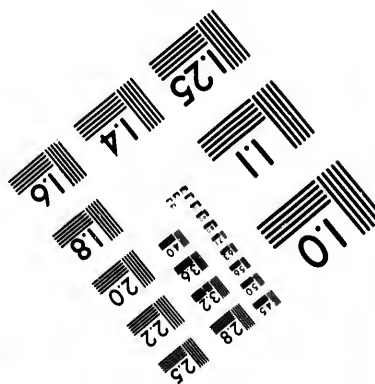
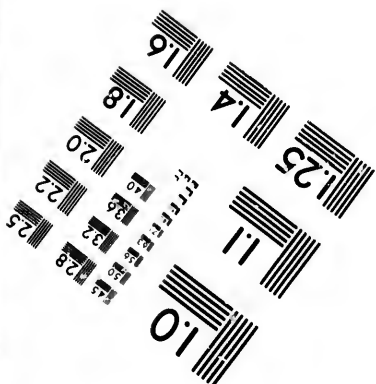
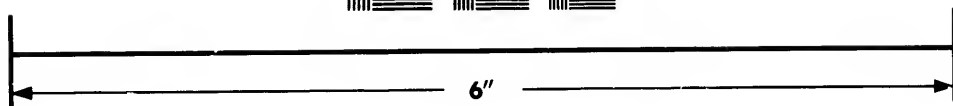
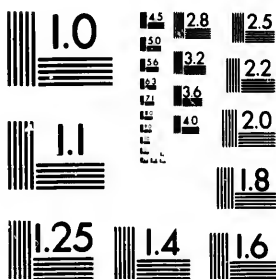


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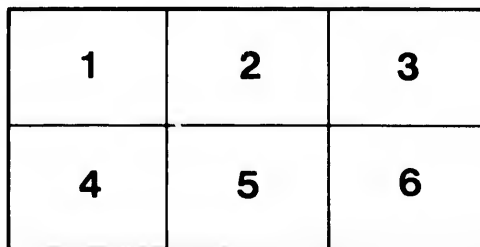
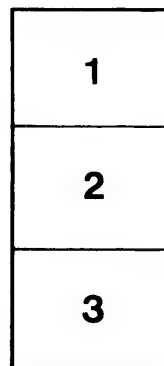
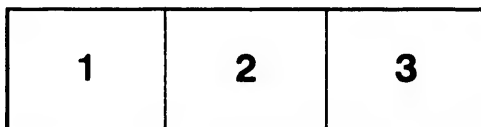
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8.

PASTORAL GREETING.

A SERMON

PREACHED ON THE OCCASION OF HIS ENTERING UPON
THE PASTORAL CHARGE OF

TRINITY CHURCH, PORT BURWELL,

AND

S.T. LUKE'S CHURCH, VIENNA,

APRIL 21st, 1867, BY THE

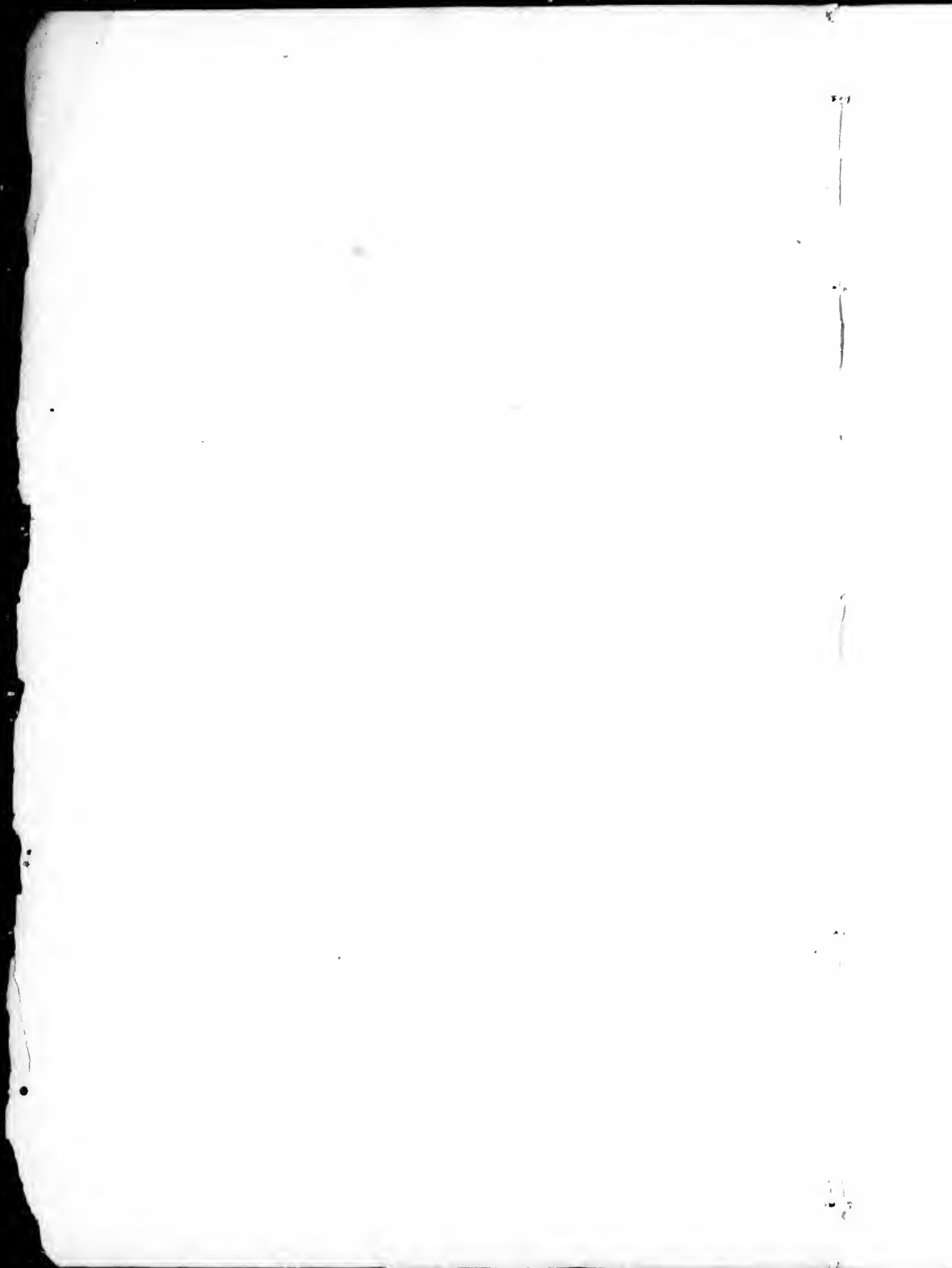
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DEDICATED

TO THE

MEMBERS OF TRINITY CHURCH, PORT BURWELL,

AND

ST. LUKE'S CHURCH, VIENNA,

IN WHOSE SPIRITUAL WELFARE

I TAKE THE DEEPEST INTEREST, WHOM I SINCERELY

WISH TO SEE STEADFAST IN FAITH, STRONG IN

HOPE, ARDENT IN LOVE AND ZEALOUS

IN GOOD WORKS, FOR WHOM I

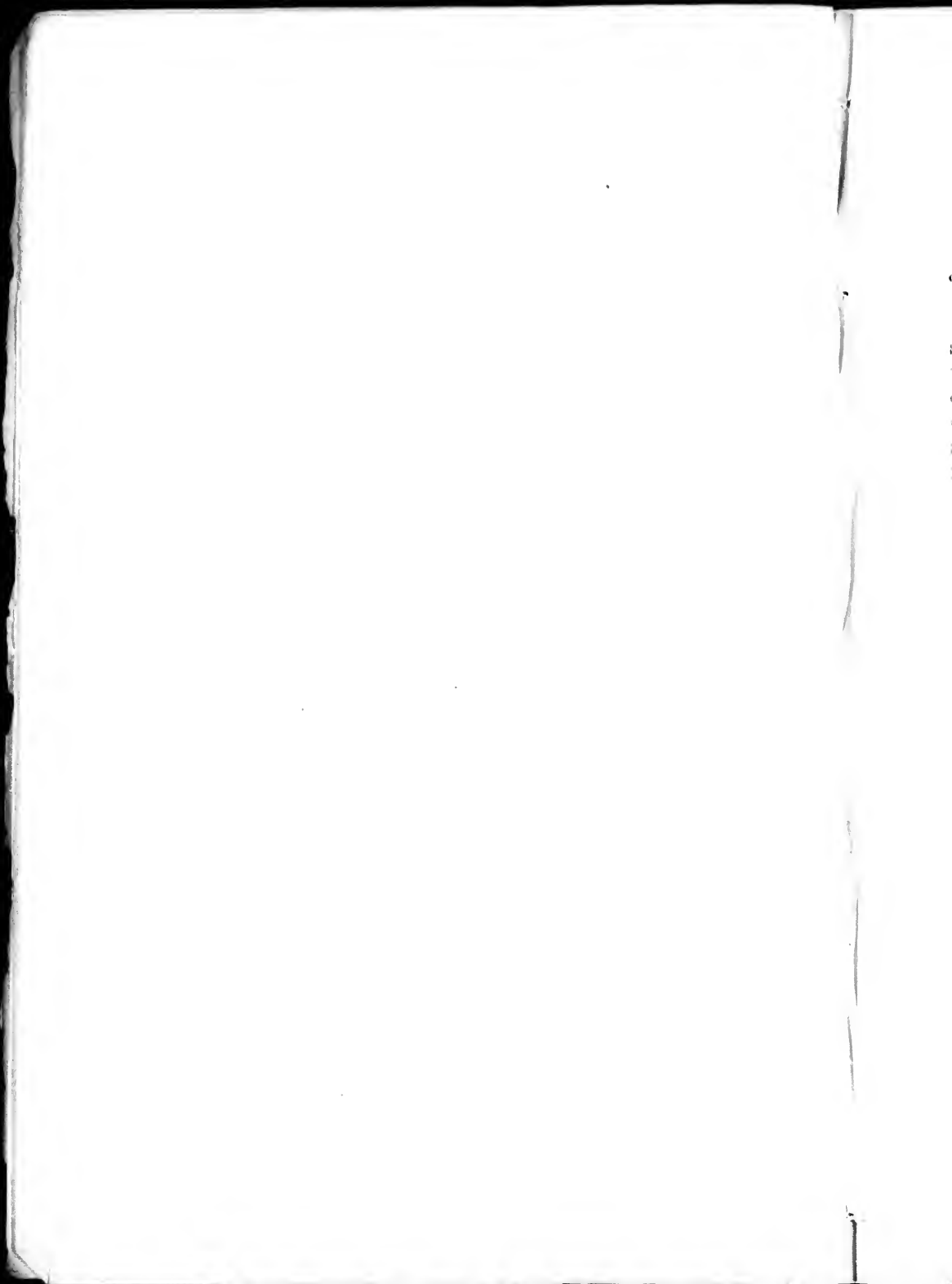
CONSTANTLY PRAY THAT

THEY MAY BE

LIVELY MEMBERS

OF THEIR

BELOVED CHURCH.



PASTORAL GREETING.

II. Cor., XIII., 14.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all."

Much is contained in this short and comprehensive sentence. It plainly sets forth, in words full of meaning, the whole doctrine of the Gospel. This heartfelt benediction of the Apostle supposes the fundamental doctrine of the Divine Trinity, and declares that Father, Son and Holy Ghost are three persons, yet but one God. It implores the grace of Christ the Redeemer, the love of God the Father who sent him, and all the communication of that grace and love which came to us by the Holy Ghost. We can desire no more to make us happy here or hereafter. And without this threefold blessing all my pastoral labors among you would be fruitless. I may preach to you and administer the Sacraments, instruct you and pay you pastoral visits, pray with you and edify you by a holy life; I may plant and water, but mark well, my brethren, it is God alone that gives the increase. Without his blessing our spiritual edifice cannot be built up. Let us, therefore, consider the words of the text, and apply them to our souls' welfare, and may the Triune God assist us in our humble meditation.

In the first place, the Apostolical blessing expressed in the words of the text supposes and declares the *all-important doctrine of the Trinity*. This is a difficult doctrine, and would require several discourses to prove it and set it before you in its proper light. I shall content myself, at present, by merely making a few remarks.

If God himself had not revealed to us a few glimpses of his nature, we would know very little of him. Our reason gives us not a single satisfactory and convincing proof that there is only one God. I examined carefully all the rational arguments usually given in favor of the

unity of God, and I found that to my mind they were all more or less defective. I incline to the belief that those who extol the Unity to the detriment of the Trinity, take many things for granted which require proof, and have no solid basis for many of their first principles.

On the other hand, the plurality of Gods can also not be proved by reason. But can it be disproved by our reasoning powers? I think it can neither be proved nor disproved. If we study the history of the world, we find that men left to their reason alone were more inclined to admit more Gods than they were to favor the doctrine of One God.

All that we know, or rather, all that mankind knows, by reason alone is, that there exists *a supreme indivisible and intelligent Agency* in the universe. What this Agency is, its nature and character, reason cannot tell us. All mankind universally admitted this superior Agency. And let me state also this fact, that the thinking men of all nations and ages admitted a *unity* and *plurality* in this supreme Agency. With some of these philosophers this plurality consisted of two, with others of three, with others of many Divine Agents. Reason inclines not only to the unity, but also to the plurality in the Godhead. In some ages, and among some nations, it may have inclined more to the one than to the other; but historical observation assures us that it inclines to both at the same time. Sound reason, then, is not adverse to admitting a *plurality in the unity* of the Godhead.

And, indeed, how can you conceive *life* possible in a unity *without* a plurality. I give you an instance. Each human being consists of many indivisible particles, the union and active relation of which constitute the life of man. If there was only one indivisible atom constituting the human being, life could not be conceived. So also in the Godhead. If there were no *internal union*, no *internal active relation of being* in God, there would be no *Divine life*. Now, this supposes a *plurality in unity*. But this internal union, this active relation of being, constituting the Divine life, must be altogether *perfect*

in God, something superior to any analogy taken from created beings; hence what in man are called *powers*, are called in God *persons*. All this reason admits; but it does not tell us in what this *plurality in the One Godhead* consists,

God himself, in his infinite mercy and love, has revealed it to us, as far as we are concerned, and as far as it contributes to our well-being. All authenticated revelation from the beginning of the world emanates from *One and the Same God*. He who speaks to us is altogether *One*. He has revealed to us that there are *three* in the Godhead, whose union and mutual relation constitute the Divine life. These three are Father, Son and Holy Ghost. This is unmistakably revealed; we cannot understand Scripture without admitting it. Believe this Trinity, and the whole sacred volume becomes clear and intelligible. Call them persons, call them individuals, call them essentials; it does not matter. The doctrine does not consist in the name. It is certain that there are *Three*, and these *Three* are in *One*, that is, they are so intimately, so essentially, so internally united, that they constitute but one Divine life—*One Godhead*.

This sublime union of Father, Son and Holy Ghost is beautifully expressed and analyzed in the Athanasian Creed. Hence the many expressive repetitions in that formula. Without these repetitions the essential union of the *Three in One* could not be forcibly expressed. All the three Divine Persons are *equally* active in our salvation. We must believe in this equal activity in order to be saved. The love of the Father, the grace of the Son, the communion of the Holy Ghost, all these three are equally and essentially necessary for our salvation. Hence the condemnatory clauses in that Creed. They are not only contained in Scripture, but they follow as a matter of course.

The doctrine of the Trinity inculcated in our text is the basis of all revealed truths. Without this doctrine all divine revelation is unintelligible. Without it we would have to twist and wrest the language of Scripture,

and put upon it senses unnatural and violent. Scripture would cease to be a lamp to our feet, and a light to our steps. This doctrine is also the groundwork of the salvation of our souls. I am, therefore, perfectly right, when in coming among you as your pastor, I speak to you of this fundamental tenet of Divine revelation, and exhort you to believe firmly the Divine Trinity. Receive it with a reverent faith. Worship the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. This is life eternal to know the three Divine persons. O, there is happiness and mental food in this believing. Do not think that it is an irrational doctrine. It may be irrational to believe in the unity alone, or in the three alone, but it is enlightened faith and truth to believe in *Three in One*, or the *Trinity of the Godhead*. May, then, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.

And in the first place, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you in all my pastoral ministrations among you. This expression of St. Paul contains a convincing proof of the Divinity of Christ. He calls here Christ *our Lord*, a name which in Scripture, in such connections as our text, is only given to God. He wishes the Corinthians the *grace* of Christ. God alone can give grace. The Apostle gives Christ *the same standing* with the Father and the Holy Ghost. Christ therefore is God. O, let us firmly believe this great doctrine. Christ is attacked on all sides in our inquisitive, but worldly and infidel age. He is foolishness to the unthinking worldling, and a stumbling-block to the thoughtful but unconverted heart. Let him be to us the power of God, the wisdom of God unto eternal salvation. The Father and the Holy Spirit, Scripture, miracles and prophecies have borne testimony that he is the Messiah, the Redeemer of the world.

Dearly beloved, you have heard and read of Christ, of his wise doctrine and wondrous works, of his life, passion and death on the cross, of his glorious resurrection, ascension into heaven, and intercession at the right hand of his Father; but did you ever *reflect* and *feel* that you

stand in need of Christ? He himself has said: "*Without me ye can do nothing.*" We may have natural good qualities, but without Christ they avail us nothing. Without Christ we yield to the temptations that beset us on all sides, and fall into sin. We often thought ourselves wise, strong, rich and honored; but our wisdom turned out to be foolishness, our strength yielded to temptations, our riches were but dross and gave us no satisfaction, our honor was but empty vapor. In spite of all our good resolutions and precautions we fell into sin. Yes, my brethren, we all have sadly experienced that we are sinners, and as such we have incurred the displeasure of God, the reproach of our own conscience and the punishment due to sin. Do we feel this? And if we feel it, how can we be saved? How can we obtain pardon of our sins, and peace for our troubled conscience? The answer is ready, true and sure: Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. He, the eternal Son of God, for our sakes became man, and thus united our nature with the Divine; in this incarnate nature he offered himself for us to the offended Godhead, and atoned for our sins. Through his grace, then, we are saved. May this grace be with us all, and obtain pardon and mercy for us! Whenever we are so unfortunate as to commit sin, let us have immediate recourse to our Redeemer. *Come to Jesus, beloved, and be saved!* This is the invitation I address to you to-day, and shall continue to address as long as I minister among you.

But sin, although pardoned, has left us weak; the older we grow the weaker we become. We cannot stand still; we must either go backward or forward in the road to perfection that leads to heaven. Backwards we do not wish to go; forwards, then! yes, forwards! But, alas, how cramped are all our energies! how desponding and discouraged our spirits! how short-sighted our views of what is good and right and true! We try and endeavor again and again; but, oh, how difficult is the task! how difficult to perform our duties in our respective spheres! What shall we do? Shall we despond? No, but have courage, and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

His grace is all-sufficient. With St. Paul, I wish that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. May this powerful grace be with you in all your transactions, both domestic, social and ecclesiastical; may it sustain you in your trials and afflictions at home, in your difficulties with your fellow-creatures, and in the various branches belonging to the welfare and prosperity of the Church.

But in wishing you the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, I wish you, at the same time, the love of God the Father. Both go inseparably together. God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son for our redemption; and the Son so loved his Father, that he obeyed his will, and so loved us, that he sacrificed himself for us on the altar of the cross. Here you have love and grace united.

O, the depth of the riches of the unspeakable love of God! God loved us, and therefore he gave us life and its manifold blessings. He loved us, and therefore he wishes to see us happy in time and eternity. He preserves our lives, and watches over us with a father's care; not a hair can fall from our head against his will. Food and raiment, health, wealth and comfort, the enjoyments of society and the happiness of the domestic circle are all gifts of his love. His wondrous love feeds our mind with knowledge and our hearts with joyful affections. And when we rebelled against him, he still loved us; he took pity on us, and decreed in his love that we should be redeemed from our sins. He sent his well-beloved Son to restore the reign of love on earth. Jesus Christ was the living witness of his Father's love. He was the incarnate love of God. God, in his wondrous love, created heaven for us, where love should reign supreme. Heaven is the abode of love. There in those happy realms God wishes us to sing forever and ever the canticles of love. There our eyes will be delighted in beholding the great works of love; our hearts will be filled with the ecstasies and raptures of divine love; our whole nature will be pervaded with the blissful fire of this wondrous love of God.

O, my brethren, what more can I wish you, than this love of God. If you possess that love, all my ministrations among you will be blessed and crowned with success. If you have that love, you will delight in hearing me speak of God and his truth; you will come to Church to hear the word of life eternal. *What is more pleasing and sweet than to be beloved by no less a personage than God himself!*

My wish is also that you should love him in return. *What is more sublime than to love a God!* Love him by seeking his presence and company in fervent prayer. Love him by keeping his commandments. Love him by promoting his greater honor and glory in your midst. Love him by loving your neighbor, who, like you, is the object of God's love. How could you love God, if you hated your brother, who is created in God's own image and likeness, who has been redeemed by the blood of Christ, and, like you, is destined to be a citizen of heaven? Be therefore kindly affectioned one towards another; be of one mind; live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you. Be a united congregation. Show your membership in works of love. Then you will feel the blessings of religion.

Through the grace of Christ you obtain the love of God. But both this grace and love must be communicated to you through the agency of the Holy Spirit. And this is what I wish you in the third place: "May the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." All the three Divine persons have an equal part in the redemption of the world. We would never partake of the grace of Christ and the love of the Father, if the Holy Spirit did not breathe upon our souls and make us feel our own nothingness, sinfulness and wants; if he did not open our minds to see in Christ the Redeemer of our souls, and bend our rebellious hearts to take our refuge to him. The love of God would never be shed abroad in our hearts, if the Holy Spirit did not kindle it therein. The Word of God would forever remain unintelligible to us, if the Holy Ghost did not open to us its understanding. Spirit signifies breathing. He is the Breath-

ing between the Father and the Son, the Breathing that proceeds from these two Divine persons, the Breathing that brings the souls of men into contact with the God-head, and makes them partakers of the Divine nature. The Spirit of God renders the word that is preached productive in the hearts of men, and gives life to all the ordinances of the Church. May this Spirit, then, be with you all. May he bless my pastoral labors among you. May he lead you into all truth, and give you everlasting life.

Dearly beloved, in coming among you as your pastor, I pray God that he may shower his heavenly blessings upon my humble labors; and these are the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost. If these three blessings are with us, we will edify each other by a holy daily walk, and our church will prosper.

There is one thing which I wish to impress particularly on your mind, on this the first Sunday of my pastoral charge. I would ask your *cordial and sincere co-operation* in all my endeavors for good. I cannot tell you, my brethren, how it cheers a pastor's heart, and inspires him with new zeal and energy, when he meets everywhere with a hearty and friendly reception, and when all co-operate with him in the good cause of Christ, truth, and brotherly love, to the honor and glory of God and the welfare of society. Encouragement and good will on the part of the people mould and fashion the life of a clergyman and make him more useful to his flock, while indifference and unreasonable opposition tend to deprive him of his energy, damp his best efforts, injure his health, and often inflict lasting injuries on his character and future ministerial usefulness. As I am ordained and set apart by God to benefit you in every regard, to be your true friend, consoler, counsellor and guide, to be at your side in all your afflictions, to weep with them that weep and to rejoice with them that rejoice, so it is also your duty to make my heart glad by your sincere co-operation, to enable me to do good, and to be attached to me with a brotherly love.

Above all, I would entreat you, my brethren, to *pray for me*. Remember me in your prayers at your domestic altar. I do the same in your behalf. As long as the members of a congregation pray for their clergyman, and he, likewise, supplicates God for them, God will support him in his holy calling. Nothing promotes more the mutual confidence between pastor and people, than this mutual prayer.

O yes, my brethren, there is a *mutual silent influence* between pastor and people. I know that the people often think and speak of their clergyman. They all desire to have a good pastor in their midst. I know their spiritual welfare is dear to their hearts, although they may not always openly express it. I do not think there is one who does not wish to see the truth prevail. Let, then, your thoughts and words be accompanied by zealous co-operation. Let pastor and people give each other the right hand of fellowship, and work together in the good cause that makes man happy both here and hereafter.

As I have commenced speaking on these points, allow me to make some further remarks. It is very important, dearly beloved, that there never should be any, not even the slightest misunderstanding between any one of you and me. Let us always immediately come to the right good understanding. Much harm is often done by allowing a misunderstanding to go on for weeks and months. It should be cleared and removed *immediately*. Be therefore always outspoken, open and candid with me. I assure you that you can give me no greater pleasure, than by expressing to me freely your wishes. You will find me always ready to comply with them. With prudence and care, I shall endeavor to carry out the good plans that any one may suggest to me for the good of the Church and the welfare of the community in general.

One of the most important institutions in a parish is the *Sunday-School*. We cannot over-estimate its value and importance. The children must be trained, and *well* trained in the ways of the Lord. The future welfare of

the Church depends on it. I am confident you will give me a helping hand in this great Christian work. I shall be thankful to those ladies and gentlemen who kindly volunteer to give their services in the religious training of the young. We shall have our regular *teachers' meetings* for our mutual benefit and the efficiency of the school.

But I would remind the parents that, with all our efforts, the Sunday-School comprises only a very small part of the religious training of the youth. *Home education* is required. The principal education rests on the parents themselves. Woe unto them if they neglect it! Your children ought to pray at home, read the Bible at home, be instructed and trained at home in the way they should go. I would impress also upon your mind that it is your solemn duty to take your children with you to church; otherwise, they will grow up careless and indifferent in religion when they become their own masters. Teach them, in their tender years; to love the Church and her admirable worship.

Besides the Sunday-School, the *Bible-Class* is another great parochial institution, and an efficient instrumentality for doing good. The Bible is the religion of Protestants; it is the rule of our faith and practice. It is highly important to know how to read, study and interpret it. Well, all this is learned in a Bible-Class. I would, therefore, request you to attend it with regularity and due preparation. May the truth of God make us wise unto salvation.

Remember, my brethren, the *Sabbath-day*, to keep it holy. Exclude from your mind, on that day, all secular cares and anxieties. Let it be consecrated altogether to the service of God. Keep it holy at home by more fervent prayer and pious reading. Keep it holy by going to Church and joining fervently and sincerely in the public worship of the congregation. We do not observe the Lord's Day if we do not attend Divine Service. This attendance is our solemn duty. Christ has given us the example. We read of him that he was present, on the Sabbath-day, at the Services of the Temple, or

Synagogue. My brethren, we are citizens of a Christian land, and as such we are bound to honor God by public worship; because society, deriving its origin from God, must worship him as a society, and this can only be done by a united public worship. This is the worship of the whole body of the citizens. The welfare of our country depends on the strict observance of the Lord's day. I cannot tell you, dearly beloved, how it grieves the heart of a pastor to see members of the flock entrusted to his charge absent from Church, on the day appointed by God himself for our sanctification. It is a cruel pain that none but he that is zealous for God's glory and the welfare of society can sufficiently understand. I hope that none of the members of the Church in this place will ever inflict on me this pain.

I hope, also, my brethren, that you will be attentive and diligent observers of all the *ordinances* of the Church. Bring your infants to be baptised, and to have them engrafted into the tree of Christ's Church. Approach regularly the Lord's Table, and unite yourselves with the Redeemer of your souls. Renew your baptismal vows in the Apostolical rite of confirmation. Never esteem lightly the ordinances instituted by Christ himself. If he considered them of importance, they must needs be important. Observe also the regulations and constitutions that the Church has made in olden times, or may, from time to time, see fit to make for your spiritual welfare. Remember that they are devised by the united wisdom of the whole body.

My brethren, in order to become truly useful to you, and to benefit you as much as possible, I must become acquainted with every man, woman and child of my flock. I can acquire this necessary acquaintance only by *pastoral visits*. It is, therefore, my intention to visit you, from time to time, at your own homes, to sit by your firesides, to read for you out of God's holy word, to pray with you, to converse with you on the high and holy things of God, to become acquainted with your wants, to give you my pastoral advice and assistance, and thus prove myself the true friend of your families.

I am sure that many can thus be won over to the Church who would otherwise be lukewarm and indifferent. I know by experience that many a tender cord of the heart is thus touched that might never otherwise be brought to think and feel seriously on the importance and end of this life's short pilgrimage. The great point gained by the system of pastoral visits is, that it establishes an intimacy between pastor and flock in spiritual matters. I intend visiting you as much as possible, and to become *all to all*. But sometimes I may not be able to visit you as frequently as I would wish. You must bear in mind that there are many families whom I have to visit, and that a day's pastoral visiting is more laborious work than all the duties of the Sunday, that the preparations for my sermons and lectures, and the care of my own household require a considerable portion of my time. A clergyman's duties are manifold. In order to feed the people with sound doctrine, he himself ought to study continually, and fill first his own mind. Not only the regular members of the church require to be visited and cared for, but also those who attend no church. These latter demand the special attention of the pastor; the only way of reaching them is to visit them in their houses. Dearly beloved, sometimes I may visit you less frequently, but do not imagine on that account that I have forgotten you. I bear you all in my mind and heart. At other times, again, my visits will be more numerous than usual. You shall all be visited in your turn.

In regard to the *temporal matters* of the congregation, I would wish the churchwardens to have the complete management of them. It is their proper sphere and province. The clergyman should give his whole time and attention to the spiritual, moral and intellectual welfare of his flock. I know it is often troublesome to manage the temporal affairs of the parish, and to collect, at the proper time, the necessary salary for the decent support of the pastor, so that he may minister without embarrassing temporal cares and anxiety; but let the Churchwardens undertake it as a labor of love for the welfare of the Church; then they will find it easy, pleasant and

satisfactory. My brethren, I wish you all to take a deep and zealous interest in Church matters. Be diligent in attending regularly the different vestry meetings. Why? They are your meetings, for your especial benefit, for the benefit of your children, for the spread of truth and morality, for the maintenance of order and regularity in the Church. Let it, therefore, never be said that such or such a vestry meeting was thinly attended. Zeal, my brethren! forwards, not backwards!

As we stand continually in need of some funds for Church purposes, the best way of having them always on hand is to contribute liberally towards the regular collections which are taken up every Sunday in Church. Do not put on the plate the smallest silver coin which you find in your house. I am sure you can afford more than that. There is so much money uselessly spent during the week. Why could you not save a little of that for the prosperity of your Church. You would not feel the want of it, and it would often save a great deal of trouble and anxiety to the Churchwardens. I would especially exhort those who pay no regular subscriptions, or pew rents, to be more liberal in their contributions on Sundays.

A good Churchman not only takes an interest in the welfare of his own parish, but his views and feelings extend beyond its narrow limits. He loves his Church sincerely, and therefore rejoices when the whole body is sound and vigorous; and he is sorry when any part of it suffers. His heartfelt desire is to see the Church prosperous and efficient for good in all parts of the world, but especially throughout the whole length and breadth of his own land. He is a true propagandist in his feelings and actions; he wishes to see the limits of the Church extended. My brethren, act the part of zealous Churchmen, contribute liberally of your worldly goods towards all missionary efforts, both in your own land and elsewhere. Our missions should not languish for want of funds. The missions in our young Diocese are very numerous and destitute. Remember them liberally in the

yearly and quarterly collections that are taken up in their behalf in the Church and parish.

I cannot conclude without addressing a few words to the ladies of the congregation. Beloved sisters, Christianity has raised you to a high dignity in the Church, in society and in the family. Holy women ministered to the wants of our Blessed Saviour; they did not abandon him in his sufferings, but accompanied him to Calvary, stood close by the cross, witnessed his pain and agony; they consoled their beloved Lord in his dying hour, by their presence and tears of sympathy and condolence. Holy women were the first at the grave on the great resurrection morn; it was to them that our Lord first appeared. Holy women assisted the Apostles in establishing the Church of Christ; they accompanied them in their travels, administered to their wants, and received them hospitably into their houses. And in the succeeding ages, wherever Christianity raised its standard and unfurled its glorious banners, we find that woman asserts her true dignity, reigns by her affection and love, is a ministering angel to suffering mankind, banishes vice and crime from the family circle, and in her own sweet way instils the seeds of virtue into those that are nearest and dearest to her. In every age woman has been the angel in the Christian Church, promoting its welfare by prayer and kind co-operation in the good work of Christ. Let this also be your sphere, beloved sisters; promote the good cause of Christ at home, in Church and society. O, yes, you can do a vast amount of good. There are many ways in which you can be active in the Christian work. You have a great influence in your families and in society. Exert that influence on your husbands, children, brothers, sisters and friends. When the love of Christ is shed abroad in your hearts, the Church will prosper in your midst.

Finally, dearly beloved, I beseech you to think much of religion, and to esteem it above all other things of this world. Study the great truths contained in the Bible, and become every day wiser unto salvation. Be good Christians, then you will be good Churchmen. To pre-

tend to be a good Churchman without being a good Christian, is an absurdity. Be, therefore, true followers of Christ, then your church will prosper.

With these sentiments I enter upon my pastoral duties among you. May the Lord enable me to walk before you in all humility, prudence, patience, meekness, wisdom and zeal. And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen.



