *more than a prophet*, and even the *greatest* of the sons of men. *Jo.* i. 21, &c. *Matt.* xi. 9.

Q. Why did our Saviour style him *more* than a prophet?

A. Because he pointed out the world's Messiah then present, whom the prophets only foretold and saw at a distance.

Q. In what consisted St. John's greatness?

A. In contempt of the world, and of all that is reputed valuable in it.

Q. What does this teach us?

A. 1. That to be great in the judgment of Christ, the eternal wisdom, we are not to love the things of this world.

2. That by doing penance and contemning the world and ourselves, we may prepare the ways of Christ.

Q. How did he show his zeal?

A. 1. In proclaiming the glory of Jesus Christ, 2. In preaching penance. 3. In reproving vice.

Q. Why is he called the *Baptist*?

A. Because he washed or baptized in the Jordan the Jews that hearkened to his doctrine, and likewise Christ himself.

Q. To what end did he baptize?

A. To prefigure that most admirable baptism instituted afterwards, by Jesus Christ, and to instruct the Jews how to be cleansed from sin, by doing penance and believing in Jesus Christ.

Q. How did he die?

A. He died a martyr of chastity, for having reproved Herod's sinful commerce with his brother's wife. *Matt. xiv. 3, &c.*

Q. What think you of those superstitions to which some Christians abandon themselves on this feast?

A. It is taking an occasion from the memory

of Christ's precursor, to run from light to darkness, and from their Saviour to their own perdition.

Q. What are we to beg of God by St. John's intercession?

A. The virtues he has recommended to our imitation.

Q. If any time remain for prayer and the public duties of the Church, how may it best be spent?

A. In reading the exhortations of St. John; or, after his example, in instructing the ignorant, or in endeavouring to bring such as are in sin or error to the way of salvation. *Matt. iii., Luke, iii., John, i. & iii.*

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SECT. 19.—*SS. Peter and Paul.\*—June 29.*

Acts, xii. 1, 11. Matt. xvi. 13, 19.

Q. WHO was St. Peter?

A. A poor fisherman, called by Jesus Christ to be, under himself, the head of the Church militant.

Q. Why do you give St. Peter a preference to all the other apostles?

A. We give him no more than what our Saviour, in the opinion of the holy Fathers, conferred upon him.

Q. How prove you it to be the opinion of the holy Fathers?

A. He is called in their writings the *prince* of the apostles and *supreme* preacher of the Church, the *head* of the apostolic company, the pastor entrusted with the charge of Christ's whole flock.

Q. What grounds from Scripture can you bring me of St. Peter's supremacy?

A. 1. Christ committed to him the government

of his lambs and sheep, without exception. (*John*, xxi. 15.) 2. He gave particularly to him the keys of heaven. (*Matt.* xvi. 19.) 3. He declared him to be the rock upon which he would build his Church, (*v.* 18.); and for that reason called him *Cephas*, or *Petrus*; that is to say, a *rock*. (*John*, i. 42.) Hence the Evangelists, in their lists of the apostles, always name St. Peter before the rest; and St. Matthew calls him *the first*. (*Matt.* x. 2., *Mark*, iii. 14, 16., *Luke*, vi. 13, 14., *Acts*, i. 13.)

Q. Where did St. Peter die?

A. He was crucified at Rome, and, at his own request, with his head downwards, because he thought himself unworthy to suffer in the same posture wherein his Lord had suffered before him.

Q. Was St. Peter's dying at Rome any advantage to that episcopal see?

A. Yes. The Church of Rome was, upon account of St. Peter's chair, established the Mother of all other Churches, and chief guardian of the divine truths; and all other churches are obliged to hold communion with her. (*St. Hierom.* *Ep.* lvii.)

Q. What do the faithful owe to the present Bishop of Rome?

A. A sincere obedience, as to the successor of St. Peter, and the chief ecclesiastical governor.

Q. Has the Church any writings of St. Peter?

A. She has two of his Epistles.

Q. Who was St. Paul?

A. A learned Pharisee, who, from a persecutor, was miraculously changed by Jesus Christ into a glorious preacher of the gospel, and appointed doctor of the Gentiles.

Q. Why was Jesus Christ pleased to convert him so miraculously?

A. To make appear in him the power of divine grace, and to render his testimony the more unquestionable.

Q. What has St. Paul written?

A. Fourteen admirable epistles.

Q. What was his death?

A. He was beheaded at Rome.

Q. Was St. Paul in any manner equal to St. Peter?

A. He was equally empowered by Jesus Christ to preach the gospel to all the world; but he was not equal to St. Peter in ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

Q. What mean you by *ecclesiastical jurisdiction*?

A. Ecclesiastical jurisdiction is a power derived from Christ, to govern the members of the Church.

Q. How was St. Paul inferior to St. Peter in point of jurisdiction?

A. St. Paul had full power over all other Christians, but none over the apostles: whereas St. Peter was set over all the sheep of Christ, among which St. Paul and the other apostles were certainly comprehended.

Q. Why do we keep the feast of these two apostles on the same day?

A. Because they were both put to death at Rome on the same day, for the faith of Christ.

Q. Was this feast kept in the primitive ages?

A. Theodosius the younger, anno 425, mentions it among the days that were then celebrated throughout the world, and consecrated to prayer; on which he forbids any public shows to be exhibited, because the minds of Christians on such days ought to be taken up with the service of God. *Cod. Theo. xv. t. v. l. 5.*

Q. And was it usual in those times to desire their intercession?

A. St. Augustin tells us, that the Emperors themselves went to pray with respect at their tombs. *And they acknowledge*, says St. Chrysostom, *amidst their power and greatness, that they stood in need of having for their patrons and intercessors a fisher-man and a tent-maker.* And St. Paulinus, as he himself informs us, went every year to Rome, to assist at this solemnity. *Aug. Ep. xlii. Chrys. Hom. xxvi. in 2. ad Cor. Paulin. Ep. xvi.*

Q. What virtues does the Church recommend to us from the example of St. Peter?

A. Faith, humility, and penance.

Q. What from the example of St. Paul?

A. An unlimited, a compassionate, and a disinterested charity to our neighbour.

Q. And what from both?

A. 1. An ardent zeal for the glory of Jesus Christ, and the salvation of our own and our neighbours' souls.

2. An unwearied patience, and an undaunted courage in the profession of Christ's faith and maxims.

3. A lively confidence in the mercy of our Redeemer, who made choice of the one, who denied him, and of the other, who persecuted him, to be the main pillars of his Church.

Q. What are we to beg of God by their intercession?

A. 1. The virtues recommended by their example.

2. The divine spirit and protection upon the pope, bishops, and inferior pastors.

3. The grace of conversion for all that by schism or heresy are divided from St. Peter's chair.

Q. What part of the holy scripture is proper to be read on this feast?

A. The fifth and the twentieth chapters of the Acts, St. Peter's two Epistles, the four last chapters of St. Paul's second Epistle to the Corinthians; the two first of his Epistles to the Galatians; the last of his two to Timothy; or his Epistle to the Philippians.

SECT. 20.—*Visitation of the B. Virgin.*—July 2

Cant. ii. 8, 14. Luke, i. 39, 47.

Q. IS this a feast of obligation?

A. No! but, however, it is a day that calls upon us for more devotion and reflection than other working days.

Q. Why so?

A. Because the Church commemorates this day that charitable and humble visit which the blessed Virgin made to her cousin St. Elizabeth. *Luke, i. 39, &c.*

Q. In what condition were both of them?

A. The blessed Virgin was with-child of Jesus Christ, and St. Elizabeth of St. John.

Q. What happened at their meeting?

A. So soon as the blessed Virgin spoke, the infant in the womb of Elizabeth leaped for joy, and adored his Saviour.

Q. What said St. Elizabeth to the blessed Virgin?

A. She saluted her in these words: *Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb*: and then added, *What a favour is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me!* *Luke, i. 42, 43.*

Q. What does this teach us?

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A. With what sentiments we ought to approach to Jesus Christ in the holy communion.

Q. What was the answer of the blessed Virgin?

A. She uttered (in answer to St. Elizabeth's salutation,) that divine canticle, *Magnificat*, wherein she glorifies God, and descends into her own nothingness.

Q. What does this canticle teach us?

A. How to express our thanks and gratitude after communion.

Q. Why is this canticle daily said at vespers?

A. To commemorate that heavenly joy the Holy Ghost on that day infused into the hearts of Mary, John, and Elizabeth; and to express our own, for the mystery of Christ's incarnation.

Q. What must we beg of God by the intercession of the blessed Virgin?

A. 1. A share of those graces with which Christ filled St. John.

2. Grace so to regulate our visits and conversation, as to render them agreeable to Almighty God.

Q. What rules are to be observed as to visits?

A. That idle visits, and much more, such as are dangerous, be carefully avoided.

Q. Why so?

A. Because our soul and our time is the price of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Q. What is the second?

A. That the visits which may, or must be made, be governed by a right intention.

Q. How do you mean?

A. I mean, they must be made out of a principle of duty, charity, christian friendship, gratitude, or respect.

Q. Is it any fault in a Christian, not to visit he sick, poor, the afflicted, or the imprisoned ?

A. These kind of visits sometimes cannot be omitted without endangering our salvation *Matt.* xxv. 41, &c.

Q. Why so ?

A. Because the character of a Christian strictly obliges us to these works of mercy.

Q. What think you of such as generally find the day too long for them, unless some of its hours be passed away in idle visits ?

A. It is to be feared that they are but little acquainted with those many important duties that are inseparably annexed to the profession of a Christian, and to their state of life.

Q. What directions can you give me as to conversation ?

A. A good Christian will take care to avoid those faults which are generally found in wordly conversation.

Q. What are those faults ?

A. They are chiefly these five : 1. Unprofitable discourse. 2. The commending worldly pomps and vanities. 3. Detraction. 4. Boasting or talking of one's self or family, fortune, relations, &c. 5. Words bordering upon immodesty.

Q. Are jests allowable in conversation ?

A. Provided they break not in upon religion, charity, or civility, nor be carried too far, they are helpful to an innocent recreation. *St. Fran. Sales, Introd. par. 3. ch. xxvii.*

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SECT. 21.—*St. James, Apostle.* †—*July 25.*

1 Cor. ii. 9, 15. *Matt.* xx. 23.

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Q. WHAT was St. James?

A. A fisherman, who was called, with his brother St. John, to the apostleship, and immediately left his father and his nets to follow Christ.

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Q. What particular favours did he receive from his Lord and Master?

A. He was one of the three apostles that our Lord admitted to the more intimate transactions of his life; as to be an eye-witness of his glorious transfiguration, (*Matt.* xvii. 1.) of his raising to life the daughter of the prince of the synagogue, and of his sorrow in the garden. *Mark*, v. 37, xiv. 33.

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Q. Did not both he and his brother John meet also with some rebukes from Christ?

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A. Yes. Not only when their zeal for their Master's honour carried them too far, (as related in St. John's life, p. 133.) but on another occasion also, when their mother, prompted by them, petitioned for the principal places of honour next to his person.

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*St. Fran.*

Q. What may we learn from our Saviour's answer to this request?

A. 1. That to have a place in the kingdom of Christ, we must drink his chalice; that is, we must partake in his sufferings.

2. That the highest places would be given to those for whom they were prepared by his Father, in consequence of their superior merit and virtue.

Q. Were not the rest of the disciples offended at this request?

A. Yes: and this gave our Saviour occasion to instruct them in the nature of his kingdom, shewing them, that in his service humility was the way to honour; alleging his own example as a pattern of it, who came not to be served himself, but to serve others, even at the expense of his own life. *Matt. 25, 26.*

Q. In what manner did St. James share in his master's sufferings?

A. By being apprehended and beheaded by the order of Herod Agrippa; and so he became the first of the apostles that died for the faith of Christ.

Q. What must we beg of God by his intercession?

A. 1. Grace to subdue all pride and haughtiness of mind.

2. To make a right use of prosperity and adversity, and to rise from the spiritual death of our souls, whenever we are so unhappy as to fall into sin.

SECT. 22.—*St. Anne.*—*July 26.*

*Prov. xxxi. 10, 31. Matt. xiii. 44, 52.*

Q. WHO was St. Anne?

A. The mother of the blessed Virgin Mary.

Q. What instruction may we suppose she gave her daughter, the blessed Virgin?

A. Doubtless she gave her early lessons of humility, chastity, patience, love of God and her neighbour, and of all other virtues, as soon as her tender years seemed capable of receiving the like good impressions.

Q. What is to be recommended to married women, and what are they to pray for?

A. 1. That no excess of solicitude for their family, may take off their thoughts from providing for eternity.

2. That by the love of worldly vanities, they neglect not the care of their families.

3. That they affect no dresses for the pleasing of strangers' eyes, or gratifying self-love and vanity.

4. That they patiently submit to the difficulties of their state.

5. That, in short, they may be wanting in no duty to their husbands, children, or servants.

Q. What are the duties of parents to their children?

A. To take care of their education and their settlement.

Q. How are they to take care of their children's education?

A. By giving them, 1. Instruction. 2. Good example. 3. Correction.

Q. What is to be said of mothers, who will not take pains to instruct their children themselves, and are so fond of them, as not to permit them to seek abroad what instruction is necessary?

A. Such mothers will certainly at Christ's tribunal be answerable for all the misdeeds of their children.

Q. When should parents begin to instruct their children?

A. From their infancy, 1. By instilling into them some of the chief maxims of the gospel, as a love and fear of God, an aversion to sin and vanity, forgiving injuries, &c.

2. By teaching them the ordinary prayers, and how to make short acts of the virtues most neces-

sary to salvation, and by enlarging these instructions as they advance in age.

Q. And whilst their children are growing up, what care is then to be taken ?

A. 1. They must keep them to their hours of praying and reading. 2. Teach them to employ themselves. 3. Oblige them to order and discipline. 4. Examine their company and conversation. 5. Study to make them easy in a regular life, by allowing them their diversions, and encouraging them in whatever is decent. 6. To take care they lie separate, if possible ; and by no means to suffer boys and girls to lodge in the same chamber, much less to have the same bed.

Q. What are the ordinary failings of parents in point of instruction ?

A. There are too many, who, instead of laying the foundation of a virtuous life, sow in their children's minds the seeds of vanity, ambition, revenge, self-love, gluttony, lying, detraction, and the like.

Q. Why are parents obliged to give good example ?

A. Because children naturally imitate what they see done by others, especially by persons whom they love and respect.

Q. What need of correction ?

A. It is needful for preventing both their children's and their own damnation. *Eccl. xxx. 8, &c.*

Q. Ought parents to give correction when they are in a passion ?

A. By no means ; because such correction, not being attended by God's blessing serves only to exasperate them and make them worse.

Q. How then is correction to be given ?

A. It must be governed by reason, accompanied

with sweetness and moderation; and with no other regard than that of God's honour and their children's salvation.

Q. How are parents to take care of their children's settlement?

A. By an early provision of what may be necessary to support them according to their condition; and more especially to help them to that state of life to which God calls them.

Q. How may parents know to what state God calls their children?

A. 1. By consulting God in their prayers.

2. By examining the inclinations and talents of their children.

3. By taking advice of a prudent and pious person, without hearkening to the suggestions of self-interest or ambition.

Q. Is it a sin, to force a child to embrace a state, to which there appears no vocation from Almighty God?

A. A very heinous sin; and such as draws after it a thousand more.

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SECT. 23.—*St. Laurence.* †—*August 10.*

1 Cor. ix. 6, 10. John, xii. 24, 26.

Q. WHAT was this Saint?

A. A deacon and martyr at Rome.

Q. Why did the church formerly celebrate his feast in so particular a manner, as to keep a fast before it?

A. The more effectually to recommend to our imitation the virtues of charity to the poor, love

of suffering, and constancy, which were eminent in this great Saint.

Q. Wherein appeared his charity and care of the poor?

A. In distributing to them the treasures of the Church, as the best way of securing them from the avarice of a heathen tyrant.

Q. What was his love of suffering?

A. It was so great, that seeing Pope Xistus led to martyrdom, he sighed and complained that he himself was not to accompany him.

Q. What was his constancy in suffering?

A. Being soon after apprehended and stretched upon a gridiron, in order to be broiled to death, he had so much courage as to say to his executioners, *Turn and eat, it is roasted enough.*

Q. How must we imitate his charity to the poor?

A. By depositing in their hands our unnecessary riches, that the tyrannical world may not rob us of them, by making us spend them on its vanities.

Q. What effect should his love of sufferings have upon us?

A. It should at least encourage us not to forsake our faith, nor the methods of a virtuous life, for fear of what the world may say or do against us.

Q. What do you learn from his constancy upon the gridiron?

A. To beg, by his intercession of Almighty God, that fire of chastity which may render us, as it did him, victorious over all our spiritual enemies, and a generous contempt of this mortal life, which must necessarily be lost before we can arrive at a life eternal.—*Matt. x. 39.*

SECT. 24.—✠ *Assumption of the B. V. Mary* \*  
August 15.

Eccl. xxiv 11, 20. Luke, xviii. 38, 40.

Q. What means the word *Assumption*?

A. Assumption is some times applied to the death of saints; because it is then God takes them to himself, and translates their souls from earth to heaven. And it is piously believed, that not only the soul of the blessed Virgin, but her body also is already in glory; especially since this privilege is not so singular, as those others of being a mother and a virgin, and even Mother of God.

Q. What grounds are there for this opinion?

A. 1. We cannot think that the mother of God was deprived of a privilege granted to many at Christ's resurrection; viz. that of rising in body before the last day.—*Matt.* xxvii. 52.

2. The primitive Church, which was very industrious in seeking after and preserving the relics of the apostles, St. Stephen and other saints, makes no mention of the relics of the Mother of God.

Q. Why does the Church in the holy Mass on this day invite us to rejoice?

A. Because we have great reason on this occasion to congratulate, 1. With the blessed Virgin for the consummation of her grace and glory.—*Proverbs*, xxxi. 29.

2. With the court of heaven, in the triumph of the Mother of God.

3. With ourselves, for having the Mother of Mercy to appear and intercede for us, through the merits of her Son, at the throne of God.

Q. To what degree is the blessed Virgin exalted in heaven ?

A. In proportion to her charity, humility, and dignity upon earth.

Q. How may we deserve her intercession, and have the happiness at death of obtaining heaven ?

A. By the imitation of her virtues, *viz.* her love of God, her humility, purity, patience, conformity to the will of God, and her spirit of adoration, praise, and thanksgiving ; these being the necessary dispositions of a soul, for attaining that state of bliss.

Q. How are we to imitate her humility ?

A. 1. In regard of God, by owning that all we have is the pure effect of his bounty, and by a cheerful submission to all his appointments.

2. In regard of our neighbour, by despising none, and being mild to all ; by not contending for our own way or opinion, by forgiving injuries, and esteeming all others better than ourselves.

3. In regard of ourselves, in having a true knowledge of our unworthiness, in receiving objection and contempt with peace and comfort, in checking our own will, in taking reproofs or advice quietly, in suppressing all words of vanity, and refusing no good office as if it were beneath us.

Q. What devotion is proper for these eight days ?

A. 1. Frequently to thank Almighty God for the graces and glory bestowed on her whom he made choice of to be the Mother of his beloved Son and of all the faithful.—*John, xix. 26, 27.*

2. In a more particular manner to recommend ourselves to her protection and intercession.

3. To meditate upon the virtues of which she has given us an example, and be ashamed to see

ourselves so deeply tainted with the contrary vices.

4. To beg those virtues of Almighty God by her intercession, and to practice them upon every occasion.

5. To beg a happy death for ourselves and others, especially for all that are now in their agony; and grace to prepare from this day for it, by a virtuous life, lest any further delay be punished with the loss of time and grace.—*Matt. xxiv.*

42. *Luke, xii. 20. Matt. xxv. 13.*

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SECT. 25.—*St. Bartholomew. †—August 24.*

1 Cor. xii. 27, 31. Luke, vi. 12, 19.

Q. WHO was St. Bartholomew?

A. An apostle of Jesus Christ, who preached the gospel in Armenia, where he is said to have been flayed alive.

Q. How must we sanctify this feast?

A. In the manner already mentioned in pages 25, 26.

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SECT. 26.—*Nativity of the B. V. M. †—Sept. 8.*

Prov. viii. 22, 25. Mat. i. 1, 16.

Q. WHO were the blessed Virgin's parents?

A. St. Joachim and St. Anne.

Q. Of what family was she?

A. Of the royal family of David.

Q. Was she like the rest of mankind, born in sin?

A. We ought not by any means to think so ; it being very improbable that she should be less favoured than St. John Baptist, who was sanctified in his mother's womb, and that at the voice of the blessed Virgin.

Q. What then was her sanctity ?

A. A sanctity of so extraordinary a degree, as to be exempt during her life from all sin, as well venial as mortal.—*Conc. Trid. Sess. vi. can. xxiii.*

Q. How did she live ?

A. A poor, humble, hidden life, attending to nothing else but God and her duty.

Q. What was most remarkable in her life ?

A. The promise she made in her tender age of preserving her virginity, to which she found no encouragement from past ages.

Q. What virtues were the chief companions of her virginity ?

A. Prayer and retirement.

Q. What may we learn from the early preparation she made for the conceiving the Son of God ?

A. That it ought to be the care of our whole life, to dispose ourselves for receiving of God's benefits, and for the receiving of Jesus Christ in the blessed Eucharist.

Q. Who ought principally to imitate the blessed Virgin ?

A. Young virgins and all women kind, she being the honour of their sex.

Q. In what are they chiefly to imitate her ?

A. In her retirement, modesty, chastity, and humility.

Q. What other lessons have we from festival ?

A. 1. To do all things with as little noise as possible ; since God so ordered, that nothing ap-

peared in this new born Virgin (so accomplished with grace, and designed for so great a dignity) which might recommend her to the eyes of men.

2. Never to boast of our good works, abilities, or extraction, nor invite others to speak in our commendation. 3. If rank and quality oblige a Christian to admit somewhat of state, that he is not to love it, nor think himself the greater for it, but rather to combat the injustice of being set up to be admired and coveted, when on so many accounts he deserves to be contemned. 4. Not to be loud and talkative, or contentious in conversation, nor yet morose and dull; but rather cheerful, free, and easy.

Q. And what is to be remembered as to the spiritual birth of children?

A. That parents ought not to admit those to answer for their children at the font, who know not the way to heaven themselves, or voluntarily go out of it.

Q. What is to be our devotion during this octave?

A. 1. To thank God for the graces where with he endowed the blessed Virgin, as also for the rich present he made this day to the earth, in the birth of the blessed Virgin, of whom was to be born the Saviour of the world.

2. To beseech Almighty God, that it may be a day of new birth to us, by engaging anew in his service, and resolving to make good our baptismal obligations.

3. To beg by her intercession, that we may be faithful in corresponding, as she was, with the many blessings he continually showers down upon us.

4. To meditate on these virtues, of which she

has set us a pattern; and to beg grace to copy them out in our lives.

Q. For whom beside must we pray?

A. 1. For children as yet unborn, that God would bring them safe into the world, and to the grace of baptism.

2. For children already baptized, that they may never loose their baptismal innocence.

3. For all the faithful, that by a thorough penance and amendment of life, they may recover the grace of baptism.

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SECT. 27.—*St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist, †*

—*Sept. 21.*

Ezech. i. 10, 14. Matt. ix. 9, 13.

Q. WHAT was St. Matthew before he was called to follow Christ?

A. A publican; that is to say, an officer employed in collecting customs upon goods, and receiving toll from passengers, all of which profession were looked upon by the Jews to be enormous sinners.

Q. How was he called to follow Christ?

A. He gives this account of himself; that Jesus passing by, saw a man sitting in the custom-house, whose name was Matthew, and said to him, *Follow me*; who rising immediately, followed him, and made a feast for him, to which a great many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus.

—*Matt. ix. 9, &c.*

Q. What do you learn from hence?

A. 1. That there is mercy ready for the worst of sinners, if they forsake their evil way and become obedient to the call of God.

2. That the happiness of a soul may often depend upon its fidelity and obedience to the first voice and call of Almighty God.

3. That where it is for the interest and glory of God, such as have a zeal for him will not be concerned for their own reputation.

4. Four marks of a true conversion.

Q. What are these marks ?

A. 1. A true convert will avoid the occasions of sin.—*Num. xvi. 26. Prov. vi. 27. Matt. xxvii. 69. Eccl. xxi. 2. Matt. v. 29. Gen. iii. 3. 3 Kings xi. 1, 2.*

2. Will follow Christ by the practice of good works.

3. Will express in the best manner he is able, his gratitude to the divine mercy.

4. Will be so far from being ashamed to own his conversion, that he will endeavour to bring others to do the same.

Q. Were the Pharisees scandalized at our Saviour for eating with publicans and sinners.

A. Yes: but he told them that it was the sick and infirm, and not the sound and healthful, that needed the physician; that he preferred mercy to sacrifice, and came to call, not the just, but sinners.

Q. What may we learn from hence ?

A. Four essential truths: 1. That Jesus is the great physician of our souls.

2. That we all stand in need of him.

3. That if we desire to find him our physician, we must confess and acknowledge our infirmities.

4. That our souls are never so dangerously sick, as when we proudly think ourselves to be in health.

Q. What do we learn besides ?

A. 1. That under a false zeal there is often hid a real pride, that is scandalized at every thing, complains and passes censure upon every thing.

2. That the more sensible we are of being sinners, the greater right we have to call upon Jesus Christ, and to hope for mercy from him, if we are but ready to obey his call.

Q. What devotion is proper for this feast ?

A. 1. To praise the mercy of our Redeemer, who came to call sinners.

2. To pray for the conversion of some sinner, and for our own.

3. To beg comfort for dejected sinners.

4. To beg for ourselves and others a true humility, and a faithful correspondence with the graces and inspirations of Almighty God.

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SECT. 28.—*Michaelmas-Day*. †—*Sept. 29.*

Rev. i. 1, 5. Matt. xviii. 1, 10.

Q. Why is this feast so called ?

A. Because St. Michael is the chief of the holy Angels, and that on this day the Church celebrates his feast, with that of the other Angels.

Q. How many orders or choirs of Angels are there ?

A. The Scripture mentions these nine : 1. The Cherubim. 2. The Seraphim. 3. Thrones. 4.

Principalities. 5. Powers. 6. Dominations. 7. Virtues. 8. Archangels. 9. Angels. And these are divided into three Hierarchies.

Q. What are the Angels?

A. They are creatures spiritual and intelligent, which are not made to be united to bodies.

Q. Why do you say the Angels are *spiritual* creatures?

A. Because they have no body, no figure nor colour; nor can they in their own nature be perceived by any of our senses.—*Heb. i. 7.*

Q. Why do you say they are *intelligent* creatures?

A. Because they have knowledge and understanding, as men have, but in a much more perfect degree.

Q. Where are the holy Angels, and how are they employed?

A. They are in heaven, and always in the presence of God, whom they see, adore, and praise; and are inseparably united to him for all eternity.—*Tob. xii. 15. Dan. vii. 10. Matt. xviii, 10. Apoc. v. 11.*

2. They are the ministers of God, always ready to obey him; and God makes use of them to execute his orders with regard to other creatures, and especially with regard to men.—*Ps. cii. 22. Heb. 14.*

Q. What do the holy Angels in relation to mankind?

A. 1. They rejoice at the conversion of a sinner.—*Luke, xv. 10.*

2. They present our prayers to God, and pray for us.—*Zuch. i. 12. Tob. xii. 12. Apoc. viii. 3.*

3. God makes use of them to signify his will to

mankind, or to do wonders upon extraordinary occasions in their favour.—*Matt.* i. 20. ii. 13. xxiv. 31. xxvi. 53. xxviii. 2. *Luke*, i. 11, 26. ii. 9. *Jo.* v. 4. *Ac's*, i. 10. v. 19. x. 3. xii. 7, 23. xxvii. 23. and in many places of the Old Testament.

4. God has appointed them the guardians and protectors of the Church, and of every one of the faithful. *Matt.* xviii. 10. *Acts*, xii. 15. *Ps.* xxxiii. 8. xc. 11, 12. *Dan.* xii. 1.

Q. What instructions do the Angels give us?

A. 1. That as their whole business is to adore, bless, and magnify God, to be wholly subject to him, and perform his will in all things, so we ought, by following their example, to dispose ourselves for that which we hope will be our entertainment for ever.

2. To undervalue all earthly goods, honours, and satisfactions, and settle a fixed Judgment, that the best employment of our understanding is, to know him, and the ways that lead to him, and of our will and affections, to love him. And 3. For this end to spend the Sunday and holy-days in such a manner, as to answer the design of their institution, by giving them to him to whom they belong.

Q. How are we to direct our devotions on this feast?

A. It is our duty, 1. To join with the Angels in acts of adoration, praise, thanksgiving, and love.

2. To condemn all earthly things, and earnestly to desire a share of the happiness they enjoy, and pray that we may arrive at that unchangeable state.

3. To beg by their intercession, grace to imitate their ready obedience to the orders of Almighty

God, their zeal for his glory, their mutual charity and concord, their purity, humility, &c.

4. To thank God for the favours and protection received by their ministry and to pray for a continuance of them.

5. To thank St. Michael and the other holy Angels for the favours they have conveyed unto us.

6. To recommend ourselves and the whole Church to his protection; and to desire him to guard us, particularly at the hour death.

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SECT. 29.—*The Angel-Guardians.*—Oct. 2.

Ex. xxiii. 20, 23. Matt. xviii. 1, 10.

Q. IS this day a feast of obligation?

A. No. But however it deserves to be taken notice of more than ordinary working days.

Q. What Angels do you call guardians?

A. Those whom God, out of his great mercy, has ordered to watch over us, and to take particular care of us.

Q. What then does your Angel-guardian do for you;

A. He accompanies me wherever I go; he preserves and rescues me from many dangers; he succours me in time of temptation; he guides and governs me by interior inspirations.

Q. What do you owe to your Angel-guardian?

A. 1. Gratitude. 2. Respect. 3. Submission.  
4. Confidence.

Q. What obligation of gratitude?

A. For the great concern he has for me, and the many favours he does me.

Q. Why are you to respect him?

A. Upon account of his excellence, his dignity, and sanctify. And therefore I ought to blush at the very thought of doing any thing in his presence, which I should be ashamed to do in the sight of a good Christian.

Q. Why do you owe him submission ?

A. Because he is a wise and powerful, a faithful and a zealous friend.

Q. Why are you to have a confidence in him ?

A. Because he is an intercessor that loves me, knows my wants and desires, and has great credit in heaven.

2. Because God has recommended me to his care.—*Psaln xc. 11.*

3. He is a professed enemy to my spiritual enemies.

Q. What may we conclude from these truths ?

A. That we ought to have a great deference and respect for every one of the faithful, since their Angels always see the face of God.—*Matt. xviii. 10*

Q. What devotion is suitable to the day ?

A. 1. To thank God for his love and mercy in committing us to such protectors.

2. To beg pardon of God and his Angels, our guardians, for having ungratefully offended him, and by so doing grieved them.

3. By a sincere conversion, an humble confession, and a devout communion, to give them an occasion of joy, and to render ourselves more dear to them, and more worthy of their protection.

4. To pay them the thanks, the respect, the submission which we owe them ; and by a fervent devotion to make amends for all past neglects.

5. To beg their protection in all our ways, and particularly at the hour of death.

SECT. 30.—*Feast of the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary.—1st Sunday of October.*

Luke, i. 28, 48.

Q. WHY is the principal feast of the Rosary of the blessed Virgin Mary celebrated on the first Sunday of October?

A. In memory of the signal victory of Lepanto, gained on that day, being the 7th of October, 1571, over the united maritime forces of the Ottoman empire, by the combined Christian fleets.

Q. What were the immediate consequences of that victory?

A. The almost total destruction of the infidel marine power, 300 gallees being taken, with 116 large and 256 small cannon, and a vast number of prisoners; 30,000 infidels were killed in the engagement and pursuit, and 15,000 Christians recovered their liberty.

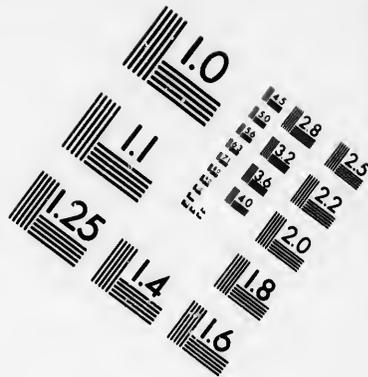
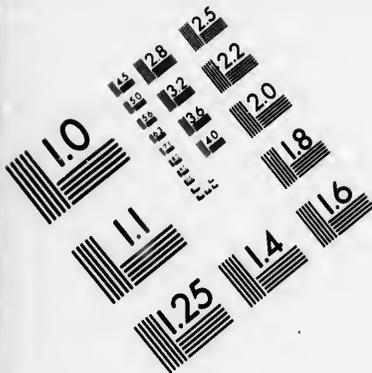
Q. Are the effects of that victory still perceived?

A. They are very sensibly, for since that memorable era, the infidels have so much declined in their marine, that their conquests and depredations towards the West, have almost totally ceased; the terror of their arms and name are no longer apprehended; and the Christians have attained a manifest and decisive superiority.

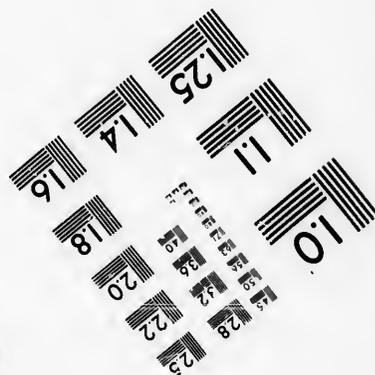
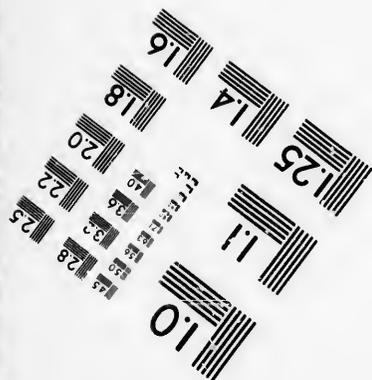
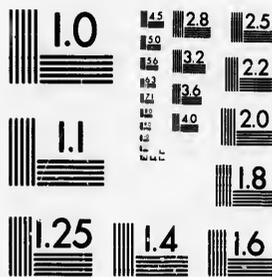
Q. Why should this victory be esteemed the effect of divine interposition, rather than the consequence of the courage and conduct of the Christian combatants?

A. Because the Christian forces were vastly inferior to the infidels, and St. Pius V., who was the vicar of Jesus Christ on earth assured them of victory





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long before the combat, and the very day, though distant many hundred miles, divinely inspired, proclaimed the victory, which he firmly believed to have been obtained by the intercession of the B. V. Mary, whom the devout brethren and sisters of the Rosary at his request then solemnly invoked, the very instant the victory declared for the Christians. St. Pius V. was so firmly persuaded of this, that he added to the Litany of Loretto, " Help of Christians, pray for us ;" and ordained that the said first Sunday of October should be the principal feast of the Rosary of the blessed Virgin Mary of Victory.

Q. In what does the Rosary of the blessed Virgin Mary consist ?

A. In devout meditations and prayers, and a frequent repetition of the Lord's Prayer, and Hail Mary, as fully explained in the Manuals.

Q. Who first introduced this form of praying ?

A. St. Dominick, Founder of the order of Preachers, to whom the blessed Virgin revealed it, as is asserted in his canonization, *anno* 1224.

Q. Was this method of praying attended with any salutary effects at its first introduction ?

A. St. Dominick found it most efficacious in the conversion of the *Albigensian* heretics ; for many, whom neither persuasion nor authority could move, were melted into tears, and converted, when they joined in this devotion, and reflected on the sublime mysteries of our redemption, which it commemorates.

Q. Has the Church solemnly approved of this devotion ?

A. She has, and given to the confraternities of this Rosary the most extensive spiritual privileges ?

Q. What are those privileges ?

A. A plenary indulgence to each of them, on their entrance; on every first Sunday of the month; on the days the mysteries are commemorated; and at their death. But, it must be observed, that all these indulgences indispensably suppose a person in the state of grace, by having reconciled himself to God, in the sacrament of penance, and partook of the blessed Eucharist; the other indulgences and privileges are found enumerated in those books expressly published on this devotion.

Q. Why is this devotion called Rosary?

A. Because, like a rosary or plantation of rose-trees, it contains pious prayers and aspirations, which ascend, with a sweet odour, to heaven, when they are the genuine effusions of a devout heart.

Q. Is the Rosary of the blessed Virgin a general devotion of the faithful?

A. None more so, for wherever the Catholic Religion is professed, it is known and practiced; and those who cannot read, may supply that want, and satisfy the ardour of prayer, by a frequent repetition of it.

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SECT. 31.—*St. Luke, Evangelist.* †—Oct. 18.

See pages 34 to 39.

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SECT. 32.—*SS. Simon and Jude.* †—Oct. 28.

Eph. iv. 7, 13. John, xv. 17, 29.

Q. WHAT does the Scripture remark concerning them?

A. That they were called to be apostles, and that St. Jude was nearly related to our Lord.

Q. Are not all Christians related to our Saviour?

A. Yes. By baptism we are all made members of his mystical body, children of his Father, and co-heirs with him of eternal glory. And he assures us he will look upon those as his brother, sister, or mother, who do the will of his heavenly father.—*Matt.* xii. 15.

Q. How may we have a share in the reward of the apostles?

A. By giving charitable advice, good example, pious books, or alms, towards the conversion of sinners.

Q. What has St. Jude particularly recommended to us in his epistle?

A. "*To contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,*" building ourselves on this most holy faith.—*Jude*, i. 3, 20.

Q. And what does this teach us?

A. That the only way we have to learn this faith, is to hear that Church which, having had the apostles for her teachers, and being to continue to the end of the world, can prove the succession both of her own visible existence, and of the doctrine she has received and taught.

SECT. 33.—✠ *All-Saints.\**—November 1.

Rev. vii. 2, 12. *Matt.* v. 1, 12.

Q. WHY was this feast instituted?

A. To honour God in all his Saints, (there being but a few of them, who have their memories celebrated apart,) and to thank him for having made them partakers of his glory—

2. To repair the defects committed in the celebrating of the Saints' particular feasts.

Q. What advantages may we expect from this solemnity?

A. 1. We may, if we be not wanting to our duty, obtain more abundant graces by multiplying our intercessors.

2. The united examples of Saints of both sexes, and of all ages and professions, will be apt to encourage us to a more vigorous pursuit of the virtues which may fit us for a place amongst them.

Q. By what means may we best excite ourselves to imitate the Saints?

A. By considering, 1. That the Saints had the same difficulties to contend with as we have.

2. That we have all those helps which enabled them to overcome.

3. That we have no less encouragement; and,

4. No more to do, than the Saints had.

Q. What difficulties had the Saints to encounter with?

A. They had to fight against the devil and his suggestions; against the world and its threats and promises, its maxims and example; against their own passions and concupiscence: and what others can we fear?

Q. What helps have we in order to become Saints?

A. 1. The merits of Jesus Christ. 2. The inspirations and graces of his holy spirit. 3. The protection and intercession of the saints and angels. 4. The holy sacraments. 5. The reading or hearing of divine truths. 6. Good example. 7. Temporal prosperity or adversity;—and the Saints had no other.

Q. What encouragement?

A. 1. The example of Jesus Christ and of his

Saints. 2. Eternal misery to be avoided. 3. Eternal happiness to be gained.

Q. What is to be done, that we may be admitted into the company of the Saints?

A. All that we have to do is, love God, who is infinitely amiable, and to keep his commandments, which are not hard.—*Matt. xi. 30. 1 John, v. 3.*

Q. How then are we to employ ourselves on this feast?

A. 1. To thank God for the glory he has bestowed upon the Saints, and provided for us.

2. By considering the above-mentioned truths, to make a firm resolution of serving God.

3. By lively acts of faith and hope, to raise in our souls a contempt of the earth, and a longing desire of being admitted into that blessed assembly.

SECT. 34.—*All-Souls.*—*November 2.*

1 Cor. xv. 51. 57. John, v. 25, 29.

Q. IS the custom of praying for the dead ancient in the Church of God?

A. This day has been set apart for that duty ever since the beginning of the eleventh age. But in all ages of the Church, the faithful used to offer up the Mass, to give alms, and to fast, that they might obtain for the souls departed a diminution of their pains.—*Tert. de Cor. Mil. c. iii. Aug. Ench. c. cix. cx.* And Arius (in the fourth age) was reputed a heretic for condemning this practice.—*Aug. L. de Hær. h. 53.*

Q. Is this devotion consonant to Scripture?

A. The second book of Maccabees assures us, "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins." (c. xii. 46.) And though Protestants will not allow these books as a part of Scripture, yet St. Austin says, the Catholic Church allowed them.—*De Civ. Dei*, l. xviii. c. xxxvi.

Q. For what souls are we to pray?

A. For such only as may be presumed to be in purgatory; and therefore not for martyrs, infants, or canonized Saints, nor for any that die out of the communion of the Catholic Church?

Q. May we pray for such as lived holily in the Church?

A. Yes. For the judgment of God is different from that of man.

Q. May we pray for such Catholics as lived wickedly?

A. We may; unless they died in the actual commission of a mortal sin; for we hope in the unlimited mercy of Almighty God.

Q. What motives are there to induce us to this devotion of praying for the dead?

A. To pray for the dead is an argument of our charity to God, our neighbour, and ourselves.

Q. How is it an argument of our charity to God?

A. Because by praying for the delivery of those pious souls, we desire that God may be praised and glorified by them in heaven.

Q. How is it a charity to our neighbour?

A. Those souls are elect members of Jesus Christ, and therefore in a particular manner our neighbours and fellow members; so that upon account of their great and patient suffering, they very much deserve our compassion and assistance.

Q. How is it a charity to ourselves?

A. 1. It makes us think of the next world, which is the great duty of a Christian.

2. It provides us friends in heaven.

3. It renders us more capable of relief when we come to purgatory.

4. It encourages us to avoid even venial sin; to bear patiently the afflictions of this life, and to do all the penance we are able, which is the most effectual means to avoid both hell and purgatory.

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SECT. 35.—*Presentation of the Blessed Virgin.*  
Nov. 21.

Eccles xxiv. 14, 16. Luke, xi. 27, 28.

Q. WHAT is the intention of the Church in this feast?

A. 1. To praise and thank Almighty God for the graces with which he so timely endowed the blessed Virgin, who was the first of her sex that made profession of continuing a virgin all her life.

2. To excite us to the imitation of this glorious Mother of all the Elect.

Q. How are we to imitate her?

A. By presenting and dedicating ourselves, as she did, to God's service.

Q. And how are we to offer ourselves?

A. 1. By humbling ourselves in his presence, confessing our infirmity, and owning that if he help us not with his grace, we are certainly lost. 2. By making a protestation of being faithful in resisting evil, and performing whatever he requires of us.

3. By putting ourselves in a disposition of accepting from his hand sickness, pain, poverty, afflictions, or whatever he appoints.

Q. How did she dedicate herself?

A. Early, entirely, and for ever.

Q. How early?

A. In her infancy, according to a pious tradition of the Eastern church; being well persuaded that all the moments of her life were few enough to make a present of to her Creator.

Q. Why do you say, entirely?

A. Because she undoubtedly renounced her own will and all the riches and pleasures of this world.

Q. What reason have we to believe this?

A. We have this reason, that since we ought to believe every thing that adds to the honour of the blessed Virgin, without prejudice to faith, we must think she certainly took God's will for the only rule of her actions: she desired no other riches but to possess God's grace; no other pleasure, but to please and serve him.

Q. How did she dedicate herself for ever?

A. She was constant in her good resolutions, and made it her daily care to improve in virtue.

Q. What are those persons to do, who have already dedicated themselves to God?

A. To renew this day their vows or purposes of serving God.

Q. And what advice do you give to those that are not as yet settled in any state?

A. 1. To resolve from this day forward, under the protection and patronage of the blessed Virgin, to give themselves entirely to the service of Almighty God.

2. To beg her intercession, that God would be

pleased to direct them to that state of life in which he designs that they shall save their souls.

Q. What ought mothers to do on this feast?

A. 1. To offer up their children to Almighty God, and daily to renew the oblation.

2. To beg grace so to educate them, that they and their children may both inherit eternal life.



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## PRAYERS.

*That may be said, preparatory to the reading of the  
different Subjects in this Book.*



ON A SUNDAY, OR A FESTIVAL OF THE LORD.

*Prayer.*

O ALMIGHTY and eternal God, to whose honour and glory this day is dedicated, grant us, we beseech thee, that we may celebrate the same in acts of adoration, praise, and thanks giving, due to thy divine Majesty; through Christ our Lord. Amen.



ON THE FESTIVALS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

*Prayer.*

O ETERNAL Father, who hast chosen the blessed Virgin Mary to be the Mother of thy only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ; grant us, we beseech thee, who celebrate her Festival this day, that by her intercession, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life; through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.



ON THE FESTIVALS OF THE SAINTS.

*Prayer.*

O ALMIGHTY God, grant us, we beseech thee, that the example of thy Saints may effectually

move us to reform our lives, and that whilst we celebrate their Festivals, we may also imitate their virtues; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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ON FASTING DAYS.

*Prayer.*

GRANT us, O Lord we beseech thee the assistance of thy grace, that duly applying ourselves to fasting and prayer, we may be delivered from all our enemies both of soul and body; through Christ our Lord. Amen

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ON DAYS OF ABSTINENCE.

*Prayer.*

GRANT, we beseech thee, O Almighty God, that thy people, who by abstinence mortify their bodies, may, by the observance of thy law, abstain from all things displeasing to thee; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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