

THE
Externals
OF THE
Catholic
Church

COMPLETELY REVISED

A Handbook of
Catholic Usage

\$4.50

ECC
PJK&S

The Externals of the Catholic Church



A Handbook of Catholic Usage



BY MSGR. JOHN F. SULLIVAN

Revised by Rev. John C. O'Leary

Illustrated by William V. Cladek

More than three decades have passed since the historic first edition of EXTERNALS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH appeared. Ever since then it has been on all Catholic basic book lists, has run through many printings, for it is uniquely useful as a ready-reference compendium of *Catholica* — a comprehensive survey of Catholic organization and government, traditions and ceremonies, sacraments and devotions, explained in the most winning and satisfying sort of way. EXTERNALS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH answers not only the *who?* *what?* *how?* and *when?* but especially the *why?* behind each phenomenon of Catholic custom and usage.

(Continued on back flap)

The Externals of the Catholic Church

OF CATHOLIC USAGE

Foreword

THE ORIGINAL INTENTION of the author of *The Externals of the Catholic Church* was to bring together in readable form a mass of information found only in widely scattered sources. The book was designed chiefly for the Catholic layman, so that without considerable study he might have a satisfactory knowledge of the history and significance of the visible features of his religion.

It has been many years since the first edition of the work appeared. At that time the publishers little realized how constant would be the demand for such a book, but far less did they realize how much the ensuing years would affect the contents of a book about Catholic practice.

The Church is, of course, unchanging in its doctrine—of God and man, and of the means for man's attaining to God—but in all else she is adaptable to changing social conditions. Yet even in externals the Church had been for a long time relatively stable. This was so because society itself had been stable. As with everything else, however, she had to adjust to modern times.

When Monsignor Sullivan was writing, this adjustment was barely under way; it had not yet reached the level of the faithful for whom he was writing. Hardly had the original edition been published, however, when the effects of this adjustment became visible. In 1918 the Church completed her vast codification of Canon Law. With this event a new era in discipline began, in which not only were practices to be altered but also a large scale shifting of emphasis was to take place.

Foremost among the changes affecting *The Externals of the Catholic Church* were those associated with the Liturgical Movement which, under the impetus of Saint Pius X had begun to pick up momentum. In the following years this movement so completely transformed the attitudes of the faithful towards their official forms of worship that much of Sullivan's frame of reference gradually became obsolete.

Another change had to do with the apostolate. The role of the laity in the life of the Mystical Body was again recognized, and the years saw the rise to prominence of a vast lay apostolate. Today this apostolate is a vital factor in the spiritual life of Europe and its present vigor in America holds much promise.

In successive editions of *The Externals* attempts were made to keep up with the tide of changes, but it gradually became evident that a complete renovation of the book would eventually be called for. While continuing in demand the book became less and less representative of current attitudes. Any thorough revision, however, entailed not only a careful examination of every statement in the light of new facts and legislation, but also a judgment in accordance with current attitudes in matters which had not yet crystallized into law or practice.

Father John C. O'Leary was well equipped for the task of revision. Pastor of a church, Newman Club chaplain, and author of *Fundamental Rubrics*, his was the recognized advantage of having prepared for the priesthood in Rome. Those who are familiar with previous editions of *The Externals* will readily see how well he has succeeded in renovating a unique compendium without losing the graceful style which has helped to popularize the book.

The new illustrations are by William Cladek, an artist who has long been associated with the Liturgical Movement. His drawings, while avoiding extremes, exemplify what is best in contemporary liturgical art.

Preface

~~~~~

THE ORIGINAL WORK of Monsignor Sullivan has been for many years a standard source of information. Reading it today, however, one realizes how attitudes, customs and tastes, as well as factual data, have changed in the years since the book was first written. In keeping with the spirit of those days, much of the author's treatment of certain subjects was a refutation of erroneous notions held by persons outside the Church. In other respects, too, his approach reflects an era of Catholic practice that is rapidly passing.

In our revision we have attempted a more positive presentation of factual information animated by the spirit of the modern liturgical revival as expressed in the recent papal encyclicals, *Mystici Corporis* and *Mediator Dei*.

We had at hand, besides these encyclicals and other documents from the Holy See, many authentic sources which were not available to the author. Among them were documentary volumes, such as the *Raccolta* (Benziger Brothers Inc., 1943), *The Canon Law Digest*, by T. Lincoln Bouscaren, S.J. (Bruce Publishing Co.); factual fonts such as *The National Catholic Almanac* (St. Anthony's Guild), and *The Official Catholic Directory* (P. J. Kenedy & Sons); also many other modern works on the Church, its government, and its liturgy.

In particular, acknowledgment should be made to B. Herder Company, of St. Louis for permission to quote from Parsch's *The Liturgy of the Mass*; to The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn., for permission to use a passage from *The Mass-Drama* by W. Busch; and to the Paulist Press, New York, N. Y., for the

passage from *The Vestments of the Roman Rite*, by Fortesque.

It is our fond hope that a better acquaintance with the externals of the Catholic Church may foster piety, enkindle the flame of charity, increase our faith, and deepen our reverence for Him Who teaches, rules and sanctifies through the visible Church, His Mystical Body.

JOHN C. O'LEARY

*Feast of Corpus Christi*



# Contents

---

|                                                            |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Foreword . . . . .                                         | v   |
| Preface . . . . .                                          | vii |
| <i>Chapter One: The Government of the Church</i>           |     |
| 1. The Pope . . . . .                                      | 3   |
| 2. The Cardinals and the Roman Court . . . . .             | 11  |
| 3. The Bishops and the Diocesan Clergy . . . . .           | 15  |
| <i>Chapter Two: The Religious State and the Apostolate</i> |     |
| 1. Religious Orders . . . . .                              | 21  |
| 2. The Lay Apostolate . . . . .                            | 30  |
| <i>Chapter Three: The Administration of the Sacraments</i> |     |
| 1. The Ceremonies of Baptism . . . . .                     | 41  |
| 2. The Sponsors in Baptism . . . . .                       | 46  |
| 3. The Ceremonies of Confirmation . . . . .                | 50  |
| 4. The Confession of Sins . . . . .                        | 57  |
| 5. The Ceremonies of Extreme Unction . . . . .             | 64  |
| 6. The Ceremonies of Holy Orders . . . . .                 | 69  |
| 7. Celibacy of the Clergy . . . . .                        | 83  |
| 8. The Ceremonies of Matrimony . . . . .                   | 88  |
| 9. The Marriage Laws . . . . .                             | 93  |
| 10. The Blessing after Childbirth . . . . .                | 102 |
| <i>Chapter Four: The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass</i>        |     |
| 1. The Mass . . . . .                                      | 106 |
| 2. The Mass of the Catechumens . . . . .                   | 112 |

|     |                                                |     |
|-----|------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 3.  | The Mass of the Faithful . . . . .             | 117 |
| 4.  | The Mass of the Faithful—The Sacrifice-Banquet | 126 |
| 5.  | The Requisites for the Mass . . . . .          | 132 |
| 6.  | Church Buildings . . . . .                     | 141 |
| 7.  | The Consecration of a Church . . . . .         | 148 |
| 8.  | Requiem Mass . . . . .                         | 154 |
| 9.  | Church Music . . . . .                         | 161 |
| 10. | The Use of the Latin Language . . . . .        | 173 |
| 11. | Other Rites . . . . .                          | 177 |

### *Chapter Five: The Liturgical Year*

|    |                                  |     |
|----|----------------------------------|-----|
| 1. | The Calendar . . . . .           | 183 |
| 2. | Festivals . . . . .              | 187 |
| 3. | Fasting and Abstinence . . . . . | 194 |
| 4. | Advent . . . . .                 | 199 |
| 5. | Christmas Day . . . . .          | 203 |
| 6. | Lent and Holy Week . . . . .     | 209 |

### *Chapter Six: The Sacramentals*

|     |                                      |     |
|-----|--------------------------------------|-----|
| 1.  | The Sign of the Cross . . . . .      | 217 |
| 2.  | The Cross and the Crucifix . . . . . | 220 |
| 3.  | Holy Water . . . . .                 | 226 |
| 4.  | Vestments . . . . .                  | 231 |
| 5.  | The Stations of the Cross . . . . .  | 243 |
| 6.  | The Holy Oils . . . . .              | 247 |
| 7.  | Candles . . . . .                    | 253 |
| 8.  | The Rosary . . . . .                 | 257 |
| 9.  | Scapulars . . . . .                  | 262 |
| 10. | The Agnus Dei . . . . .              | 271 |
| 11. | Palm Branches . . . . .              | 275 |
| 12. | Incense . . . . .                    | 278 |
| 13. | Church Bells . . . . .               | 282 |
| 14. | Religious Medals . . . . .           | 290 |
| 15. | Ashes . . . . .                      | 294 |
| 16. | Christian Symbols . . . . .          | 296 |

*Chapter Seven: The Liturgical Books and the Bible*

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 1. The Missal . . . . .   | 303 |
| 2. The Breviary . . . . . | 308 |
| 3. The Ritual . . . . .   | 312 |
| 4. The Bible . . . . .    | 317 |

*Chapter Eight: Devotions*

|                                           |     |
|-------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Devotion to the Sacred Heart . . . . . | 322 |
| 2. The Invocation of Saints . . . . .     | 327 |
| 3. The Canonization of a Saint . . . . .  | 332 |
| 4. The Veneration of Images . . . . .     | 337 |
| 5. The Veneration of Relics . . . . .     | 342 |
| 6. The Forty Hours Adoration . . . . .    | 346 |
| 7. Our Daily Prayers . . . . .            | 351 |
| 8. The Litanies . . . . .                 | 358 |
| 9. Psalms and Hymns . . . . .             | 365 |
| 10. Pilgrimages . . . . .                 | 370 |
| 11. Indulgences . . . . .                 | 374 |

|                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| Index . . . . . | 381 |
|-----------------|-----|



# The Externals of the Catholic Church



## Chapter One

# The Government of the Church

---

### 1. THE POPE

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH is a divinely instituted society, of which all the members profess the doctrine of Christ and are united under the teaching and rule of the Roman Pontiff and the Bishops subject to him, that thereby they may cultivate holiness and obtain salvation.

Like all other societies it has, therefore, a system of authority by which it is ruled, and by which its members are directed toward the end for which it was established; and the description of this system will form the matter of these first chapters.

When we read of the Church's government or of its legislative acts we often meet the words *Cardinal*, or *Metropolitan*, or *Delegate*, or *Primate*, and we know in a vague way that these are officials of the Church; but the great majority of us Catholics have no very clear idea of the duties or the relative rank of these and other dignitaries. Many of us, doubtless, are far less familiar with the details of the government of our Church than we are with the administrative machinery of our country or city.

**The Two Hierarchies.** The governing body of the Church's clergy is usually known as the *Hierarchy*, a word derived from the Greek, signifying "order or rank among sacred things."

The Divine Founder of our Church did not intend that the rank and file of its membership should have authority in it, or a power to perform sacred public functions. To selected members, called the *clergy*, was given the office of offering public worship, of administering most of the sacraments, and of rul-

## 4      *The Externals of the Catholic Church*

ing and instructing the faithful; and the clergy (the "chosen ones") are therefore known, first of all, as the *Hierarchy of Order*, because they receive these powers through the Sacrament of Holy Orders. And in order that there may be system and uniformity, that the work of the whole body may be done in an orderly and effective manner, these leaders of the Church possess also certain legislative powers, on account of which they are known as the *Hierarchy of Jurisdiction*.

The essential features of the Church's government are the *Papacy* and the *Episcopacy*—the office of Pope and the office of Bishop. These were established by our Blessed Lord. The other grades of the hierarchy and the various details of governmental legislation have been determined by the Church herself in the course of centuries.

**The Pope.** Every nation has its ruler, be he emperor or king or president. Every society has its legislative head, its centre of authority, its lawmaker and lawgiver. And, as the Church is a society of men, although instituted by God, His wisdom has ordained that at the head of His earthly kingdom there shall be one man, a monarch, endowed with supreme power. This man is the Pope, the successor of St. Peter in the bishopric of Rome. "And I say to thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matt. 16, 18-19. Our Lord Jesus Christ, wishing His Church to be one, instituted the Primacy of Peter to rule it and to cement it into unity.

**The Pope's Power.** The sovereignty of the Pope over the Church differs from that of the rulers of other societies. He has direct authority over all Catholics, from the most exalted prelate to the humblest layman; and he is obliged to render an account of his administration to no human being. None of his power is derived from or delegated by any one else. According to the Vatican Council, he has "the whole fulness of



supreme power, ordinary and immediate, over all and each of the pastors and the faithful." He is the supreme judge in matters of faith. To him belongs the right to regulate all the Church's discipline. He may enact laws for the whole Church and for any part of it, and dispense from them. He can inflict censures, such as excommunication. He can reserve to himself the power of absolving from certain sins. He and he alone can form, suppress and divide dioceses and approve new religious orders. He can dispense from any vow, no matter how solemn or sacred.

**The Pope's Infallibility.** That the successor of St. Peter may preserve the faith of Jesus Christ free from any taint of error, that the shepherd may guide the flock aright, he has been endowed with a wonderful power and privilege. He is infallible in matters of faith and morals. That is, when by virtue of his Apostolic office he defines a doctrine of faith or morals to be held by the whole Church, he speaks without error or danger of error, being preserved from it by the Spirit of God, Which "teaches all truth" and abides with the Church forever.

Non-Catholics often ask: "Does this mean that the Pope cannot make a mistake?" Others go further, and inquire: "Do you Catholics believe that the Pope cannot sin?" The answer to both questions is, No. The Pope is subject to error, like other men. He can sin, even as we, for he is human. He is infallible only when he is speaking as the supreme teacher and head of the Church, and only when he is defining a doctrine concerning faith or morals and imposing it upon the whole Church to be accepted and held by all the Church's members. He has no immunity from error in other things. He may advocate historical or scientific views that are absolutely false. He may write books which may be full of inaccuracies and misstatements. God protects him from error only when he is exercising his office of sovereign teacher and lawgiver regarding matters which are the doctrine of the Church, whether these be of faith or morals. Such doctrines thus proposed are the

## 6 *The Externals of the Catholic Church*

teaching of the Church of Christ as soon as the Pope defines them; and any one who refuses to accept them thereby ceases to be a member of the Church.

Here, then, we have the supreme authority, the highest tribunal of appeal, the very foundation of our Church. The man who sits to-day in the chair of Peter is, like him, the rock upon which God's Church is built. He is guided by the Holy Spirit when he is teaching the truths of God to the world. As the Church is our infallible guide in the path of salvation and our infallible teacher concerning God's revealed truth, it is logical and necessary to hold that he who rules the Church must be likewise infallible, free from even the possibility of error, when he is solemnly proclaiming its principles of morals or of faith.

**The Pope's Election.** The Papacy is a monarchy, differing from other governments of that kind in one important detail; it is not hereditary. It may be termed an elective monarchy. In the first centuries it was the custom to allow the clergy and people of each diocese to choose their own bishop, and this was done at Rome as well as elsewhere; the election, however, required the assent of the neighboring bishops, and the crowning of the new Pontiff was performed by the Bishop of Ostia. The present system of election may be traced back to Pope Nicholas II, for his decree, issued in 1059, restricted the electoral power to the Cardinals. At first the Cardinal-Bishops were the only ones authorized to select the new Pope, but after a time all the Cardinals were allowed to have a share in that important work.

Who may be chosen to fill the office of Pope? Strictly speaking, any male Catholic who has come to the age of reason—even a layman. Strange to say, it would be legally possible to elect even a married man; for the law of the "celibacy of the clergy" is not of divine institution, but is a rule of the Church which developed gradually and was finally made a part of her legal code for the greater part of the world. But there is no likelihood, in the present state of Church discipline, that we

will have a Pope with a wife, nor even that any layman will be selected in preference to a cleric. For more than five hundred years the choice has fallen upon a Cardinal.

Would it be possible for the Pope to nominate his successor? As far as we know no Pope has directly designated his successor. In the light of the encyclical "Humani Generis" (1950) the Papal power is not limited in this respect. The Pope could, no doubt, appoint a Coadjutor with the right of succession to the See of Rome.

**The Conclave.** The election of a Pope takes place at what is called a *Conclave*, which word signifies that the voting prelates (the College of Cardinals) are under lock and key. This is an ancient practice, dating back to the twelfth century.

"Death lays his icy hand on kings," sang the old poet; and he who is more exalted than any king must bow to the same inexorable law. When the Sovereign Pontiff dies, his actual death is verified by a quaint ceremony. One of the Cardinals approaches the bedside and strikes the forehead of the dead Pope three times with a silver mallet, calling him by his baptismal name. This ceremony has been omitted since the death of Pius XI. The death of the Pope being thus legally attested, the Cardinals are called to the Conclave to elect its successor.

A part of the Vatican Palace is walled off, and fifteen days after the death of the Pope the Cardinals begin their work allowing enough time for the Cardinals in distant lands to arrive in Rome. The voting takes place in the Sistine Chapel by secret ballot. A two-thirds, plus one, majority is required for election according to a decree of Pope Pius XII. Two ballots are taken each morning and evening until a decision is reached. No civil power has a right to interfere. The outside world learns of the election from the type of smoke which is produced by the burning of the ballots. Heavy black smoke indicates that a vote had been cast but no majority attained by any one candidate. Light smoke ascending from the chimney announces that a new Pope has been elected and in a short time his name is proclaimed to all the people.

## 8 *The Externals of the Catholic Church*

When a candidate is found to have the necessary number of votes and has manifested his willingness to accept the office, he is thereby Pope. He needs no ceremony of consecration to elevate him to the Papacy.

It would be possible, though far from probable, that a person might be elected Pope who is not already a Bishop. He would become Pope as soon as he was lawfully chosen, and could then perform all the duties of the Papacy which pertain to jurisdiction; but he could not ordain or consecrate until he himself had been raised to the episcopate by other Bishops.

Within a few days after his election the new Pope is crowned with solemn ceremonies after a Mass of Coronation, in which petitions are offered for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the new Pontiff, and for the prosperity of the Church under his rule.

**The Pope's New Name.** For about one thousand years it has been customary for each new Pope to change his name. This is said by some to be in imitation of the taking of the name of Peter by the first Pontiff. Usually the name is taken of some preceding Pope whose works and sanctity commend themselves to the new Pontiff, and whose policies, perhaps, he intends to imitate.

Such is the method which our holy Church uses for the perpetuation of her government, continuing through century after century that glorious line of successors to him who received from our Saviour the commission to feed His lambs and His sheep. The powers of evil have conspired against that Church, but they have not prevailed. Storms have raged around the bark of Peter, but it has not been overwhelmed. The enemies of God's Church have tried and are trying to destroy that which is indestructible.

**The Pope's Titles.** The term Pope derives from the Latin "Papa," a familiar word for "Father." Since the eleventh century this has been the distinguishing title of the Bishop of Rome as the supreme head of the Catholic Church, and it is used of no one else in the West. The title is complete in itself without

the addition of the words "of Rome." The Pope signs himself: Pius p.p. XII; the two letters being an abbreviation for "Papa."

The Pope's full designation is Bishop of Rome, Vicar of Jesus Christ, Successor of the Prince of the Apostles, Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, Patriarch of the West, Primate of Italy, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Roman Province, and Sovereign of the State of Vatican City.

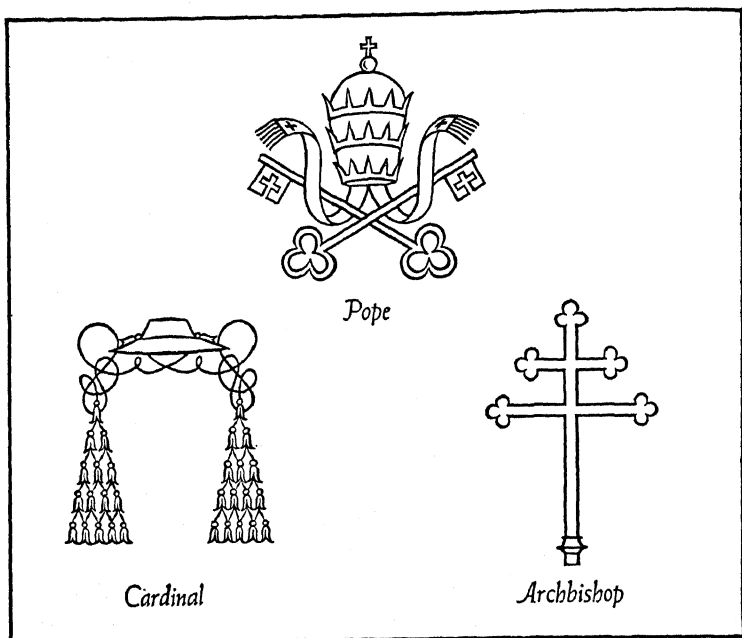
He is called Pontiff, which means "bridge-builder" because the priests of ancient Rome, among other duties, had charge of the bridges over the Tiber. The Pope is usually mentioned as "Our Holy Father," and is addressed as "Your Holiness," or in Latin, "Beatissime Pater"—"Most Blessed Father." He speaks of himself in official documents as "Servus Servorum Dei"—"Servant of the Servants of God."

**The Pope's Insignia.** The ordinary garb of the Sovereign Pontiff is white. He does not use the crozier or pastoral staff of Bishops. Among his insignia are the *pallium*,\* which signifies his rank as an Archbishop, the *keys*, symbol of his authority, and the *tiaara*,† or triple crown. In early centuries the Pope wore a simple mitre, like other Bishops; but about the ninth century a crown was added to it, to denote the Pontiff's temporal power as ruler of the States of the Church. Later a second crown was added, and about the year 1365 a third—signifying, according to some, the supreme authority of the Pope in spiritual things, his jurisdiction over the Church considered as a human society, and his dominion as a temporal monarch. According to others, the triple crown typifies his threefold office as teacher, lawgiver and judge.

**Peterspence.** A part of the revenue of the Holy See at the present day is provided by a yearly contribution from the faithful of various countries. This bears the name of *Peterspence*, because in England, in Saxon times, each householder gave a penny. It began in the reign of King Offa in 787, and spread from England to other nations of northern Europe.

\* See illustration on page 241.

† See illustration on page 10.



### Hierarchical Insignia

At the time of the Reformation it ceased throughout the world, and was not re-established until the reign of Pius IX.

The Church commonly enumerates as Popes 262 successors to St. Peter. Seventy-seven are venerated as saints, the most recent being St. Pius X, and seven have been beatified.

Under the Holy See there are nearly two thousand separate ecclesiastical jurisdictions, such as dioceses and vicariates apostolic. It has special representatives in most of the countries of the world, and many countries have representatives at the Vatican.

The term *Holy See* or *Apostolic See* means both the Pope and all the offices through which he administers the affairs or "Acts" of the Universal Church. The word "See" derives from

the Latin *sedes* (seat, i.e., of authority). Frequently the Holy Father addresses a letter to all the patriarchs, primates, archbishops and bishops of the world. These communications on doctrine and timely admonition against evils are called *encyclicals*.

By the Treaty of the Lateran, 1929, an independent sovereign state called the Vatican City came into existence. It enjoys all the rights and privileges of any sovereign power. It is ruled by the Pope and administered by a commission of Cardinals. The whole area of this important little state is slightly over 100 acres, but it includes the Pope's residence, St. Peter's Basilica, the Vatican Museum and Library, and government buildings. If the Pope were not an independent ruler he would then be a subject to a civil power, hence somewhat hindered in his universal mission to all nations.

The long line of saints, of martyrs, of learned teachers and of wise rulers who have sat on the Chair of Peter, has endured for nearly twenty centuries, and will endure till the end of time. Other religions have arisen and flourished and died; for they were not divine in their origin, and contained at most only a part of God's truth in their teachings. But the Catholic Church was founded by Jesus Christ Himself, and that Church will be man's guide and the chief means of his salvation until that dread day when "the Son of Man shall sit in the seat of his majesty and all nations shall be gathered before Him."

## 2. THE CARDINALS AND THE ROMAN COURT

Next to the Pope, in the Church's hierarchy, come the Cardinals. They are the counsellors of the Pontiff in many important matters pertaining to the government of the universal Church, and some of them exercise extensive jurisdiction in the various congregations and tribunals which have been instituted for the administration of Church law. They form, so to speak, the Senate of the Church.

The word *Cardinal* is derived from the Latin "cardo," a

hinge. They are, as it were, so necessary to the government and discipline of the Church that it may be said to revolve around them as a door on its hinges.

**Princes of the Church.** The office of Cardinal is a dignity only; the person who holds it has not received any new Order. It merely makes him higher in rank than other prelates. He is second to none but the Pope, and takes precedence of all other dignitaries in the Church. He is considered equal in rank to a prince of a reigning house, and is often spoken of as a "Prince of the Church." He is responsible to the Pope only, and may be deposed by him alone.

The Cardinals are appointed solely by the Sovereign Pontiff. By a law made in 1586, the membership of the College of Cardinals, or Sacred College, as it is sometimes called was not permitted to exceed seventy. Pope John XXIII, however, increased the number of Cardinals to 75 shortly after his coronation (November 4, 1958), and thus modified Canon 231, No. 1. They are taken from many nations.

**The Grades of Cardinals.** There are three grades of Cardinals: Cardinal Bishops, Cardinal Priests, and Cardinal Deacons.

The garb of Cardinals is scarlet, with a biretta or cap of the same color. Chief among their insignia is the *red hat*,\* which also forms a prominent feature of their armorial bearings. A Cardinal is always addressed as "Your Eminence."

**The Duties of Cardinals.** The principal duty of the Cardinals is to assist and advise the Pope in the governing of the Church. This is done in many ways—in *Papal Consistories*, which are transient meetings of all the Cardinals in Rome with the Pope, occurring from time to time at the call of the Pope, to treat of affairs of very great importance, such as the Creation of

\* See illustration on page 10.



Cardinals, the canonization of Saints; and in *Congregations*, which are permanent bodies of certain Cardinals and officials constantly transacting the daily affairs of the Church, subject to the approval of the Pope. The Cardinals have also a most important function when the Holy See becomes vacant, for, as explained in the preceding chapter, they elect the new Pope.

**The Roman Congregations.** The Congregations by which the Holy Father is assisted in the governing of the Church are: *The Consistorial Congregation*, composed of the Pope and the College of Cardinals, assembled to discuss the most weighty matters; the *Congregation of the Sacraments*; the *Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs*, which deals specially with the relations of the Holy See and other governments; the Congregation of the Inquisition, now called the *Holy Office*, which considers cases of heresy and apostasy, supervises certain classes of indulgences, and examines books; that of the *Affairs of Religious Orders*; the *Congregation of Studies*; the *Congregation of Rites*, which regulates ceremonial details and also is in charge of the process for the canonization of saints; the *Congregation of Ceremonies*; the *Congregation of the Council*, which attends to matters of discipline and some matrimonial cases; the *Congregation of Seminaries and Universities*; the *Congregation on Oriental Affairs*; and the *Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith* (the *Propaganda Fide*), which supervises the work done in missionary countries.

Besides these Congregations there are various Tribunals. Three of these are known as Tribunals of Justice: the *Rota*, which means "the wheel," because its twelve officials, called auditors, are seated in a circle and by turn examine the controversies submitted to it; the *Apostolic Camera* or Treasury; and the *Segnatura* or Signature of Justice, which examines petitions for justice and reports on them to the Holy See. There are also three Tribunals of Grace, which consider favors asked from the Sovereign Pontiff. These are the *Signature of Favor*, the *Datary*, in charge of benefices, etc., and the *Sacred*

## 14      *The Externals of the Catholic Church*

*Penitentiary.* Through this latter Office the Holy See gives absolution from sins and censures specially reserved to it.

There are, moreover, several tribunals or offices "of Expedition," through which apostolic letters are sent and other business is done. The more important of these are the *Apostolic Chancery* and the *Secretariate of State*. The cardinal who holds the latter office attends especially to the relations of the Holy See with other governments.

**Apostolic Legates.** A Legate, in the practice of our Church, is a person sent as a representative of the Pope to a government or to the bishops and faithful of a country. He may be a cardinal, or a prelate of lower rank. There are several grades. *Legates a latere* are Cardinals appointed by the Pope to represent him at specific functions, usually of national importance. A *Nuncio* is the representative of the Holy See to a country that has the Catholic Church as the state religion. An *Internuncio* is the representative of the Holy See to a country that does not have the Catholic Church as the state religion, but does maintain diplomatic relations with the Holy See. An *Apostolic Delegate* is the representative of the Pope to the Catholic hierarchy of a country that does not maintain diplomatic relations with the Holy See. Such is the case with the United States. The Apostolic Delegation in the United States is in Washington, D.C.

### 3. THE BISHOPS AND THE DIOCESAN CLERGY

**The Archbishops.** After the cardinals come the archbishops, and of these there are several grades. Certain prelates have the rank of *Greater Patriarchs*; they are the archbishops of Jerusalem, Constantinople, Antioch and Alexandria. Besides these there are several others to whom the honorary title of *Patriarch* is given, such as the archbishops of Venice and of Lisbon. A step lower in dignity than these come the *Primates*, or archbishops to whom this honorary rank has been given; they formerly exercised authority over the dioceses of a whole country or over several provinces. A *Metropolitan* is an archbishop who has certain rights and jurisdiction over a province, that is, a number of dioceses, and over the bishops who rule them. A *Titular Archbishop* is one who rules a single diocese only, or who has merely the title of some extinct archdiocese.

All these grades of dignity, of course, add nothing to the sacred order which the holder has received. He is a bishop, whether he bear the title of Patriarch, Primate, Metropolitan, Archbishop or simple Bishop.

**The Archbishop's Insignia.** The heraldic arms of an archbishop displays a doublebarred cross.\* This is to be used only as a device of heraldry. The archiepiscopal cross is a processional cross carried before the archbishop in solemn processions with the figure of Christ turned towards him. After his elevation to the archiepiscopal rank he receives from the Sovereign Pontiff the *pallium*, vestment consisting of a band of white wool with pendants worn on the shoulders.†

An archbishop is spoken of as "Most Reverend," and is addressed as "Your Excellency."

**The Bishops.** Next come the bishops, who preside over the individual dioceses, and this they do by divine right, for the Episcopate of our Church, as well as the Papacy, was instituted by Jesus Christ. Bishops are divided into two classes: *Dioce-*

\* See illustration on page 10.

† See illustration on page 241.

*san Bishops*, who rule a certain allotted territory called a diocese, and *Titular Bishops*, who bear the title of a diocese but have no jurisdiction over it. These latter may be commissioned by the Holy See as *Auxiliary Bishops* or *Coadjutors*, to assist the bishop of a diocese. The term Coadjutor Bishop is usually employed to designate one who has the right to succeed the bishop whom he is appointed to aid. Archbishops and bishops who are merely Titular receive their titles, in many cases, from ancient sees in regions that are not now Catholic. The bishop of a diocese which is a part of a province is called a *Provincial* or *Suffragan Bishop*. If a diocese does not form part of a province the bishop is sometimes called an *Exempt Bishop*, because he is exempted from the jurisdiction of a Metropolitan and is subject to the Pope directly, e.g., the bishop of San Juan, P.R. In countries having no dioceses, the territory is governed by a *Vicar Apostolic* or a *Prefect Apostolic*.

**The Visit Ad Limina.** Every archbishop and bishop in charge of a diocese is obliged at certain intervals to visit Rome and make a report to the Pope. This rendering an account of his stewardship is known as the visit *ad limina*, or to the threshold of the Apostles. These bishops are canonically required to make this visit every five years for dioceses situated in Europe, every ten years for others (Canon 341). Every five years every such Bishop must make what is called a quinquennial report to the Holy See on the state of his diocese.

**The Choosing of a Bishop.** In the first days of the Church, and for some time afterward, the appointing of a bishop was a very simple matter. The Acts of the Apostles tell us of the first election to the episcopate. When the place of the traitor Judas was to be filled, the eleven Apostles selected two candidates, and then left the result to God's providence, drawing lots to see who was to be the new shepherd of the flock of Christ; "and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven Apostles." But in later ages it was seen that there was great need of care and deliberation in choosing these guardians and leaders of the Church of God.

**The Election of Bishops.** The method of choosing bishops varies in different countries, but the final decision rests with the Holy See. The Pope, if he chooses, can name a bishop altogether independent of the usual procedure. However the ordinary method in effect in the United States is as follows: After Easter, every alternate year, a private meeting of the Bishops of each province is summoned by the Archbishop, and all are put under oath to observe the strictest secrecy. The names and qualifications of the candidates whom the Bishops regard as worthy of the episcopal dignity are considered, and each is voted on. The results (usually with all obtainable information as to the qualifications of the candidates) is sent to the Sacred Consistory through the Apostolic Delegate. And thus, when a vacancy occurs in any diocese, the Holy See is well provided with a list of candidates and with testimony as to their fitness for the place to be filled. The ultimate choice, of course, rests with the Holy See.

The garb of a bishop and his special insignia—the mitre, the pectoral cross, the ring, the pastoral staff, etc. are described elsewhere in this work, in the section on Vestments. A bishop is entitled “Most Reverend,” and in some countries is addressed as “My Lord.” In America it is customary to address him simply as “Bishop,” or “Your Excellency.”

**The Monsignors and Abbots.** Those who are called Prelates in the proper and canonical sense of the word are the Pope, Cardinals, Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops and Abbots. Below these, however, there are in the Catholic Church certain officials invested by the Pope with the title and dignity of Prelates, who are commonly called Monsignor.

Among these the highest rank is that of Protonotaries Apostolic, of which there are four grades. 1. *Protonotaries Apostolic de Numero Participantium* (of the number of the participating), of whom there are seven, forming a college of Notaries to the Sovereign Pontiff. 2. *Protonotaries Apostolic Supernumerary*—Canons of certain Roman basilicas. 3. *Protonotaries Apostolic ad Instar Participantium* (resembling the participating), who

are either the Canons of certain cathedrals or have been raised to this dignity by the Pope. The clergy who are known as Protonotaries Apostolic in this country belong to this third class of Protonotaries. 4. *Titular Protonotaries Apostolic*, called also Honorary or "Black" Protonotaries. These are not members of the pontifical household, and enjoy their rank as Prelates only outside of Rome. Since 1905, Vicars General, by virtue of their office, belong to this class of Protonotaries, if these officials are not Prelates otherwise.

Members of the first three classes of Protonotaries have the right to use and wear some of the insignia of Bishops, and are addressed as "Right Reverend Monsignor." Those of the fourth class wear black, without any red or purple, and are addressed as "Very Reverend."

Next in order come certain officials of Papal Congregations and Tribunals who are bound to reside in Rome. After these come those Prelates who have no special functions in the Papal Court and are called simply *Domestic Prelates*. Their number has been increased greatly in late years. Besides Domestic Prelates there is another lower rank of Monsignors now very frequently conferred by the Pope as an honor on members of the clergy. They are called Papal Chamberlains and are addressed as "Very Reverend Monsignor." They have the right to wear a cassock of purple cloth and a long purple mantle, but no train or rochet. Their appointment lasts only during the lifetime of the reigning Pontiff.

There are two classes of Abbots, the Abbots *nullius* and the Abbots *regiminis* or "Simple Abbots." The Abbots *nullius dioecesis* (i.e., belonging to no diocese), usually called Abbots *nullius*, are those who have jurisdiction over a certain territory and its inhabitants, with absolute exemption from the authority of any Bishop. Simple Abbots are those who have jurisdiction in their monastery and its annexed territory, though this territory is within the limits of a diocese, the Bishop of which has a right of supervision, precedence and interference in the monastery itself.

**The Vicar General.** In the United States chief among the officers of any diocese is the Vicar General, who is, as canonists say, the "other self" of the bishop. He takes precedence over all the other clergy of the diocese. His official acts have the same force as those of the Bishop—so much so that the latter cannot receive an appeal from a decision of the Vicar General; it must be made to the higher tribunal of the Metropolitan, the archbishop of the province. Usually being a Monsignor, the Vicar General is so addressed, and is designated, according to his rank as Protonotary, by the title "Right Reverend" or "Very Reverend." There may be more than one Vicar General if the size of the diocese requires it.

**Other Officials.** Each diocese has a *Chancellor*, whose office is the channel for nearly all diocesan business; and there is also, usually, a *Bishop's Secretary*. There are also the *Diocesan Consultors*, usually six in number, who form an advisory board for the Bishop, for the discussion of important matters; the *Diocesan Attorney*, or *Procurator Fiscalis*, the legal advocate for the bishop and the prosecutor in ecclesiastical trials; a board for the administrative removal of pastors, consisting of *Examiners* and *Consultors*, two of each being chosen for action on each particular case; the *Matrimonial Court*, consisting usually of a judge, a notary and the *Defensor Vinculi*, "Defender of the Marriage Tie;" the *Board of Examiners* for the clergy, *The Superintendent of Schools*, and the *Censor of Books*, who examines all works published in the diocese and dealing with matters of faith or morals. It is to the Censor of Books that books needing an imprimatur are sent. A decree of St. Pius X also provides for a *Committee of Vigilance*, to guard against the danger of Modernism. The same holy Pope ordered the creation of a *Music Commission* in each diocese. Pius XII ruled that a similar commission be established to promote the *Sacred Liturgy*.

In some dioceses there is a *Board of Deans*, having supervision over a certain number of parishes and their clergy. In many there are directors of the Priests' Eucharistic League and

of other devotional associations, and sometimes there are other officials, committees and boards for various purposes.

**The Clergy of Parishes.** Over each parish the Church places a *Pastor* or *Rector*, who is its ruler both in spiritual and temporal things, subject, of course, to the authority of his bishop and the restrictions of *Canon Law* (the term designating the body of law by which the Church is generally governed). Each parish has a certain designated territory, and the pastor is responsible for the care of souls within its limits as well as for its financial management. Each parish, legally considered, is generally a corporation, of which, in some States, the bishop is the president and the pastor the treasurer, the vicar general and two lay members known as trustees forming the rest of the corporation.

In the dioceses of the United States a certain number of the larger parishes have irremovable or permanent pastorships.\* After the pastor, whether permanent or not, come the *Curates*, the assistant clergy of the parish, who are (theoretically at least) subject to the pastor and act under his direction in the care of souls. A priest who has the spiritual care of soldiers or sailors, or who officiates in a hospital or other institution, is called a *Chaplain*.

Our Church is a spiritual kingdom, indeed, but it is a human society as well. Even considered as a mere worldly institution, it is truly a remarkable example of efficiency and orderly development. No other society on earth is so well and thoroughly organized, so well adapted to its work. Some of the parts of the governmental system of the Catholic Church are of divine origin; many of them are human institutions; and these are a grand monument to the wisdom of the saintly men who through twenty centuries have sat in the chair of Peter as vice-gerents of Jesus Christ.

\* The removal of these pastors is governed by certain provisions of Canon Law. They cannot be transferred against their will without special permission of the Holy See.



## Chapter Two

# The Religious State and the Apostolate

---

### 1. RELIGIOUS ORDERS

THE MISSION of the church is the saving of souls. This work is carried out by the bishops and their clergy, by men and women in religious orders, and by the apostolic laity.

The work of the apostolate is a work of prayer as much as it is one of activity. In the economy of the Church's life, those who are busiest in the field of the apostolate rely constantly on the prayers of those who, like Mary of Bethania, have "chosen the better part," the way of contemplation—those who have given up all things to follow Christ in the religious orders.

Not all the religious orders are devoted solely to contemplation. Nevertheless every member of an order is such by virtue of his professed desire to seek the perfection of Christian charity. The chief means to this end are the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience to a legitimate superior, and a life in community with other religious.

In addition to the orders and religious congregations properly so called, there are also societies of men or women united for some particular apostolate whose members do not take the three vows, but whose lives are somewhat similar. At the present time there are in the Church hundreds of orders, congregations and societies whose activities range from the uninterrupted praise of God to the most menial of domestic or welfare services.

The Catholic Church, through nearly all of her history, has encouraged the institution and spread of religious orders. Their value has been appreciated by pontiffs and councils, and their prayers and labors for the glory of God and the extension of His kingdom have deserved and received commendation in every age since they came into being.

**The Desire of Perfection.** The religious life, in the sense of monasticism, owes its origin to the desire that arises in the heart of a man who is striving for perfection to withdraw himself from the excitement and allurements of worldly things, and to seek companionship and surroundings that will assist him in attaining to union with God. In the beginning, as we shall see, companionship was not desired; the seeker after perfection became a recluse, a hermit, dwelling in solitude. But gradually it became evident that community life was necessary for the full development of charity. Thus the great monastic orders were born.

**Asceticism.** The belief in the efficacy of bodily mortification and discipline of the senses, in other words, asceticism, prevailed in many religions before the advent of Christianity. Among the Jews there were the Essenes, who withdrew themselves from the luxury and corruption of the cities and formed small communities with strict rules of abstinence and mortification. In pagan lands a similar practice existed, as exemplified by the Stoics, who held that all material things were evil, and that consequently, he was highest in the scale of perfection who held aloof as far as possible from sensual gratification.

Among the early Christians there was also a strong desire to master the lower nature of man. Unlike the Stoics, they did not consider worldly things to be sinful in themselves, if rightly used; but they strove to bring themselves into more perfect communion with God by strict discipline and self-abnegation. Chastity, fasting, earnest and long-continued prayer, castigation of the body—these were the principal means which were employed even in the first centuries by those who sought to “mortify the flesh that the spirit might be strengthened.”

**The Hermits of the Desert.** The ascetics of the early Church did not, at first, separate themselves from the world. They practised their austerities in the midst of their fellow-men. But after a time, about the year 250, the stern persecutions to which the Christians were subjected caused many to seek refuge in the deserts, where they would be comparatively safe from the power of imperial Rome and could serve God without molestation.

The first of these hermits, or anchorites, as they were called, did not live in communities. Even when several of them dwelt in the same neighborhood, each lived in his own cell, supporting himself by his own labor and practising his devotions alone. The life of these solitaries of the desert is not proposed for the imitation of ordinary Christians, even though their sanctity and fervor have been commended by the Church. She praises them as men who were filled with the spirit of sacrifice and the desire of perfection, who devoted themselves to lifelong prayer and penance, who vanquished the weaknesses and yearnings of nature and gave up all things for God.

Tradition states that the first who entered upon this solitary life was St. Paul of the Desert, who was succeeded by the famous St. Anthony the Hermit, concerning whose long and severe conflicts with the Spirit of Evil many legends have been handed down. The fame of his sanctity caused others to gather around him, to listen to his wisdom and profit by his example; but even then each lived in a separate hermitage and generally practised his devotions in solitude.

**The First Monasteries.** About the year 315 another saintly recluse, St. Pachomius, began what is considered the first monastic house, in which the religious dwelt together in a community. It was seen that there were great advantages in living in the company of others who were striving for the same end, because by mutual example and contact they could each advance more rapidly in virtue.

It was not long before the knowledge of monastic life and the appreciation of its excellence spread throughout the Chris-



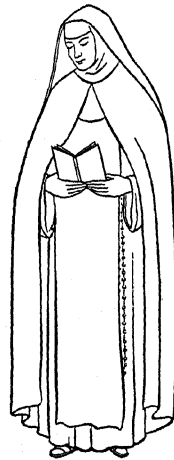
*Habit of Franciscan friar,  
showing cowl and cord*



*Secular Priest wearing  
cassock and biretta*



*Habit of Benedictine monk,  
showing scapular*



*Habit of Dominican nun,  
showing veil, cappa, and scapular*

**Clerical and Religious Dress**

tian world. St. Hilarion, a disciple of St. Anthony, introduced it into Palestine, and St. Basil established communities of monks in Greece. Others were founded in various parts of Asia Minor; and St. Athanasius, the great bishop of Alexandria, on the occasion of a journey to Rome, is said to have inspired the centre of Christian unity with a wonderful spirit of monastic fervor by preaching there on the life and austerities of St. Anthony.

As missionaries carried the light of the Gospel into the remoter parts of Europe, religious houses sprang up everywhere. St. Martin of Tours founded several monasteries in France and others were established in England, Ireland, Germany, Austria and elsewhere.

**The Monastic Rule.** In the earliest period of their history the communities were usually independent. Each had its own system of government; but some uniformity was soon seen to be desirable, and gradually certain codes of rules were formulated for the guidance of these religious bodies. That known as the *Augustinian Rule* is attributed to St. Augustine.

One of the oldest and most celebrated of monastic rules is that established by St. Basil, the great light of the Eastern Church. His laws were adapted to the religious life of the West, and continued in almost universal use until the advent of the great "Father of the Religious Life," St. Benedict, who lived in the sixth century. He instituted the code known as the *Benedictine Rule*, and for several hundred years nearly all the monastic houses of the Christian world obeyed it and flourished under it. In the course of time several great communities branched off from the original Benedictine foundations, but still kept much of the spirit of the ancient rule.

**Mendicant Friars.** In the thirteenth century the religious life took a new form under the leadership of St. Dominic and St. Francis of Assisi, whose respective followers became known as itinerant or mendicant friars. The evils of the day centered

about one's attitude towards wealth and the things of the world. Abuse of riches and laxity of morals had given rise to the heresy of Albigensianism, which denied that the corporeal life of man had true value. The two new orders came into existence to preach the true attitude, the *Dominican Order*, or *Order of Friars Preachers*, meeting the heresy on the level of ideas, and the *Franciscans*, or *Friars Minor*, demonstrating the truth by a profound spirit of poverty and a reverence for creation. The life of these friars consisted in a combination of the contemplative life with an active apostolate, their strict monastic discipline being adapted in order to give the faithful the fruits of their contemplative life through preaching, teaching, and example.

Three other orders were approved as Mendicant Orders about this time, namely the *Carmelites*, *Augustinians*, and *Servites*. The *Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel*, according to legend, dates from Old Testament times. Equally well known for its communities of women as for those of men, it has been largely responsible for the development of a theology of the spiritual life. At the present time the men devote themselves considerably to the ministry of preaching and teaching, but the convents of women live a completely cloistered existence spent mainly in the chanting of Office and the pursuit of domestic crafts such as the making of altar vestments and the baking of breads for the Sacrifice of the Mass.

The *Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine* is an amalgamation of certain monastic groups who followed the ancient Rule of St. Augustine mentioned above. The *Order of the Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary* also follows the Rule of St. Augustine, but was not founded until the year 1233. Like the other mendicant orders of the present time it is occupied with teaching and missionary work, but it stresses devotion to the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

**The Society of Jesus.** With the advent of Protestantism, a further development of the religious life took shape. In 1534 St. Ignatius of Loyola, a reformed soldier, founded the Society

of Jesus. Here the emphasis was upon a spiritual discipline to fit one for a rigorous and versatile apostolic life. Organized somewhat along military lines, the Jesuits add to the traditional three vows of religion a fourth, that of obedience to the Pope.

As time went on and the apostolate of the Church expanded and adjusted to a more complex society, numerous other communities of men and women came into existence mainly to meet the needs of the missions, of education, and of social welfare in the crowded cities. But through all this development, while she approved the new trend towards an active religious life, the Church did not abandon the ideal for which she blessed the first monastic communities. Monasteries devoted solely to contemplation have always stood their ground in the changing times. It might even be said that they have never in recent centuries enjoyed more recognition than they do in the present frenetic era.

It would be difficult to assess the enormous contribution that the monks have made to society. Even apart from the supernatural benefits which we believe to derive from their constant prayer for the Church and society, their work for the perpetuation of culture during the early middle ages is immeasurable. All that we have of classical antiquity has been transmitted to us through the monks, through their schools, their arts and crafts, their agronomic traditions, and their prodigious work of manuscript copying.

It is true that, in the light of the high ideal that monasticism sets for earth-bound human nature, there were lapses in discipline and considerable individual defection. But in the perspective of true history the imperfections of some men only point up the glory of the institution as a whole.

**Orders, Congregations and Societies.** To catalog all of the religious orders and congregations that have come into being since the beginning of the Christian era would take more than a volume. But some mention should be made of other more prominent communities whose members one encounters today.

We have noted in passing the Benedictine Rule. From this rule—which was probably originally intended as a universal form of monastic life—have come several of the present day orders. First there is the *Benedictine Order* itself, which continues to thrive. Its traditional emphasis on the liturgy and on the crafts of wholesome living is very much apparent today. Wherever you find a Benedictine Abbey, there you are sure to find a community of the laity nearby intent upon learning from the synthesis that they teach.

Always to be associated with the Benedictines are the Cistercians or *Trappists*. A purely contemplative order, they stem from a French foundation of early Benedictine traditions which had returned to the pristine rigor of that rule. Devoting themselves to singing the Divine Office and to working in the fields, they subsist on a very frugal diet and speak only to God and their superiors. Much less known than the Trappists are the *Trappistines*, a similar religious order for women.

In some respects more strict even than the Trappists are the *Carthusian Monks*. They too stem from an early foundation, but have maintained the eremitic ideal. Instead of all living under one roof, the monks spend most of their day in complete solitude, coming together in community only for the celebration of the liturgy and for brief recreation periods.

**Religious Life for Women.** In speaking historically of the development of religious orders one habitually thinks of it insofar as it pertains to men. But there has been a similar development in the orders and societies of women. In their case, the division between the contemplative and active communities was for a long time more marked, due to the strict cloister observed by the contemplatives. In fact, until rather recent times it was common to regard only the contemplatives, or *nuns*, as being religious in the formal sense. According to the present legislation of the Church, all Sisters engaged in the apostolate outside the cloister are definitely living in the religious state.



**Second Orders.** Most of the great orders have their *Second Orders*, which are monasteries of women living a cloistered life according to the spirit of their particular affiliation. Because of the limitations of the cloister, these Second Orders have resisted change more than their respective first orders, who because of the demands of the apostolate have had to adapt themselves to changing times.

**Third Orders.** Some of the religious orders have established associations of the laity known as *Third Orders*. These are groups of people imbued with the spirit of a particular order who wish to follow in some way that spirit in a mode of life consistent with their lay state. Members of these groups are known sometimes as *Tertiaries*.

An outgrowth of the Tertiary movement are the Third Orders Regular, whose members live the full religious life, take public vows, and are engaged in some active apostolate, such as teaching or foreign mission work. Among the more prominent are the various Third Order Dominican, Franciscan, Carmelite and Servite Sisters. Many of the sisters teaching in the Catholic schools are members of such communities.

**Religious Congregations.** What distinguishes the religious order from any other form of religious association is the nature of the vows taken by the members: *solemn* vows wherein religious give up the right to *own* property, and *simple* vows wherein religious give up the right to *use* property, except with permission of the superior. Those whose members take *solemn* vows are religious orders properly so called. Other groups are usually termed religious congregations, but in ecclesiastical law the term Congregation implies at least simple vows. Members of congregations are living in the formal religious state.

There are many so called congregations, however, whose members do not embrace the religious state. Such are the *Maryknoll Fathers*, who are secular priests united for foreign mission work; the *Sulpicians*, or *Society of Saint Sulpice*, whose work is the education of candidates for the priesthood; the

*Paulists*, who specialize in work among prospective converts, and the *Vincentian Fathers*, dedicated to instructing the poor by parish missions and retreats.

**Societies of Brothers.** Not all the men in the religious life are priests. Nearly all the orders and congregations are made up of brothers as well as priests, and a few of the societies exclude priests. The *Christian Brothers*, or *Brothers of Christian Schools* are among these. Devoted entirely to teaching, they conduct many of the Catholic schools in Europe and America. Other societies of brothers are the *Alexian Brothers*, the *Xaverian Brothers*, and the *Brothers of Mary*.

**Modern Trends.** So vast and profound have been the changes in society in recent decades that it is not unreasonable to look for extensive adaptations in the organization of the religious life and the apostolate in the years to come. Indicative of this was the Papal Constitution *Sponsa Christi* by Pope Pius XII in which permission was granted for certain cloistered orders of women to engage in teaching and other external activities. Other changes, such as the federation of certain bodies for more effective apostolic work, are already under discussion.

## 2. THE LAY APOSTOLATE

The Church has always relied on the laity to bear witness to the Gospel according as the opportunity presented itself, but modern times have emphasized the part that the layman must play in the leavening of society. For several decades this has been recognized, and under the direction of prudent and zealous leaders there have grown up a number of groups among the laity which generally come under the term Lay Apostolate. The essence of the Lay Apostolate is the sanctification of the members so that their zeal for the renovation of society may be effective.

**Secular Institutes.** Among the organizations of the Lay Apostolate which have been flourishing for a number of years there were certain groups of men and women who, while living

and working in the world, lived a life of consecration approaching that of the formal religious life. For one reason or another these people were not in a position to embrace the religious state. Pope Pius XII, seeing divine Providence at work, established what is known as the *Secular Institute*, which is a new canonical form, according to which lay organizations of this kind, if they conform to the norms established, may enjoy recognition in canon law. Thus, in effect, a new state has been constituted between the strictly religious state and that of the person living in the world.

Already several European groups have been approved by the Holy See as Secular Institutes. Representative of these is *Opus Dei*, or the Sacerdotal Society of the Holy Cross and the Work of God. Members of this institute are of both sexes and come from all ranks of society. They continue their normal life, but consecrate themselves to God by private vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They also make a vow to work for the spread of the kingdom of God among those with whom they come in contact in their ordinary life. The general aim is the sanctification of the members, and the specific aim is to spread the life of Christian perfection among all classes of society and to form men and women for the exercise of the apostolate.

**Catholic Action.** Nearly two decades before the establishment of the Secular Institute, Pope Pius XI had laid down a plan for the most effective organization of the growing zeal of the laity. According to the plan, to which he gave the name *Catholic Action*, the laity are to be formed into groups under the supervision of the hierarchy for the intensification of their own spiritual life and for the programs of personal contact work among the people of their own environment. The groups, or cells, as they are termed, are usually formed on the basis of a particular occupation or pursuit.

In the course of time the term "Catholic Action" has come to be applied to numerous other organized activities more or less in accord with the Pope's ideal. However, unless a group has

the two features of *apostolic aim*, and *organization under the direction of the hierarchy*, its activity is not *Catholic Action* in the strict sense of the word.

Since these are the essential requisites for a true Catholic Action organization, we can readily see that there are many societies and associations of Catholics which do not come under this title in its strict sense. These are referred to as "auxiliary societies" engaged solely in a work of religious development or in some particular apostolic work. Speaking of such societies, Pope Pius XI made it clear that they are good societies, and have their specific part to play. They need not be done away with, nor is it necessary to change them into official Catholic Action groups. The whole point is simply this: they are not authentic Catholic Action groups, but helpers to the central undertaking of Catholic Action.

**National Catholic Welfare Conference.** The whole superstructure of Catholic Action is a reality in the United States in the National Catholic Welfare Conference. What is needed now is a more intense participation of the laity in this work so admirably organized by the hierarchy. The NCWC is a national representative body, governed by a board of ten bishops and archbishops, and all the American Cardinals. Eight departments function under the members of the board, covering all possible activities of the Church in the religious, social and industrial make-up of our society.

The Executive Department supervises the operations of the other departments and coordinates all the multiple activities of the various units.

The Department of Education aims to serve the Catholic school system in fidelity to the ideals and teachings of the Church.

The Press Department has the function of promoting, developing, and assisting the Catholic Press of the United States.

The Social Action Department deals with studies and programs connected with industrial and civic problems, with rural and family life.

The Legal Department collects and classifies legal information which is available to dioceses and to all other departments.

The Catholic Action Study Department disseminates papal encyclicals, allocutions and discourses; maintains a record of Catholic Action in the United States, and assists in furthering Catholic Action.

The Department of Youth promotes and assists the activities of Catholic youth groups throughout the country.

The Lay Organization Department consists of two constituent bodies, the National Council of Catholic Men and the National Council of Catholic Women, with the chief function of coordinating, promoting and assisting the activities of the Catholic lay organizations of the country, under the direction of the bishops. Affiliation with either council enables Catholic lay organizations to know the mind of the hierarchy, the common guide of all. This department is essentially an apostolate of Catholic Action. The laity of the country is commissioned by the bishops to cooperate as partners in the mission of leavening society with the truths of Catholic Faith and the principles of Catholic life.

The National Council of Catholic Men is made up of representatives of affiliated lay societies having ecclesiastical approval. The form of diocesan organizations rests entirely with individual bishops. In some dioceses parish councils are grouped into diocesan councils, which affiliate with the National Council; in others, pre-existent or new-lay societies—spiritual, social or fraternal—are affiliated with the NCCM. There are now over three thousand organizations affiliated with the National Council of Catholic Men. In this number are included national, regional, diocesan and local groups.

The National Council of Catholic Women is a federation of organizations of Catholic women in the United States, uniting them, helping them to strengthen, increase, and inspire their membership. There are now over six thousand affiliated organizations.

**Catholic Societies.** Anything like a complete list and description of all the confraternities, pious associations and sodalities of the Church in this country alone would occupy several volumes. Many of them have a history which goes back to the early ages of the Faith, at least by the link of venerable traditions, while others have sprung up in answer to the most modern developments of social life.

Most of this vast number of lay societies may be classified into three main streams of purpose, or intention, although they cannot be regarded as absolutely distinct from each other, for the unity of Catholic life includes them all. The first class embraces the societies which have for their main purpose to cultivate, develop, and increase personal and corporate piety and devotion. The second class includes those groups organized chiefly to promote the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. The third class are those societies whose principal purpose is to work for the improvement and welfare of a distinct group of persons, such as musicians, workmen, farmers, artists, educators, etc.

Among the societies of the first class the special objects of devotion are the profound mysteries of religion. Such pious unions are the Archconfraternity of Perpetual Adoration, the Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception, the League of the Sacred Heart, the Holy Name Society, the Scapular Apostolate, the Sodality of Our Lady, and the Family Rosary Crusade.

Included among the second class—those societies dedicated to the promotion of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy—we may note the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the Paulist League, the Society of St. Peter the Apostle for Native Clergy, Catholic Near East Welfare Association, the Extension Society, the Catholic Central Verein, the Holy Childhood Association, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and the Legion of Mary.

The societies or associations of the third class, which are organized for the promotion of the spiritual, moral, or ma-

terial good of certain specific groups of society, are most numerous. In the field of education we may mention the union of various student groups under the heading of the National Federation of Catholic College Students, the Newman Clubs, Pax Romana, and the Catholic Students Mission Crusade. There are Catholic societies dedicated to the learned professions, as the Guild of Catholic Lawyers. Others have for their object the development of Christian mothers and Catholic homes. Still others are concerned with the Catholic Press, Education, Poetry, Economics, Music and Nursing. The Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Daughters of America, the Catholic Knights of St. George and the Ladies Catholic Benevolent Association are among the most popular of these associations of the third class.

**The Holy Name Society.** "At the Name of Jesus every knee shall bend." The greatest organization intended especially for Catholic laymen is the Holy Name Society. It has been a wonderful power for good ever since its establishment centuries ago. At no time have its beneficial results been more in evidence than at the present day; in no place has it effected more good than in our own country.

The Holy Name Society (or, to give it its full title, the Confraternity of the Most Holy Name of God and Jesus) was established by the Dominicans, and has always been under their especial charge. It owes its origin, indirectly at least, to a decree of the Council of Lyons, in 1274, which provided for the instruction of the faithful regarding devotion and reverence towards the name of Jesus. Shortly after the issuing of the Council's decree, Pope Gregory X directed Blessed John Vercelli, Master-General of the Dominicans, to apply the energies of his order to this work. The society had a gradual growth in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The first public procession in honor of the Holy Name took place at Lisbon in 1433. In 1564 Pius IV approved the confraternity and granted indulgences to it; and since that time it has been further enriched with spiritual favors by many Pontiffs. It

was founded in the United States in 1909 and now has over 3,500,000 members.

The members bind themselves to labor for the glory of the Holy Name; to pronounce it always with reverence; to abstain from all sinful speech, and to strive that others shall also refrain from evil speaking. The spiritual advantages are many. Masses are offered for living and dead members; plenary indulgences are granted on the day of admission into the society and on certain festivals during the year; and partial indulgences may be gained for almost every act of worship or charity performed by the members.

It is a society for Catholic men living in the world, and its aim is to help them so to live that their every-day duties to God and their neighbor will be well performed—that their lives will be lives of manly Christian virtue and of good example, resounding to the greater glory of God.

**The League of the Sacred Heart.** This is also known as the Apostleship of Prayer, and is one of the most widely spread of Catholic societies. It is purely spiritual in its aims, being intended to promote the practice of prayer for the mutual intentions of its members, and the increasing of love for our Blessed Saviour in return for the love which His Sacred Heart has lavished upon mankind.

It was founded at Vals, in France, in 1844, and was put substantially into its present form by Father Henri Ramière, a Jesuit, in 1861. It was approved by Pius IX in 1879, and its statutes were revised and again approved by Leo XIII in 1896. It is under the special care of the Society of Jesus, and to the zeal and wise direction of that great order it undoubtedly owes much of its marvelous success.

The supreme officer, known as the Moderator General, is the Superior General of the Jesuits, who usually deposes his authority to an assistant. The management of the society is largely carried on through the *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, a periodical which is published in different parts of the world and in various languages. Diocesan directors promote the



work in their own territories, and the separate societies are known as centres, each in charge of a local director. Under him are promoters, each caring for a band of members and distributing leaflets which instruct the members concerning the monthly practices of piety expected of them.

The religious duties of the association are a daily offering of prayers and good works, the daily recitation of a decade of the beads for the special intention of the Holy Father, as recommended in the monthly bulletin of the society, and the making of a Communion of Reparation on an assigned day of the month or week. The first Friday of each month is observed as a day of special devotion, the Mass of the Sacred Heart being usually celebrated; and evening services are held at which the members assist.

The growth of this society has been phenomenal. Over thirteen thousand centres exist in the United States with more than 6,000,000 members.

Our Blessed Lord has assured us that "where two or three are gathered together in His Name, there is He in the midst of them." How pleasing, then, must be the united service of these millions of His children! Each month the intentions and good works of the society are printed in a leaflet and the number and variety of these are astounding. Millions of separate petitions, millions of prayers of thanksgiving ascend day by day to the throne of our Saviour from the League of His Sacred Heart.

This society has had a large share in bringing about that great spiritual renovation which is the most consoling feature of our Church's life during the last few years—frequent Communion. Frequent Communion has become the rule, rather than the exception, for practical Catholics. When, in future ages, the history of our Church in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries shall be reviewed, the wonderful spread of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the resulting increase of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament will be the salient points of that history.

**The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.** The modern revival and expansion of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine began with St. Pius X. His encyclical on the Teaching of Christian Doctrine issued April 15, 1905 directs that in each parish the Confraternity is to be canonically instituted. In January 1935, the Sacred Congregation of the Council repeated this pronouncement.

The work of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine is the spread of knowledge and practice of the Faith by the following means: religious training of elementary school children not attending Catholic schools, by instruction classes during the school year and in vacation schools; religious instruction of Catholic youth of high school age not attending Catholic schools, in study clubs and by other methods; religious discussion clubs for adults; religious education of children by parents in the home; instruction of non-Catholics in the teachings and practices of the Catholic Faith, and other like services.

**The Legion of Mary.** This society is an association of Catholic laity. Membership is open to men and women, married or single. It draws its inspiration from the realization of the immense intercessory power of Our Lady with her Divine Son, and from the conviction that she is the divinely appointed Mediatrix of all Graces.

The object of the Legion is the assistance of the bishops and priests in their apostolic work of saving and sanctifying souls. It does not concern itself with the giving of material aid. It was founded in 1921, in Dublin, Ireland. It is now established in almost all parts of the world.

The basis of the Legion system is the weekly meeting of the *Praesidium* (local branch). The purpose of the *Praesidium* meeting is two-fold, spiritual formation and apostolate. The active members join the *Praesidium* to pray, to plan, to act. Whatever success attends their efforts is rightly attributed to the powerful intercession of her whom Legionnaires serve as their Queen and Commander.

**The Sodality of our Lady.** The sodality of Our Lady was founded in Rome in 1563 by Father John Leunis, S.J. Originally planned for young men in college, it has been gradually extended to all Catholics, and is now found on every continent and in almost every nation. The first United States sodality was established in New Orleans in 1738. A central office was set up in St. Louis, Mo., in 1913. There are about 16,000 bodies in this country affiliated to the Primary Sodality in Rome.

Its aim is "to foster in its members ardent devotion, reverence and filial love toward the Blessed Virgin." Many Popes have bestowed indulgences on the Sodality, and Pope Pius XII repeatedly stressed the need for Catholics formed according to its spirit. By Apostolic Constitution, the same Pope confirmed its status and privileges on September 27, 1948.

**The Society of St. Vincent de Paul.** This is an organization of Catholic laymen which is almost world-wide in extent, and is engaged in ministering to the needs of the poor. It was founded at Paris in 1833 by Antoine-Frederic Ozanam, a brilliant young professor, who brought together several of the students of the Sorbonne for charitable work, under the title of The Conference of Charity—later adopting the name of The Society of St. Vincent de Paul and choosing that grand exemplar of Christian charity as the patron and model of the society.

Its special field, from the beginning, has been "the service of God in the persons of the poor," who are visited in their homes and assisted according to their needs. The membership is of three classes: Active, subscribing and honorary—the last two being those who cannot devote themselves personally to the work, but who assist the active members by their influence, their contributions and their prayers.

The branches of the society in parishes are known as *Conferences*; and when there are several of these in a city they are usually controlled by a *Particular Council*. A further plan of administration has been undertaken in this country, which

40      *The Externals of the Catholic Church*

calls for a *Superior Council of the United States* for the whole country, a *Metropolitan Central Council* in each ecclesiastical province, and a *Diocesan Council* in each diocese.

The Society in the United States during the past twenty-five years has distributed fifty million dollars to the poor in their homes, and in institutions. All of the money contributed goes to charity, there being no salaries or other administrative expenses.

## Chapter Three

# The Administration of the Sacraments

---

### 1. THE CEREMONIES OF BAPTISM

THE LIFE of a Catholic is a supernatural life of faith nourished by divine grace. The normal channels of this grace are prayer and the Sacraments. The Sacraments are certain divinely appointed functions which effect an increase of the supernatural life in the Catholic whenever he approaches them with the proper dispositions of soul.

In order the better to symbolize the spiritual benefits derived from the reception of the Sacraments, the Church employs certain appropriate ceremonies over and above those prescribed by Christ. Some of these are of very ancient origin. They are intended to denote mystically the gifts and graces bestowed on the soul through the Sacrament which is administered.

Baptism is the first of the Sacraments. In the language of the Apostle, it "clothes us with Jesus Christ," and makes us members of His Church. The sacred rites with which it is given remind us of the corruption in which we were born, the trials that await us in this world, and the immortal heritage for which we are destined.

**In the Early Ages.** The ceremonies of Baptism, as now practised, are a survival of the solemn rites with which it was administered in the early Church. We find a complete and curious account of this in the work of St. Ambrose, *De Mysteriis*. In his day Baptism was given publicly to adults on Holy

Saturday only, and this fact is still indicated in the Church's liturgy by the blessing of the baptismal water on that day. The minister of the Sacrament at this solemn administration was always a bishop, assisted by priests and deacons.

On those occasions Baptism was usually given by immersion—by putting the person entirely under water. This was never considered essential, but was generally practised until about the ninth century.

In the ancient ceremonies, after the baptized person had been anointed with holy oil and clothed in a white garment, he immediately received the Sacrament of Confirmation, assisted at Mass and usually received Holy Communion.

**At the Present Day.** In our times the Sacrament of Baptism is more often administered to infants than to adults. The sponsors or god-parents bring the child to the baptismal font,\* and the priest, clad in surplice and purple stole, asks (mentioning the name which the child is to bear): "What dost thou ask of the Church of God?" The sponsors answer: "Faith." "What does faith bring thee to?" "Life everlasting." "If therefore thou wouldst enter life keep the commandment: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind, and thy neighbor as thyself."

He then blows on the face of the infant, saying: "Depart from him, thou unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Ghost, the Comforter." This ancient ceremony of blowing is always symbolical of the imparting of the Spirit of God.

**The Sign of the Cross.** The forehead and breast of the infant are then marked with the sign of the cross, to signify that he must be sanctified in mind and heart. An appropriate prayer is then recited, asking that the child thus marked with the cross of Christ may keep His commandments and gain everlasting life.

The priest then places his hand upon the head of the child—which ceremony is always symbolical of the giving of strength

\* See illustration on page 62.

and power. He prays that this servant of God, who has been called to the light of faith, may be freed from all blindness of heart and all snares of Satan; that he may be imbued with wisdom, may joyfully serve God in His Church, and advance daily in holiness.

**The Giving of the Salt.** Then follows a curious ceremony. A small quantity of salt, previously blessed, is put into the mouth of the person to be baptized, with the words: "Receive the salt of wisdom. May it be unto thee a propitiation unto eternal life."

Salt, in the symbolic usage of the Church, has many meanings. It denotes wisdom, regeneration, purification, preservation from corruption—as we see in the passage of the Gospel wherein our Lord calls His Apostles "the salt of the earth." These meanings are expressed in the next prayer, in which God is besought to sanctify the person who has tasted this salt; that he may be filled with heavenly food, that he may be fervent in spirit, joyful in hope, and faithful in the service of God.

**The Exorcisms.** According to the teaching of the Fathers of the Church, the soul of an unbaptised person is particularly under the dominion of the spirits of darkness. Therefore a solemn adjuration is pronounced, in the name of the three Persons of the Trinity, commanding the devil to depart from the servant of God. Then the sign of the cross is again traced on his forehead, as a shield and protection against any further attacks of Satan.

With the imposing of the priest's hand on the child, another solemn prayer is offered, beseeching God the Father, the Author of light and truth, to illumine this His servant with the light of understanding—to cleanse and sanctify him—to give him true knowledge, that by the grace of Baptism he may possess firm hope, right counsel, and holy doctrine.

The priest then lays the end of his stole on the infant—a relic of the ceremony of early days, when the catechumens were conducted into the church in solemn procession. Then

the sponsors, together with the priest, make a profession of faith in the name of the child, by reciting aloud the Apostles' Creed, which is followed by the Our Father.

**The Ephpheta and the Vows.** After another exorcism comes the ceremony of the *Ephpheta*. The priest moistens his finger with saliva from his own mouth, and touches lightly the ears and nostrils of the child, saying: "Ephpheta, which is, Be thou opened, in the odor of sweetness; go out from him, O evil spirit; for the judgment of God will come."

The touching of the ears signifies the opening of the understanding to the Word of God; that of the nostrils denotes the sweetness of the spiritual life. The use of saliva reminds us of a ceremony used by our Lord in one of His miracles, as recorded in the Gospels.\*

The baptismal vows are next in order. The priest asks the child, by name: "Dost thou renounce Satan?" And the sponsors answer: "I do renounce him." "And all his works?" "I do renounce them." "And all his pomps?" "I do renounce them."

**The Anointing.** The first anointing is then made, with the oil of catechumens. The priest dips his thumb into the blessed oil and marks the sign of the cross on the breast of the infant and on the back between the shoulders, saying: "I anoint thee with the oil of salvation, in Christ Jesus our Lord, that thou mayest have eternal life."

The cross on the breast means that our holy faith is a shield against temptation. That on the back signifies that to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ we must shoulder our cross.

The priest then puts on a white stole in place of the purple one, and solemnly inquires: "Dost thou believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?" The sponsors answer: "I do believe." "Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was born and suffered?" "I do believe." "Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church," etc.; and the same answer is given. Then, ad-

\* Since 1944, however, a priest is permitted to omit the saliva but still must touch the ears and nostrils with his thumb as he says the words.



dressing the child by name, the priest asks: "Wilt thou be baptized?"—and the sponsors answer: "I will."

**The Baptism.** The sponsors hold the child over the font, and the priest takes a small vessel which he fills with the baptismal water, pouring it upon the head of the infant three times in the form of a cross, saying at the same time the sacramental words: "N—, I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

The top of the child's head is immediately anointed with holy chrism in the form of a cross, to denote that he has been made a Christian. Then comes a ceremony which is a survival of the ancient practice of attiring the newly baptized person in white robes. The priest takes a white cloth and drapes it over the child's head, adjuring him to "receive this white robe and carry it spotless before the judgment seat of our Lord Jesus Christ."

A lighted candle is then placed in the hands of the sponsors, typifying the light of faith and the flame of charity; and the baptized person is urged: "Keep thy Baptism without blame; observe God's commandments; so that when the Lord cometh to the wedding feast thou mayest meet Him with all the saints in the halls of heaven, and mayest obtain eternal life."

Then with the simple words of farewell and benediction, "Go in peace, and the Lord be with thee," the ceremonies come to an end.

Thus we see how the beautiful symbolism of our Church's rites expresses clearly the wonderful effects of Baptism on the soul of man. These ancient ceremonies are intended to illustrate the freeing of the human soul from the domination of Satan, the cleansing of it from original sin, and the strengthening of it against the world, the flesh and the devil. They denote the receiving of a new and holy character, and the adding to the flock of Christ of a new member, destined to everlasting life in God's heavenly Kingdom.

**Lay Baptism.** The ceremonies just described constitute *solemn* Baptism. Ordinarily it must take place in the parish

church and can be performed by a priest, and under certain conditions, by a deacon. When, however, Baptism is administered without the prescribed ceremonies it is called *private* Baptism. Here only the most essential ceremonies prescribed for the validity of the Sacrament are performed. Private Baptism may be administered only in case of necessity—a real danger of death—and if afterwards the recipient survives, he should be taken to the parish church in order to have a priest supply the other ceremonies. The minister of private Baptism can be any person who has the use of reason. Every one should know how to baptize privately. By the command of Christ, real water must be used. Thus, any thing that is not water in the usual sense of the word will not suffice. It is best to use ordinary water; holy water is not necessary. The pouring of the water and the saying of the words must be done at the same time and by the same person. Here is how to baptize: Pour ordinary water on the forehead of the person to be baptized, and say while pouring it: *“I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”*

## 2. THE SPONSORS IN BAPTISM

In the administration of the Sacrament of Baptism a very prominent part is taken by the sponsors or godparents, who present the child at the baptismal font and make a profession of faith and certain promises in his name. As this is an office which may fall to the lot of any of our readers, it may be well to explain just what the duties of sponsors are, and what are the obligations which they assume; for there is danger of undertaking these duties without due consideration and of estimating these obligations lightly.

**An Ancient Practice.** From the very beginning it has been the practice of the Church to have certain persons assisting at the administration of Baptism, whether of an infant or an adult—to offer the infant at the font, to answer for it, to make profession of the Christian faith in its name, and to receive it

from the hands of the priest after it is baptized; to act as witnesses of the Baptism of adults, and to attest their acceptance of the Church's teaching and their avowal of allegiance to her authority. These persons, from these various duties, were called in the Latin of the Ritual, *Sponsores*, or Promisers, *Fidejussores*, or Attestors of Faith, *Offerentes*, or Offerers, or *Susceptores*, Receivers.

In later times they have usually been called *Patrini*, a medieval Latin word signifying those taking the place of parents, since they undertake the office of spiritual parents towards those whom they bring to the sacramental font. In English they are called "godfathers" and "godmothers," which words denote the spiritual relationship which they acquire.

**The Duties of Sponsors.** The Catechism of the Council of Trent directs that "all sponsors should at all times recollect that they are bound to exercise always great vigilance over their spiritual children, and to take particular care that, in those things that pertain to the Christian life, the baptized persons shall act through life as the sponsors promised for them at the solemn ceremony of Baptism." If for any reason the natural guardians of a child are unable or unwilling to attend to its religious training, this must be looked after by the godparent. Of course, in the case of an adult there is less likelihood that such responsibility would come upon a sponsor; but for those who assist at the Baptism of a child there is a serious obligation, and one which every godparent should understand and appreciate—that if the child's parents do not provide for its Christian training, the burden comes upon those who have assumed a spiritual relationship with it.

The sponsor at the administration of Baptism holds the child or physically touches it while the sacrament is being conferred—or at least receives it from the priest's hands immediately after it has been baptized.\*

\* Wherever it is customary for the godmother to hold the child, the godfather is required merely to put his right hand on or under the child's right shoulder, while the priest pours the water.

It is allowed in certain cases for a person to become a sponsor "by proxy"—that is, to assume the office and obligations without being actually present, by having an agent take his place. This is the case sometimes in royal families and elsewhere, when it is desired to have as godparent some person who cannot be present. In this case the proxy or agent contracts no obligations whatever, these being assumed by the real sponsor whom he represents.

**Impediments from Sponsorship.** How many sponsors are allowable? Only two at the most—a man and a woman; and only one is strictly necessary. Why is the number so restricted? Because a spiritual relationship is contracted by the sponsor with the baptized person, and this relationship is a "diriment" impediment to marriage between them unless a dispensation is obtained. Formerly this impediment extended to the parents of the person baptized; but by the code of Canon Law (in effect at Pentecost, 1918) it has been restricted to the sponsor and the godchild, and the baptized person and the one who baptizes. This spiritual relationship is looked upon by the Church as a real relationship, binding almost as strongly as a tie of blood.

Do sponsors contract any impediment in regard to each other? Or, in other words, if a man and a woman become godparents of a child, is there any obstacle thereby to their subsequent marriage? No; the impediment exists only between the godparent and the godchild. There is no spiritual relationship between the godparents themselves.

**The Qualifications of Sponsors.** On account of the all-important duties which sponsors may be called upon to perform, it is not surprising that the Church requires her pastors to make diligent inquiry regarding persons selected for this office, and to enforce the rule that none but those who would be suitable guardians of the child's spiritual welfare can become godparents.

The two sponsors should be of different sexes—not two men nor two women; for it is deemed proper that there should be

an analogy between spiritual and natural parentage. When there is only one sponsor, it is usual (but not necessary) to select one of the same sex as the child, for thereby it is made certain that there will never be any question of marriage between the godparent and the godchild. Parents are not allowed to be sponsors for their own children, to mark more strongly the difference between spiritual and carnal parentage—for it is not deemed proper that one person should hold both relationships.

By the code of Canon Law, a sponsor should be provided at a private Baptism when he is available, and he contracts a spiritual relationship. This is the case also with the person who administers the Sacrament. If there was no sponsor at the private Baptism, one should be on hand at the subsequent supplying of the ceremonies; but no impediment is contracted.

If a doubtful Baptism be repeated *conditionally*, to remedy some supposed defect in its original administration, the same sponsor who acted before should be employed again—and the impediment of spiritual relationship then comes into force. But if this sponsor cannot be present at the second ceremony, no other is required (though one may be used) and no impediment is contracted.

A member of a religious community may act as a sponsor only in case of necessity and by permission. It is forbidden to clerics to be sponsors without the sanction of the Bishop.

The Church directs that small children shall not be chosen as sponsors. They should be fourteen years or more of age, and should have a sufficient knowledge of the fundamentals of the faith. The choosing of non-Catholics is not permitted, for the Church does not wish that the Christian training of her children should be entrusted to those who are not of the same faith. And, in general, all those who are unable or unwilling to discharge with fidelity the duties of spiritual parents should not be admitted to this sacred trust.

In the section on The Ceremonies of Baptism the duties of the sponsors at the font have been sufficiently mentioned. If

the father of the child is not present, the godparents should be prepared to answer the various questions which the priest may ask—as to the names and residence of the child's parents, the date of birth, the name to be given, whether the infant has been privately baptized or not, if so, by whom. When it can be conveniently done, the person who has baptized privately should be present, to explain to the priest how the Baptism was administered, and thereby to enable him to ascertain whether it was valid or not.

**The Name of the Child.** As one of the duties of the sponsors is to tell the priest the name which is to be conferred on the child at its Baptism, it may be well to say a word about the choice of the name. The Church, in her rubrics and in the writings of her teachers, has expressed the wish that it should be really a Christian name—the name of a Saint. The use of that name will serve to stimulate the imitation of the virtues of the Saint and the attainment of holiness like to his; and the blessed one in heaven who is thus made the patron of the new member of Christ's flock on earth will, by his advocacy and intercession, become the guardian of the soul and body of the person upon whom his name has been bestowed.

It is not permitted to give infants foul, fabulous, or ridiculous names, the names of pagan deities, or impious men. Popular characters in movies and novels do not always bear Christian names. "If he who presents the child for Baptism will not permit it to be baptized unless such a name is given, it is not lawful to put off the Baptism on that account: the child should be baptized, the name of a Saint being added in a low voice." (Holy Office 1883). Both names must be inserted in the Baptismal Register.

### 3. THE CEREMONIES OF CONFIRMATION

In this section we shall examine the history and liturgy of a sacrament which we all have received, and which is of special interest because, unlike Baptism, we can remember when we

received it. Confirmation was administered to us when we had come to the age of reason, and after a long and thorough preparation. The ceremonies and prayers which the Church uses in conferring it are not long nor numerous; but they express very clearly the meaning of the sacrament and the nature of the special graces which we receive through its administration.

**The Nature of the Sacrament.** Confirmation is a sacrament of the Church through which grace is conferred on baptized persons, strengthening them for the duty of professing the Christian faith. As the Catechism tells us, by it we are made "strong and perfect" in our Christianity; we become "soldiers of Jesus Christ," earnest and loyal in His service, willing to wage war against His enemies and ours. It is administered ordinarily by a bishop, who makes the sign of the cross with chrism on the forehead of the recipient, while he pronounces a certain formula of words.

This sacrament not only gives us special graces to help us to live up to our faith, but also, like Baptism and Holy Orders, imprints a seal or character upon the soul—an indelible spiritual mark which remains forever, and which renders the repetition of the sacrament of Confirmation at any future time impossible.

**A Catholic Sacrament.** Confirmation is a Catholic sacrament. It is true that it exists in the schismatic churches of the East, which were originally members of the true Church and have preserved most of her teaching; but the Protestant sects have always denied the sacramental nature of Confirmation. Some reject it altogether; others, such as the Episcopalians, retain an imitation of it—a ceremony which they call Confirmation, but which they hold to be merely a rite and not a sacrament. With them it consists in the public renewing and confirming of the promises made for them by their sponsors at Baptism. But the Catholic Church has always held that Confirmation is one of the seven sacraments, the God-given channels by which His grace is brought to our souls through the

ministry of His Church. In it we have all the requisites for a true sacrament—the outward sign, the giving of grace, and the divine institution.

**Confirmation in the Scriptures.** This sacrament was instituted by our Blessed Lord, for it is a doctrine of our holy faith that each of the seven sacraments owes its origin not to the Church nor to the Apostles, but to Christ Himself. There is no mention in the Gospels of such institution; but according to tradition and the general opinion of the Doctors of the Church, it took place during the forty days after the Resurrection of our Saviour.

The first account of it is found in the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.\* St. Philip, a deacon, had converted and baptized certain Samaritans, and when he announced this fact to Peter and John, these Apostles went down from Jerusalem and “laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost.” In St. Paul’s Epistles allusion is also made to the same sacrament, by which Christians are made “partakers of the Holy Ghost” and are “sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.”

In the works of the early writers of the Christian Church we find Confirmation mentioned repeatedly. In the first centuries it was generally conferred immediately after Baptism. Tertullian speaks of “the imposition of hands on the baptized, which calls and invites the Holy Ghost.”

**The Minister of Confirmation.** Who can give this sacrament? Bishops are the usual ministers of Confirmation. Pastors and administrators of parishes, in virtue of a decree that became effective January 1, 1947, are granted the faculty of confirming, as extraordinary ministers, those among their faithful and others in their territory who are in danger of death from sickness, accident, or old age. Priests, especially those in missionary lands, are sometimes delegated by the Holy Father to administer Confirmation. In the Eastern Church, confirmation has been for many centuries administered by priests immediately after Baptism.

\* Acts 8, 14-17.



**The Matter of Confirmation.** What is strictly required in the administration of this sacrament? There has been much dispute about this. Some ancient writers held that the essence of Confirmation was the laying on of hands—that the anointing with oil is not necessary; but the great majority of authorities as well as the wording of the Church's ritual support the teaching that the real "matter" of this sacrament is the anointing with the consecrated oil which we call *chrism*.

This is olive oil with which balm or balsam of a certain kind has been mixed. This balm is a species of perfumed resin which exudes from a tree called the terebinth, which grows abundantly in Eastern lands, especially in Arabia. Similar substances are produced in the West Indies and in the tropical parts of America.

Probably in the first ages of the Church pure oil without admixture was used; but we find mention of the use of balm from about the sixth century. In Many Eastern churches the chrism is highly perfumed, and rare spices of many kinds are dissolved in it; but the uniform practice of the Roman Church has been to prepare the chrism simply with olive oil and balm. The oil is symbolic of strength, for it was used by the athletes and gymnasts of classic times as an ointment, to promote bodily vigor; of light, because it can be used in lamps, to dispel darkness; of health, because it is taken internally as a food and a medicine. The balm denotes freedom from corruption and the "sweet odor of virtue."

The chrism is blessed on Holy Thursday in every cathedral church. This is an ancient custom, going back before the year 500. The beautiful ceremonies which accompany this solemn blessing are described elsewhere in this work.

**The Words of Confirmation.** To administer Confirmation validly, what form of words must be used? Here again there is a great diversity of opinion and of practice. Among the Greeks the form is: "The seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost," and this has been in use among them from very early times. The words used in our Latin ceremonial are: "I sign thee with the

sign of the cross and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." These date back only to the twelfth century.

Before that time a very common form was: "I confirm thee in the name of the Father," etc. In some parts of the world these words were used: "The sign of the cross with eternal life"; and elsewhere the following very expressive formula was commonly employed in the administration of this sacrament: "Receive the sign of the holy cross with the chrism of salvation in Christ Jesus unto eternal life."

We see from this variety of forms that it was evidently the intention of our Lord and the practice of His Church that the sacrament of Confirmation could be validly administered with any words which sufficiently indicate the graces given; but, of course, for us at the present day the form prescribed by the Church's ritual is the one to be followed.

**The Age for Confirmation.** In the Latin church it is proper for children to receive Confirmation at about the age of seven. The sacrament, however, may be given at an earlier age either by reason of danger of death or for any other cause which the minister considers grave and just. In the Oriental churches it is usually conferred immediately after Baptism, and this was the rule in all parts of the world until about the thirteenth century. In fact, the prompt confirming of newly baptized children was strictly enjoined, and penalties were prescribed for parents who neglected it. But gradually it was seen to be preferable to defer this sacrament (which is not necessary for salvation) to an age when it could be received "with knowledge and free will."

Bishops are required, by the code of Canon law, to provide for the administration of Confirmation in every part of their dioceses at least every five years. In the more populous parts of our country it has become customary to have this done at intervals of two years.

**The Sponsor at Confirmation.** At the administration of this sacrament the Church requires a sponsor, as at Baptism. The

person chosen for this office must be a Catholic, and must have received Confirmation.

The code of Canon Law has removed the matrimonial impediment which formerly existed from this sponsorship, and there is, therefore (after Pentecost, 1918), no obstacle whatever to a marriage between a sponsor at Confirmation and the person confirmed, or the parent of that person.

It is usual to have in Confirmation one sponsor only, of the same sex as the person confirmed. A sponsor should not stand for more than two candidates unless the Bishop for a just reason allows him to stand for more. The sponsor has no duty at the ceremony except to place his or her hand on the shoulder of the person while the sacrament is being administered.

**The Ceremonies.** The bishop who confirms is vested in amice, stole and white cope, and wears his mitre. He goes to a seat before the middle of the altar, facing the people; and after washing his hands, he begins the ceremonies of the Confirmation. He first says aloud, in Latin, "May the Holy Spirit come upon you, and may the virtue of the Most High guard you from sin. Amen." Then, after making the sign of the cross, he extends his hands over those who are to be confirmed, and prays as follows:

"Almighty and eternal God, Who hast deigned to regenerate these Thy servants with water and the Holy Spirit, and Who hast given them the remission of all their sins, send upon them from heaven Thy sevenfold Spirit, the Paraclete. Amen. The Spirit of wisdom and understanding. Amen. The Spirit of counsel and fortitude. Amen. The Spirit of knowledge and piety. Amen. Fill them with the Spirit of Thy fear, and sign them with the sign of the cross of Christ unto everlasting life. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, etc."

The candidates are arranged before the bishop, generally at the altar rail; and it is customary with us for each to hold a card bearing his baptismal name and the name which he wishes to take at his Confirmation. This taking of an additional name is not necessary, but is sanctioned by long usage.

The bishop goes to each and administers the sacrament as follows: Dipping his right thumb into the vessel containing the holy chrism, he makes the sign of the cross with the consecrated oil on the candidate's forehead, and says at the same time (addressing him by his Christian name or names), "N—, I sign thee with the sign of the cross and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

He then strikes the cheek of the person lightly, saying, "Peace be with thee." This ceremony is not found in ancient rituals. It symbolizes the persecutions to which we may possibly be exposed on account of our faith, and reminds us that as soldiers of Jesus Christ we may have to suffer for Him.

The chrism on the forehead of each is wiped off with cotton by one of the assisting clergy. The bishop then washes his hands, to remove all traces of the chrism, and the choir or clergy or the candidates themselves chant or recite the following words: "Confirm this, O God, which Thou hast wrought in us, from Thy holy temple which is in Jerusalem. Glory be to the Father, etc."

**The Closing Prayer.** The bishop then offers a prayer, preceded by certain versicles—"Show us, O Lord, Thy mercy and give us Thy salvation. . . . O God, Who hast given Thy Holy Spirit to Thy Apostles, and hast willed that He should be given to the other faithful by them and their successors, regard benignantly the service of our lowliness; and grant that the same Holy Spirit, coming upon those whose foreheads we have anointed with holy chrism and marked with the sign of the cross, may make their hearts a temple of His glory. . . . So will every man be blessed who hears the Lord."

Finally the bishop gives his solemn blessing to those confirmed, making the sign of the cross over them, with the words: "May the Lord bless you from Sion, that you may see the good things of Jerusalem all the days of your life, and may have life everlasting. Amen."

It is customary for the bishop to deliver an instruction ap-

propriate to the occasion, teaching the newly confirmed the greatness of the sacrament they have received, urging them to be "strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ," steadfast in faith, loyal to their Leader; and warning them against the dangers to morals and faith to which they will be exposed through life.

At the bidding of the bishop, those who have been confirmed recite aloud the Creed, the Our Father and the Hail Mary; and this concludes the ceremonies of Confirmation.

#### 4. THE CONFESSION OF SINS

The telling of sins in Confession, or in other words, the receiving of the Sacrament of Penance, is something distinctively Catholic. It is true that it is found in schismatic churches but only because they have preserved it and continued it from the time when they were Catholic. When the Greek and Oriental churches separated themselves from communion with the Roman See, they retained nearly all the dogmas and practices which then prevailed in the Christian world. The Sacraments, the Mass, the priestly office and many other essentials of Catholicism are still to be found in those schismatic bodies, and the necessity of confessing sins is recognized in them just as it is in the Church of Rome.

There is hardly anything in the whole system of our religion which is so misunderstood and misrepresented as is Confession. Even learned non-Catholic writers and preachers show astounding ignorance of the true facts of the case when they treat of the "Romish" practice of confessing sins; and as for the rank and file of our separated brethren, the extent of their misinformation is appalling.

**What Catholics Believe.** Because Christ knew the needs of men's souls—for His primary purpose in coming to earth was to restore all things to His Father—He instituted the Sacrament of Penance for the pardon of sins committed after Baptism. Our Lord's words are so crystal-clear that

no one can seriously question their meaning. In the light of the constant teaching and tradition of the Catholic Church, no one could deny this doctrine and remain a member of the true Church. After His Resurrection, Christ appeared to His Apostles, and said: "Peace be to you. As the Father has sent Me, I also send you. When He had said this, He breathed upon them; and He said to them: Receive the Holy Spirit; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." (John, 20, 21-23)

The power of forgiving or retaining sins is obviously one involving responsibility and decision of a judge. The very nature of sin involves the necessity of a confession so that the priest, who is to judge and determine whether the guilt is to be pardoned or not, can properly function. Since God and the penitent alone know the real guilt of a man's conscience, there remains only one method by which the minister of Christ's power—the priest—can know the man's sins. The sinner must himself give the information: he must confess.

From the charge of Christ to His Apostles and their successors in the priesthood, we see that the priest himself has the power delegated by God to actually forgive sins, and not simply to declare that they are forgiven. Since Christ established this pardoning power for the forgiveness of sins committed after Baptism, every Christian is bound to be pardoned in the way He divinely appointed. St. Augustine says: "Let no one say to himself: 'I do penance secretly before God; God knows it, and He will forgive me, because I am doing penance in my heart.' Has it, therefore, been said without reason: 'Whatsoever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven.' Have the keys been given to the Church of God in vain? Are we to frustrate the Gospel and the words of Christ?" (Sermon 392)

The Church does not teach, however, that the simple recitation of sins is enough for forgiveness. The telling of sins, while necessary whenever physically and morally possible, is by no

means essential to the valid reception of this Sacrament. There is something far more important, something without which there can be no Sacrament, no forgiveness—namely, contrition, or sorrow and detestation for sin, with its necessary consequence, a firm purpose of amendment of life. Mortal sin, under certain conditions, can be forgiven without confession: it never can be forgiven without contrition.

It is beyond the scope of this book to go into an explanation of the Catholic doctrine on repentance and pardon, or to refute the ignorant and vicious attacks made upon this Sacrament of divine mercy. Numerous books on doctrine and apologetics are available and prove convincingly the teaching of the Church.

Here we consider the externals and the history of our method of confessing our sins. Since the Protestant Reformation, our practice of individual auricular confession of sins has been under attack. The charge was made that this method of private and detailed confession was merely an institution of the Church, first introduced by Pope Innocent III in the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. The truth on this matter is this: Confession, as we have seen, is not a human institution of Pope or Council, but a divine institution observed by the Church from the beginning. The Council of 1215 merely made the annual confession of sins a special precept of the Church. Evidence of auricular confession of sins to a priest is found in the writings of the Fathers of the Church and the early historians, through every century of the Church's existence. In all ages of her history, the power of absolution, of judgment of sins, has been recognized and used. St. Cyprian (died A.D. 258) urged the sinner to repent "while confession may be made." St. Leo the Great (died 461) writes: "Those who have violated the vows of their Baptism may obtain the remission of their sins by condemning themselves; the divine goodness has so decreed that the pardon of God can only be obtained by sinners through the prayers of the priest. Jesus Christ Himself has conferred upon the rulers of the church the power

of imposing canonical penance upon sinners who confess their sins." Origen, who lived in the beginning of the third century (185-254), exhorts the sinner to find a physician, learned and merciful, who will judge if his sickness be of such a nature that "it ought to be manifested in the meeting of the whole Church"; and he tells his listeners: "If we reveal our sins, not only to God, but also to those who can heal our sins, they will be blotted out."

In the early centuries public penance, of the greatest severity and sometimes lasting for years, was demanded in reparation for great sins—especially for murder, idolatry and adultery. This practice, however, was later abolished, because it was not of divine origin, and was often a deterrent from reconciliation with God rather than a help towards it; but sacramental confession has endured, because it is divine, and because, as St. Leo has said: "It is enough that guilt should be manifested to the priest alone by secret confession."

**The Priest Needs Jurisdiction.** What priests have the power of forgiving sins? All priests have it, but all priests cannot use it. No priest can hear confessions unless he has jurisdiction; just as no magistrate can try a case unless it is submitted by law to his tribunal. It is true that every Catholic priest has received this power at his ordination; but its exercise depends on the authority of the Church. For instance, if a priest who belongs to one diocese goes to another, he cannot hear confessions there unless he first obtains permission from the bishop of that diocese. He cannot even hear confessions in his own diocese unless he has received "faculties" to do so from his own bishop. In the words of the Catechism, he must be a "duly authorized priest." A merciful exception to this general law is granted by Canon Law, whereby any priest anywhere can absolve from any sin or excommunication if the penitent is in danger of death.

**The Form of Absolution.** What does the priest say when he raises his hand over us, after bidding us to say the Act of Contrition? Or, in other words, what is the form of absolution?



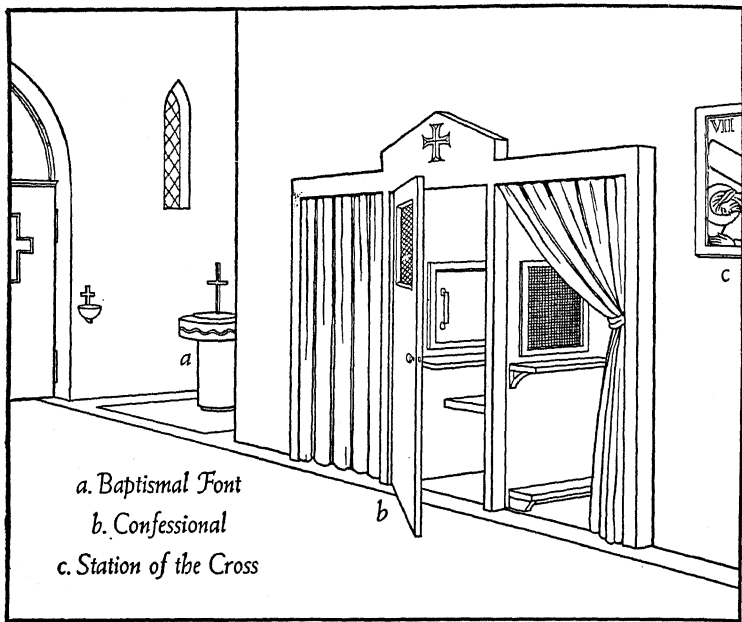
After reciting the last two sentences of the Confiteor, the Confessor uses these words:

“May our Lord Jesus Christ absolve thee, and I by His authority absolve thee from every bond of excommunication and interdict in so far as I can and as thou needest it; and so I absolve thee from thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. May the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merits of the Blessed Mary ever Virgin, whatever good thou hast done and whatever evil thou hast borne, be for thee unto the remission of sins, the increase of grace, and the reward of everlasting life. Amen.”

Such are the impressive words which God’s appointed minister uses as the sentence of pardon for God’s faithful. And when these words are uttered over one who is rightly disposed, the soul that has been loathsome with the leprosy of sin becomes pure in God’s sight; the wickedness that defiled it is cleansed away forever.

**The Seal of Confession.** Every Catholic knows, and many non-Catholics know as well, that a priest is not permitted under any circumstances or for any reason whatever, to reveal what he has heard in Confession. This obligation of secrecy is what is known as the *Seal of Confession*.

The Confessor is not acting as a mere man, but as one who stands in the place of God; and he is never allowed to disclose to any one the matters submitted to him in the sacred tribunal. This law admits of absolutely no exception. Unless the penitent freely gives the Confessor leave to use his knowledge, the priest must not by word or look or gesture reveal sins or weaknesses, or the names or sins of accomplices, or anything that would bring contempt or trouble on the penitent. If harm would thereby ensue, he must not even admit that a certain person has confessed to him. He must not even by change of conduct or manner remind the penitent of anything that has been told in Confession. To violate this law in any way would be a detestable sacrilege, and would entail the severest penalties for the guilty priest. And it is right that this should be so;



for any revelation of matters of confession would make the Sacrament of Penance an intolerable evil instead of a ministry of mercy and reconciliation.

**The Confessional.** The enclosure within which the confession is ordinarily made, is known as a *Confessional*. In our churches it consists usually of a central recess in which the Confessor is seated, and side alcoves, fitted with doors or curtains, in which the penitents kneel. The partitions have openings provided with gratings or screens, separating the penitent from the priest, and these may be closed by sliding shutters. The Ritual demands that the confessional be located in a conspicuous place in the church, and it is recommended that in the part where the penitent kneels there shall be a crucifix or a picture of our Lord, to inspire devotion and contrition in the sinner.

This present form of confessional is of somewhat recent origin. In ancient times confessions were heard in the open church, the penitent kneeling before the priest or seated by his side. The division of the confessional into compartments seems to have come into use about the sixteenth century.

The priest, when hearing confessions, wears a purple stole, and, according to the requirements of the Ritual, should also wear a surplice. However, this latter detail, probably for comfort's sake, is sometimes omitted by our clergy.

**A Secret Sacrament.** The Sacrament of Penance is the only one that is always administered in secret. The other six Sacraments are given ordinarily in a solemn manner, in the presence of witnesses or others, with lights and prayers. The Sacrament of Penance is a private affair, concerning no one but the penitent and the priest; and hence it is generally administered in the narrow space of the confessional, and always without pomp or ceremony.

Much more might be written about the sacred tribunal of Penance, but it would be rather an exposition of Catholic doctrine than of practice and would not come within the scope of this book. Every Catholic is familiar from childhood with the requirements for a worthy Confession, and every Catholic knows also, from his own experience, the peace and heavenly comfort that have filled his soul when he arose from his knees and went forth "with God's benediction upon him." The confessing of our sins may seem hard, but God, in reality, has made the work of reconciliation easy for us. Earnest sorrow, a real purpose of amendment, a sincere accusation—and the sins, be they few or many, no longer exist. They must be told, and the telling is hard—but it is not made to the world at large. They are whispered only to one man, who is bound by a most sacred obligation, bound by his own hope of Heaven, to preserve everlasting silence.

## 5. THE CEREMONIES OF EXTREME UNCTION

The ministry of the Catholic Church is at its best in the care which it manifests towards the sick. In the sick room and at the death bed the Catholic priest wins the grateful love of the faithful and the admiration of those who are not of the One Fold. There is no part of his work, no service that he renders to his flock, that is better calculated to make men of all creeds respect the priest. When they see him wending his way to the homes of the poor, through darkness or rain or snow, when they know that no danger of contagion can keep him away, that no peril is worthy of notice when a soul is at stake, they realize that the priest believes what he teaches.

**The Last Anointing.** In this section we shall take up the ceremonies of the Sacrament by which a soul is prepared for its passage to eternity. Why is this Sacrament called Extreme Unction? Because it is the last or extreme anointing which the Catholic receives. At Baptism his breast and shoulders were anointed with the oil of catechumens and his head with chrism. At Confirmation he was marked on the forehead with chrism, to show that his faith must be manifest to the world. If he has been raised to the priesthood, he has received on his hands another anointing by which these members were consecrated to God's service. And, now that he is about to cross the threshold of eternity, his various senses receive a last anointing in the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

**The Oil of the Sacrament.** For this Sacrament the oil which is used is olive oil, consecrated by a bishop on Holy Thursday of each year. It is known as *oleum infirmorum*—"the oil of the sick"—and it is applied by the priest to the principal organs of the body through which sin may have come upon the soul.

**A Symbol of Strength.** The symbolism of oil can be easily understood if we remember the many uses for which it was employed among the ancients. It was a medicine, a food, a source of light, and especially a means of producing that strength and flexibility of muscle which athletes seek to ac-

quire. The gymnast, runner, boxer or wrestler of the old Olympic games rubbed oil into the pores of his skin, and thereby nourished and strengthened his muscular system in preparation for his contests. So it is with the sacramental oil with which the Church anoints her children to give them spiritual strength in their conflict with Satan.

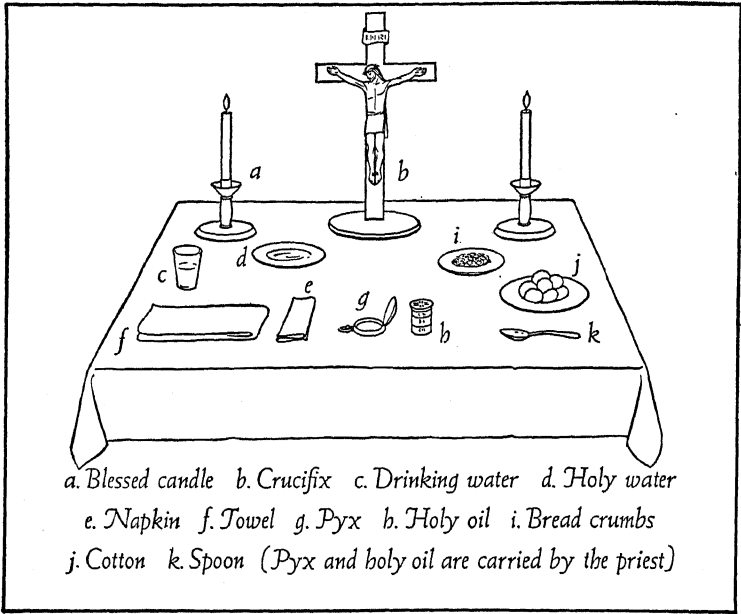
**Scriptural Authority.** Like all the other sacraments, Extreme Unction was instituted by our Blessed Saviour; but there is no mention of it in the Gospels. We find the first account of it in the Epistle of St. James the Apostle, where the manner of administering it and the nature of its effects are clearly set forth: "Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." (James 5, 14-15)

The Sacrament of Extreme Unction should, if possible, be given when the patient is in full possession of his mental faculties and realizes the importance of the Sacrament, and not when he is deprived of his senses and is in the throes of death.

Certain prejudices of extraordinary vitality make some Catholics fearful of receiving it. A recent catechism has this fine advice: "Ordinarily, those who are in danger of death should be advised of their condition. It is false mercy to keep them ignorant of the fact that they may soon face God, their just Judge. Those who are in danger of death should welcome the sacrament of Extreme Unction. It cannot harm them, and it often helps them physically."

**In the Sick Room.** When it can be done, the Holy Viaticum is given to the sick person before Extreme Unction. It may be well to mention the various things which should be prepared. These should always be kept together and in readiness in every Catholic household, for in each the day will come (and may come suddenly) when they will be needed.

First, in the room of the sick person there should be a small table covered with a clean linen cloth. On the table there



**Table Prepared for Sacraments of the Sick**

should be a crucifix, two blessed candles lighted, holy water, a glass of fresh water and a spoon. The parts of the sick person which are to be anointed should be washed before the priest arrives—the face, hands, and feet.

Second, if the priest is bearing the Blessed Sacrament, he should be met at the door with a lighted candle. The candle-bearer should genuflect and precede the priest to the sick-room, where all present should kneel.

**The Prayers Before the Anointing.** As the priest comes into the sick room he says, in Latin, "Peace be unto this house and all who dwell therein." He sprinkles the sick person, the room and the other persons present with holy water, uttering the words of the Psalmist: "Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, O Lord, and I shall be cleansed; Thou shalt wash me, and I

shall be made whiter than snow. Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy. Glory be to the Father, etc.”

He then hears the confession of the sick person, if it has not been previously heard, and gives the Holy Viaticum, if it is to be given. He then recites three prayers. The first asks that “into this house may come eternal happiness, divine prosperity, serene joy, fruitful charity and lasting health; that the devils may flee; that the angels of peace may be present; that all evil discord may disappear.” The second asks blessings from our Lord Jesus Christ on the house and on all who dwell in it, that He may give them a good angel as their guardian; that He may protect them “from all the powers of darkness, from all fear and perturbation.” The third asks again for the angel of God “to guard, protect, cherish, visit and defend all who dwell in this abode.”

The Confiteor is then recited. It may be said in English (or any other language) by the sick person or by those who are present. The priest says, in Latin, the concluding sentences: “May the Almighty God have mercy on thee, etc.” As he pronounces the final words he makes the sign of the cross.

Then, before the anointing, the priest offers a prayer to the angels and saints which opens with an invocation of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity, with a threefold sign of the cross over the patient: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, may all the power of the devil be extinguished in thee, by the imposition of our hands and by the invocation of all the holy Angels, Archangels, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins, and all the Saints. Amen.”

**The Anointings.** At the anointing of the sick person, those who are in the room should kneel and pray. The oil of the sick is carried in a small gold-plated box, known as an oil stock, which is enclosed in a leather case. The oil is usually soaked into cotton, to avoid danger of leakage. The priest dips his thumb into the oil and makes the sign of the cross with it on several parts of the sick person’s body; first on the eyes,

with the words, in Latin: "By this holy unction and His most loving mercy may the Lord pardon thee whatever thou hast sinned by sight." Then on the ears, with the same formula, except the last word, which is "hearing." He anoints the nose, mentioning the sense of smell; the lips, for taste and speech; the palms of the hands, for the sense of touch; and the feet, for sins committed by walking. The last-mentioned anointing may be omitted if it cannot be done conveniently. Each anointing is wiped away with cotton.

When a priest receives Extreme Unction his hands are anointed not on the palms, but on the back. The reason is that his palms have been previously consecrated with oil, at his ordination.

**The Final Prayers.** The priest then prays, "Kyrie eleison," etc.—"Lord, have mercy"—after which the Our Father is recited secretly down to the last words, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," which are said aloud, in Latin. Then follow several versicles with their responses: "Make safe Thy servant, my God, who trusts in Thee. Send him, O Lord, help from Thy holy place, and defend him from Sion. Be to him, O Lord, a tower of strength from the face of the enemy. May the enemy avail naught against him, and the son of iniquity be powerless to harm him." These and the other prayers are varied according to the sex of the sick person—"Thy handmaid" instead of "Thy servant," etc.

Three prayers are then offered. The first asks for forgiveness of sin and restoration of bodily health. The second, in which the Christian name of the sick person is used, implores refreshment of soul and divine healing; and the third begs that he may be restored to Holy Church "with all desired prosperity." This concludes the ceremonies of Extreme Unction.

**The Apostolic Blessing.** Immediately after the administration of this Sacrament it is usual to impart the Last or Apostolic Blessing, which gives a plenary indulgence to the recipient. This indulgence is gained, not when the prayers are read, but at the moment of death—"in articulo mortis."



The priest exhorts the sick person to elicit acts of contrition, faith, hope and love, and to invoke the Sacred Name of Jesus. A prayer is offered to "the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation," to look with favor upon His servant and to grant him the pardon of all his sins. After the Confiteor has been said, the Blessing is given, as follows:

"May our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, Who gave to Peter the power to bind and to loose, receive thy confession and restore to thee that first robe of innocence which thou didst receive in Baptism; and I, by the power given to me by the Apostolic See, grant thee a plenary indulgence and remission of all thy sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

"Through the most sacred mysteries of man's redemption may God remit unto thee the pains of the present and future life, open to thee the gates of heaven, and bring thee to everlasting life."

And with a solemn benediction, "May Almighty God bless thee, Father, Son and Holy Ghost," the ceremonies are concluded which prepare the Christian soul to meet its God.

## 6. THE CEREMONIES OF HOLY ORDERS

"Only on the Apostles, and thenceforth to those on whom their successors have imposed hands, is granted the power of the priesthood, in virtue of which they represent the person of Jesus Christ before their people, acting at the same time as representatives of their people before God. Their priesthood is not transmitted by heredity or human descent. It does not emanate from the Christian community. It is not a delegation from the people. Prior to acting as representative of the community before the throne of God, the priest is the ambassador of the divine Redeemer. He is God's vice-gerent in the midst of his flock precisely because Jesus Christ is Head of that body of which Christians are the members. The power entrusted to him, therefore, bears no natural resemblance to any-

thing human. It is entirely supernatural. It comes from God." (Pius XII in *Mediator Dei*.)

The rites used in the administration of Holy Orders are of great antiquity and full of meaning. They are beautiful and symbolical ceremonies, expressing well the dignity and the duties of the Orders conferred through them.

In the catechism we find the following definition of the Sacrament of Holy Orders: "A sacrament through which bishops, priests and other ministers of the Church are ordained and receive grace and power to perform their sacred duties." We are somewhat familiar with priests and more remotely with bishops; but who are the "other ministers of the Church?" Not the Cardinals; these are not elevated to that dignity by any ordination. Not the Pope himself; he is a bishop—and if he be (as has generally been the case) a bishop before his election to the Papacy, he needs no ordination or consecration to make him Pope. The "other ministers of the Church" are those who have received Orders below that of priesthood; for a candidate for the sacred ministry passes through several steps before the priestly character is conferred upon him.

**The Steps to the Priesthood.** He first receives the clerical tonsure, which is not an Order—merely a ceremony. Then four Minor Orders are conferred upon him; these will be described in detail. Then come the Sacred Orders, namely, subdeaconship, deaconship and priesthood. Therefore a candidate for the priesthood, after receiving the tonsure, is ordained to six different grades before he is finally made a priest.

It is usual to give these various Orders on the same day and at the same Mass, but not to the same individual at one time. An ordination will sometimes include a hundred candidates or more, some for each of the above Orders. By the code of Canon Law a student may not receive the tonsure until his first year of theological study; Minor Orders will come probably during the second; subdeaconship will be administered at the end of his third year, and deaconship and priesthood in his fourth year.

**The Clerical Tonsure.** When a student has manifested sufficient signs of a probable vocation and fitness for the clerical state, he receives a summons to the ceremony of tonsure. This is the rite by which a man is taken from the world, ceases to be a layman, and is made a member of the clergy. The tonsure has been for many centuries the special badge of those who have been elevated to the clerical state. It consists in the cutting off of some of the hair from the candidate's head. In our part of the world it has never become a custom to wear the tonsure; but in Catholic countries it is an obligation upon all clerics. Among the secular clergy (where it is worn) and in some religious communities the tonsure consists of a smoothly shaven circular spot, perhaps three inches in diameter, on the top of the head towards the rear. In certain orders of monks it is much larger, the whole crown of the head being denuded of hair, leaving merely a fringe around the head, like a wreath; this may be seen in pictures of St. Anthony and some other saints.

What is the meaning of this peculiar practice of the Church? It signifies the putting away of useless and superfluous ornaments, the separating of one's self from vanity and worldliness. It is also considered as a symbol of the crown of thorns of our Blessed Lord, and therefore typifies the austerities which the wearer should practice in imitation of Him.

The conferring of the tonsure and the various Orders usually takes place on the Saturdays of Ember weeks, the Saturday before Passion Sunday, or Holy Saturday; they may, however, be given on other days. So careful is the Church that her clergy shall be well qualified in every way that when the candidates appear for ordination the first ceremony is the pronouncing of a solemn sentence of excommunication on any one who presents himself to receive Orders and who is legally unfit or unworthy.

**The Tonsure Ceremonies.** Those who are to be tonsured stand before the bishop, and he recites a prayer that "these servants of God who have hastened hither to lay aside the hairs

of their heads for love of Him" may receive the Holy Ghost, Who will defend them against the world and earthly desires; and that, being endowed with an increase of virtue, they may receive the light of eternal grace.

Then the bishop with a pair of scissors clips five small locks of hair in the form of a cross from the head of the young man who kneels before him—taking them from the front, back, both sides and centre of the head, while the candidate says: "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and my chalice; it is Thou Who wilt restore my inheritance to me." Then after a prayer asking God's blessing on the new clerics and the reciting of a psalm, the bishop invests each with a surplice, the garb of their new state, with the words: "May the Lord clothe thee with the new man who has been created according to God in justice and the holiness of truth." He then recites a beautiful prayer that these new servants of God may be freed from all slavery to worldly things; that as they carry the likeness of Christ's crown on their heads, they may be worthy of an eternal inheritance with Him. The bishop then admonishes them "to remember that this day they are made members of the Church's court and have received the privileges of the clergy; to beware lest they lose them; and to endeavor to please God by honorable living, good morals and works."

**The Minor Orders.** Minor Orders are a necessary part of the preparation for the priesthood, and they are given only to those who have previously received the tonsure. They are four in number: The Order of Porter, of Reader, of Exorcist and of Acolyte.

In the early centuries of the Church's history, for the proper celebration of the sacred mysteries, it was deemed necessary to appoint various ministers who would attend to certain duties connected with the divine worship. Some of these were afterwards raised to the priesthood; some never advanced further than the Minor Orders, spending their lives in the exercise of these lower functions of the ministry, much like the *lay*

*brothers* who serve in the churches of various religious orders. Gradually, however, these Minor Orders became merely a step towards the sacred office of the priesthood, and all those who received them did so with the intention of ultimately becoming priests. Thus it has come about that every man who becomes a priest first receives the four Minor Orders, although as a matter of fact he seldom or never exercises their functions. The office of porter is filled in our churches to-day not by a cleric but by a layman. Those of reader and exorcist are exercised only by priests. The duties of the office of acolyte fall to the lot of the altar boy who serves Mass.

No candidate may receive tonsure and a minor order on the same day; nor are all minor orders to be conferred on anyone on the same day.

**The Order of Porter.** The first Minor Order is that of porter—the doorkeeper of the house of God. The tonsured cleric comes before the bishop clad in cassock and surplice and carrying a candle, and is instructed in the duties of his office. He is to sound the gong, to ring the bell, to open the church, to prepare the book for the preacher. He is warned not to be negligent about the care of the Church's goods; not to be tardy in his duties; and, just as he opens and closes the visible house of God, so likewise he must by word and example close the hearts of the faithful to the devil and open them to God. Such is the substance of the Latin exhortation which is read by the bishop to the candidates. They then receive the keys of the church, and are led to the door, which is locked and unlocked by each of them; they then ring the church bell, after which the bishop prays over them and solemnly blesses them.

**The Order of Reader.** The lector or reader was a very important person in the ages when the Church was engaged in evangelizing Europe. He was the instructor, the catechist, the reader of the Scriptures for the semi-savage tribes which were being brought into the fold of Christ. A knowledge of reading was unusual among the common people in those days, and a book was an almost priceless treasure; and therefore, that the

people might be instructed concerning sacred things and that they might know the written Word of God, a cleric was ordained to read to them in the church. He also acted as chanter at solemn ceremonies, and was permitted to bless certain articles for the faithful.

Those who receive this order come before the bishop with candles and receive an admonition from him regarding their new duties. They are exhorted to proclaim the sacred truths clearly and openly, and not to falsify them in any way; and as they are to be placed in an exalted position in the church so that they may be seen and heard by all, so must they hold a high place in the order of virtue, that they may lead to eternal life those who see and hear them.

The bishop then places in the hand of each the Holy Scriptures, as a symbol of their office. He then asks God's blessing on them and prays that they may always "preach what should be done and do what they preach."

**The Order of Exorcist.** In the first centuries of the Church the devil undoubtedly had more power than in later centuries in regard to material things. The greater part of the world was his dominion, for it was sunk in paganism, which was to a large extent devil-worship. The enemy of God and of mankind had extended his sway over the souls of a great portion of the human race, and God even permitted him in some cases to control the bodies of men. This is why we read in the Gospels, in the writings of the Fathers and in the lives of the early saints, of many instances of demoniac possession—actual control by the Evil One of the minds and bodies of unfortunate victims.

The exorcist is one whose office it formerly was to cast out devils; and he received the right to use the solemn formulas of the Church for that purpose. He also assisted at the administration of Baptism, imposing hands on the catechumen and thereby giving him the graces of the Holy Spirit; but in our times these duties are exercised only by those who have been elevated to the priesthood.

At the ordination of an exorcist the bishop admonishes him that, having the power to expel devils from others, he must keep all uncleanness and evil from his own mind and body, lest he be conquered by those whom he has driven from others. Then the Missal or the Pontifical (the Ritual used by the bishop) is handed to him; the blessing of God is invoked upon him, and he is declared to have power and dominion over unclean spirits, and to be "an approved physician of the Church, confirmed in the grace of curing and in heavenly virtue."

**The Order of Acolyte.** The Order of Acolyte is the last and highest of the Minor Orders which are conferred before promotion to the greater dignities of subdeaconship, deaconship and priesthood. As the candidates kneel before the bishop they are instructed in their duties—to carry candles at the services of the Church, to light the lamps, and to serve the priest at Mass. They are warned that those whose office it is to care for lights must have nothing to do with the works of darkness. They must themselves be lights in the house of God. And as they are to present wine and water at the altar, so they should offer themselves as a sacrifice to God by a chaste life and good works.

Afterwards the bishop presents a candle to each of them, stating that they thereby receive the right to light the lamps of the church; then a cruet, such as is used at Mass, to express their duty of serving the wine and water. A prayer is then offered to ask a blessing upon them, and God is besought to enkindle in their minds and hearts the love of His grace, that they may faithfully serve Him in His holy Church.

**The Order of Subdeacon.** The subsequent steps to and including the priesthood are known as the Sacred or Major Orders. Some time after the reception of the Minor Orders the candidate, if he be deemed worthy, is notified that he is to be raised to the subdeaconship. This decision is only arrived at after the merits of the cleric have been well examined by his superiors; for this is the important step which, once and

forever, separates him from the world and devotes him to the perpetual service of God in His sanctuary.

The ordination of subdeacons is a most impressive ceremony. The young men have decided that God calls them to give up earthly things, to make a sacrifice of much that is in itself lawful and laudable. They have resolved to bind themselves by an obligation to absolute and perpetual chastity and to strict obedience—to offer their lives as an oblation before the throne of God.

In company with those on whom the deaconship and priesthood are to be conferred, the candidates for subdeaconship are arranged before the bishop, who sits at the altar and gives them a solemn admonition in these words: "Dearly beloved sons, who are to be promoted to the holy order of subdeacon, you should consider again and again what kind of burden you voluntarily seek to-day. For thus far you are free, and you are allowed, if you wish, to pass to earthly vows; but if you receive this order it will not be lawful for you any longer to turn aside from what you have proposed to do; but you will be obliged perpetually to serve God, to serve Whom is to reign; but you will be bound to preserve chastity with His aid, and to be joined forever to the ministry of His holy Church. Therefore, while there is time, reflect; and if it please you to persevere in your holy resolution, in the name of God, come hither."

Then the candidates take a step towards the bishop. They are ministers of God's Church forever, vowed to chastity.

Together with those who are to be elevated to deaconship and priesthood, they then prostrate themselves on the floor, lying motionless on their faces while the bishop and clergy recite the Litany of the Saints. This prostration is a most impressive ceremony. The young men who have given themselves to God fall to the earth before His altar and lie there like sacrificed victims. The world with its pleasures and ambitions is left behind; henceforth they belong to God, and are bound to His service forever.



The bishop then instructs them as to their duties. A subdeacon is to prepare and present the water used at the altar; to sing the Epistle; to assist the deacon; to wash the sacred linens; to care for the chalice and the paten. All these external actions symbolize many spiritual obligations which are incumbent upon him. He is to assist in the instruction of the faithful, by word and example. He is to be zealous, vigilant, sober and pure.

The empty chalice and paten are then presented, and are touched with the hand; the bishop says: "See whose ministry is entrusted to you. Henceforth, I admonish you, show yourselves so that you may please God." Then the cruets of wine and water, with the basin and towel, are also presented and are touched in like manner.

The bishop then solemnly blesses the candidates and calls down upon them the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. The vestments of the new subdeacons are blessed, and their mystical meaning is explained. The amice, which is worn on the neck and shoulders, signifies the restraining of speech. The maniple, which is placed on the left arm, symbolizes good works. The tunic, the large vestment worn by the subdeacon at Mass, typifies happiness and joy.

The Mass Book is then given to each of the newly ordained, to signify their office of chanting the Epistle in solemn Masses. One of them sings the Epistle of the day, and this concludes the ordination of the subdeacons.

**The Order of Deacon.** The order next below the priesthood is deaconship. The deacon is the priest's principal assistant not only at Mass but in other sacred rites. With the permission of the bishop, or the pastor, he may preach to the people, and with special permission in cases of necessity he may administer solemn Baptism and give Holy Communion.

This order has a very ancient origin. We read in the Acts of the Apostles that in the very first years of the Church it was found necessary to ordain assistants, called deacons (meaning ministers or servants), to take charge of various duties to

which the Apostles themselves could not attend. Among these first deacons was St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr.

The conferring of deaconship, like subdeaconship, takes place at Mass, and begins after the latter order has been given—just after the Epistle. The candidates, clad in albs and carrying their vestments are presented to the bishop by one of the clergy, called the archdeacon, who says in Latin: "Most reverend Father, our holy Mother the Catholic Church asks that you ordain these subdeacons here present to the burden of the diaconate." The bishop inquires: "Do you know that they are worthy?" And the other answers: "As much as human frailty permits me to know, I both know and testify that they are worthy of the burden of this office." To which the bishop responds: "Thanks be to God."

Then he calls upon any person to state any reason why these subdeacons should not receive the higher order. Afterwards follows a long instruction on the duties to which the deacons will be bound. They are to minister at the altar, to baptize and to preach. They are like the levites of old, especially deputed to the service of the sanctuary; urged to be shining examples to the Church—pure and chaste, as befits ministers of Christ—to preach the Gospel by example as well as by word.

Next comes the prostration before the altar, unless this has been previously done with the subdeacons; for when the different sacred orders are conferred at the same Mass, all the candidates prostrate themselves together.

Afterwards the bishop asks the prayers of the clergy and people for those who are to be elevated to deaconship, and then intones or recites a beautiful Preface (like that which is sung in a high Mass), in which he invokes the blessing of God upon them. In the middle of the Preface, after placing his hand on the head of each candidate, he says the essential words: "Send forth upon them, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the Holy Spirit that they may be strengthened by Him, through the gift of Thy sevenfold grace, unto the faithful discharge of Thy service."

The deacon's stole is placed on his shoulders. He wears this

in a manner different from that in which a priest's stole is put on. It is placed on the left shoulder and extends diagonally to the right side, where the ends are fastened.

The dalmatic, which is the large vestment worn by deacons, is then imposed, with a prayer which expresses its symbolic meaning. It represents salvation, joy and justice.

Next comes the bestowing of the Book of the Gospels, with the words: "Receive the power of reading the Gospel in the church of God, both for the living and the dead, in the name of the Lord."

Then, after two prayers asking God to bless the newly ordained and to give them grace to persevere, the Gospel of the day is chanted by one of the new deacons, and this concludes the ceremonies of their ordination.

**The Order of Priesthood.** All orders described thus far are a preparation for the priestly dignity, which, with diaconate, imprints on the soul of the recipient a character which endures forever. He possesses all the faculties of the porter, the lector, the exorcist, the acolyte, the subdeacon and the deacon, and receives also in his ordination powers which they do not enjoy—wonderful privileges which are of so sublime a nature that human reason cannot grasp their full import or measure their magnificence. The priest, in the words used by the bishop in the ceremonies of ordination, is "to offer, to bless, to rule, to preach, to baptize." His most august function is the offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass—to call down the Almighty from heaven—to hold God in his consecrated hands. He receives power to bless, to bring God's benediction upon any one or anything. He is placed in authority, to rule over a part of Christ's flock. He is God's spokesman, appointed to preach His word, set apart to do the work of an evangelist. He is the ordinary minister of Baptism, empowered to bring souls into the fold of Christ. He, a man and a sinner, has the marvelous power of forgiving the sins of other men.

These and many other wonderful supernatural faculties are given to the priest in his ordination, and they are symbolized

by the beautiful ceremonies which our Church uses when she raises a man to this exalted dignity.

**The Ordination of a Priest.** As at the ordination of deacons, the candidates are presented to the bishop by the archdeacon, with the request that they be ordained to "the burden of the priesthood." The bishop inquires about their worthiness, and the archdeacon testifies to it. The bishop then solemnly asks if any one is able to give reasons why the priestly dignity should not be conferred upon any of these.

He then admonishes the candidates that they must endeavor to receive the priesthood worthily and to live holy lives. He instructs them concerning their future duties; he compares their office with that of the seventy priests who were selected from all Israel under the Old Law to minister to God, and with the seventy-two who were chosen by our Blessed Saviour to go two and two to preach His Word. He reminds them that out of the various orders of the clergy and out of many members distinguished as to dignity, the one Body of Christ is formed. He exhorts them to be chaste and holy, to mortify their bodies, to make their teaching the spiritual medicine of the people of God, to build up the household of the Lord by preaching and example.

If the candidates have not taken part already in the prostration with the subdeacons, they then prostrate themselves before the altar, as previously described.

**The Imposition of Hands.** They kneel two and two before the bishop, who presses both hands upon the head of each. Afterwards all the priests who are present do the same to each candidate.

The bishop then prays that all heavenly gifts may be bestowed on them, and invokes a blessing. He then chants or reads a long and beautiful preface, thanking the Almighty for having instituted the priesthood and asking that all those who enter it may receive all necessary helps and graces; that those now being ordained may be filled with the spirit of holiness and may through their priesthood win an eternal reward.

The imposition of hands by the bishop and some of the words

from this Preface constitute the essential matter and form of the Order of Priesthood, according to an Apostolic Constitution made by Pope Pius XII on November 30, 1947.

**The Giving of the Vestments.** The bishop moves the stole from the left shoulder of each candidate (where it indicated the Order of Deacon) to his neck, crossing it in front as it is worn by priests, with the words: "Receive the yoke of Christ, for His yoke is sweet and His burden light."

The chasuble, the large vestment worn by a priest at Mass, is then put on his shoulders, but the rear part of it is kept folded until later. The bishop says: "Receive the priestly vestment, by which charity is understood; for God is powerful, that He may increase charity in thee, and perfect work." The symbolic meanings of this and the other vestments, as well as their history, are set forth in another section of this book.

He then again invokes the blessing of God on all the candidates, and prays that they may possess and practice all the virtues necessary to their exalted state.

**The Anointing of the Hands.** The *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, or hymn to the Holy Ghost, is then intoned by the bishop and is sung by the choir. During this hymn the bishop anoints the hands of each of the candidates with the oil of catechumens. This anointing is done in the form of a cross on the palms of the hands, which are thereby specially consecrated that they may be worthy to touch and handle the Sacred Body of our Lord. The hands are then tied together with a strip of white linen and remain bound until the following ceremony is completed.

**The Giving of the Chalice.** The chalice, containing wine and water, and the paten, holding the unconsecrated host, are placed in the hands of each, with the words: "Receive the power to offer sacrifice to God and to celebrate Masses, both for the living and the dead, in the name of the Lord. Amen."

At the Offertory of the Mass each newly ordained man presents a lighted candle to the ordaining bishop, an interesting relic of the ancient gift-procession. Another most impressive element of the ordination rites is the concelebration of the ordi-

nation Mass. From the offering of the bread until the end of Mass, the new priests simultaneously offer and consecrate the Holy Eucharist with the bishop. While we often speak of a new priest's first Mass as being the day or so after ordination, strictly speaking his first Mass is in immediate conjunction with the ordination itself.

**The Power to Absolve.** After all have received Holy Communion they receive the power of forgiving sins—that wonderful faculty which the priest exercises by virtue of the commission given by our Lord to the Apostles. The bishop places his hands on the head of each, uttering the words of Jesus Christ: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." He then unfolds the chasuble (which up to this time has been hanging folded on the priest's shoulders) with the words: "May the Lord clothe thee with the mantle of innocence."

**The Oath of Obedience.** Each of the new priests goes to the bishop, kneels before him, and places his hands in those of the prelate, who says to him: "Do you promise me and my successors reverence and obedience?" And the priest answers: "I do promise." The bishop then kisses the new priest on the cheek, and says devoutly: "The peace of the Lord be always with thee."

If the priest belongs to another diocese the question is asked in a different form. Then a solemn admonition is addressed to the new priests, warning them that as the sacred things which they are to use and handle are worthy of all reverence, they must be well trained in the ceremonies of the Holy Sacrifice before they attempt to offer it.

The bishop pronounces a blessing, calling down upon them the benediction of the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity; and near the end of the Mass he gives them another solemn warning, saying: "Beloved sons, consider diligently the order received by you and the burden imposed upon your shoulders. Study to live holy and religious lives, that you may please the Almighty and acquire His grace."

A penance is then announced for each of the orders that

have been conferred at the ordination. Those who have received tonsure and the Minor Orders are told to recite the seven penitential psalms; the subdeacons and deacons, a part of the sacred office; and the priests are directed to celebrate three Masses, one in honor of the Holy Ghost, one of the Blessed Virgin, and one for the souls in Purgatory; and all are requested to pray for the bishop.

These ancient rites used in the conferring of Holy Orders show us the wisdom of our Holy Church. She teaches not only by word but by example. This sacrament imparts wonderful graces and privileges and powers to those who receive its various grades; and that these may be well understood by them and also by the faithful who witness the ordination, the Church has enriched and adorned with beautiful and symbolic ceremonies the administration of the sacrament of her priesthood and the steps which lead up to it. Every one of the details of an ordination is of great antiquity; little change has been made in them for centuries. Every one is intended to instruct us concerning some gift or faculty given by our holy Church to the levite who aspires to the service of her sanctuary. Every duty and every power belonging to the various orders is symbolized by the majestic rites with which they are administered, or are expressed in the solemn prayers offered to God and the admonitions addressed to the candidates by the ordaining bishop.

## 7. CELIBACY OF THE CLERGY

There is such a wide distinction between the mode of life of the Catholic priest and that of the clergy of other Christian denominations that we are apt to look upon his celibate state as something which is essential to his sacred character and profession. We are familiar with the idea that the priest is one who has voluntarily sacrificed all that man holds dear in worldly relationship in order thereby to be better able to devote himself to God's service; but it would be erroneous to

imagine that the fact of his priesthood necessitates his living a single life. Our priests in the Latin Church have vowed themselves to celibacy; by receiving ordination they have rendered themselves forever incapable of valid marriage; but this is because the Church has made laws to that effect, and not through any divine decree or institution.

The practice of clerical celibacy and the law which confirms it have been the slow growth of centuries—and, as we shall see, they are not by any means universal. There are many thousands of Catholic priests (not schismatics, but real Catholics) who are lawfully married and are living in the married state; but this is the case only in Eastern churches which have a ritual and a system of legislation different from the Roman. The uniform practice and rule of the Latin Church is that those who serve the altar and who are promoted to subdeaconship shall be unmarried and shall so remain.

**Why Our Priests Do Not Marry.** What are the reasons for clerical celibacy? Why is it that the Church insists on this rigorous and difficult rule? Rigorous and difficult it undoubtedly is, for it requires the constant repression of natural instincts and affections. The Church has imposed celibacy on her clergy that they may serve God with less restraint and with undivided heart. As St. Paul says, "He that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God; but he that is with a wife is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and he is divided."

They are expected to practise chastity because the state of virginity is holier than that of marriage. This does not mean that the married state is not praiseworthy and honorable; but our Blessed Lord Himself tells us (and the apostles reiterate His teaching) that the life of those who practise virginity is superior to that of those who are married. The Church has always taught the same doctrine. Council after council has extolled the holy state of celibacy, and the Council of Trent affirmed as a matter of faith that it is holier than marriage.



But this, while it shows that the unmarried state is preferable and even specially desirable for the priests of the Church, does not of itself compel them to observe it. This has been done by direct legislation, which required several centuries to reach its present development.

**The Church's Law.** The Church imposes a law of celibacy upon her ministers, but she has not always done so. During at least one-half of her history the legislation was not in its present form; and even now it is not extended to all parts of the Church's domain and is not enforced in regard to all her clergy.

In the first days of the Church there was no law restricting the marriage of the clergy except that a bishop was required to be "a man of one wife"; that is, to have been married only once. It is quite likely that several of the apostles were married. We read in the Gospel of the curing of Peter's mother-in-law by our Blessed Lord—and if the chief of the apostles had a mother-in-law he undoubtedly had at some time a wife. It is supposed, however, that she was dead before he was called to be an apostle, as there is no mention of her in the Scriptural account of Peter's life.

The first trace which we can find of positive legislation is in the fourth century. At the Council of Nice and other synods of about the same time a regulation was made prohibiting the marriage of the clergy after ordination; but the validity of the marriage was not denied or assailed by this rule. It merely provided that the priest who contracted it was to be degraded to the lay state. But gradually the sentiment of the whole Western Church became more rigorous. It was felt that a married clergy was in no way desirable; and under various Popes laws were made for the clergy of the Latin rite which rendered invalid any marriage attempted by a subdeacon or one in higher orders.

The marriage of a cleric below the rank of subdeacon is valid, but by that very act of marrying the cleric in minor orders is reduced to the lay state.

In the eyes of the Church a widower is a single man, and

therefore is eligible to Holy Orders; if he is otherwise capable, his previous marriage is not an obstacle to his becoming a priest, unless he was married and widowed twice. Then a dispensation from the Holy See is required.

**Catholic Priests Who are Married.** Are there any married priests in the Catholic Church? Yes, several thousands. They are really married, and they are not living in opposition to God's or the Church's law. These are the clergy of several Eastern churches which are united to ours in faith and government, though differing from it in ritual and laws.

We shall not go into the details of the legislation of the separated Eastern churches—the schismatic sects which have a clergy and Mass and sacraments as we have, but which have cut themselves off from communion with Rome. In nearly all of these the pastors of parishes are married men—the members of the religious orders are not; while the bishops are also generally unmarried.

In nearly all the Eastern churches which are in communion with the Holy See, marriage before receiving diaconship is not an obstacle to that or the succeeding orders; but marriage is not allowed afterwards. If the candidate is not married he is ordained only on condition of making a promise of perpetual chastity. If the wife of a priest dies, he is not permitted to remarry in some Churches; while in others his second marriage is considered valid, but necessitates his retirement from priestly duties.

The result of these long-established customs in the Eastern Catholic Churches is that the candidate for Holy Orders, before receiving diaconship, usually withdraws from the seminary and is married—after which he returns, resumes his studies, and is finally ordained. In recent years in the United States and Canada only celibates may be promoted to sacred orders.

**The Reasons for Celibacy.** Why is it that the Church has sought to make at least the priests of the Latin rite observe the rule of celibacy? Because the value of the priest's ministry is

thereby enhanced. He is giving a practical lesson in disinterestedness and self-sacrifice. He has given up the things of the world which are most highly valued by men—the love of wife and children—that he may be the better able to devote himself to the salvation of souls. He has no earthly ties that might conflict with his duty to his spiritual flock. The burden which rests on the sinner's soul may be freely revealed to him without fear that the secret will be shared with the confessor's wife. Pestilence has no terrors for the unmarried priest—he has no family to whom the contagion might be transmitted; and so, when the call comes summoning him to administer to the diseased, he has no fear. He is risking nothing but his own life, and that he has already consecrated to God. And when the quest for souls leads him into distant pagan lands he has an advantage over the married missionary. He takes no family with him, to be an encumbrance in his work, to require support and shelter in his field of labor; he leaves no wife and children behind him whose welfare would be a source of anxiety while he is far from them. If death comes in the course of his work, whether by accident or disease or martyrdom, the unmarried priest need not care; he has no worldly ties to lessen his peace of soul—no dependents whose future well-being would be affected by his living or dying.

**Difficult Not Impossible.** Is not this law difficult of observance, since it is opposed to a primary function and instinct of man's nature? Is it not impossible to bind the clergy by such a rule without leading to sins and irregularities immeasurably worse than honorable marriage would be?

These are questions which non-Catholics of an inquiring mind will frequently ask. We answer to the first question, that it is assuredly difficult. To observe the law of priestly celibacy requires a strong will, a divine vocation, a spirit of self-sacrifice, great watchfulness, frequent and fervent prayer, and God's grace. But only the difficult things obtain much merit or deserve much reward.

To the second question we answer decidedly, No. It is not

impossible nor even impracticable to bind the clergy to the unmarried state and to keep them pure and decent. We do not attempt to deny that abuses and scandals have arisen—that in some lands and in some epochs there have even been many lapses from virtue on the part of priests. Some countries have been worse than others—discipline has sometimes been relaxed, ecclesiastical training has sometimes been neglected, luxury and avarice have occasionally led to the preferment of the unworthy, and worse vices have naturally followed in their train. But we affirm most emphatically that the history of our Church shows that by far the greater part of her clergy have been faithful to their obligations, models of priestly virtue, ornaments of the mystical Body of Christ. The priests of Ireland, Germany, France and Belgium and those who have done God's work in our own land have been worthy of all praise, faithful to their holy vocation. There have been exceptions, we know; but they have been few and far between; and when scandals have arisen, the very sensation which they produced demonstrated their infrequency.

What a grand testimony is given by the apostate Renan to the virtue of the clergy who were his instructors in his boyhood and youth. "I spent thirteen years of my life under the care of priests, and I never saw the shadow of a scandal. I have known no priests but good priests."

Thank God, most of us can say the same.

## 8. THE CEREMONIES OF MATRIMONY

Our holy Church uses a very beautiful and appropriate ritual when she blesses the matrimonial union of two of her children. The ceremonies with which the Sacrament of Matrimony is administered express the solemnity of the contract by which the man and woman bind themselves, and the holiness of the sacrament which they receive.

**The Ceremonies of a Marriage.** Although the Church recommends most strongly that the Sacrament of Matrimony

shall be received at Mass and shall be accompanied by the giving of the Nuptial Blessing, a marriage may be performed apart from Mass and even in some other place than a church. We shall, therefore, describe briefly the ceremonies employed in the actual administration of this sacrament, whether at Mass or not, and afterward we shall explain in detail the beautiful ritual which is used at the solemn celebration of a marriage at a Nuptial Mass.

A marriage is a very simple ceremony. It consists essentially in the expression of mutual consent by the parties to take each other as man and wife. This is followed by the blessing of their union and the ceremony of the ring.

At a marriage of two Catholics the parties, attended by two witnesses, appear before the priest, who wears a surplice and a white stole if no Mass is to be said. If the Nuptial Mass is to follow the marriage ceremony, he is vested for it, except that he does not wear the maniple during the marriage rite.

**The Expressing of Consent.** The priest first asks the consent of the parties. Addressing the man by name, he says, in English: "Wilt thou take . . . , here present, for thy lawful wife, according to the rite of our holy Mother the Church?" To which the answer is given aloud, "I will." The same question is put to the bride: "Wilt thou take . . . , here present, for thy lawful husband, etc.," to which the same answer is given by her. Then, at the bidding of the priest, they join their right hands.

In many places it is the custom for the parties to pledge themselves to each other formally by repeating certain words after the priest. This is not essential, as the consent of both has been sufficiently manifested already; but the solemn repetition of the mutual obligations which they are assuming adds to the impressiveness of the ceremony. The words used for this purpose are not defined in the Church's ritual, and vary considerably in different countries and different languages. The following is the form generally used by us:

"I, N. N., take thee, N. N., for my lawful wife (or husband),

to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part." Indeed, these are solemn and impressive words! Very beautiful also is the formula usually employed by those speaking French: "I take you, N., for my wife (or husband), and my lawful spouse; and I swear to you that I will be a faithful husband (or wife), and that I will assist you with all my power in all your necessities, so long as it shall please God to leave us together."

Then the priest, in Latin, pronounces the words by which the marriage is blessed: "I join you together in marriage, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost"—and while saying this he makes over the couple the sign of the cross, and then sprinkles them with holy water.

**The Giving of the Ring.** The blessing of the wedding ring comes next. The priest recites in Latin the following beautiful prayer: "Bless, O Lord, this ring which we bless in Thy name, that she who is to wear it, keeping true faith unto her husband, may abide in Thy peace and in obedience unto Thy will, and ever live in mutual love. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." Holy water is sprinkled over the ring, and the bridegroom then places it on the third finger of the left hand of the bride, saying in old fashioned English, which has come down to us from past centuries: "With this ring I thee wed, and I plight unto thee my troth." In other lands and tongues the words are different. The French formula is: "My spouse, I give you this ring in token of marriage."

The priest then recites certain versicles and the Our Father; and it is usual for the married couple to recite this latter prayer also. A final prayer is said, asking God's protection for those whose union has been sanctified by the Church. "Look down, we beseech Thee, O Lord, upon these Thy servants, and graciously protect Thy institutions whereby Thou hast provided for the propagation of mankind; that those who are joined together by Thy authority may be preserved by Thy help. Through Christ our Lord. Amen."

**The Nuptial Mass.** It is the desire of our Church that the Sacrament of Matrimony shall be administered, in every possible case, in connection with the Sacrifice of the Mass. The graces needed in the married state are so many that every available means should be taken to obtain them. The Church bestows these graces not only through the Sacrament of Matrimony itself, but also through the Holy Mass which is celebrated for the special benefit of the married couple, and through the solemn blessing which is pronounced over them.

As early as the second century we find traces of this practice. St. Evaristus, Pope and martyr, decreed that "in accordance with apostolic tradition marriage should be celebrated publicly and with the blessing of the priest"; and in the third century marriage with a Mass was common.

The Nuptial Mass is filled with special prayers invoking the blessing of the Almighty on those who are entering the married state. It may be said during the greater part of the year. On the most important festivals the Mass of the feast is said instead, with a commemoration of the Nuptial Mass.

The long established law of the so-called "closed times" has been greatly changed by modern legislation. Formerly a marriage Mass was not allowed from the beginning of Advent till after Epiphany, and during Lent and Easter week. The present Canon law forbids the giving of the Solemn Nuptial Blessing during Advent and on Christmas Day, and during Lent and on Easter Sunday. The Nuptial Mass is forbidden at the same times, unless the bishop, for a just cause, gives permission for the blessing, in which case the Nuptial Mass is said or commemorated. If at the time of a marriage the solemn blessing is impeded, it may be given afterward and the Nuptial Mass may then be said or commemorated when the rubrics allow it. This is especially recommended for persons who validly contracted marriage before their conversion.

The Nuptial Mass is filled with beautiful quotations from the Scriptures, expressing the dignity and holiness of the matrimonial union. The Introit is taken partly from the Bible

narrative of Tobias and his bride. The collect or prayer of the Mass asks that "what is performed by our ministry may be abundantly filled with God's blessings." The Epistle is very appropriately taken from the teaching of St. Paul to the Ephesians: "Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord; because the husband is the head of the wife"—a teaching not precisely in harmony with the spirit of our twentieth century. The Gospel is that in which our Lord declared the indissoluble character of matrimony. "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

And so it is through the whole Mass. All the parts which admit of change are adapted to the spirit of the ceremony, expressing the sanctity of marriage and invoking God's blessing upon those who are contracting it.

**The Nuptial Blessing.** After the Pater Noster of the Mass, the priest turns and faces the married couple, and imparts to them the solemn Nuptial Blessing. This is directed rather to the woman than to the man, and is given to her only once. Consequently, if it has been received by the bride at a previous marriage, it is omitted at a subsequent one; and if a marriage takes place without a Mass, it is not given without a dispensation.

It consists in the invoking of God's grace upon the union which has just been made; and the prayer goes on thus: "May her wedlock be to her a yoke of love and peace. May she marry in Christ, faithful and chaste, and be an imitator of holy women. May she be amiable to her husband, like Rachel; wise, like Rebecca; long-lived and faithful, like Sarah. . . . May she be fruitful in offspring, approved and innocent. May she attain to the repose of the blessed in heaven; and may they both see their children's children, even to the third and fourth generations, and arrive at their desired old age. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Near the end of the Mass, just before the usual blessing, the priest turns to the married couple and prays that they may enjoy fruitfulness, peace and everlasting happiness. Holy water



is then sprinkled upon them, and the Mass concludes as usual.

Such is the Nuptial Mass, established as a means of grace for the Church's children who are entering into the married state. It is not necessary to have an ostentatious celebration when a marriage takes place; but the marriage in the church, with a Mass, with the Nuptial Blessing and with the reception of Holy Communion by the parties, should never be omitted except for the gravest reasons. The Catholic man and woman who wish their married life to be happy and blessed by God should never be tempted to deny themselves the graces which will be obtained through the beautiful ceremonial which the Church has authorized for the solemnizing of Christian marriage.

## 9. THE MARRIAGE LAWS

By natural law, marriage is a contract, and by divine law for those baptized a Sacrament. The primary purpose of marriage is the generation and education of children; the secondary purposes are the cultivation of mutual love and the quieting of concupiscence. The two essential qualities of this union are unity and permanence.

In order to safeguard these essential notions of the marriage state, the Church has laid down a list of impediments which affect the status of a marriage. Some of these arise from the natural law, some from the divine positive law, others from the authority of the Church.

Since Christ left to His Church complete jurisdiction over all baptized Christians, she has the supreme power to legislate concerning their marriages. When her laws in this respect explain the provisions of the natural divine law itself, even unbaptized persons are bound to observe them. Marriage between baptized persons is a Sacrament, and therefore it falls under her authority.

**The Power of the State.** Has the State any right to nullify marriages? None whatever. It has the right to regulate them—for instance, to require the obtaining of a license and the subsequent registration of the marriage—and it can lawfully inflict penalties for the non-observance of these rules; but it has no right and no power to annul a valid marriage. And so the divorce mill that grinds so merrily at Reno and that works almost as freely elsewhere in our land is a feature of our laws that has no justification whatever.

**The Kinds of Impediments.** We shall now consider the impediments to this sacramental contract. As said above, some of them exist because of the natural law or the revealed law of God, some because the Church has so ruled. Impediments are of two kinds. Some render a marriage merely unlawful, but do not affect its validity; these are called *hindering impediments*. Others render it absolutely null, and are known as *diriment* or *destroying impediments*. The details of the law in regard to both of these classes has been considerably changed by the code of Canon Law, in effect at Pentecost, 1918, and they may be summarized as follows:

**The Hindering Impediments.** Those, which merely impede the marriage but do not affect its validity, are:

1. A *simple vow* of virginity, of perfect chastity, of not marrying, of receiving Sacred Orders, or of entering the religious state.

2. *Mixed religion*, which is the marriage of a Catholic with a baptized non-Catholic. This is valid if performed by proper authority, but requires a dispensation, which is given only when the non-Catholic party has signed a promise not to interfere with the religion of the Catholic, and to permit the children to be reared in the Catholic faith.

3. *Legal relationship*, resulting from adoption. This renders a marriage illegal when such marriage is considered unlawful under the civil law of the place.

**The Diriment Impediments.** The impediments that render a marriage altogether invalid (unless a dispensation be given

by the Church, which is possible only in certain cases) are as follows:

1. A *solemn vow* of chastity, or Sacred Orders. Such a vow is one that is made publicly and for life in a regular constituted religious community where such vows are administered, or at the reception of Holy Orders. The rule of the Church requiring celibacy for her clergy in Sacred Orders throughout the greater part of the world is explained elsewhere in this book, in the section on Celibacy of the Clergy.

A simple vow of chastity may also be a diriment impediment if made in a religious community which has received apostolic permission to that effect.

2. *Consanguinity*. By natural law, marriages are forbidden in the direct line of descent; that is, a man cannot marry a woman from whom he is descended, or who is descended from him. For such relationships no dispensation can be given. And a man cannot marry what are called collateral relatives—his sister, cousin, niece, aunt, etc., as far as the third degree inclusively, which means second cousins. (Until the promulgation of the code, this impediment extended to third cousins.) As regards dispensations for these collateral relationships, none can be given for the first degree—brother and sister; for this is forbidden by the natural law. Cousins are of the second degree; second cousins are of the third degree; and for these relationships dispensations may be granted by the Church.

3. *Adoption*, or legal relationship, is a diriment impediment only in the case where the proposed marriage is *invalid* according to the civil law of the place. Dispensations may be given, when necessary, from this form of impediment.

4. *Spiritual relationship* results only in connection with the Sacrament of Baptism, and has been considerably modified by the code of Canon Law. Without dispensation, a sponsor at baptism cannot marry his or her god-child; and the one who administers private baptism cannot marry the person baptized. This impediment no longer exists in regard to the Sacrament of Confirmation.

5. *Affinity*. This is an impediment that prevents a valid marriage, unless by dispensation, with certain blood relatives of a previous wife or husband, even though the parties had never lived together as husband and wife. Under the new code this impediment includes all degrees of the direct line of descent; but in collateral relationship it now extends to the second degree only, or as far as first cousin, aunt or niece.

6. *Crime*. This means for example, a conspiracy between a wife and a man, resulting in the murder of the woman's husband, with the intention that the guilty parties may subsequently marry; or adultery with the same expressed intention of marrying after the husband's death; or a combination of both crimes for the same end. These are gruesome details of human wickedness—but such things have happened. Any of these crimes, committed with the expressed intention of subsequent marriage, is a diriment impediment to matrimony.

7. *Difference of worship* (in Latin, *disparitas cultus*) signifies that one party is a Catholic and the other is unbaptized. Unless by dispensation, such a marriage is null.

8. A *previous marriage* prevents another marriage until the death of the former husband or wife has been legally attested and is morally certain.

In connection with this matter, it will be well to explain here what is meant by the "Pauline privilege." It is based on the words of St. Paul in his first Epistle to the Corinthians: "If one of the brethren hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And if any woman hath a husband that believeth not, and he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not put away her husband. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart; for a brother or sister is not under bond in such cases." (I Cor 7, 12-15).

This privilege consists in the dissolution of a marriage which was contracted by two parties, neither of whom was then a Christian, but one of whom was afterward baptized in the Catholic faith. If the other remains in unbelief, and is unwilling to dwell peacefully with the Christian, the marriage is dissolved by the fact of a subsequent Christian marriage.

Can a lawful marriage be otherwise dissolved? Yes; a marriage of baptized persons, or of a baptized person to an unbaptized, that has been lawfully performed, but has not been consummated, may be dissolved by a solemn religious profession or by a dispensation granted for just cause by the Holy See at the request of both parties, or of one party if the other be unwilling. But a consummated valid marriage between Christians is not dissolved by any power on earth, neither by civil authority nor by the authority of the Church. Death alone can dissolve this bond.

9. *Extreme youth* is an impediment to matrimony. The present rule of the Church is, for boys, that they cannot validly marry until they have completed their sixteenth year, and for girls, their fourteenth year. Until the issuing of the new code, the ages were fourteen and twelve respectively.

10. *Physical impotency* (not sterility), incurable and existing before the attempted marriage, renders it null.

11. *Violence*, the forcible carrying off or detention of a woman, against her will, renders a marriage invalid so long as she remains in the power of the aggressor.

12. *Public propriety*. According to the new code, if a man has contracted an invalid marriage with a woman, or has lived with her in public and notorious concubinage, there is a diriment impediment between him and any of her relatives in the first and second degrees of the direct line, and between her and any of his relatives in the same degree.

**Proper Consent.** Because marriage is a contract and the essence of every contract is the contractual will, it follows that matrimonial consent is the essence of marriage. This consent must be free (without coercion); true (not pretended, not fraudulently given), mutual (given by both parties); and rational (exchanged by those possessing the use of reason and a sufficient knowledge of the nature of marriage).

Therefore, error regarding the identity of the person one intends to marry voids marriage even by natural law. Error regarding the quality of the person invalidates marriage if

the mistake amounts to an error about the person or if the other party is a slave. All other errors concerning the qualities of the other person do not invalidate marriage not even if the error is the cause of the marriage.

Fear which so disturbs the mind as to suppress the use of reason would also destroy the consent which is necessary for validly contracting marriage. This fear must be grave; it must be provoked by an outside agent; it must be unjustly provoked.

Another obstacle to the necessary consent for a valid marriage is present if one or both parties enter into the union with an intention which destroys the principal purpose of marriage—the generation and education of children.

The Church also requires that the publication of banns shall precede the marriage of Catholics, unless a dispensation from them is obtained. Three publications, on different Sundays or holydays and at public services of the Church, are ordinarily required; and unless for special reasons, a marriage should not take place until at least three days after the last publication of the banns. If either of the parties, after arriving at a marriageable age, has lived for six months or more in a place different from that in which the marriage is to occur, the bishop may require the publication of the banns also in that place of former residence.

**The Canonical Form of Marriage.** Not only must marrying parties be free from all impediments, they must also observe the form of marriage which is demanded by the law of the Church. This law states that those marriages only are valid which are contracted in the presence of the pastor of the place in which the ceremony is performed, or in the presence of the local bishop, or in the presence of a priest delegated by either. There must also be present two witnesses.

This requirement was first legislated by the Council of Trent (1554), in a document called *Tametsi*. There were some places, however, where this decree was not promulgated—including a great portion of what is now the United States. Hence, in those places marriage could be contracted validly

but not licitly without the presence of a priest. On April 19, 1908, St. Pius X by the decree *Ne Temere* made it obligatory for Catholics throughout the world to contract marriage under pain of invalidity before an authorized priest and two witnesses. This form is required also in cases of mixed marriages. The Code of Canon Law retains the discipline of the *Ne Temere*.

**The Subjects of the Law.** The canonical form of marriage is binding upon the following:

- (a) Catholics by baptism or conversion when marrying among themselves;
- (b) Catholics who marry non-Catholics even after they have received a dispensation for the mixed marriage;
- (c) Eastern Catholics, as often as they marry Catholics of the Latin rite; and
- (d) by *Motu proprio* of Pius XII, effective January 1, 1949, one even though born of non-Catholics, himself baptized a Catholic but reared otherwise from infancy, when marrying a non-Catholic.

A Catholic, therefore, who would attempt marriage before a civil magistrate contracts no marriage at all. Moreover, a Catholic who goes through this ceremony before a non-Catholic minister incurs excommunication reserved to the bishop. However, non-Catholics contracting marriage among themselves are exempt from the law and their marriages are valid if contracted before a magistrate or minister, unless there were present also some nullifying impediment.

**The Proper Pastor.** One would think, for instance, that a Catholic priest would be able to marry a couple validly anywhere in his own diocese. He cannot. He may perform the ceremony only in his own parish; and if he should attempt to do so outside of its limits without the permission of the pastor or bishop of that place, there would be no marriage.

Suppose that a priest in his own parish or a bishop in his own diocese should join in marriage a couple who do not

reside therein. It will be a valid marriage, but is illicit if it infringes on the rights of the pastor of the parties.

What is to be said of the right and power of an assistant priest, a curate, to officiate at marriages? He acts only as the pastor's delegate. This delegation, however, is taken for granted from the fact that he is appointed an assistant in the care of souls.

**One's Own Parish.** What is required that a person shall belong to a certain parish? If he or she has a real domicile, a residence therein with the intention of remaining, or has dwelt within its limits for at least a month, the party is considered as belonging to that parish.

When the parties reside in different parishes, the marriage is celebrated in the parish of the bride, unless some sufficient reason excuses from the rule.

If the persons have no fixed abode, the parish priest must refer the matter to the bishop, except in the case of necessity, and receive permission to officiate at the ceremony. Any pastor in his parish or any bishop in his diocese may give permission to another to perform a marriage.

**Marriage Without a Priest.** The Sacrament of Matrimony differs from all other Sacraments in one important feature. In all the others, the Sacrament is administered by a person (bishop, priest or layman, as the case may be) to another, and the person who performs the sacramental rite is called the minister of the Sacrament. In matrimony, the parties who marry are themselves the ministers of the Sacrament. By their expressed mutual consent they marry themselves. The officiating priest sanctions their union in the name of the Church and bestows her benediction upon it, but does not marry the parties.

As this sanction and benediction are not essential to the Sacrament, they may be omitted altogether under certain conditions without affecting the validity or lawfulness of the marriage. This is indicated in a striking provision of the law. If a couple wish to marry in a locality where for a month there



will be no priest qualified to join them in matrimony, they may simply express their mutual consent to be man and wife in the presence of two witnesses, and they are thereby validly and lawfully united in Catholic marriage.

It is required that afterwards, if an opportunity presents itself, they shall see that the marriage is properly recorded, and shall have the ritual prayers read over them—without, however, any necessity of renewing their consent. They are also advised to receive the nuptial blessing at a marriage Mass; but their lawful marriage dates from the moment when they stood in the presence of witnesses and took each other as man and wife.

By the code of Canon Law, the same thing may be done when there is danger of death, even when there is no such expected delay in the coming of the priest who has the power to marry the parties. If another priest, even without jurisdiction, can be procured, he may officiate in such a case; but his presence is not necessary for the valid and lawful reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

**The Registering of Marriages.** It is the strict duty of the parish priest to inscribe the record of the marriage immediately in the parish register, giving all essential details. If the parties were baptized in the parish where the marriage takes place, an entry must be made also in the register of baptisms, testifying to the marriage; or if either or both were baptized elsewhere, a notification of their marriage must be sent to the parish or parishes where the baptisms occurred, that it may be registered beside the record of each baptism. Hence it is necessary that persons who are to be married shall know where they were baptized.

These are the essential features, and they reveal in a most eminent degree the wisdom of the Church's legislators and the zeal and vigilance of the Holy See for the safeguarding of the contract which joins a Catholic man and woman in sacramental union "for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do them part."

## 10. THE BLESSING AFTER CHILDBIRTH

The Church has instituted a ceremony of thanksgiving by which mothers may express their gratitude to God for the blessing conferred upon them in their motherhood, and may receive the solemn benediction of the Church when they enter God's temple for the first time after that blessing has been given to them.

This ceremony is generally known as "churching," but the ritual calls it "the blessing of a woman after childbirth." Churching would seem to imply that permission is given to the woman to enter the church—whereas no such permission is necessary; and the longer title is really the more correct.

**Different from the Jewish Rite.** While this blessing was undoubtedly suggested by the rite of legal purification prescribed by the Jewish law, it differs essentially from the latter. The Jewish rite was based on the idea of legal defilement. The sufferings of motherhood were looked upon as a part of the penalty imposed on Eve and all her daughters. "I will multiply thy sorrows and thy conceptions; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children." And so, during the centuries from Eve to Mary, the noble function of motherhood was considered as necessarily associated with guilt. On this account, when the liturgical law of the Jews was formulated by Moses, a solemn ceremony was prescribed for the removing of the "legal defilement" resulting from the bearing of a child.

It must be understood, however, that the Jews did not consider that there was any stain of sin on the mother. Legal defilement was not sin. It was merely a restriction imposed by law, requiring the woman to comply with certain conditions before she would be allowed to take part in the public worship of God, on account of the fact that she had been subjected to the penalty inflicted on our mother Eve.

But with the coming of our second mother, Mary, woman-kind was elevated and ennobled. Sin had entered into the world through a woman; redemption from sin came through a

woman also; and motherhood, although still a painful ordeal, was no longer looked upon as a penalty. It became truly honorable, calling for thanksgiving instead of purification.

**The Origin of the Blessing.** Our Blessed Mother Mary, in her humility and her obedience to the laws of her religion, submitted to the Jewish rite of purification after she had given birth to the Redeemer of the world. In imitation of her it became customary in early Christian times for women to abstain from entering the church for a certain time after God had blessed them with offspring. They then sought the blessing of the priest at the door of the church before entering, and made their first visit as an act of thanksgiving for their safe delivery. The exact time when this pious custom originated is not known; but it is of very ancient date, and has been traced back to the fourth century, shortly after the Council of Nice.

**Who Should Receive It?** The Church does not wish that this beautiful blessing should be given to all mothers indiscriminately. It is for honorable motherhood only. The bearing of an illegitimate child is not an occasion for thanksgiving, and therefore only those mothers whose children are born in lawful wedlock can claim this benediction of the Church. It may be given to a mother whose child has died without baptism, because even then she has great reason for thanking God for her own preservation.

It must be distinctly understood that there is no obligation to receive this blessing. It would not be even a venial sin to omit it. On one or two occasions certain bishops and provincial councils tried to impose an obligation regarding churching, but the Holy See refused to sanction the innovation.

**How the Blessing is Given.** The ceremony must take place at a church, although it need not be the parish church to which the woman belongs; but there is a certain propriety in receiving this blessing in one's own church, with the pastor or his representative as the officiating priest, in the presence of the congregation of which she is a member.

This blessing is never given outside the church. Even in the

case of a mother who is in danger of death, it would not be allowable to infringe on this rule, because since there is no obligation to receive it there can be no sin in omitting it. But when Mass is said in a building which is not a church, the blessing may be given there.

**The Ceremonies and Prayers.** The ritual directs that the ceremony should begin at the door of the church, where the woman kneels, holding in her hand a lighted candle; but it has become customary to perform this part of it at the altar rail. The priest, vested in a surplice and white stole and accompanied by an acolyte, sprinkles the woman with holy water and recites the twenty-third Psalm: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof," with the antiphon: "She shall receive a blessing from the Lord, and mercy from God her salvation; because this is the generation of those who seek the Lord."

The priest then extends the end of his stole, which the woman takes in her hand, to denote that she is being led into the church by him to offer thanks to God. The priest says: "Enter into the temple of God, and adore the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Who has given thee fruitfulness"; and it is customary for the woman to kiss the priest's stole. Then, while she prays silently in thanksgiving for God's blessings, the "Kyrie eleison" and the "Our Father" are said by the priest, followed by several short verses. And finally a beautiful prayer is recited as follows: "Almighty, eternal God, Who through the delivery of the Blessed Virgin Mary hast turned the childbirth pains of Thy faithful into joy, look kindly on this Thy handmaid, who has come to Thy temple joyfully for thanksgiving; and grant that after this life, by the merits and intercession of the same Blessed Mary, she and her offspring may deserve to attain to the joys of eternal blessedness. Through Christ our Lord, Amen."

The woman is then sprinkled with holy water and is solemnly blessed with the words: "May peace and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father and Son and Holy Ghost, descend upon thee and remain forever. Amen."

The ceremony is in imitation of the Jewish rite to which Mary submitted, and at which she made the sacrificial offering of a pair of doves. It is therefore customary that when a Catholic woman wishes to express her gratitude for the favor which Almighty God has bestowed on her, she should make a suitable gift, according to her means, that thereby she may manifest her dependence on God's bounty and her thankfulness for all the favors which have been conferred upon her.

## Chapter Four

# The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

---

### 1. THE MASS

HOLY MASS is the very heart of Catholic worship. As the planets cluster around the sun, as the other Sacraments cluster around the Holy Eucharist, so do all the various kinds and types of Catholic prayer and ritual cluster around the sacrifice of the Mass. It is our supreme act of worship towards God, our Maker and Father. Through it we render Him our reverence and thanksgiving; through it we ask Him forgiveness of sin and fulfillment of our needs of body and soul. Nor do we ask alone, for in the Mass it is our Saviour Himself Who pleads for us.

“Christ entrusted this precious treasure to the Church that she might preserve it ‘until He come.’ (I Cor. 11, 26) He might have precisely determined this memorial rite of the Mass with all its actions and prayers; or again, He might have given the Mass to the Church, permitting her to surround it as a jewel with a worthy setting. This second course He actually followed. He gave to the Church only the essence of the Mass, allowing her to embellish it in the course of time with sacred ceremony and prayer. The Church, in truth, became the resourceful artist, giving this precious gem a magnificent setting. This labor of love is not yet completed, but will continue until the end of time.” \*

It is clear, then, that we cannot understand the prayers and actions of the Mass except in their historical development. In

\* *The Liturgy of The Mass*, by Pius Parsch. B. Herder Book Co. 1938, page 16.

the next few sections we shall consider some phases and dates and comments on the parts of the Mass as we have it today. Since our book treats of the externals of Catholic worship, we must pass over the theological aspects of the Holy Sacrifice. Here we will confine ourselves to an explanation of the meaning of the name of the Mass, the past and present customs and rules as to the time of offering it, the applying of its fruits to souls, and the various kinds of Masses that are celebrated at the present time.

**The Name of the Mass.** Why is the great Sacrifice of the Altar called the Mass? The English word is from the Latin *missa*, derived from the verb *mittere*, to send, and signifies "a dismissal." But why is it used as the name of the Sacrifice? Because in the ancient liturgy of the Church there were two solemn dismissals; first, that of the catechumens, those partly instructed and not yet baptized, after the Gospel and the sermon; and secondly, that of the faithful at the end of the Mass—still preserved in our Masses by the announcement "Ite, missa est,"—"Go, it is the dismissal"—just before the blessing and the last Gospel. The word for dismissal gradually came to denote the service from which these persons were dismissed. The French form, *messe*, was taken into England in Norman times, and was later modified into *Maesse*, *Masse*, and finally *Mass*.

In the early centuries of the Church it was known by various names—the Breaking of Bread, the Lord's Supper, the Solemnity of the Lord, the Sacrifice, the Holy Liturgy, and the Eucharist, which means Thanksgiving. In the Eastern Churches it is called The Sacred Liturgy.

**The Frequency of Celebration.** To us, who have Mass in our churches every day, and who know that priests usually offer the Holy Sacrifice daily, it may seem strange that it was not always thus. In the first centuries the bishops and priests celebrated together—one Mass, said by several. The only vestige of this practice that remains is in the Mass of Ordination, in which the newly ordained priests say Mass jointly with the bishop, though they do not partake of the same Host nor

of the Precious Blood. In those early times, then, there was usually only one Mass each day in a church; and this is the custom at the present day among the Greek and Oriental schismatics. In many parts of the world, in the first centuries, Mass was only celebrated on Sundays and great feasts; but as far back as the time of St. Augustine it began to be common to have at least one daily Mass in each church.

At the present time Mass may be said in our churches every day except on Good Friday, on which day the priest and faithful receive Holy Communion which was consecrated on Holy Thursday and reserved over night in the Repository.

Many centuries ago it was customary for the same celebrant to say more than one Mass if he wished to do so. Some priests said several daily. It is related that Pope Leo III, from a spirit of devotion, sometimes celebrated nine times in one day. But another Pope, Alexander II, restricted all priests to one Mass a day, although shortly afterwards it was tolerated to offer two Masses, one of the feast of the day and the other for the dead.

Others were led to devotion in quite an opposite direction. St. Thomas of Canterbury, from a spirit of humility, did not celebrate daily. Even St. Francis of Assisi wished to have it celebrated only once each day in the monasteries of his Order.

By the present law priests are prohibited from saying Mass more than once on any day, except Christmas and All Souls' Day, on which three may be said. Bishops, however, may allow their priests to "duplicate" or celebrate twice on Sunday and holydays of obligation if a considerable number of people would otherwise be unable to hear Mass; and our priests possess faculties, renewed yearly. Priests who attend to mission stations attached to their parish churches may, by special indult, celebrate Mass three times on Sundays and holydays of obligation, to accommodate the faithful.

When is a priest obliged to say Mass? He is not required by any law to celebrate daily. The great spiritual writers of recent centuries, such as St. Ignatius Loyola and St. Francis



de Sales, strongly urge priests to say Mass every day, and this may be called a common custom among our priests, at least when they are at home. A parish priest must say Mass or have it said whenever the people are bound to hear it. There are eighty-eight days of the year when resident bishops and pastors must offer Mass for the intention of their people. This Mass is called *Missa pro populo*.

**The Hour of Mass.** According to the ordinary law of the Church, Mass should not begin earlier than one hour before dawn, nor later than one hour after noon. At midnight on Christmas, however, Canon 821 permits parochial or conventual Mass in any church, and even allows the three Masses of Christmas in the chapels of religious houses where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.

During World War II, the Holy See permitted the celebration of Mass up to 7:30 in the evening for the armed forces and in certain civilian areas. By the Apostolic Constitution "Christus Dominus," effective January 16, 1953, Pope Pius XII granted to local Ordinaries, if the circumstances call for it as necessary, the right to permit Mass in the evening, but in such wise that the Mass shall not begin before four o'clock in the afternoon, on holy days of obligation still observed, on those which formerly were observed, on the first Friday of every month, and also on those days on which solemn celebrations are held, and also, in addition to these days, on one day in the week. In mission territories, the local Ordinaries can grant to the preachers of the Gospel faculties to celebrate evening Masses on other days of the week also.

**The Fruits of the Mass.** The Holy Sacrifice of the Altar is a sacrifice of adoration, praise and thanksgiving. It is also a sacrifice for propitiation and of petition—a means of obtaining all graces and blessings from God. It is offered always for certain persons—for those present in the church or residing in the parish, for the relatives and friends of the celebrant, for the members of the Church in general, and for the souls in Purga-

tory. According to theologians and spiritual writers, there is a threefold fruit of the Holy Sacrifice; namely, the general fruit, in which all the faithful participate—the more special fruit, which belongs to those for whom the priest intends to offer the Mass—and the most special fruit, for the priest himself.

In “saying Mass” for a person, then, the priest applies to him the “more special fruit” of the Sacrifice. The “general fruit” is given always to the whole Church, and the “most special fruit” is reserved to the priest himself.

**Intentions for Masses.** All bishops and priests having the care of souls are obliged to say Mass expressly for the benefit and intention of their people on Sundays and holydays of obligation, and on certain other days which are now merely feasts of devotion but which were once holydays.

Every priest who receives an alms or stipend for a Mass incurs a strict obligation to say it or to have it said. This offering is meant as an aid to the support of the priest. The amount is fixed by diocesan rule, and the priest may not ask more, though he may accept more. If he says two Masses in one day, he is allowed to receive an offering for one only, except on Christmas. All priests are urged not to keep on hand too many stipends for Masses, because thereby the offering of the Holy Sacrifice for the intention of the giver would be too long delayed. When they accumulate too rapidly, it is customary to give them to other priests less burdened with requests.

**The Kinds of Masses.** There are several kinds of Masses. The Solemn High Mass (in Latin *Missa Solemnis*) is celebrated with incense, music and the assistance of a deacon and subdeacon; the celebrant chants several parts of the Mass, and the deacon and subdeacon intone the Gospel and the Epistle respectively. A Pontifical Mass is a Solemn Mass celebrated by a bishop, and a Papal Mass is that celebrated by the Pope.

A High Mass (in Latin *Missa Cantata* or Chanted Mass) is one that is sung by a priest without deacon or subdeacon.

A Low Mass is one that is celebrated without music, the priest reading the words throughout. This type of Mass was unknown

in the early centuries of the Church, although now it is said more frequently than any other. It is sometimes called a Private Mass, although that name belongs more properly to a Mass said by a priest mostly for his own devotion and not for the benefit of a parish or congregation. For a Low Mass it is necessary to have a server or acolyte.

A Parochial Mass is the principal Mass offered in a parish church on Sundays and great festivals. It is the "assembly of the faithful in which they offer public prayers and sacrifice by the ministry of their pastor."

A Capitular Mass is the High Mass on Sundays and festivals in Catholic countries in churches that are served by a *chapter* or body of canons, whose principal duty is the recitation of the Divine Office. A Conventual Mass is the daily Mass said for the chapter of canons, or for some Religious Communities taking place at a fixed hour after the chanting of a part of the Office.

A Votive Mass is one which does not correspond to the office of the day, but is said at the choice of the priest, and is permitted only on certain days. For instance, on many days of minor importance in the Church's calendar, the priest may omit the Mass of the day and say instead a Mass of the Holy Ghost, of the Sacred Heart, of the Blessed Virgin, or some other, according to his own devotion or the request of the giver of the offering for the Mass.

A Requiem Mass is a Mass for the dead, said in black vestments. It may be a Solemn Mass, a High Mass or a Low Mass. It is called a Requiem Mass from the opening words of the Introit: *Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine*—"Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord." \*

The Dialogue Mass (*Missa Recitata*) is a Low Mass at which the responses ordinarily made by the server are spoken aloud by the congregation in chorus. The people sometimes recite the Gloria, the Creed, etc., as well. Permission of the bishop is necessary to introduce this practice.

\* See the section of this chapter entitled, *The Requiem Mass*, p. 154.

**2. THE MASS OF THE CATECHUMENS**

From the earliest years of Christianity the Mass was divided into two distinct parts, called respectively the Mass of the Catechumens and the Mass of the Faithful. The very names of the parts indicate a special purpose and relationship. The Catechumens were converts from paganism or from heresy who were under instructions for reception into the Church, and who, according to the discipline of the time, were not admitted to the Holy Sacrifice proper until after their Baptism. Therefore, when the instructions and preparatory prayers were finished they were called upon to leave. The second part of the Mass is the true liturgical offering of Christ's sacrifice. Only those who had received the gift of faith in Baptism were formerly allowed to attend. It was the real Mass and was only for the members of Christ to be present and actually participate in it.

"The Mass is an interchange of gifts; we give to God and God gives to us. This double motive is the basis of the entire Mass-structure. It determines the division into two parts of both the Mass of the Catechumens and the Mass of the Faithful. In the Mass of the Catechumens we first give to God, in the prayer-part, and then God gives to us, in the instruction-part. Likewise in the Mass of the Faithful, the sacrifice-oblation is our gift to God, while the sacrifice-banquet is God's gift to us. In both cases the interchange is effected through our intimate union with Christ who is both God and Man, according to the ever-recurring phrase: *Per Christum Dominum nostrum*, "Through Christ Our Lord." \* The Mass of the Catechumens ends with the Gospel (or with the Creed when it is said) and the Mass of the Faithful begins with the *Dominus vobiscum* of the Offertory. The sacrifice-oblation runs from there to the Pater Noster. The sacrifice-banquet begins with the introduction to the Pater Noster and continues to the end of Mass.

\* *The Mass-Drama*, by W. Busch. The Liturgical Press, 2nd Ed. 1933.

In this and the following sections we shall see how the various parts of the Mass have been developed and modified during the nineteen centuries of the Church's history. There is not much in the New Testament to tell us of the ceremonies of the Mass among the first Christians. Nearly all of them, at first, were of the Jewish race, and at their assemblies they undoubtedly did as they had been accustomed to do in the solemn ritual of Israel. There were readings from the holy books and from the letters (or Epistles) of the Apostle Paul; sermons were preached and explanations of Christian teaching were given; psalms and hymns were sung; prayers were said publicly for "the brethren" and for others; and collections of alms were made for the poor. The Christians of apostolic times were required to make their offerings on Sundays, even as we of this later day. Such were the elements of what was called in those times the Communion, which we now call the Mass; and this service was usually held on Sunday, the first day of the week, instead of on Saturday, thereby distinguishing it from the Jewish worship of the temple and synagogue.

The people prayed standing, with uplifted hands. The men had their heads uncovered, the women were veiled. There was a "kiss of peace" and a public profession of faith—details which have endured even to our day, for the kiss of peace is given at Solemn Masses, and the Creed, said at many Masses, is the formula by which our faith is declared.

**The First Prayers and the Introit.** Let us now take up the various important parts of the great Sacrifice and indicate briefly the origin of each. The prayers said by the priest at the foot of the altar are the latest part of all. They were, in the Middle Ages, merely a private preparation for Mass, made by the priest before he approached the altar, and expressive of his trust in God and his consciousness of his own unworthiness. It became a recognized part of the Mass only when the Missal was revised by St. Pius V in 1570.

The Introit, the first matter read by the priest when he goes

up to the altar, was originally a processional psalm chanted as the celebrant and his attendants entered the sanctuary. Later on, when this chanting was no longer used, the first verse only was retained and became a part of the Mass. It varies from day to day, and nearly all the Introits of the older feasts go back to St. Gregory the Great.

**The Incensing and the Kyrie.** The offering of incense in sacrifices was common both in pagan and Jewish worship, and its use in Christian rites goes back almost to the beginning of the Church. It was used at the tombs in the catacombs, in processions, and (somewhat later) at the altar. St. Ambrose, writing in the year 397, speaks of it as in use at the Mass; and not long afterward suitable prayers were assigned for the incensings. The Roman rite permits it only at Solemn Masses and, with the bishop's permission, at ordinary High Masses.

The *Kyrie eleison* ("Lord, have mercy") is Greek, and is the only formula in that language that is used in our Latin Mass. However, it does not go back to the time when Mass was celebrated only in Greek—namely, the first and second centuries. It came into use in the East, and is a fragment of a kind of litany which was recited by all present. The words *Kyrie eleison* are now said alternately by the priest and the server, three times in honor of God the Father; the *Christe eleison* likewise three times in honor of God the Son; and the *Kyrie eleison* again three times, to God the Holy Ghost—the whole thus forming a beautiful prayer to the Blessed Trinity.

**The Gloria.** This sublime canticle of praise, known also as the Angelic Hymn and as the Greater Doxology, is a translation of a very old Greek hymn. It was originally a morning prayer, addressed to the Trinity. It began to be used in church services at an early date; by some its introduction is attributed to Pope Telesphorus, about the year 130. It was at first sung on Christmas Day only, being an amplified form of the song of the angels at Bethlehem. Later it was extended to other days, to feasts of joy only. Up to the eleventh century it could be used by bishops only, except at

Easter. It is said in nearly all Masses except those expressive of sorrow or penance—being omitted in votive Masses, however, excepting that of the Angels.

**The Collects.** These are the prayers said or sung immediately after the Gloria. They are distinguished by their terseness and rhythm in the Latin. The origin of the designation *collecta* is obscure, but their history goes back many centuries; the ancient Ritual known as the Leonine Sacramentary contains many of those we now use. They express man's dependence on God, with petitions for help and security. The collect proper to a given feast day appears also in the Divine Office for that day, and is thus repeated many times by the priest. The number of collects in the Mass is governed by the concurrence of feast days. The collects are recited by the priest while standing with uplifted hands, the ancient attitude of prayer.

**The Epistle.** We use this name for the reading that takes place in our Mass shortly before the Gospel; but the word is sometimes inaccurate, for this reading is not always from the Epistles of the New Testament. Quite frequently it is taken from other parts of the Bible, such as the books of Exodus or Wisdom, the Acts of the Apostles, etc. As stated already, Epistles were read at the Mass in the days of the Apostles.

Between the Epistle and the Gospel come short readings, varying according to the day and the season of the year. These are the Gradual, Alleluia, Tract and Sequence. They were originally psalms, sung as part of the sacred service, and after a time were shortened to a few verses in most cases. The Gradual takes its name from the word "gradus," meaning an elevated step, because in the Middle Ages a chanter intoned the first verse of the psalm from one of the steps of the *ambo*, or pulpit.

**The Sequences.** The Sequences, medieval hymns, were once very numerous, but the reformers of the Missal at the time of the Council of Trent abolished all but five of them. These five are among the most perfect specimens of Latin poetry. That of Easter, *Victimae Paschali*, was written by a

priest named Wipo, about 1048, and was possibly at first a part of a mystery play depicting our Lord's Resurrection.

The great Dominican St. Thomas Aquinas, in 1274, composed a complete Office for the new feast of Corpus Christi, including the Sequence *Lauda Sion, Salvatorem* ("Praise the Saviour, O Sion"). The *Stabat Mater Dolorosa* was probably written about 1306, by a certain Jacopone da Todi. It is used as a Sequence on the two feasts of the Seven Dolors, and has furnished the text for several great musical compositions, notably that of Rossini. The *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*, used at Pentecost, is attributed to Robert, King of France, who died in 1031. And lastly, the Church has kept in her Requiem Masses the magnificent poem on the Day of Judgment, the *Dies Irae* ("Day of Wrath"), written in the thirteenth century by Thomas of Celano—the finest example of sacred poetry.

**The Gospel.** In the reading or chanting of the Gospel the climax of the Mass of the Catechumens is reached. In it the main thought of the feast or of the day finds definite expression. Since the fourth century it has been the office of the deacon to announce the Gospel to the people. At first the Gospel was sung by the deacon from an ambo or pulpit placed on the north side of the church (our Gospel side), and facing the south, towards the place where the men were seated. After the introduction of the Low Mass, the priest turned towards the north—at least as far as he could with the book on the altar. Now the deacon too turns towards the north, since in the minds of some liturgists, the north was a region of benumbing cold and misfortune, which the life-giving announcement of the Gospel of salvation was to dispel.

The elaborate ceremonies to be observed for the singing of the Gospel at Solemn Mass indicates how much more important it is than the Epistle. From them it is clear that the Gospel is not only an instruction, it is something more. In the Gospel the liturgy sees Christ Himself; Christ Himself speaks to us in the Gospel, Christ is honored in it. All present stand



at attention to the words of Christ. At Solemn Mass lights and incense are carried and most significant ceremonies honor the Gospel book as Christ Himself.

**The Sermon and the Creed.** The priest who preaches to his people after the Gospel on Sunday morning is following the example of his predecessors in all ages back to the Apostles, and performs what is really an element of the liturgy itself, especially if his sermon is an explanation of the Gospel. The Church has combined preaching with her beautiful liturgy from the earliest ages, fulfilling her divine mission of teaching all nations.

All the various liturgies of the Church now contain a Creed, often said at Mass; but this is a late addition to the ritual of the Holy Sacrifice. Originally Creeds were used only at Baptism as a profession of faith, and the one called the Apostles' Creed still keeps its place in the baptismal rite.

The Creed now used in the Mass is the Nicene, because it was largely drawn up by the Council of Nice or Nicæa, in the year 325. Its use in the Eucharistic Sacrifice began in Spain in 589, and at first it was said after the Consecration. Its use after the Gospel was ordered in the year 1014 by Pope Benedict VIII. The *Creed* is said on Sundays and on first class feasts, on feasts of our Lord and of the Blessed Virgin, on the natal feasts of the Apostles and the Evangelists, on feasts of Doctors of the Universal Church, and in solemn, sung votive Masses.

### 3. THE MASS OF THE FAITHFUL

**The Sacrifice-Oblation.** In the early Church neophytes and penitents were dismissed at the end of the Gospel or Creed. The real Sacrifice was now to be offered by the priest in union with the faithful, the baptized.

After the Gospel or Creed the priest says: *Dominus vobiscum* and then *Oremus* ("Let us pray"), but he says no prayer. Why is this? Because in the earliest centuries the

people at this part of the Mass offered prayers together, a deacon chanting a kind of litany to which all responded. This custom no longer exists.

**The Offertory.** In early times the offertory was an action in which the people came in procession to the tables of the offerings, bringing their gifts; the deacon selected the gifts (bread and wine) required for the sacrifice, and brought these to the altar. Since the eleventh century this action was practically eliminated except for the actual offering of the bread and wine to God by the prayers and action of the priest. A few relics of the ancient offertory procession are found in the ordination Mass. A newly ordained priest presents a lighted candle, the newly consecrated bishop offers two such candles, and two loaves of bread and two small barrels of wine. At the solemn rites of canonization at the Papal Mass, in addition to the gifts enumerated, the offerings made to the Pope include two live doves. At the present time the custom is preserved by the offerings of money given at the offertory of the Mass.

**The Bread and Wine.** For many centuries the Roman Church has used at Mass bread that is unleavened, or made without yeast. In the East all Christians except the Armenians and the Maronites use leavened bread, and it is probable that this was done everywhere until about the eighth century. Either kind is valid, and Rome insists that each Church shall keep to the kind required by its own liturgy; thus she would not permit the Greeks who are Catholics to use unleavened bread, and would not allow us to use leavened. The unleavened kind was probably used by our Lord at the Last Supper, since this was the Passover of the Jews, when only such bread was permitted.

The breads for the altar are baked between heated irons upon which is stamped some pious emblem, such as the crucifix and the letters I H S. The small altar-breads, intended for the Communion of the faithful, may be plain. In the Roman rite both the large and the small Hosts are of a cir-

cular form, according to a rule which goes back at least to the third century.\*

The wine must be fermented, or alcoholic—not merely grape juice, which is not wine at all. A little water, blessed with a short prayer, is mingled with it in the chalice. Spiritual writers look upon the mixture as a symbol of our union with Christ in the sacrifice. The chalice is offered with a prayer, the last words of which invoke the blessing of the Holy Ghost.

At a solemn Mass the deacon holds and offers the chalice with the celebrant, because in ancient times he had special charge of the chalice, and gave Holy Communion from it to the faithful in the days when they received the Holy Eucharist under both forms. The bread and wine and the whole altar are then incensed by the priest. This ceremony in its present form goes back to the fourteenth century.

**The Washing of the Fingers.** In all the various rites which our Church uses throughout the world the celebrant washes his hands before handling the offerings.† He has already done so at the vesting before Mass, and formerly he repeated it twice during the Mass. While the water is being poured on his fingers he recites part of the twenty-fifth Psalm: “I will wash my hands among the innocent, etc.”

He then, as it were, concludes and sums up the whole offertory by the prayer “Receive, O Holy Trinity, this oblation,” which is a rather recent addition to the Mass. It was not in general use until after the revision of the Missal in 1570.

**The Secret Prayers.** The priest then turns towards the people and asks for their prayers: *Orate, fratres*, (“Pray, brethren, that my and your sacrifice may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty”)—and the response is made on their behalf: “May the Lord receive the sacrifice from thy hands to

\* See illustration on page 139.

† At the time when the offertory procession was customary, this washing was a practical necessity, and is even now in Solemn Mass when incense is used. But its significance is chiefly symbolic of the interior purity required to offer the Holy Sacrifice.

the praise and glory of His Name, and also for our benefit and that of His whole holy Church." "Not only," says Innocent III, "do the priests offer the Sacrifice, but also all the faithful: for what the priest does personally by virtue of his ministry, the faithful do collectively by virtue of their intention."

Then come the *Secreta*, one or more prayers said by the priest in a low tone, and resembling those said as collects earlier in the Mass. Many of those now in use are found in the most ancient ritual books of the Church. They usually ask God to accept the gifts offered at the altar, to sanctify them, and to give us His grace in return. The last of these prayers ends with the clause *Per omnia sæcula sæculorum* ("Through all the ages of ages" or "forever and ever"), said or sung aloud.

**The Preface and Sanctus.** Although in our Missals the words "Canon of the Mass" stand after the Sanctus, it is important to remember that the Preface is really a part of the Canon. It is so recorded in the old Sacramentaries, being the "thanksgiving prayer" which leads to the words of consecration. The name *Preface*, or Introduction, is found first in the early Middle Ages.

Originally this part of the Mass was very long, containing a list of all the blessings for which man gives thanks to God. Later, especially in the Roman rite, it was shortened, and was varied according to the feast or season. In some ancient Missals there were more than a hundred different Prefaces, but the number was reduced in later centuries. We now have fifteen, the latest being those for the Sacred Heart and Jesus Christ the King.

The Preface begins with a dialogue. The priest says or sings to the people: "The Lord be with you," to which the server or choir answers for them: "And with thy spirit." "Lift up your hearts"—one of the oldest of liturgical formulas, to which the response is made: "We have them lifted up to the Lord." "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God," with the answer: "It is meet and just." The celebrant takes up these last words, saying: "Truly it is meet and just," and so begins

the Eucharistic prayer, varying it, as said above, according to the occasion of the Mass. In it mention is made of the angels who praise God, and like them we are urged to say: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts," in the beautiful prayer of adoration, the *Sanctus*.

This is merely a continuation of the Preface; but besides being said by the priest, it is sung in solemn Masses by the choir and recited by the assisting ministers, representing the people—who are thus enabled, as it were, to join in the chant of the angels. It is one of the oldest parts of the Church's service, being alluded to by St. Clement of Rome before the end of the first century.

**The Canon of the Mass.** Thus we enter into what is called the Canon of the Mass. The word *Canon* is Greek, meaning a rule or method; and the name is used for the part of the Mass before and after the Consecration because the Church requires it to be said usually without variation, according to a fixed standard to which all must conform. It is most symmetrically arranged—for example, it begins with three signs of the Cross over the offerings, towards the close before the Pater Noster there are three also; five signs of the Cross immediately precede the Consecration, five more signs immediately follow it; the words of the Consecration are in the very center of the Canon; the Memento of the Living precedes the Consecration, and at an equal distance after the Consecration follows the Memento of the Dead.

The Canon is said in a low voice to inspire and to foster in the faithful the reverence due to the sacred mysteries. During it the people are engaged in silent prayer in union with the priest, but at the close of it they give their assent to all that has been done by saying *Amen*, when the priest says aloud or sings the words which conclude the Canon: *Per omnia sæcula sæculorum*, just before the Pater Noster.

First, the priest prays for the Church, the Pope, the bishop of the place, and the faithful, mentioning the Pope and the bishop by their first names. He then makes the Commemora-

tion of the Living, remaining silent for a few minutes while he mentally prays for those whom he wishes specially to commend to God. In the next prayer he brings in a list of saints, including the Blessed Mother of God, the Apostles, St. Cyprian and eleven illustrious martyrs of the Roman Church, thus emphasizing our communion with them as members of the Church of Christ. This prayer varies slightly at certain seasons of the year.

**The Words of Consecration.** Then follows the prayer, *Hanc igitur oblationem*, beseeching God to accept the offering. While reciting this, the priest holds his hands horizontally over the bread and wine. Finishing this he begins the beautiful passage which introduces the words of consecration spoken by our Blessed Saviour at the Last Supper. It reads as follows: "Who, the day before He suffered, took bread into His holy and venerable hands, and, raising His eyes to heaven, giving thanks to Thee, blessed, broke and gave to His disciples, saying: Take and eat all of this; for this is My Body." And another introduction, *Simili modo*, leads to the words of consecration said over the chalice: "For this is the chalice of My Blood of the new and eternal testament, a mystery of faith, which shall be shed for you and for many for the remission of sins." Then follows the commission to the Apostles: "As often as you shall do these things, you shall do them in memory of Me."

Let us examine these solemn words. They have not been always precisely the same, various ancient rituals giving slightly different forms. Why is the phrase "a mystery of faith" inserted, since it is not to be found in any of the Gospel accounts of the Last Supper? It is conjectured that in early times these words were an exclamation made by the deacon to announce to the people that the great Mystery of Faith was accomplished—that God was present on the altar.

**The Elevation.** After the priest has pronounced the words of consecration over the bread he genuflects in adoration and raises the Sacred Host so that It may be seen by all the people,

and then genuflects again. This elevation is a ceremony introduced in the late Middle Ages. There was no trace of it until about the twelfth century, when it was the custom to hold the Host as high as the breast while the words of consecration were being pronounced. As done at present, it seems to have been first ordered by Eudes de Sully, Bishop of Paris, about the year 1200, and within a hundred years the practice had spread throughout the Western Church. The genuflections were ordered by the revised Missal of 1570.

The elevation of the chalice is done in like manner, and came into use a little later than that of the Host. The incensing of the Blessed Sacrament at the two elevations at a Solemn Mass is a late addition to the ceremonial of the Mass. It began with the Dominicans, and was introduced at Rome about the end of the fourteenth century.

What should we do in church at the Elevation in the Mass? As the reason for the ceremony is to show the Blessed Sacrament to the people, it is right for them to look at it. However, in order to gain the special indulgence of seven years granted by Pope Pius X, one may either bow the head or look at the consecrated Species while saying with faith, piety, and love, "My Lord and My God."

"We must try, however, to keep in mind that, during the Mass and particularly at the Consecration, the primary and essential thing is the offering of the sacrifice; the adoration of the Species is entirely secondary. The Mass is not a 'devotion,' it is not the adoration of the Eucharist; it is the sacrifice offered by Christ, and in this offering we are actually participating since it is also our sacrifice. We come to Mass, we celebrate Mass, not so much to adore Christ in His Divinity, as to offer Him, the divine Lamb, to our heavenly Father."\*

**The Bell at the Mass.** The ringing of a bell has come to be a part of the ceremonies of the Mass. A peculiar and not very laudable custom existed in many parts of the world in the Middle Ages. This custom consisted in summoning the people

\* *The Liturgy of the Mass*, p. 237. .

from outside the church by the sound of a bell as the time of the Consecration drew near; and after the Elevation they promptly went out again. This bell, known in England as the *sanctus* or sance bell, was often hung in a small cupola over the sanctuary, and was rung by means of a rope that hung down near the server's place. A small hand-bell was rung then, as now, at the Elevation; and the great church bell was tolled at the same time, so that those at a distance might know the moment of consecration. At the present day the ringing of the bell at the *Sanctus* and at the Elevation is all that the rubrics demand. The use of a gong is forbidden. In France and in some other countries there is a great deal of bell-ringing at different parts of the Mass—which cannot be said to add anything to the dignity of the Holy Sacrifice, and is not called for by any Missal regulations. In our churches the bell is rung three times at the *Sanctus*, once at the *Hanc igitur* just before the Consecration; three times at the elevation of the Host and of the chalice; three times at the *Domine, non sum dignus* before the priest's communion and in some places three times also before the communion of the people when the same words are said.

**After the Consecration.** The prayers which follow the Consecration are similar in construction to those preceding it. There are three prayers, with the usual conclusion: "Through Christ Our Lord, Amen." The first prayer is divided into three parts: in the first part we offer the sacrifice; in the second, we try to increase our sacrificial spirit by recalling the three sacrifices of the Old Testament; in the third, the sacrifice, enveloped in our sacrificial spirit, is lifted up to God. Thus the act of offering is completed. This portion of the Mass is the most ancient part of the Canon.

Then the text returns again to the petitions (*Memento*). The priest folds his hands, and recalls those deceased whom he wishes especially to commend to God. Besides these especially remembered souls, all Christians departed are recommended to God, even those who have been entirely for-



gotten, since their memory has passed from among the living.

After the *Memento*, the priest remembers the living, in the prayer which begins, *Nobis quoque peccatoribus* ("Also for us sinners"). While saying these three words in a moderate tone of voice he strikes his breast. Until now we have prayed for the Church, the living and dead and to the Saints. Now we pray for ourselves, that we might be worthy to be numbered in the fellowship of the Saints. Then follows a list of fifteen martyrs, beginning with St. John the Baptist.

The Canon proper concludes with the sublime act of praise of the Holy Trinity. Taking the Sacred Host, the priest makes with it three signs of the Cross over the chalice and two before the chalice, then he elevates the Host and the chalice; and while doing this he says: "Through Him (Christ), and with Him, and in Him, is to Thee, God the Father Almighty, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory, forever and ever." The final phrase, *Per omnia sæcula sæculorum* is pronounced aloud, or chanted, and the server or choir replies, *Amen*.

This *Amen* should be said by all the people, at least in spirit. From the earliest times it was considered an important prerogative of the congregation, since it is the faithful's assent to all that has preceded it. The late Pope Pius XII, in his encyclical on the liturgy recalled this privilege, and reminded the Christian people of their great dignity: "Let the faithful, therefore, consider to what a high dignity they are raised by the sacrament of Baptism. They should not think it enough to participate in the eucharistic sacrifice with that general intention which befits members of Christ and children of the Church, but let them further, in keeping with the spirit of the sacred liturgy, be most closely united with the High Priest and His earthly minister, at the time the consecration of the divine Victim is enacted, and at that time especially when those solemn words are pronounced, 'By Him and with Him and in Him, is to Thee, God the Father Almighty, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory forever and ever'; to

which words in fact the people answer, 'Amen.' Nor should Christians forget to offer themselves, their cares, their sorrows, their distress and their necessities in union with the divine Saviour upon the Cross."

#### 4. THE MASS OF THE FAITHFUL— THE SACRIFICE-BANQUET

We have come now to the last part of the Mass, the sacrifice-banquet, better known as the Communion. In the Canon or Consecration prayer, the Victim of the sacrifice, the living Body and Blood of Christ, was brought to the altar. In return for the supreme honor we have rendered to God by offering up to Him this divine Victim, God invites us to His Holy Table, to the Lord's Supper, and gives us as the food of our souls the very Body and Blood of Jesus Christ—the Victim which we in union with the priest have offered in sacrifice. So in receiving Holy Communion at Mass we manifest in the highest degree our participation in the sacrifice. For this reason the Council of Trent (Session 22, c. 6) has earnestly exhorted "the faithful when they attend Mass to communicate not merely spiritually but sacramentally by the reception of the Eucharist so that they may derive more abundant fruits from the Most Holy Sacrifice."

This portion of the Mass, called the liturgical preparation for Communion, consists of the *Pater Noster*, the Breaking of the Bread (that is, the Host), the mingling of the Sacred Species, the *Agnus Dei*, the prayer for peace (and in Solemn Mass, the Kiss of Peace), two personal prayers of the priest, and the *Domine, non sum dignus*.

**The Pater Noster.** The Our Father is the most sublime and most precious of all prayers, since our Lord Himself taught it to us. It is one of the most ancient parts of the liturgy. It is introduced by a beautiful passage expressing, as it were, our authority for using it: "Advised by salutary precepts, and instructed by divine institutions we dare to say: Our Father,

etc." The priest sings (or recites) these words with folded hands, since they are not a part of the prayer itself. Then with hands extended he sings (or recites) the Our Father, while looking on the Host that lies before him upon the altar. The last petition, "*Sed libera*" ("*But deliver us from evil*"), is said by the server, or sung by the choir.

At the end of the Our Father, we have a prayer which is an embolism, an amplified form of the last phrase of the Pater Noster, asking deliverance from evil, past, present, and future, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, Saints Peter and Paul and St. Andrew. In former times this list of saints varied considerably in different countries.

**The Breaking of The Host.** While the priest says the concluding formula of the prayer for deliverance, he breaks the sacred Host into two equal parts, one of which he lays on the paten. From the other part he breaks a small particle, with which, during the solemn *Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum* ("The peace of the Lord be always with you"), he makes the sign of the Cross three times over the chalice. The server or the choir answers: *Et cum spiritu tuo*, ("And with Thy spirit"). He then allows the small particle to fall into the chalice.

The breaking of the Sacred Host is among the most ancient of the actions of our liturgy; indeed, it was observed at the institution of the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper. The mingling of the small particle with the Precious Blood has a most interesting history. It was intended as a sign of the unity of the Church and the continuity of the sacrifice. It seems that the words *Pax Domini* were at one time a blessing and a dismissal of those who did not receive Communion.

**The Agnus Dei.** This threefold petition to the Lamb of God is then said by the priest and at high Masses is sung by the choir. It re-echoes the greeting of St. John the Baptist to our Blessed Lord: "Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him Who taketh away the sins of the world." It is found in ritual books of the Middle Ages, and is said to have been introduced into the Mass by Pope Sergius I, about the year 700. It was orig-

inally sung once by the priest and once by the people; but in the twelfth century the other repetition was added, with the words: "Give us peace." In Requiem Masses the responses are *dona eis requiem* ("grant them rest") said twice, and *dona eis requiem sempiternam* ("grant them eternal rest") said at the end of the third invocation.

**The Kiss of Peace.** Just before the priest's Communion there are three prayers in the Mass (two in Requiem Masses); and after the first of these, in solemn Masses except those of Requiem, the Kiss of Peace is given. This, in ancient times, took place earlier in the Mass, before the beginning of the Canon. It is a sign of fellowship and unity, and is one of the oldest elements of our liturgy, being mentioned by the earliest writers. It is now given by the priest placing his hands on the deacon's shoulders with the words: "Peace be with you," while the deacon holds his hands under the arms of the celebrant. It is then transmitted to the subdeacon and to the other clergy present.

The three (or two) prayers are of recent origin. They were once merely private devotions, not included in the prayers of the Mass. After saying them the priest takes the Sacred Host into his hands, saying: "I will receive the Heavenly Bread and will invoke the name of the Lord." Then he repeats three times the beautiful words of the humble centurion of the Gospel: "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; but only say the word and my soul shall be healed." These words have not always been used in the Mass, and were only authorized officially in the revised Missal of 1570.

**The Communion.** Then, saying reverently, "May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ guard my soul unto eternal life," the priest receives the Sacred Host. Uncovering the chalice, he says: "What shall I render to the Lord for all that He hath rendered to me? I will receive the chalice of salvation, etc."—words which were once merely a prayer of private devotion; and he then receives the Precious Blood.

Following the priest's Communion comes that of the people.

It seems strange to us to learn that in early centuries the Sacred Host was put into the hand of the communicant. The placing of it on the tongue began in some places about the year 600. In those days, too, one important detail of Holy Communion was different from what we now have: the faithful received "under two kinds"—that is, drinking from the chalice as well as receiving the Sacred Host. This practice continued almost universally down to the twelfth century, although it was always known and taught that the reception of the Host alone was sufficient for Holy Communion.

Before the Communion of the people, the server in the name of the faithful recites the *Confiteor* and the priest says the *Misereatur* and the *Indulgentiam*, making the sign of the Cross over the people as he says the *Indulgentiam*. He then takes one of the Sacred Particles in his right hand, and with the ciborium in his left he turns around facing the people, holding the Host over the ciborium. He then says *Ecce Agnus Dei, etc.*, ("Behold the Lamb of God. Behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world"), repeats three times the *Domine, non sum dignus*, and advances from the altar to the Communion rail to distribute Holy Communion. He makes the sign of the Cross with the Sacred Host before each communicant, saying the words, *Corpus Domini, etc.*, ("May the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ keep thy soul unto life everlasting. Amen."), and then places the Sacred Host upon the tongue of the communicant.

The faithful who communicate should conform their actions and intentions in accordance with the meaning of the words addressed to them by the priest. After receiving they should retire from the altar rail with due reverence and order, allowing for no distractions from their Divine Guest. Pope Pius XII indicated the obligation of a suitable thanksgiving after Communion in the words of his encyclical, *Mediator Dei*: "When the Mass, which is subject to special rules of the liturgy, is over, the person who has received Holy Communion is not thereby freed from his duty of thanksgiving; rather, it is most becoming that, when Mass is finished, the person who has re-

ceived the Eucharist should recollect himself, and in intimate union with the divine Master hold loving and fruitful converse with Him."

**The Fast For Communion.** For many centuries the Church required an absolute fast from all food, drink or oral medication from midnight (legal time) until after Holy Communion. By the Apostolic Constitution "Christus Dominus" (Jan. 16, 1953), Pope Pius XII modified the laws for the Eucharistic fast. It is now the law of the Church that the drinking of ordinary water does not break the fast. It is therefore permitted to any and all the faithful to drink water at any time before receiving Holy Communion.

Later, however, the same Pontiff further relaxed the regulations so that the Catholic laity might receive Holy Communion more frequently. Food and alcoholic beverages may be taken up to three hours before the time of receiving Holy Communion. Non-alcoholic liquids (other than water) may be taken up to one hour prior to receiving Holy Communion. Further, medicine—whether solid or liquid—may be taken at any time, even to the moment of Holy Communion if necessary. Also, the sick may take non-alcoholic liquids at any time, and without first obtaining permission of a confessor.

**The Ablutions.** After the sacrificial-banquet, i.e., Holy Communion, the Mass is quickly concluded. The rubrics direct the priest, after receiving of the chalice, to purify the chalice with wine, and then with wine and water, to wash the fingers with which he touched the Sacred Host, and to consume the purifications. These actions are accompanied by appropriate prayers. Those priests who say Mass twice or three times on the same day, can consume the ablutions without breaking the fast. In such cases, however, the abluion must be made with water alone, not with wine. After the ablutions,

the chalice is again covered with the veil and, in Solemn Mass, is then removed. The celebrant has meanwhile gone to the Epistle side to recite the brief *Communion* verse, which formerly was a long chant while the people communicated. This is followed by the so-called *Postcommunion*, a prayer for the enduring fruit of Holy Communion, and corresponds to the Collect and Secret, and like them is variable each day.

**The Dismissal and Blessing.** Now the Mass concludes with the dismissal, the blessing and the last Gospel. In ancient times the *Ite, missa est* ("Go, you are dismissed") ended the divine worship; not until the eleventh century were the concluding petition *Placeat* and the blessing added. The response to the dismissal is *Deo Gratias* ("Thanks be to God"), a concise and fervent thanksgiving for the graces received. In Masses that have no Gloria, ever since the eleventh century it has been customary to use the dismissal of the Office: *Benedicamus Domino* ("Let us bless the Lord"). The *Requiscant in pace . . . Amen* was later used in Requiem Masses. The blessing probably arose from the episcopal blessing which the Pope or the bishop imparted as he left the altar for the sacristy.

**The Last Gospel.** The prologue of the Gospel of St. John was for centuries used—and is still used—as a prayer, a kind of exorcism. Even today it is regarded as a most efficacious sacramental for the sick. The faithful were much attached to this devout practice, and after a time it became a daily and universal rite to read the passage aloud after the blessing in the Mass. This practice has continued to the present day.

The prologue to St. John's Gospel is a beautiful summary of all those things we have received in the Holy Sacrifice. In a most sublime and mysterious manner have those words been fulfilled: "The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us;

and we saw His glory, the glory as it were of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." No wonder our grateful hearts respond, *Deo gratias*—"Thanks be to God."

## 5. THE REQUISITES FOR THE MASS

In order that the Holy Sacrifice may be consummated not only validly but with the proper decorum, our Church has in the course of centuries, made many regulations concerning the ceremonies to be used at the Mass and the accessories which are to be used to increase its solemnity.

**The Place.** Where can Mass be celebrated? Ordinarily in a sacred place and on a consecrated altar. A sacred place is a church or oratory which is specially blessed or consecrated for divine worship. A church is a sacred edifice, intended primarily to enable all the faithful to assist at the public exercises of divine worship. An oratory is intended particularly for the utility of a special portion of the Christian community in the exercise of its religious rites.

When there is a just and reasonable cause, the bishop of the place, can in extraordinary cases and for a short space of time, authorize the celebration of Mass outside the church or oratory, provided that it is a decent place and upon a consecrated altar stone. He may also permit at times the celebration of Mass in the open air. An Apostolic Indult is required in order to say Mass at sea. In time of war, the Military Chaplains enjoy many privileges in respect to the time and place for Mass, but they must always use a consecrated altar stone and certain other essential requisites.

**The Altar.** Even when a priest says Mass outside a church, he must always celebrate it upon an altar (unless by very exceptional concession from the Holy See, as is granted in time of persecution). We must distinguish, from a liturgical point of view, between a fixed altar and a portable or movable altar. The fixed altar is a permanent structure of stone, consisting of the table and the supports consecrated together as



one whole. They may not be detached without the altar losing its consecration. The portable altar consists of a solid piece of natural stone, generally of a size large enough to hold the Sacred Host and the greater part of the base of the chalice. It bears on its upper surface five crosses cut into the stone, where the anointings are made when it is consecrated, and near its edge a *sepulchre* or cavity containing the relics of two martyr-saints and sealed with a cemented stone lid. In popular language, this portable altar is called an altar stone. Many of the altars in our churches are simply altar stones supported by a stone or wooden structure to make them resemble a fixed altar. So too, in missionary lands and in battle stations, our priests contrive to set up their altar stones in some manner resembling our church altars, although the only essential portion of such an altar is the consecrated stone.

**The Tabernacle.** This is the receptacle or case in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved on the altar. It is proper only to an altar where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. Its interior is lined with silk, with gold or silver plate, or at least gilded. The use of a veil on the interior, although not prescribed is tolerated. Exteriorly the tabernacle must be completely covered with a *conopaeum* or tabernacle veil whenever the Blessed Sacrament is reserved therein. This veil gives the tabernacle the semblance of a tent, hence the name tabernacle (from *tabernaculum*—or tent). This is sometimes explained by the fact that in early ages the altar was surmounted by a canopy by which, at certain parts of the Mass, the altar was concealed from the people.

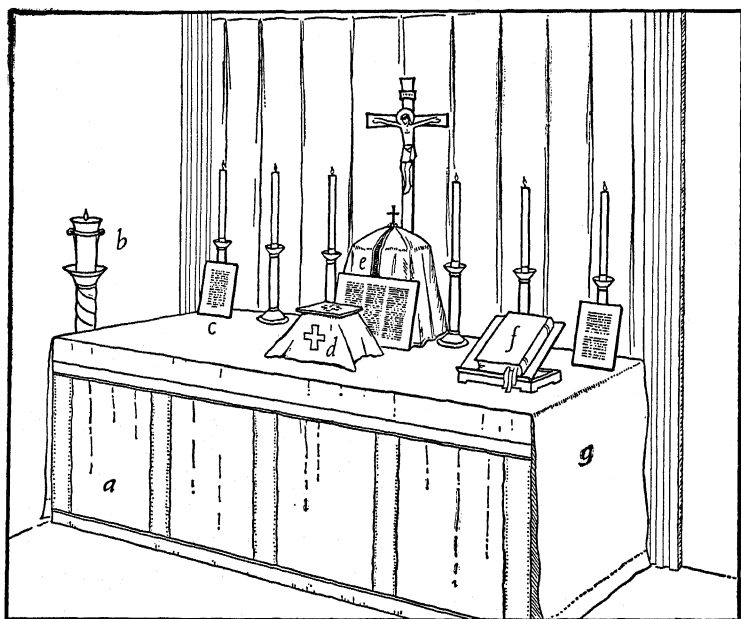
**Equipment of the Altar.** The rules concerning the preparation of the altar on which Mass is to be said are minute and rigorous. To prevent diversity of practice and any lack of respect to our Eucharistic Lord, each detail is carefully specified in the Church's rubrics, and exact conformity with these requirements is demanded of all.

The altar must have three cloths of white linen, of which the two lower ones should be nearly of the same area as the

altar table; the upper linen is to be long enough to touch the floor at each end of the altar. The rubrics insist over and over again that these cloths shall be clean—and, in some places, there is good reason for such insistence. Sacristans are not always diligent, and pastors are sometimes given to procrastination.

The rubrics of the Roman Missal prescribe an antependium—a cloth or tapestry which covers the entire front of the altar—for every altar on which Mass is to be celebrated. It is the true liturgical decoration of the altar. In spite of rubrics and tradition, there is a rather common opinion among some

### Altar Prepared for Mass



*a.* Antependium *b.* Sanctuary lamp *c.* Altar card *d.* Veiled chalice and burse  
*e.* Veiled tabernacle *f.* Missal and missal stand *g.* Altar cloth

authorities that the antependium may be dispensed with when the front of the altar is ornamental. This hanging must be, so far as possible, of the color of the day. For Requiem Mass it is violet, if the Blessed Sacrament is reserved on the altar; for Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, it must be white.

**The Crucifix and Candles.** To recall the identity of the sacrifice of the altar and the sacrifice of Calvary, the Church requires that there be on every altar a crucifix large enough to permit it to be seen not only by the priest but by all the people. It should rise above the candlesticks.

The Church requires that during the Mass, lighted candles must burn on the altar. These candles must be of beeswax. The bleached or white beeswax candles must be used, except at funerals, on Good Friday, and for the Tenebrae services in Holy Week, when the yellow unbleached candles are employed. Stearic candles are absolutely forbidden for liturgical use. The Church requires the bishops to take all the precautions necessary to see that the Paschal Candle and the candles which are to be lighted during Mass shall be, at least for the major portion, of beeswax; in the other candles which are placed on the altar, the wax must form at least a notable part.

For private Masses, the rubrics authorize only two candles; for High Mass at least four; for a Solemn Mass six; and when the bishop of the place celebrates a Pontifical Mass (except Requiem Mass) a seventh candle is lighted behind the altar crucifix. A special candle, called the Sanctus Candle, is directed to be lighted on the Epistle side at the Sanctus of the Mass and remains lighted until the Communion. The custom of using this third candle at Low Mass has fallen into desuetude almost everywhere.

**The Credence Table.** To the right of the altar a small table or shelf holds two cruets or flasks containing the wine and water to be used in the Holy Sacrifice, together with a shallow dish and a clean towel for the washing of the fingers of the priest.\* The cruets should be of glass, not only for the sake

\* See illustration on page 279.

of cleanliness but also in order that the contents of each can be distinguished. The rubrics also call for a little bell \* as one of the furnishings of the altar. It should be a simple hand bell of good tone, made of silver or bronze. Gongs or cymbals are forbidden by Church law.

**The Altar Cards and Missal.** On the altar are placed three printed cards, usually framed, containing the words of certain parts of the Mass. These are intended as an aid to the priest's memory, to obviate the necessity of turning to various parts of the Missal in case the celebrant should forget the words. The central and largest card contains usually the Gloria, the Credo, the offertory prayers for both the bread and the wine, the solemn words of consecration, and certain other parts of the Mass as well. The one at the Epistle side has two prayers which are recited at that part of the altar—that which is said when water is poured into the chalice, and the psalm *Lavabo* ("Among the innocent will I wash my hands, etc."), recited by the priest when he washes his fingers. The card on the gospel side presents the words of the first chapter of St. John which form the last Gospel of most Masses.

The *Missal*, or Mass Book, is an indispensable requisite for the Mass, for it contains not only the fixed parts of the Mass, which the priest could learn by heart, but also the constantly changing prayers, epistles, gospels, offertories and other portions of the Mass which vary from day to day according to the festival celebrated and the season of the year. Its contents and arrangement are described in another section of this book. The Missal is mounted, for convenience, on a book stand, or cushion, which may be covered with a drapery of the color of the day's vestments. Nothing is allowed on the altar except what pertains to the Holy Sacrifice; but on festival days, especially the more solemn, it may be decorated with flowers, reliquaries and statues of saints. Relics are permitted at all times except during Public Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament, and the last three days of Holy Week.

\* See illustration on page 279.

**The Chalice and Paten.** "And taking the chalice, He gave thanks, and gave to them, saying: 'Drink ye all of this, for this is My Blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins.'" (St. Matthew, 26, 27-28)

These words show us why the priest uses a cup or *chalice*—because He who gave us the adorable Sacrifice of the Mass made use of one when He instituted that wonderful mystery. When the apostles followed His command to "do this for a commemoration of Me," they also used a cup—probably at first the ordinary drinking goblet of those times. In the course of centuries it became customary to have the chalice formed of costly metal and oftentimes adorned with precious stones.

A chalice is generally from eight to eleven inches high, and consists of a wide-spreading base to insure stability, a stem which has a knob midway to facilitate handling, and a cup. The whole may be of gold or silver, or the cup only may be of precious metal; and it is even permitted, on account of poverty, to make the cup of inferior metal, but in every case, when any metal but gold is used for the cup, the interior must be heavily plated with gold. This is the part which comes directly in contact with the Precious Blood of our Lord, and it is proper that gold or gold-plating should be used on account of its purity and the fact that it will not easily tarnish or corrode. The best that we can supply is immeasurably unworthy of containing or coming into actual touch with the Sacred Body and Blood of Christ; and therefore gold is used in preference to other metals, in all parts of the sacred vessels which the Holy Eucharist touches or rests upon.

A circular, slightly concave dish, resembling a saucer, and made either of gold or of silver, or other metal heavily gold-plated, is used with the chalice. This is called the *paten*. It is held aloft in the hands of the priest when he offers the bread which is to be consecrated in the Mass. Later on, after the Pater Noster, the celebrant blesses himself with it and places it under the Sacred Host.

The chalice and paten must be consecrated by a bishop. The

blessing of the chalice goes back many centuries, at least to the time of St. Gregory the Great, and that of the paten dates from about the eighth century. After certain prayers the paten and the whole interior of the chalice are anointed with holy chrism, and a concluding prayer is offered, asking that they may be sanctified and made a new sepulchre of the Body and Blood of Christ.

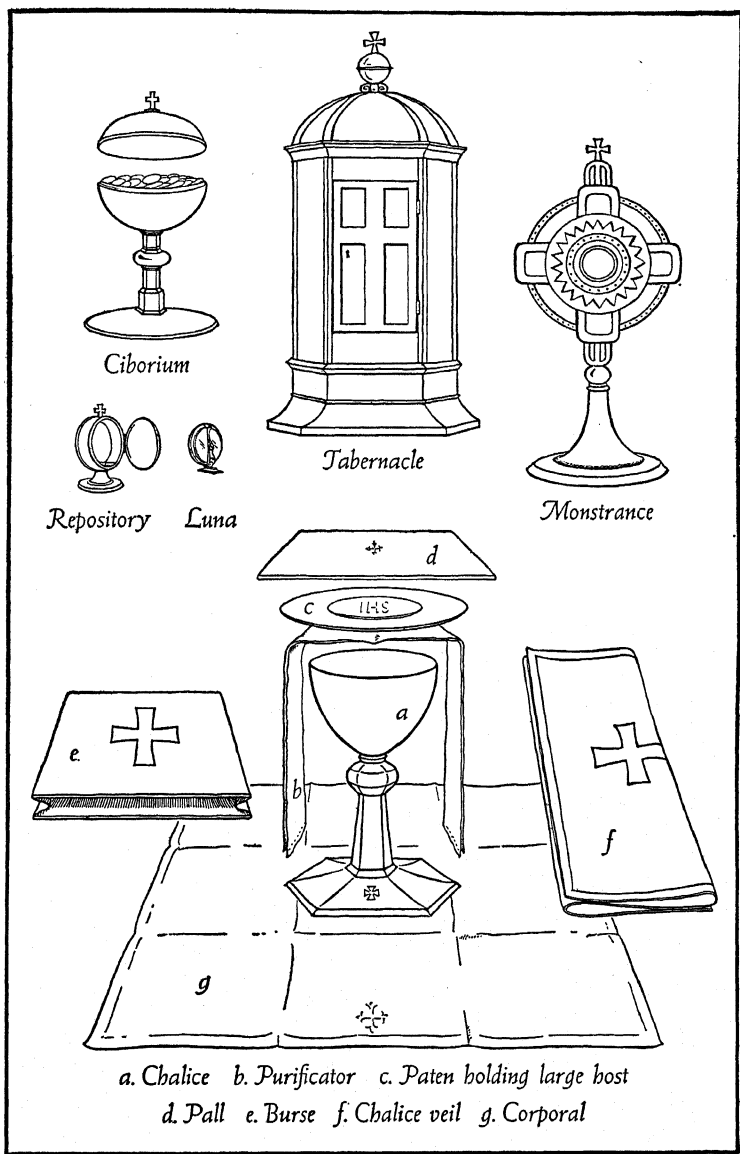
At the beginning and the end of the Mass the chalice is shrouded in a *chalice veil* of the same material and color as the vestments of the Mass. Upon this rests the *burse*, a flat pouch of the same color, in which the *corporal* is kept. The corporal is a square linen cloth which, during the Mass, is spread upon the altar to receive the Host and chalice. Symbolically, the corporal represents the winding-sheet in which the dead Body of Christ was wrapped for burial.

The *purificator*, a folded piece of linen, is draped across the chalice, and is used for cleansing its interior, and for purifying the priest's fingers during the Mass.

The *pall* is used to cover the chalice. It is a piece of linen usually about six or seven inches square, often double and stiffened by a piece of cardboard. This part of the chalice equipment is not of ancient date. At one time a part of the corporal was folded up from the rear to cover the chalice, but about the year 1200 a separate piece began to be used.

**The Ciborium.** When the faithful communicate, the Blessed Eucharist is distributed from a *ciborium* (from the Latin *cibus*—"food"). This vessel is in shape somewhat like the chalice, but it usually has a larger bowl and is provided with a closely fitting cover. Ciboria vary greatly in size according to the number of people customarily served in a given church or chapel. The interior of the ciborium is heavily plated with gold, and when it contains the Blessed Sacrament the vessel is enshrouded in a silk cover, usually white or gold in color and highly ornamented.

**The Ostensorium or Monstrance.** While treating of sacred vessels it may be well to insert here a mention of those that



**Sacred Vessels Pertaining to Mass and  
the Blessed Sacrament**

are not requisites for the Mass, but which pertain to the Eucharist. The word *ostensorium* signifies an instrument for showing or displaying. This sacred utensil, called also a *monstrance*, is used in giving the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and in processions in which the Host is carried publicly. It is generally formed of a cluster of metallic rays radiating from a central aperture which is fitted with a receptacle for a large Host. This receptacle is called a *luna* or *lunula* and has glass on either side, so that the Host may be seen when enclosed therein. The whole is mounted on a base so that it can stand erect.

**The Pyx.** The vessel in which the Holy Eucharist is carried to the sick is called a *pyx*, and is a very small ciborium, but is of a different shape from that used in church.\* It resembles a watch, being formed of two hollow cups hinged together and fastened by a spring catch operated through the stem. It also is gold-plated, unless it is made entirely of gold. It is kept, together with a small corporal and purificator, in a silk-lined leather case, called a *burse*.

The ciborium, the *pyx* and the *luna* of the *ostensorium* are blessed with a simpler formula than that used for the chalice, and this blessing may be imparted, in our country, by any priest.

A *communion paten* must be used at the giving of Holy Communion, being held beneath the chin of the communicant. † It resembles the Mass paten, but is usually provided with a handle, and does not require a blessing.

**Touching the Sacred Vessels.** Is it lawful for any one not a priest to touch or handle the chalice and other sacred vessels? If the vessel contains the Blessed Sacrament, it must not be touched by any one except a priest or deacon, under pain of mortal sin, unless in case of grave necessity, or to pre-

\* See illustration on page 66.

† See illustration on page 279.



vent profanation. For example, in time of persecution or in case of fire, it would certainly be allowable for any one to remove the Blessed Sacrament and to touch the vessel containing it.

But if the sacred vessel be empty? There is some diversity of opinion about this matter, some holding that when the vessel does not actually hold the Blessed Sacrament it may be handled by any one if there is reason for doing so; but the usual practice today is to restrict the touching of these vessels to clerics, even though these are not priests, and to such lay persons as have obtained permission from the bishop—for example, those whose business it is to repair or clean church goods. Any other person who has been lawfully charged with the care of these vessels, for example, a sacristan, should use a cloth to prevent direct contact of the hand with it.

The chalice, the paten, the luna and the pyx are sacred things, true sacramentals, and are worthy of deepest reverence; for they are set apart for a purpose than which none can be higher and holier—to contain the Heavenly Food which the love of our Redeemer has given us. St. Augustine tells us: “I dare to say God, though He be omnipotent, is not able to give us more; though He be all-wise, knows not how to give us more; though He be all-rich has not more to give.”

---

The vestments used by the priest at Mass and other services are considered in the chapter of this work treating of the Sacramentals.

## 6. CHURCH BUILDINGS

A church is a building set apart for worship, and the name is used only for such structures as are for the general use of the faithful, as distinguished from chapels, which are for some community or family, or oratories, which are for private devotion.

The use of churches may be said to be as old as Christianity, for places of Christian meeting are frequently mentioned in the New Testament. At first, private houses were used for this purpose; and this state of things continued probably for three centuries. In the days of persecution the Christians sometimes worshipped underground, in the recesses of the excavations known as the Catacombs, which were also used as burial places, and they registered their assemblies as *collegia*, or burial societies, so that they might hold property as legal corporations. About the beginning of the third century we find mention of churches properly so called; for when the final and greatest persecution broke out under the Emperor Diocletian, an edict of that tyrant ordered the destruction of Christian churches throughout the Empire.

**Early Churches.** As soon as peace had come to the Church under Constantine, the erection of magnificent temples of the true faith began everywhere. These early churches always had the sanctuary at the east end, so that the worshippers might pray in the ancient fashion, facing the east, whence the light of faith had come to them. At this end was the apse (Greek *apsis*, a wheel), within which the altar was placed. Behind this was the bishop's throne, and the priests occupied seats in a semicircle. This part was called the *presbyterium*—the priests' place, the name of sanctuary being of much later date. Just forward of this was the choir, wherein the singers were placed. In those early days the Blessed Sacrament was not kept on the altar, but in a cell or chapel near the apse. The baptistery was usually a separate building, often octagonal or round, with a pool in which the Sacrament was administered by immersion. Fine examples of such detached baptisteries, though of much later date, are to be seen at Florence, Pisa and elsewhere.

The laity were placed in the nave, the body of the church, which derived its name from the Latin *navis*, a ship, from its shape and from the symbolism of a ship as emblematic of the Church. This part of the building was divided into sections by low partitions—the nearest to the presbyterium being for virgins

and consecrated widows. Next came the parts for men and for women—carefully separated from each other in those days; and in the rear were the catechumens (those preparing to embrace the faith) and the penitents, who were also arranged in a certain order according to their guilt.

**The Kinds of Churches.** The principal churches are called, in Church law, basilicas (Greek *basilike*, a palace or handsome building), which may be greater or patriarchal, or minor basilicas. The chief church of a diocese, wherein the bishop customarily officiates, is known as a cathedral (Latin *cathedra*, a chair). An abbatial church is the seat of an abbot; and if a church had a chapter of canons for the daily solemn chanting of the Divine Office, as is usual in many dioceses of Europe and elsewhere, it is called a collegiate church. A parish church, of course, is the chief place of worship in a parish; other churches within its limits, attended from the parish church, are often known as mission churches; and other places in which Mass is said are, in our country, called stations.

**Some Styles of Architecture.** Let us devote the remainder of this section to an explanation of the principal features of our present day churches, so that the various parts of these edifices may be familiar to us. There are several distinct styles of architecture in common use in our country—and, unfortunately, some of our churches are a mixture of details of many styles and of no style at all.

*Grecian Architecture.* This ancient form of construction is not often used in its purest form for Catholic churches at the present day, though Roman modifications of it are common enough. Its essential features are the columned portico, the low-pitched roof overhanging it, and the plain or pilastered side walls of massive construction, to carry the weight of the broad roof. The front columns support a triangular *pediment*, of which the sunken panel, called a *tympanum*, is often highly ornamented with sculptures.

There are three distinct types of Grecian architecture, differing mostly according to the columns used. The Doric has col-

urns of simple design, fluted, with a capital consisting of a projecting curved moulding surmounted by a flat square block called an abacus. The Ionic has also fluted columns with moulded base and a capital with curled ornaments known as volutes. The Corinthian is the richest form of Grecian architecture. The capitals of the columns are carved exquisitely into leaves, surmounted by a gracefully moulded abacus. There is a legend that this beautiful form of capital took its origin from a basket filled with acanthus leaves.

*Roman Architecture.* In imperial Roman times all these styles of columns came into use and are to be found in ancient buildings; but the distinctive feature of Roman architecture was the round arches supported on rows of columns. The Roman style later developed into the Italian Renaissance, marked also by round arches and by the attachment of columns and fluted pilasters to the fronts of buildings. In the early Middle Ages the contact of Rome with the East resulted in the introduction of the Byzantine style, of which a fine specimen is the cathedral of St. Mark, in Venice.

*Gothic Architecture.* This has as its distinguishing feature the pointed arch. The nations of Europe, after their conversion to Christianity, devoted their energies to the construction of great churches; and when the light of learning had begun to shine upon them they developed this new and beautiful style of architecture, full of grace and captivating harmony. It is distinguished by comparative lightness of material, as well as by art and boldness and engineering skill in execution. The heavy piers and massive walls of earlier days were replaced by graceful clustered columns carrying on exquisite capitals lofty and beautiful pointed arches; by buttresses, both solid and flying; by grouped windows with slender mullions between, and complicated tracery; by great rose windows of circular shape; and by mighty towers, buttressed and pinnacled and often surmounted by graceful spires, "like angels' fingers, pointing ever heavenward"—sometimes at the front of the church, sometimes at the intersection of the nave and transept. Won-

derful examples of this beautiful style of architecture are to be found throughout Europe, and nowhere are they more numerous than in England, where the services of a mutilated Christianity have replaced the Holy Sacrifice and the Divine Office in majestic cathedrals that were built by Catholic hands for Catholic worship.

The Gothic style has varied in detail in different countries, and has passed through many modifications in the course of centuries. Space will not permit even a brief description of each of these. In England we may distinguish the Norman, the Early Pointed (also called Lancet or Early English), the Middle Pointed style, the Flowing or Curvilinear, and the Third Pointed or Perpendicular. Similar changes took place in French architecture, resulting in the majestic cathedrals of Paris, Amiens, Rheims and Chartres, varying much in design and detail, but each an exquisite specimen of the handiwork of the men who built well because they built for God.

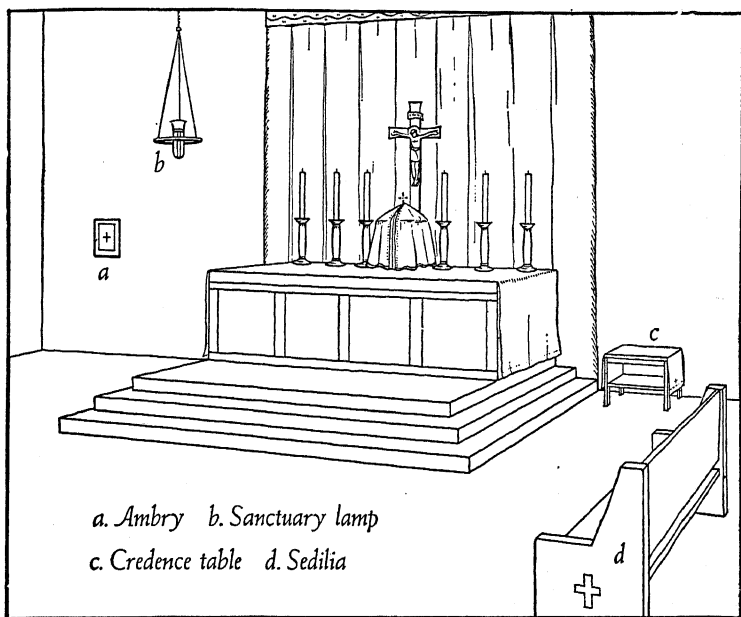
**Details of Our Own Churches.** Now let us, in imagination, approach a church—our own parish church. Above us, it may be, rises the tower. If this has a belfry and spire, the whole is called a steeple. It may be battlemented—in which case the openings in the battlement are embrasures, the intervening blocks are merlons. The pointed caps at the corners of a tower or parapet are called pinnacles, and the topmost ornaments of these are finials. Carven ends of water-spouts are gargoyles—often grotesque figures of animals or diabolic faces. An outside shelter at the door is a porch or portico. Projecting stone braces against the walls are called buttresses, and if these stand apart from the wall which they support and are connected with it by cross-braces or arches, they are flying buttresses.

Let us go into the church, and find the proper names of its interior parts, not already mentioned. The nave stretches before us, bounded on each side by a row of columns and arches. A column is to be distinguished from a pillar—the latter being usually a square or several-sided pier (although a very heavy

round pier may also be called a pillar), while a column is always a round shaft of more slender form, with a base and capital. A portion of a pillar or column affixed to a wall is a pilaster. Arches may vary in shape, according to the style of architecture, the Roman arch being a semicircle, the Gothic of pointed form. The central stone of an arch is the keystone; the lowest stones are the springers; the flat under surface of an arch is the soffit; and the wall space above the sides of the arches is a spandrel. The columns and arches divide the whole nave into bays. If there are columns but no arches, the wall space above is the entablature, composed ordinarily of an architrave, a frieze and a cornice. If the church has a ceiling, ornaments hanging therefrom are pendants, and deep panels therein are coffers. If the roof is formed of interlacing arches, the construction is called groining.

The parts of the church beyond the rows of pillars are the aisles; and as the roofs over these are usually lower than the nave roof, the upper part of the nave, if provided with windows, is the clerestory. The part which crosses the nave and thus makes the church cross-shaped is the transept. Brackets projecting from the walls to carry pilasters, etc., are known as corbels. If the church has a dome, a turret surmounting this to admit light is called a lantern.

The part of the church containing the main altar is the sanctuary or chancel (Latin *cancellus*, a lattice, because in past ages it could be screened off from the body of the church by the rood-screen, so called because it supported a large rood or crucifix). As already mentioned, the further end of the sanctuary, if of semicircular or polygonal form, is the apse. Over the altar there may be a *baldacchino* or *ciborium*, a canopy supported on columns. A reredos is the carved screen or ornamental work behind an altar. Around the sanctuary there may be stalls or seats for the clergy; and near by is the sacristy or vestry—the room for keeping the vestments and sacred vessels. This is usually provided with a basin for receiving ablutions—the water in which the sacred linens, etc., are washed; this is a



a. Ambry    b. Sanctuary lamp  
c. Credence table    d. Sedilia

### Sanctuary of Church

*sacrarium* or *piscina* (Latin, fish-pool). An underground vaulted room, such as is sometimes used for burial, is a crypt. An enclosed square outside the church, with a colonnaded shelter-roof around it, is a cloister.

**Liturgical Altar.** "The tendency of the modern liturgical movement is to concentrate attention upon the actual altar, to remove the superstructure back from the altar or to dispense with it altogether, so that the altar may stand out, with its dominating figure of the Cross, as the place of Sacrifice, and the table of the Lord's Supper, and that, with its tabernacle, it may stand out as a throne upon which Christ reigns as King and from which He dispenses the bounteous largesse of Divine Grace." \*

\* McMahon: *Liturgical Catechism* Dublin, 1930.

## 7. THE CONSECRATION OF A CHURCH

The consecration of a Catholic church is a solemn and impressive ceremony, with rites which are symbolical of the sacred uses to which the edifice will be devoted. The various parts of this service are of very ancient date, and are substantially the same today as they were centuries ago.

A building which is to be used for the worship of God should be sanctified by prayer. When Moses constructed the movable Tabernacle for the people of Israel in the desert, he dedicated it to the service of the Almighty with much ceremony; and when the temple of Sion was built by Solomon it was consecrated to God with pomp and grandeur that lasted for many days, "and the majesty of the Lord filled the temple."

As these sanctuaries of the Old Law were a type of the Christian Church, so the rites of their dedication were a foreshadowing of the solemn service by which our churches are set apart for the worship of God.

On the day of the consecration of a church, some of the assisting clergy are deputed as chanters or choir, to intone the many psalms, responses and antiphons which form a part of the service.

**Outside the Church.** The bishop and priests leave the church in procession, except one priest attired in deacon's vestments, who remains within. The doors are then closed. The bishop, assisted by the clergy, chants an invocation to the Trinity: "Be with us, one Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost," after which he offers a prayer asking God's blessing on the work which he is beginning.

The intercession of the saints is invoked by the recital of their litany, after which the bishop blesses some holy water; and with the words: "Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, O Lord, and I shall be cleansed; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow," the bishop and clergy form a procession and go entirely around the church, the outer walls of which are sprinkled with the holy water. The choir chants



a beautiful responsory, as follows: "The house of the Lord is founded on the summit of mountains, and is exalted above all hills, and all nations shall come to it, and they shall all say, Glory to Thee, O Lord. And coming, they shall come with joy, bearing their sheaves."

The bishop offers before the church door a prayer asking God's protection on the new house which He has founded—that here true service may always be rendered to Him. He then strikes the door with his pastoral staff, saying in the words of the psalm, "Lift up your gates, and the King of Glory shall enter." The deacon inside the church answers through the closed door, "Who is this King of Glory?" To which the bishop responds, "The strong and powerful Lord, the Lord strong in battle." Another circuit of the church is made, with sprinkling as before, and the choir chants, "Bless, O Lord, this house which I have built to Thy name; hear in the high throne of Thy glory the prayers of those coming into this place; O Lord, if Thy people shall be converted and shall do penance and shall come and pray in this place, hear them."

After another prayer the bishop again knocks at the church door with his staff, speaking as above, and the deacon answers in the same manner. The procession goes again around the church in a direction opposite to that previously taken, and during its progress the choir sings, "Thou, the Lord of all, Who needest nothing, hast wished Thy temple to be made among us; preserve this house spotless forever, O Lord. Thou hast chosen this house for the invoking of Thy name therein, that it may be a house of prayer and petition for Thy people." A third time the bishop strikes the door, and the dialogue with the deacon within the church takes place; but this time the door is opened. As the bishop passes the threshold he makes the sign of the cross with his staff, saying, "Behold the sign of the cross; may all phantoms flee away."

**The Entrance.** During the entrance into the church the choir intones two beautiful anthems, the first being a solemn invocation of the Holy Trinity: "Peace eternal from the Eternal

upon this house. May peace perpetual, O Word of the Father, be on this house. May the loving Consoler bestow peace on this house." The second is taken, very appropriately, from the Gospel narrative of the humble publican who received our Lord: "Zaccheus, make haste and descend, because I shall remain today in thy house. And he descended in haste and received Him joyfully into his house. Today on this house salvation has been bestowed by God."

Then the grand hymn to the Holy Ghost, the *Veni Creator*, is chanted, followed by litanies, prayers and an antiphon: "O how this place is to be dreaded: Truly, this is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven." The beautiful Canticle of Zachary is then recited: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, because He hath visited and hath made the redemption of His people."

**The Ashes on the Floor.** A very striking ceremony then takes place. Ashes have been previously strewn on the floor of the church in the form of a St. Andrew's cross, or X, and the bishop, with his pastoral staff, marks in them the letters of the Greek and Roman alphabets, beginning at the corners nearest to the door—from A to Z of the Roman alphabet and from Alpha to Omega of the Greek. This is symbolic of the two great branches of the Catholic Church, the Eastern and the Western, which differ in language and details of ritual, but are one in doctrine and government; and it also typifies the universality of the Church of God, teaching in all languages the Gospel of the Cross of Christ.

**The Consecration of the Altar.** A most important feature of the ceremonies is the consecration of the altar, the most essential part of a Catholic church—the place where the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the central point of Catholic worship, is offered up. This is a lengthy ceremony, full of beautiful symbolism, and containing many rites of great antiquity. In this blessing a special kind of holy water is used, called Gregorian, or Water of Consecration, which is not employed in any other service. It contains not only salt, as does ordinary holy water,

but also ashes and wine; and the salt, ashes and wine are solemnly blessed with appropriate prayers before being mingled with the water.

After the reciting of a beautiful prayer asking for the outpouring of God's grace upon this house, the bishop goes in procession with the clergy to the church door, and marks on the inside with the sign of the cross, to indicate that this temple of God is protected by His cross against all dangers and the attacks of the Evil One.

The actual blessing of the altar then begins with the recital of the psalm which is said ordinarily at the beginning of the Mass: "I shall go unto the altar of God, to God Who rejoiceth my youth." The bishop makes the sign of the cross five times upon different parts of the table of the altar, which is bare, dedicating it to God Almighty to the glorious Virgin Mary, to all the saints, and particularly to the name and memory of the saint in whose honor it is erected. A prayer is said in which is mentioned "the stone on which the patriarch Jacob offered sacrifice," and the bishop then goes around the altar seven times (symbolic of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost), sprinkling it with holy water, while the psalm *Miserere* is recited. He then makes a circuit of the interior of the church three times, sprinkling the walls all around, during which ceremony several psalms are recited and appropriate antiphons are chanted by the choir, such as "My house shall be called a house of prayer. I will narrate Thy name to my brethren, in the midst of Thy church will I praise Thee." Then comes a long and beautiful Preface, invoking the descent of the Holy Ghost upon this church, and enumerating the spiritual blessings which will come from its dedication to the worship of God.

**The Relics in the Altar.** When the altar is consecrated, a small sealed metal box containing relics of at least two saints, is enclosed within it. These relics are guaranteed to be genuine by the Roman authorities who send them to the various dioceses of the world. A square cavity is made in the front

part of the altar table, and a stone lid is fitted to this, to be cemented into place.

What is the reason of this placing of relics in the altar? It is said to go back to the days of persecution. In the catacombs, the underground chambers where the Christians were forced to hide from their enemies, were many tombs containing the bodies of martyrs and other saints; and when the priests celebrated the Divine Mysteries, the flat topped stone tombs made very convenient altars. When the persecutions were over, and the Church was able to build her altars in the light of day, the same form was retained; the altar was a tomb, containing the body of some holy servant of God, but, as churches multiplied, it was impossible to provide a whole body for each altar; and so the custom began of placing in each a small portion of the earthly remains of some canonized saint, whose intercession is thereby sought by those who will hereafter worship at that altar.

The bishop uses some of the holy water described above, to make cement with which the relics are to be sealed within the altar stone—in which work he is assisted by a stonemason who is present for that purpose. The relics have been previously deposited in a chapel or other place, and a procession is formed to transport them to the sanctuary. The choir chants these appropriate words: “O how glorious is the Kingdom in which all the saints rejoice with Christ; clothed in white robes, they follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. Arise ye saints of God, from your abodes; sanctify these places, bless the people, and guard us sinners in peace. Enter into the City of God, for a new church is built for you, where the people ought to adore the majesty of God.”

A discourse or proclamation is then read by the bishop, explaining the holiness of a place consecrated to God. It recounts the fact that the tabernacle of Moses was dedicated for the offering of sacrifices—not to be used for worldly things; and the faithful are urged to look upon this new temple as worthy of even greater honor.

Two decrees of the Council of Trent are read aloud by one of the clergy, declaring that the Church's anathemas shall fall upon any one converting to his own use any of her property, and that the faithful are under obligation to provide for the proper support of the new house of God.

At the entrance of the church the bishop makes the sign of the cross with chrism on the outside of the door, with a solemn blessing: "Mayest thou be a gate blessed, sanctified, consecrated, sealed, dedicated to the Lord God; a gate of entrance to salvation and peace."

When the relics have reached the sanctuary, two psalms are recited, and the bishop signs with holy chrism the cavity or sepulchre of the altar stone, and places the sacred relics within it. The cover or stone tablet which closes the cavity is anointed in like manner, and is then cemented into place; during which ceremony the choir chants appropriate verses, such as: "The bodies of the saints are buried in peace, and their names shall live forever."

The solemn incensing of the altar then takes place; it is begun by the bishop, and is performed all through the remainder of the service by one of the priests, who makes the circuit of the altar continuously, except when the bishop resumes the incensing at intervals.

The altar stone is then anointed with holy chrism in the form of a cross in five places on its upper side.

**The Crosses on the Walls.** When a church is to be consecrated, twelve crosses, generally cut into slabs of marble, are placed on the interior walls, about six or eight feet from the floor, and at the top of each is a candlestick holding a candle. The bishop anoints each of these with chrism, and also incenses them, going in procession from one to another, and saying at each unction: "May this temple be sanctified and consecrated, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

The blessing of the altar is then resumed. Five crosses are formed of grains of incense on the altar stone, and on each

of these a cross is made of small wax tapers, which are then lighted, so that, when these burn down, the crosses of incense will be ignited and consumed. The ashes are then scraped off the stone. A beautiful Preface is intoned by the bishop, asking for God's blessing on His new temple and for the presence therein of His Angels and the Holy Spirit; and after two more unctions and two prayers the bishop usually celebrates the first Mass on the newly consecrated altar. This Mass is a special one, for the dedication of a church. An announcement is then made of the indulgences which may be gained—a year for each visit on the day of the consecration, and forty days on each anniversary of it.

Such are the impressive ceremonies which our Church uses for the sanctifying of a temple of God. It is sprinkled, within and without, with holy water; the door and walls are signed with blessed chrism; the altar is anointed with the same holy oil, and is made a tomb of one of God's illustrious servants. The odor of incense fills the house of God; and the solemn prayers of the Church are used to consecrate both temple and altar to His service forever. "This is none other than the House of God and the Gate of Heaven."

## 8. REQUIEM MASS

Love of the departed and a desire to perpetuate their memory is to be found in every race and tribe, whether barbarous or civilized. The ancient countries of Asia are noted for their sepulchral monuments. The mighty pyramids of Egypt have been found to be tombs of dead monarchs. In distant India may still be seen the fairy-like Taj Mahal, perhaps the most beautiful edifice in the world, erected by a Hindoo king as a memorial and sepulchre for his beloved queen. Outside the walls of Jerusalem are the tombs of the great ones of Israel. Along the roads that radiate from the gates of Rome are the ruins of the final resting places of patricians and of emperors.

All nations honor their dead. Whether enlightened by faith

or groping in error, all strive to keep alive the memory of those whom death has taken away; all endeavor to manifest their undying love for those who have gone before. But the Catholic Church does more than this. She is a true mother to her children, and her solicitude extends not only to their perishable bodies, not only to their memory, which will endure only for a time, but to their immortal souls. Her faith teaches that the soul, when it has been separated from the body and has received its sentence from its Maker, may need help from its friends who remain on earth. Its time for meriting is over, but it may obtain merit through the prayers and good works of those who are still able to acquire merit, and particularly through the petitions of the Church in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

**Why the Church Honors Dead Bodies.** But why does the Church pay so much attention to the perishable body, the lifeless clay, soon to be the food of worms? We can easily understand that she would be solicitous for the soul of the departed; but why should she pay honor to the lifeless body?

Because the Church's faith teaches that that body has been the temple of the Holy Ghost, and is to be reunited to the soul on the day of general judgment, to share its eternal destiny. The body is the instrument which the soul has used for God's service. Without it the soul could not have attained to its happiness; and so the body, in the designs of God, is destined to participate in the bliss which He will give to the faithful soul. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that in the last day I shall rise out of the earth, and I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God, Whom I myself shall see and my eyes shall behold, and not another." (Job 19, 25-27)

**A Tabernacle of God.** The body has received the waters of baptism, the chrism of confirmation, the holy oil of extreme unction—and hundreds of times during its life it has been a living tabernacle of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. And so, when death has come to the Catholic, the Church not only

endeavors to help his soul, but she gives the last honors to his body. It is brought into the house of God in solemn procession, the adorable Sacrifice of the Mass is offered in its presence, the odor of sweet incense arises around it, holy water is sprinkled on it, and it is then laid away in ground that has been consecrated by the prayers of the Church.

**Supplications for Mercy.** How often we read in our daily papers the funeral orations delivered over those who are not Catholics—always laudatory, sometimes fulsome in their praises of the departed. There is never a word to indicate that he may have been a sinner, or that he may be in dire need of prayer by which the mercy of God may be implored in his behalf. Such is not the spirit of the Church in her services for her dead. She looks upon death as a punishment for sin; she remembers that nothing defiled can enter heaven; and so she treats the dead as souls in which some stain of sin may have been found by the all-seeing eye of God, or which may not have fully satisfied the debt of temporal punishment due for sins forgiven. She takes the salvation of no one as certain, be he Pope or king or peasant. Her funeral services are always a supplication for God's mercy on the departed soul.

**The Ceremonies Before Mass.** The priest, in the house of the deceased, or, in this country more commonly at the door of the Church, sprinkles the corpse with holy water and recites Psalm 129: "Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord, etc." The corpse is brought to the altar, the symbol of the Heavenly City, where God and His Christ, surrounded by saints and angels, await the coming of the just. To this high assemblage the Church now addresses her petition in the words of the Ritual sung by the choir as the body is borne towards the altar: "Come to his (her) assistance, all ye saints of God; meet him (her), all ye Angels of the Lord, receiving his (her) soul, suffering it in the sight of the Most High."

The corpse is placed before the altar just outside the sanctuary. If the deceased was a lay person, his feet are pointed towards the altar, so that he is, as it were, facing it. If he is a



priest, the body is turned the opposite way, the face towards the congregation, to signify that his work during life was to instruct the people from the altar.

**Masses of Requiem.** It is the wish of the Church that, whenever it is possible, her children should be buried with a Mass. This is not only the most solemn way in which they may receive her final blessing, but also the most efficacious for their soul's salvation. The Mass which is celebrated on that occasion is full of touching symbolism and expressive prayer. The priest is garbed in sombre black, the color of death, and all ornaments are removed from the altar or shrouded in penitential wrappings. The veil before the tabernacle door is purple, the color of penance, for it would not be fitting to put black on the dwelling place of our Saviour living in the Holy Eucharist. Around the coffin are black candlesticks, usually six in number. Masses for the dead are much shorter than usual. All parts expressive of joy are omitted; \* the whole intention of the Church is to pray for the departed one, that God's judgment upon him may be merciful. And so there is no opening psalm of confidence and hope ("I will go unto the altar of God, of God Who rejoiceth my youth," etc.). There is no Gloria, or Alleluias, such as we find in other Masses at most seasons of the year. There is no Credo, such as is said or sung in the Masses of Sundays and many festivals. When the words of the Agnus Dei are said, the priest does not ask the Lamb of God to "have mercy on us," but to "give eternal rest" to the faithful departed. Instead of the parting "Ite, missa est" ("Go, the Mass is over"), the priest prays "Requiescant in pace" ("May they rest in peace"). No mention is made of any festival or saint's day—nothing but the expression of the Church's sor-

\* In case a baptized child dies before coming to the use of reason, a votive Mass in honor of the Angels—*Missa de Angelis*—may be offered, if the rubrics allow it, but this is not prescribed by the Ritual. The Roman Ritual prescribes the prayers to be recited. If the Church bell is rung, it is tolled in a festive manner, for there is joy in the Church that another soul has reached heaven.

row and hope, and the presenting of her fervent petitions for the eternal welfare of the departed.

**The Dies Irae.** The beautiful *Dies Irae* (Day of Wrath), one of the oldest of the rhyming metrical hymns of the Church, forms a part of the Mass for the dead. It is said to have been composed by Thomas of Celano, a companion of St. Francis of Assisi, about the year 1200, and it sets before us a vivid picture of the Last Judgment—the coming of the Judge, the opening of the books, the anguish and remorse of the reprobates; and it concludes with a fervent prayer for the souls of the faithful: “Loving Lord Jesus, grant them rest. Amen.” All Masses for the dead which are said in black vestments are known as Requiem Masses.

**Kinds of Requiem Masses.** Besides the Mass on the day of burial the Church has authorized Masses for the third and seventh day after death and for the thirtieth day—usually called the “Month’s Mind.” All of these are very similar to the funeral Mass, except in the wording of some of the prayers. There is also an anniversary Mass, differing from the others, chiefly in the epistle and gospel read in it. On other occasions a Mass is used called the *Missa Quotidiana*, the “Daily Mass” of Requiem.

**The Catafalque.** Why does the Church use an imitation of a coffin at the commemorative Masses which are sung at certain times after the funeral? It seems peculiar to witness the incensing and the sprinkling of a pall-covered frame—to behold the solemn ritual of the Church carried out over it as though it contained a human body.

This catafalque, as it is called, has an interesting history. It originated at the time of the Crusades, or perhaps a little earlier. In those centuries it happened sometimes that a pious Christian knight went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, or buckled on his armour to win back the Sepulchre of our Lord from the hated Saracen; and it happened also that in many instances the pious Christian knight did not come back. Pestilence or shipwreck or the Moslem scimitar put an end to his

life, and it was not usually possible to bring his earthly remains back to his native land. But the Church wished to pay honor to his memory, and to celebrate for him the final rites of her liturgy; and so it became customary to erect in the church a huge funeral pile, decorated with emblems of mourning and sometimes bearing the armorial shield, knightly sword, helmet, spurs and other insignia of his rank.

Such was the origin of the catafalque; and when for any reason, at the present day, the body cannot be present at a funeral service, or at the celebration of anniversary or other solemn Masses, the same practice is adhered to. A representation of a coffin, suitably enshrouded in a sable pall, is placed before the altar, to typify the body of the deceased; and over it the Church performs the various ceremonies which would ordinarily take place over the remains of the departed ones.

**After the Mass.** When the Mass is finished the celebrant lays aside the chasuble and maniple, puts on a black cope, and turns to the place where the body lies. The ensuing services are known as the "Absolution." He reads a prayer: "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord," asking the divine mercy on him who during his life was signed with the seal of the Most Holy Trinity. The choir then chants the *Libera*—"Deliver me, O Lord, from everlasting death on that dread day"; a most touching appeal of the soul trembling with fear before the tribunal of God. "I am made to tremble, and I fear, at the thought of judgment and the wrath to come."

Then while the Pater Noster is being recited, the priest sprinkles the coffin with holy water, typifying the preservation of body and soul from the dominion of Satan; and he then incenses it on all sides, to express the honor that is due to the former temple of the Holy Ghost and tabernacle of Jesus Christ.

A prayer is then chanted, which is the same as that said in the early part of the Mass: "O God, to Whom it belongeth always to show mercy and to spare, we humbly beseech Thee for the soul of Thy departed servant N., whom Thou hast this

day called out of the world, that Thou deliver it not into the hands of the enemy nor forget it forever, but command that it be received by Thy holy angels and taken to Paradise, its true country; that, as it has believed and hoped in Thee, it may not suffer the pains of hell, but have joy everlasting. Through Christ our Lord. Amen."

**Going to the Grave.** When the priest or priests accompany the body to the cemetery, a beautiful prayer is read or chanted while the procession is wending its way thither. "May the angels lead thee into Paradise; at thy coming may the martyrs receive thee and bring thee to Jerusalem the holy city. May the choirs of angels receive thee, and, with Lazarus once a beggar, mayest thou have eternal rest."

The *Benedictus*, or Cantic of Zachary ("Blessed be the Lord God of Israel") is then said or sung, with an antiphon formed of the consoling words of our Blessed Saviour to the sorrowing sisters of Lazarus: "I am the Resurrection and the Life. He that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live; and every one that liveth and believeth in Me shall not die forever." This is followed by a prayer in which the divine mercy is besought for the deceased because he has had the desire of doing God's will, although he may have deserved punishment for his misdeeds. Finally, as the priest returns to the Church from the grave, he remembers all the souls departed in the *De profundis* and other prayers.

Such is the closing ceremony of the earthly career of a Catholic. We have all been present at it many times, and we all hope that it will be performed over us, when our time has come. The Church knows that the immortal soul, still a member of the Church of Christ, may be in suffering which can be relieved and shortened by the prayers of other members of that Church. And so she offers her public prayers and urges her children to pray in private for the souls of the faithful who have passed through the gates of death, teaching us that, although separation has come, it is but for a time, and that even while it continues there is a bond of union, the Communion

of Saints, between us who are still on earth and our loved ones who "have gone before."

## 9. CHURCH MUSIC

It is eminently proper that man, in his worship of God, should render to Him all that is most sublime and most beautiful. His homage can be expressed not only in words but in sweet sounds. In every form of worship since the world began, his natural devotional instinct urged him to honor Divinity by means of music as well as by the other arts, and to heighten his religious exaltation by the chanting of hymns and the sound of musical instruments.

All true religious music is an exalted prayer—an effective expression of religious feeling. In nearly all rites, whether Jewish, pagan or Christian, the elements of public worship have been sacrifice, prayer, ceremonies, chanting and instrumental music. In Catholic worship these elements constitute an organic whole, in which, however, music forms a part only on solemn occasions; and in order that it may be fittingly used it must be in accord with the regulations of proper authority.

**An Auxiliary to Worship.** Church music has, in common with secular music, the combination of tones in melody and harmony, the variation as to rhythm, measure and time, the distribution of power (known as dynamics), tone-color in voice and instrumentation, and the simpler and more complex styles of composition. All these, however, must be well adapted to the service at which they are used, to the words of the hymn or prayer, and to the devotion of the heart; otherwise they are unfit for use in the house of God. They must be calculated to edify the faithful, and must not be in any way opposed to the spirit of true worship. Music must be an auxiliary to the other means of giving honor to God; and if it be so it does not interfere with the Church's ceremonies or detract from their religious spirit, but, on the contrary, it imparts to them the greatest splendor and effectiveness. Appropriate

music raises man above the sordid world, directs his mind and heart to the sacred words and ceremonies of his Church's worship, and fills him with a spirit of exalted devotion. Realizing this, our Church has indeed made her music appropriate to the spirit of her services, adapting it to the nature of the religious functions at which it is used, to the season of the ecclesiastical year and to the solemnity of the feast—making it grand and exultant on festivals of joy, and mournful in seasons of penance and in services for the dead.

**In Jewish Worship.** Under the Old Law music formed a prominent feature in the Jewish rites, and this was in compliance with the commands of God Himself. Religious songs of victory are mentioned in the books of Exodus and Judges; and later on the ceremonial was enriched by David with hymns and the use of instruments, and reached its highest development under his son Solomon in the sublime ritual practised in the great temple of Jerusalem.

**In the Early Church.** We know very little concerning the music of the primitive Christian Church. On account of many circumstances that Church was restricted in its religious manifestations, for the greater part of the first three centuries was a time of bitter persecution, when Christians worshipped God in secret and in peril of their lives. Tertullian tells us, however, that in his day psalms were sung in the divine service, and the pagan Pliny knew that Christians honored their God before dawn by the chanting of hymns. The extensive use of music in church ceremonies came later, and is to be largely attributed to St. Ambrose, the great bishop of Milan, who introduced the singing of psalms "after the manner of the East." Under the fostering care of our Church sacred music developed most wonderfully during the succeeding centuries.

St. Jerome, who seldom failed to criticize when criticism was needed, speaks of singers of his day in words to which some of our modern choirs and church soloists may well hearken: "Let the servant of God sing in such manner that the words of the text rather than the voice of the singer may cause de-

light, and that the evil spirit of Saul may depart from those that are under its dominion, and may not enter into those who make a theatre of the house of the Lord."

**The Organ.** The majestic tones of the organ have been considered from very early times to be particularly appropriate for religious services. The word organ is used occasionally in the Old Testament, but is somewhat of a mistranslation; in Jewish worship it signified any kind of wind instrument, as a pipe or trumpet, for organs resembling those of the present day did not then exist.

Nothing is known as to the exact date of the introduction of organ music into Catholic services. St. Augustine speaks of it as being in use in his time, and gives testimony to the delight he experienced in listening to it; he even seems to reproach himself because of the pleasure derived from it, asking himself whether it would not be perhaps more perfect to deny himself that gratification.

There is no authority whatever for the legend that the organ was invented by St. Cecilia, although modern art often depicts the Roman virgin-martyr seated at the keyboard of such an instrument. Probably in her day organs did not exist in any form, and the present form of keyboard was not devised until fully a thousand years later.

The organ was, in fact, the invention of many minds, and centuries were required for its development. It was evolved from the syrinx, or set of pipes bound together, such as we see represented in pictures of the pagan god Pan. A wind-box and bellows were attached, and the various pipes were caused to sound by means of a sliding perforated plate. This is said by some to have been invented by a certain Ctesibius. A hydraulic organ, in which the bellows were actuated by water, is mentioned by Tertullian, who attributed the idea to the famous Greek scientist, Archimedes.

In the year 757 Constantine V, one of the Byzantine Emperors, sent an organ as a gift to Pepin, King of France, and another was sent later to his son Charlemagne.

**The Development of the Organ.** It was undoubtedly the giving of these instruments to these great monarchs of the West that led to the general introduction of them into the service of the Church throughout Europe. A great organ with four hundred pipes and twenty-six bellows was built at Winchester, in England, in 951. From the eleventh century organs were used generally in cathedrals and monastic churches, although the idea was opposed by some great teachers of the Church, notably St. Thomas Aquinas. A vigorous effort was made to have legislation passed against them at the Council of Trent, but a majority of the bishops voted otherwise, and the Council simply enacted that the music should be grave and devotional. Similar injunctions were made by Benedict XIV in 1749, and strict regulations were put into effect by the *Motu Proprio* of St. Pius X, which will be discussed further on.

Among the early Protestant denominations there was much discussion and dissension regarding the use of organs. The Lutherans and Anglicans retained them, but many other sects banished them from their churches. At the present day, however, many of even the stricter Methodist and Presbyterian branches have introduced them again, in an endeavor to add some attractiveness to their ritual.

To proceed with the account of the organ's development: The blowing of the bellows, even for the largest instruments, was done by hand for many centuries. The Winchester organ mentioned above required seventy men, working in relays. The simple device of weighting the bellows was discovered only at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Portable organs were in use in the tenth century, and a little later the kind known as reed organs, using vibrating metal tongues instead of pipes, came into use. Organs with two or more manuals or keyboards were constructed about the year 1350, and soon afterwards the device known as the coupler was introduced, by which when a key is depressed a corresponding key is pulled down on another keyboard. The pedal keys, played with the feet, date back to the fourteenth century, but the invention which



gives the organ its greatest effectiveness, namely the stops, was probably brought into use only about the year 1500. The enclosing of a part of the organ in a box with movable shutters, known as the swell, by moving which the volume of sound is diminished or increased, was the invention of a Londoner named Jordan, in 1712.

**Orchestras in Churches.** Are musical instruments, other than the organ, allowed in church services? Yes, under certain restrictions. After the introduction of the organ it alone was used for some centuries as an accompaniment to the solemn chanting of the choir. The nature of the organ is to a great extent a protection against its misuse. Its resonance and fullness lend themselves admirably to the majesty of the divine service. It can be sweeping and powerful, or delicate and sweet; but its tone is always more appropriate for sacred music than the combined tones of the brass and wind instruments of an orchestra. After the sixteenth century, and possibly earlier in some places, orchestral instruments found entrance into some churches, but laws were soon passed against them on account of the frivolous and sensuous character of the music produced by means of them. At the present day, as a result of the legislation contained in the *Motu Proprio* of St. Pius X, they may be used only by permission of the bishop and within due limits.

**The Gregorian Chant.** This is the distinctive song of the Church, the interpreter in melody of her prayerful devotion. It is so called from its great founder, St. Gregory the Great, and is also known by the names of Plain, Roman or Choral Chant. It is a grave melody, usually solemn in nature, sung in unison—that is, without harmonizing parts—set to the rhythm of the words, and without strictly measured time. As prayer is an utterance by the believing heart, expressing its faith, so the chant which is the more solemn mode of liturgical prayer, owes to faith its power and its beauty.

The leading characteristics of the Gregorian Chant are its melody, its tone and its rhythm. Concerning the first of these,

the Church, strictly speaking, authorizes in her liturgy no other music than pure melody; that is, the singers always chant in unison and at the same pitch. Voices of different pitch singing in harmonic chords may indeed be tolerated; but, however beautiful the effect, the Church does not consider such music appropriate to the sacred chant, with the exception of the so-called "Palestrina music," which will be alluded to further on.

The melody of the Gregorian Chant is at the same time recitative and meditative; it recites the words of the text and meditates upon them. Sometimes it proceeds with great despatch, as in the singing of the psalms, usually assigning one note for each syllable; at other times it dwells upon the words, pouring out its meaning in rich and musical cadences, based rhythmically upon the syllables of the liturgical words. It is thereby accommodated to the spirit of the Church's services—now dwelling on the sacred word in sustained meditation, now sending forth a rapid current of melodious praise.

**The Beauty of the Chant.** As regards the tone used, the ecclesiastical chant is full of variety, for it was created for the purpose of beautifying the Church's services, which are of many kinds. Adoration, thanksgiving, supplication, sorrow, joy and triumph find in the Gregorian tones their fitting expression. The melody accommodates itself to the word and phrase, to the spirit of the Church, and to the nature of the prayer and praise which are being offered to God. Whether it be the Gloria, the jubilant song of the Angels—the Credo, which is the Church's public act of faith—the Sanctus, in which we here on earth join in adoration with the celestial spirits—the Agnus Dei, the appeal for mercy addressed to Him Who has taken away sin—the Libera which is the intercessory prayer for the faithful departed—in each of these the spirit of the words and the devotion of the Church are brought out clearly by the grand and simple melodies of the Gregorian Chant. How beautiful in its solemn and reverential strains is the Preface of the Mass, in which the priest offers the Church's thanksgiving and homage before the throne of God! How re-

plete with sadness and sorrow is the chant of the Lamentations in the office of Holy Week! How expressive of fear and desolation are the plaintive notes of the *Dies Israel*! All these varying moods of the Church's praise and prayer are portrayed in the Gregorian Chant without any of the artifices of vocal or instrumental harmonizing that are employed in secular music. Its melodies have sprung from the minds of saints, singing from the inspiration of the Spirit of God.

The simple Gregorian Chant was considered by the composer Halévy "the most beautiful religious melody that exists on earth." Mozart, who wrote many Masses of great merit and beauty, declared that he would gladly exchange all his musical reputation for the fame of having composed the Preface of the Mass.

As to rhythm, the Gregorian Chant differs from our modern music in that it follows the natural accenting of the words—that is, the longer notes are used for the accented syllables of the text, and there is no strict rule as to the time. Thus the melody of the Chant accentuates the meaning of the words of the liturgy, and does not becloud or conceal it, as is too often the case in secular music.

**The Notation of the Chant.** The admirable system now in use for the writing of all music originated in the chant of our Church. The ladder or scale of sound is represented to the eye by a pictorial ladder of rounds or steps, called a staff. In the Gregorian Chant four lines and three intervening spaces are used; in modern musical notation this has been increased to five lines and four spaces.

In the Gregorian staff the seven steps correspond to the seven different notes of the musical octave, and if any of these is defined by having assigned to it the pitch and name of one of the sounds of the octave, all the rest thereby receive their pitch and name. This defining is done by means of two signs called clefs, that is, keys—representing the notes "do" and "fa," prefixed to any line of the staff.

The Gregorian Chant uses notes differing in form from those

used in ordinary musical notation—a square note, called *brevis*, or short; a square note with a tail, called *longa*, or long; and a diamond-shaped note called *semi-brevis*, having about half the value of the square note. Unlike the notes in modern music, these Gregorian notes have no strictly measured value; the sense of the words and the spirit of the season cause the text to be sung rapidly or slowly, and the music of the chant is merely intended to aid in expressing such sense and spirit.

**The History of Gregorian Chant.** It is probable that some of the psalm-tunes of our Church are derived from those used in the worship of the Old Law. The Apostles, who had been members of the Jewish Church, were the founders of the Christian Church; and it is reasonable to suppose that the chant, as well as the words, was preserved by them and handed on to their successors.

As soon as the Church was freed from persecution we find her occupied in establishing due uniformity in her liturgy. Pope Damasus, about the year 380, decreed that the psalms should be chanted by alternate choirs (as is done at the present day in monastic churches), and that the Gloria Patri should be added to each. St. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, was one of the great founders of the system of church music. St. Augustine gives testimony to the beauty of the Ambrosian chant. "The sweet song of Thy Church stirred and penetrated my being; the voices streamed into my ears and caused truth to flow into my heart." But it is to St. Gregory the Great, Pope from 590 to 604, that we are principally indebted for the beautiful harmonies that have since borne the name of Gregorian. He is said to have discovered the octave as the naturally complete succession of sounds, to have distinguished the various notes by means of letters, and to have added many new chants to those already in use.

The idea of the staff of four lines and of the movable clefs is due to a Benedictine monk, Guido d'Arezzo, in the eleventh century. He also is said to have given the names to the first six notes of the octave. The note "do" was originally called

“ut,” and the six names are taken from the Vesper hymn of the feast of St. John the Baptist:

UT queant laxis REsonare fibris  
MIRA gestorum FAMuli tuorum,  
SOLve polluti LABii reatum,  
Sancte Joannes.

As the centuries went on, the beauty and solemnity of the chant of the Church were impaired in many ways—by the growing use of measured rhythm, thereby making the words subordinate to the music—by the introduction of counterpoint or harmony, with its seductive beauty—and by the mingling in the liturgy of popular worldly music, both vocal and instrumental. Therefore at the Council of Trent, in the sixteenth century, the reform of church music was considered, and a little later, by authority of Paul V, the *Graduale Romanum* was printed, the great work of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina.

**The Music of Palestrina.** This greatest of all composers of religious music was born in Italy about 1556. He was for some years a member of the papal choir, and afterwards of those of the churches of St. John Lateran and St. Mary Major. He was a friend of St. Philip Neri, and gained from him that insight into the spirit of the liturgy that enabled him to send it forth in music as it had never been done before. He made his compositions the medium for the expression of the state of his own soul, trained by his companionship with one of the greatest of modern saints.

After the Council of Trent, St. Pius V entrusted the reform of church music to a commission of cardinals, among whom was St. Charles Borromeo. This holy and learned prelate became acquainted with Palestrina and with his music, and recognized that the latter was admirably adapted to the Church's liturgy. Masses, hymns and psalm-tunes were produced in great numbers by the gifted composer. His complete works comprise no less than thirty-three volumes. The distinguishing features of his music are the absence of all themes resembling

secular melodies or reminiscent of them, and the rejection of musical forms that would obscure the liturgical text. His creations will stand forth for all times as the embodiment of the devotional spirit of the Church. To him belongs the double glory of having restored the sacred chant to its former grand and simple beauty, and of introducing harmonized music of such power and expressiveness that it became a proper accompaniment to Christian devotion.

**Saint Pius X.** This great modern Pope, who wrought so many changes in spiritual matters in the Church, and whose pontificate will go into history as an era of religious awakening, issued a decree in 1903, known as the *Motu Proprio*—which words signify “of his own accord,” indicating that the Pontiff acted without consultation with Cardinals or others. This decree states clearly what Church music should be. “Sacred music should possess in the highest degree the qualities proper to the liturgy. It must be holy, and must therefore exclude all worldliness.” The Holy Father declared that “the Church has always recognized and honored progress in the arts, admitting to the service of religion everything good and beautiful discovered by genius in the course of ages. Consequently modern music is also admitted in the Church, since it oftentimes affords compositions of such excellence, sobriety and gravity that they are in no way unworthy of liturgical functions. But care must be taken that musical compositions in this style contain nothing worldly, be free from reminiscences of theatrical *motifs*, and be not fashioned after the manner of secular pieces.” Music in church must be in conformity with the spirit of divine worship. It must be Church music, not theatrical. Marches, operatic airs, ambitious solos and the crash of instruments are out of place in the worship of God, and the melodies that bring memories of the theatre and the concert hall are nothing but a distraction to those who wish to pray.

According to the *Motu Proprio*, the liturgical text must be sung as it is in the books of the Church, without alteration or

transposing of the words, without undue repetition, and in an intelligible manner. The day of the two score Amens has gone by and the endless and meaningless repeating of disconnected phrases of the Gloria or Credo is also, happily, a thing of the past.

**Singing by the People.** St. Pius X expressed himself as warmly in favor of congregational singing within proper limits; but it was his will that this should be largely the singing of the Gregorian Chant. Hymns in other languages than Latin may not be substituted at Mass, although they are permitted at some other services. In the *Motu Proprio* the Pontiff said: "Special efforts are to be made to restore the use of the Gregorian Chant by the people, so that the faithful may take a more active part in the ecclesiastical offices, as was the case in early times." This appeal was restated with great emphasis by Pope Pius XI in 1928 and again by Pius XII.

**The History of Congregational Singing.** We may consider this important matter with reference to its history, its revival at the present time, and the results of that revival.

The first testimony as to this ancient practice is found in the Epistle to the Ephesians: "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual canticles, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord." (Eph. 5, 19) This is understood by commentators as referring to congregational singing in the religious meetings of the faithful. In these services of the primitive Church both sexes took part in the singing. Although St. Paul had ordered that women should keep silence in church, his words applied only to instructing or exhorting. And in the times of persecution, as already stated, the Christians were accustomed to use psalms and hymns in the worship of God.

St. Ambrose introduced the practice of congregational singing from the East into his diocese of Milan, and it soon spread throughout the Western Church. For many centuries Latin was used exclusively, but in later times rhyming hymns in the language of the country came into vogue in some parts of

Europe. The frequent pilgrimages and the religious plays subsequently fostered such singing among the people.

After a time, in some parts of the Church, decrees were passed against such singing. At the Council of Laodicea, in the fourth century, it was declared that "besides the appointed singers who mount the ambo and sing from the book, others shall not sing in the church." The ambo was the raised platform from which the lectors read the Scriptures to the people, and on which the chanters sang. The reason for this decree was that the unskilful singing of the people interfered with the harmony of the chanters. However, it did not come into force everywhere. Centuries later, especially after the Reformation, the use of the language of the country became rather common, particularly in Germany.

The second Plenary Council of Baltimore, in 1866, urged pastors to have the elements of the Gregorian Chant taught in the schools, so that "the number of those who can render the chant well may be increased, and the greater part of the people shall thus learn to sing Vespers, etc. along with the ministers and choir." The same wish was expressed by the third Plenary Council of Baltimore, in 1884. Pope Pius XII in his encyclical *Mediator Dei* wrote that it is greatly to be desired that the laity participate in reciting or chanting Vespers in their own parish churches on feast days; and he urged the bishops to see that this practice is kept up, and that wherever it has ceased, to have it restored if possible.

These words show us that the people are to be instructed in the Gregorian Chant—that is, to take part in the liturgical offices of the Church, such as High Mass, Vespers and Benediction. Congregational singing at low Masses and at other services has always been practised more or less in some of our churches. It is to be hoped, therefore, that means will be found to teach the people to sing the Ordinary of the Mass in plain chant—namely, the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei, besides the various responses, leaving the changeable parts, such as the Introit, Offertory and Communion, to



the trained choir; and also to sing the psalms and hymns at Vespers, the changing antiphons to be chanted by the choir.

Since St. Pius X inaugurated the reformation of liturgical music in his *Motu Proprio*, numerous apostolic constitutions, papal instructions, pastoral letters and diocesan regulations have been issued on the subject, and still the results are far, very far, from being complete. The reform of St. Pius X is not one of externals only but a renovation of the spirit of things. Good music, men and boys' choirs, dignified ceremonies, are but the first necessary step towards a greater end in view—that is, the penetration of the life of Christ into our own. So far individuals and groups have shown the possibility of living by the liturgy, but the great body of Catholics still remain quite passive.

Indeed, only one thing is necessary. Catholics must simply convince themselves of the truth of St. Pius X's words that "the first and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit lies in the active participation of the laity in the solemn liturgy of the Church."

## 10. THE USE OF THE LATIN LANGUAGE

The official language of our Church is Latin. It is used in her services in the greater part of the world. It is employed in nearly all the business correspondence of the Holy See. Encyclicals and briefs of Popes, decrees of General Councils, decisions of the Roman Congregations, acts of national and provincial councils, synodal regulations of dioceses—all these are expressed in the ancient tongue of Rome. The works of many of the great Fathers of the Church after the first three centuries and the countless tomes that treat of theology, Scripture, Church law and liturgy, all use the same majestic language.

**Why Latin is Used.** Why does the Catholic Church use Latin? Why does she not conduct her services in a language which can be understood by all those who are present at

them? These are sensible questions, frequently asked; and every Catholic should be able to give a satisfactory answer.

The Church makes Latin the language of her liturgy because it was the official language of the Roman Empire, and was generally understood and spoken throughout a considerable part of the civilized world, at the time when Christianity was established. St. Peter fixed the centre of the Christian faith in Rome, the capital city of the Empire, and the Church gradually adopted the language of the Romans, and finally used it in many parts of the world.

Latin, however, was far from being the sole language of the Roman Empire. At the time of Christ and for two or three centuries afterwards many other tongues were spoken extensively in various provinces, and Latin, as a vernacular, was confined more or less to central Italy. In northern Italy, Gaul and Spain there was a kind of Celtic; in Germany, Teutonic; but the most widespread language was Greek. It was spoken in Greece, Thessaly, Macedonia and Asia Minor, in Marseilles and the adjacent territories, in southern Italy and Sicily, and in parts of Africa. Moreover, Greek was everywhere the language of culture, and every educated Roman was supposed to know it. Latin remained the language of worship, of the law, the army and the government; but Greek became the great medium of communication among the various parts of the mighty Empire. The fact that it had become common among the Jews, both in Palestine and elsewhere, led to the making of the Septuagint version of the Old Testament and the writing of nearly all the New Testament in Greek—for even the Epistle to the Romans was written in that language, although one would think that Romans would better understand Latin. The first Fathers of the Church all wrote in Greek—even those who were addressing Roman readers or the Roman Emperor; and the Popes of the first two centuries used the same language when they wrote at all.

**The Official Language of Rome.** In the Roman Empire, Latin was the language of worship, of government and of

law; and the Church, which had fixed her seat of government in the Imperial City, took it as her official tongue for the same purposes.

The great centre of missionary enterprise in the west of Europe was Rome, and the priests who went to preach the Gospel were accustomed to say Mass in Latin. When they began their work in any country they had to learn the language; and when they had succeeded in doing so, they often found it too crude, too wanting in words, for the purpose of religious service. Therefore it was necessary to employ the Latin tongue for the public ceremonies of the Church, and the local language or dialect was used only for the instruction of the people.

**The Language of Medieval Literature.** In course of time Latin became the literary language of western Christendom, because it was familiar to the clergy, who were the educated class and the writers of books; because it was the only stable language in a time of chaos; because it was equally useful in any part of the world, no matter what was the native tongue of the people; and because it was a convenient means of communication between the bishops and the See of Rome.

Although in the course of centuries the Latin of Gaul was gradually modified into French, that of Italy into Italian, and that of Iberia into Spanish and Portuguese, the Church did not attempt to follow these changes in her language of worship. She has deemed it wise to retain the use of pure Latin both in her worship and in her legislation.

**Unity of Speech and Faith.** How well, in the Catholic Church, her oneness of speech seems to typify her unity of faith. More than that—it not only typifies but helps to preserve it. We can readily understand that it is of the utmost importance that the dogmas of religion should be defined with great exactness, in a language that always conveys the same ideas. Latin is now what we call a “dead language,” that is,

not being in daily use as a spoken tongue, it does not vary in meaning; hence it is very apt for the preservation of unity.

It is also very convenient for the Church to have it as her official language. To legislate for the Church's good it is necessary from time to time to hold a General Council, at which the bishops of all the world assemble. They all understand Latin, no interpreter is required. Every bishop writes often to Rome, and goes at intervals to visit the Holy Father; and if there were no common language used in the Church, the Vicar of Christ would need to be familiar with more than the tongues of Pentecost if he would understand the German, the Spaniard, the Slav, the Japanese, or the countless others of many races to whom he would be obliged to listen.

However, despite the advantages of an almost universal language for the liturgy, there is a strong movement in the Church towards a more liberal use of the vernacular in public liturgical functions. Leaders in what is known as the Liturgical Movement are keenly aware that in recent centuries the faithful have lost an appreciation of the liturgy, or a sense of how they should participate, as members of the Mystical Body, in the public worship of the Church. To instil this liturgical sense anew, they have at times requested of the Holy See permission to use the local speech in certain portions of the ritual, and the Holy Father has not looked unkindly on the development.

Furthermore translations of the Mass and of the ritual of the sacraments are now easily available to any one who wishes to use them. No one needs to remain ignorant of the meaning of the words and rites of the sacred liturgy. But Latin still remains the official language of the Roman Rite.

Pope Pius XII referred to this matter in his encyclical *Mediator Dei*: "The use of the Latin language, customary in a considerable portion of the Church, is a manifest and beautiful sign of unity, as well as an effective antidote for any corruption of doctrinal truth. In spite of this, the use of the mother tongue in connection with several of the rites may be of much advantage to the people. But the Apostolic See

alone is empowered to grant this permission." This Pope, however, authorized the vernacular for prayers recited in the administration of Baptism, Matrimony and Extreme Unction.

## 11. OTHER RITES

**Other Rites in Latin.** During the Middle Ages and later, there was a great diversity of rites in Catholic worship. The Gallican rite was used at one time over nearly all of north-western Europe, and our present Roman rite is largely a modification of it. The Milanese rite (also known as the Ambrosian, from the great bishop of Milan) flourished in northern Italy, and the Mozarabic rite prevailed in parts of Spain. All of these used the Latin language. Many provinces, dioceses and religious orders also had ceremonials of their own.

St. Pius V, in 1570, ordered the publication of the Roman Missal, and decreed that all these varying Latin rites should be abolished, excepting those that could show an existence of at least two centuries. Some dioceses, therefore, have kept a distinct ritual; the Ambrosian and Mozarabic rites are still in daily use; and certain religious orders have rites of their own, as follows:

The Benedictine rite, dating from the sixth century, concerns only the breviary. St. Benedict regulated the canonical hours for his monks, and his rules are still obligatory on all religious houses of the various Benedictine branches.

The Carmelite rite, also called the Rule of the Holy Sepulchre, began in the twelfth century. It varies somewhat from the Roman rite in the giving of Extreme Unction, and considerably in the Mass, the Office and the calendar of saints.

The Cistercian rite originated at Citeaux, France, in 1134. In the breviary it follows the rule of St. Benedict, and in the Mass and the administration of Penance and Extreme Unction it varies somewhat from the Roman rite.

The Dominican rite goes back to the thirteenth century. When the order was founded, each house at first followed the rites of its own locality, and these were then very diverse in the different countries of Europe. The superiors of the order, therefore, sought to bring about uniformity, and formulated the ritual which the Dominicans still use. Many of our readers may have assisted at a low Mass in this rite. The celebrant goes to the altar wearing the amice on his head, like a hood or cowl; the introductory psalm *Judica me* is omitted, the *Confiteor* is shorter than ours, and some of the prayers and ceremonies are different from those of the Roman rite. The High Mass and the Office also differ considerably from ours.

The Franciscans, Capuchin Friars Minor, Premonstratensians and Servites also have rites in their Masses and Offices varying more or less from the Roman usage.

**Eastern Rites.** The outward form of the worship varies considerably from that which we use. Their services are conducted in strange tongues; their Mass is celebrated with a ceremonial which would be unrecognizable by us if we were present at it; their sacraments are administered in a different manner from that in which we receive these same sacraments according to the Latin rite.

And yet these people are Catholics—fervent and faithful members of the flock of Christ. Their services are not heretical nor schismatic. Their Mass is the real unbloody Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of our Saviour; their sacraments are the same as ours, instituted by the same Divine Founder and producing the same spiritual effects—and the Mass and the sacraments are lawful, for those who use these various rites are in full communion with Christ's Vicar on earth.

There are also in many parts of the world, particularly in the East, schismatic sects which fell away centuries ago from the Church's unity and denied her authority over them, but which have preserved much of her doctrine and have clung steadfastly to the ancient rituals which they possessed before their separation from Catholicity. In nearly all of these schis-

matic churches of the Orient there is undoubtedly a real priesthood, a true Sacrifice of the Mass and valid sacraments. But we shall pay special attention only to the religious bodies that are Catholic—that are in union with the Roman See, and nevertheless use in their liturgy languages which are strange to us and ceremonies different from ours.

**The Languages Used by Catholics.** There are, in all, nine languages used at the present day in Catholic worship. Latin is used in our Roman rite, and in those known as the Milanese and the Mozarabic. Greek is still the liturgical language for two groups of the Byzantine rite. Syriac is the liturgical tongue of those who follow the Syrian, Maronite, Chaldean and Malabar rites. Armenian is used in all churches of the Armenian rite. Coptic is the Church's language in parts of northeastern Africa. Arabic is used by the Melchites who follow the Byzantine rite. Slavonic is in use in the Byzantine worship of the Slav races, and in the Roman rite as practised in Dalmatia. The inhabitants of the Asiatic province of Georgia, following the Byzantine liturgy, worship in their ancient Georgian tongue, and the people of Wallachia, in Roumania, with a similar ritual, use an old form of Roumanian.

**The Byzantine Rite.** Among all the Eastern rites, the most widespread and the most important one is the Byzantine Rite, which in the olden times, predominated in the whole Byzantine Empire, so much so, that it covered even Middle Italy and Sicily, where it lasted until the Norman invasions. The people of this rite have for centuries been called Greek Catholics.

This rite is derived from the rite of Antioch. Its fast expansion can be ascribed to the patriarchs of Constantinople, in whose interest it was to render the rite of their own capital city as a prevalent feature of the whole empire. Its original language was Greek, but today this liturgy is being maintained in seven different tongues, and has as many as eight subdivisions, namely:

**The Ruthenian** group, to which the Carpatho-Ruthenians, the Ukrainians, the South-Slavs (Yugoslavs) and the Hungarians belong. To this group the American Greek-Catholic belongs. The language is old-Slavonic.

**The Italian-Greek** group, functioning mostly in South Italy and Sicily. Its language is Greek.

**The Slav or Great-Russian** group, which is scattered in Poland, Lithuania, France and China. They use the old-Slavonic liturgical language.

**The Bulgarian** group in Bulgaria, using the old Slavonic language.

**The Rumanian** group, which uses in its liturgy the old Rumanian language.

**The Melchite** group, found in Palestine, Syria and Egypt. Its liturgical language is Arabic.

**The Pure-Greek** group, to which mostly the Greeks and some Turks belong. It uses Greek.

**The Georgian** group, found in Georgia and Iberia. There are few Georgian Catholics and they use a vernacular Georgian language for their liturgy.

The Mass in the Byzantine Rite differs greatly from the Roman ritual, yet is fully as old and as venerable. The bread used is leavened or raised with yeast. Holy Communion is administered under both species. These Rites employ three different liturgies, according to the feast or season of the year. That known as the Rite of St. John Chrysostom is used throughout most of the year; that of St. Basil on some days of Lent; and the Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified on certain Lenten days when the Holy Sacrifice is not offered.

**The Mass in Syriac.** There are several branches of the Catholic Church which use the ancient Syriac tongue, though their ceremonials differ considerably from each other. The Syrian Uniats worship in the ancient Liturgy of St. James. In far away India there are Christians, of the Malabar rite, who use Syriac. The Maronites, a people who live on the slopes of Mount Lebanon and who have been remarkable for their un-



swerving devotion to the Holy See, have a ritual of their own. The language of these people today is Arabic; but in their liturgies they preserve the Syriac language.

The Maronites use incense at low Masses as well as at the more solemn functions, and the celebrant and the server chant certain parts and responses of the Mass in a harmony which is thoroughly Oriental in its spirit.

**Other Asiatic Liturgies.** Mass is said in ancient Syro-Chaldaic by certain Catholic communities in the eastern and northern parts of Asiatic Turkey, as well as by Nestorian heretics in the same localities, and in ancient Georgian, in the Byzantine rite, by the inhabitants of Georgia, in Asia. Armenian is the liturgical language of the Christians of that long persecuted race, both Catholics and heretics, of whom the latter far outnumber the former. They inhabit the parts of Asia Minor near the Black Sea, and various parts of Palestine; and they are also found in the provinces of European Turkey, Austria and Russia. Their ritual is beautiful in many respects, and some of its details can be traced back at least to the fourth century.

**The African Christians.** In darkest Africa, not only in the Nile region but in more remote parts, are some Christian communities which have held to the faith of Christ more or less perfectly, despite long isolation from the Catholic world and centuries of warfare with Mohammedanism. Some of them are Catholic; others have drifted into schism and heresy, and the Christianity which they have preserved is mingled with superstition and error.

The Christians who dwell along the Nile, whether Catholics or schismatics, follow the Coptic rite and use the language which bears the same name. It is said by some to be the ancient tongue of the Pharaohs, and is now a dead language—the vernacular of those regions being everywhere Arabic. A small proportion of the Copts are Catholics, but the great majority are out of communion with the Church. They have a beautiful and complex liturgy, which goes back to early times.

Further south we find the Christians of semi-barbarous Abyssinia. This strange and little known people has held fast to at least a part of Christian truth for many centuries. Some of them are Catholics, but the greater part of the nation is schismatic, and among these are found various superstitions and semi-pagan practices. Their liturgy differs in nearly every detail from all those previously mentioned.

**The Wisdom of Our Church.** These are the principal forms of liturgy used in the Catholic world, apart from the Roman rite, which prevails throughout the greater part of Catholic Christendom. How well we see in this not only the unity but the wisdom of our holy Church! She has not interfered with the ancient rituals which are cherished by these Oriental Catholics, for she knows that the small details of rite and ceremony are not essential to faith, and that they may develop differently in different surroundings. She realizes that the faith of the Catholic Greek or Syrian or Copt is precisely the same as ours, though the outward expression of it may seem strange and unfamiliar to our eyes and ears. The language or the ceremonies used in religious service are not of paramount importance. They are only accidentals.

And so, all over the world, the grand ritual of our Faith goes on—expressed, indeed, in various ancient tongues, performed in various ways. The bishops and the priests are vested differently in each of these Oriental Churches; the Mass is celebrated and the Sacraments are administered with a symbolism unknown to us. But the bishops are real bishops, the priests are real priests, the Mass is the same Mass as ours, and the Sacraments are the same channels of grace as are those which we receive who are of the Latin rite.

## Chapter Five

# The Liturgical Year

---

### 1. THE CALENDAR

**The Liturgical Year.** “The liturgical year, devotedly fostered and accompanied by the Church, is not a cold and lifeless representation of the events of the past, or a simple and bare record of a former age. It is rather Christ Himself who is ever living in His Church. Here He continues that journey of immense mercy which He lovingly began in His mortal life, going about doing good, with the design of bringing men to know His mysteries and in a way live by them. These mysteries are ever present and active not in a vague and uncertain way as some modern writers hold, but in the way that Catholic doctrine teaches us. According to the doctors of the Church, they are shining examples of Christian perfection, as well as sources of divine grace, due to the merit and prayers of Christ; they still influence us because each mystery brings its own special grace for our salvation.” \*

The liturgical year, beginning with the first Sunday of Advent and ending with the last Sunday after Pentecost, does not everywhere give equal emphasis to all the truths and mysteries of Christ's redemption. One by one they are brought forth, commemorated, lived in a manner peculiar to the liturgy of the Church. The mystery that is being celebrated is a fact having the character of an event which is actually taking place, and in which the Church really participates. The Church lives over again the mysteries of Christ in the course of the liturgical year, and we as members of the Church communicate in these

\* *Mediator Dei.*

mysteries; the past becomes the immediate present. Let us make a brief study of the origin of our liturgical calendar.

The Church year, like the secular year, consists of weeks and seasons; but unlike the civil calendar, it is made up of two cycles of feasts and observances which run side by side. Of these the first relates to the mysteries of our Redemption, and is called the *temporal* or dominical \* cycle. The other is called the *sanctoral* cycle, in which various feasts of the Blessed Virgin and the saints are celebrated. These feasts are usually dated in accordance with the secular calendar and are called fixed feasts, that is, they are commemorated on a definite date each year. Their purpose is to help us to realize the doctrine of the communion of saints, to secure for us the aid of powerful intercessors in heaven, and to inspire us to follow the example of those who so closely followed Christ.

The formation of the temporal cycle is more complicated and to understand it we must review some history of its evolution. Easter is the first great festival in point of origin, the greatest feast of the whole year. After the first Pentecost, the Sabbath of the Old Law gave way to the Sunday because of the occurrence of the Resurrection and the descent of the Holy Ghost on Sunday. Each Sunday was, as it were, a Little Easter, a special commemoration of the redemptive mysteries of Christ, all of which centered in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Gradually the annual recurrence of the anniversary of the first Easter was celebrated with special solemnity. It was called the Paschal Mystery. The date of celebrating the Resurrection is determined by the occurrence of the first full moon of the first month of the ancient Jewish calendar, that is, the first Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox, the opening of Spring, March 21st. The earliest possible date, therefore, that Easter can occur is March 22nd, the latest, April 25th.

Easter thus occurs on various dates of the civil calendar and is called a movable feast. All the other movable feasts are determined by Easter. Preparatory to Easter there is a forty-

\* From *dominica* ("the Lord's day") the liturgical term for Sunday.

day fasting period, called *Lent*. Before Lent there is again a preliminary penitential season of two weeks and a half, commonly called the *Septuagesima* period. Lent is now completely dedicated to the remembrance of Christ's Passion and Death. In the early Church it was also devoted to the preparation of candidates for public Baptism at Easter. The extension of the Easter solemnity over the fifty days ending with Pentecost with its octave was natural in the light of the Gospel story. Thus came into existence the *Paschal* cycle.

**The Nativity Cycle.** In the first few centuries of the Christian era there was no liturgical celebration of the birth of Christ. In the East the feast of the Epiphany was celebrated very early, but it commemorated the appearance of the Saviour at His baptism rather than His birth. Only in the fourth century was the feast of Christmas instituted in the West and celebrated on December 25th. Gradually a period was set aside as a preparation for the coming of the Redeemer called *Advent*. The actual birth of Christ is now celebrated continuously, as it were, from December 25 to January 6, the feast of the Epiphany. The Nativity celebrations are prolonged in a minor key until February 2nd, on which day the presentation of the Christ Child in the Temple of Jerusalem took place according to the Jewish law.

Thus the liturgical cycle of the Church year divides naturally into two periods, that of the Nativity centered on the Incarnation, and that of Easter centered on the Redemption.

**Fixed Festivals.** All through the year, in the Church calendar, there are fixed feasts of greater or less importance on almost every day. Some of these are observed universally; others have a local or limited celebration only. Many are of very ancient origin, but some have been established in recent times; and as the work of canonization goes on new saints and feasts are added to the glory of our Church year. In some cases the day assigned is that of the saint's death—the beginning of heavenly glory; in others, it is fixed merely according to the will of the Church.

**The Gregorian Calendar.** The Church's calendar, therefore, depends considerably upon the calendar in ordinary use at the present time, which is called the Gregorian Calendar, from Pope Gregory XIII, who brought it to its present form. The arrangement of the year devised by this great Pontiff is so admirable that it may be well to give a brief explanation of it and of the reasons why it was made. To do this we shall be obliged to lead our readers a little way into the paths of astronomical science.

The sun is the centre of our planetary system, and the earth travels around it in what we call a year, turning at the same time on its own axis, each complete turn constituting what we call a day. But the journey of the earth around the sun does not happen to be completed in an exact number of days. If it leaves a certain point in its track or orbit on January first, for instance, it is not at that precise point at the same hour on the following January first. Hence arises the necessity of having "leap years," so that our calendar may be brought into close agreement with the real year of the earth traveling around the sun. Otherwise the difference between the real year and the year of 365 days would gradually cause the seasons to shift.

Leap years were invented by Julius Cæsar, who estimated the length of the solar year as 365 days and six hours; and to provide for these extra six hours he inserted an additional day into each fourth year. But his estimate of the year's length was not precise; the year is really less than the above figures by eleven minutes and fourteen seconds. The result was that there was an error of a full day in about 134 years.

**Pope Gregory's Reform.** In 1582 Gregory XIII brought the calendar to its present form by the simple plan of dropping ten days, from October 5 to 14 inclusively, for the error had increased to that extent since Cæsar's time. The Pontiff provided for the future by ordering that the leap year should not be observed in 1700, 1800 and 1900, but should be retained in the year 2000 and in every century thereafter that is divisible by 400. This ingenious method gives such a close ap-

proach to exactness that only after thirty-five centuries will there be an error of one day—and that is too remote to be of much concern to you or me.

But this was a Roman decree—and therefore it was bitterly opposed by the Protestant countries of Europe. Nearly all of them, however, adopted it in the year 1700. England, with true British obstinacy, held on to the old style until 1752, when she was eleven days “behind schedule.” More recent adoptions which made its use universal are Japan 1897, Russia 1918 and Greece 1923. For liturgical purposes the Catholic Eastern Churches and the Orthodox churches retain the Julian Calendar, although in recent years some of the former in the United States have adopted the Gregorian calendar.

Such is a brief history of the Gregorian calendar. As the years roll on—those secular years which the wisdom of one of the Church’s rulers has brought into close accord with the unvarying movements of God’s universe—day by day the Church keeps her own calendar. She celebrates the great events in the history of the world’s redemption. She honors the Mother of God and the faithful ones who have served their Master well. She has her seasons of penance and her festivals of joy. And so shall her years be kept while this earth endures—until the day shall come when “the heavens shall be folded together like a scroll” and time shall be no more.

## 2. FESTIVALS

Saints’ days and other festivals have not been imposed upon us by any law of God. In the Jewish religion certain days were set apart for the commemoration of great events, such as the Passover, or for devotional and penitential observances, such as the Feast of Expiation. These were directly commanded by God Himself, in the laws which He gave to His chosen people through Moses. But in the Christian Church festival days are not of divine institution. They were all established by the Church herself, being begun at different times and in different

parts of the world. Some few of them go back to apostolic times, while others are of very recent origin.

**The Reasons for Feast Days.** Why has our Church established these festivals? Because she desires that the great truths of religion and the important events in its history shall be impressed on the minds of her children. Moreover, for the guiding of our lives, she wishes us to take as an example the virtues of those who have been faithful servants of God, that we may ever remember, in the words of St. Paul, that "we are the children of the saints." Therefore she has wisely instituted a great number of festivals, coming at certain determined times during the year, and varying in importance and solemnity according to what event they commemorate or what saint they honor.

**The Kinds of Feasts.** Feasts are divided, first, into holydays of obligation and ordinary feasts. On the former, the faithful are obliged to hear Mass and abstain from unnecessary servile work; on the latter, the Church observes the feasts in her Office and Mass without imposing any obligation upon her children. To arrive at the relative degree of solemnity with which feasts shall be celebrated, and to assist in the solution of difficulties when there is concurrence or conflict in the two cycles of festivals, a liturgical rank is attached to each feast. These are, in ascending order of importance, simple, double, greater double, double of second class, double of first class. Christmas, Easter and Pentecost have octaves, which extend the solemnity of the festival eight days.

**The Holydays of Obligation.** The holydays of obligation in the United States are these six: Christmas Day (December 25), Circumcision (January 1), Ascension Thursday (40 days after Easter), the Assumption (August 15), All Saints (November 1), and the Immaculate Conception (December 8). There are four other holydays of obligation in the universal Church: the Feasts of the Epiphany, Corpus Christi, St. Joseph and Sts. Peter and Paul. By Apostolic Indult these four are not days of obligation in the United States.



**A History of Some Feasts.** For at least two centuries Easter and Pentecost (with the weekly Lord's Day) were probably the only festivals celebrated. Then the feast of the Epiphany was instituted in honor of the first manifestation of our Blessed Saviour to the Gentiles represented by the Wise Men. The birth of our Lord was commemorated on this day in some parts of the world in early centuries. This probably accounts for the fact that in some places it is called "Little Christmas." It is classified like Easter and Pentecost among the cardinal feasts, those feasts which, as it were, divide the liturgical year.

The first day of January is the feast of our Lord's circumcision, for the Jewish law exacted the administration of this solemn rite on the eighth day after birth; and, happening to fall on the first day of the new year, it was developed into a great Christian festival, partly because it helped to wean newly converted nations from various idolatrous and pagan practices which were observed in many countries on that day. The feast of the Holy Name of Jesus is observed on the Sunday following January first, but it is transferred to January 2nd when the first Sunday falls on the first, sixth or seventh. This feast is of rather recent origin. It was approved at first only for Franciscan Churches; but in the year 1721 it was made universal by Pope Innocent XIII.

The Jewish law demanded the presentation of a male child in the Temple and the rite of purification for the mother, forty days after the child's birth. Consequently the Church observes the feast of the Purification of our Blessed Lady on the second day of February. It was first observed in the Eastern countries in the fourth century. On this day the solemn blessing of candles takes place in our churches, as is described elsewhere in this work.

In March comes another great festival of our Blessed Mother, the Annunciation. The fact that Christmas is celebrated on the twenty-fifth of December has led to the institution of this feast on the twenty-fifth of March, nine months

before, to honor the day when Mary consented to become the Mother of the Redeemer and He became incarnate in her virgin womb. There is no certain record of this feast before 692, although in the opinion of some writers it goes back to the early Church, even to the Apostles.

On the nineteenth of March occurs the feast of St. Joseph, which is not ancient. It was first kept on that day by several of the religious orders in the fourteenth century, and its establishment as a universal feast-day is largely due to St. Francis de Sales. In 1621 it was made a holyday of obligation, and this has been reaffirmed by the Code of Canon Law, although by indult it is not a holyday of obligation in the United States. Another feast, Solemnity of St. Joseph, was established in 1847 by Pius IX. But in 1956 Pius XII replaced the Solemnity with a new first class feast in honor of St. Joseph the Worker, to be observed each year on May first.

The feast of the Ascension of our Lord into heaven is one of the oldest holydays. St. Augustine speaks of as "kept from time immemorial," and attributes it to the Apostles; however, there is no certainty that they observed it.

Trinity Sunday was observed locally as far back as the tenth century, but the date varied in different countries. It was introduced into England by the martyr-saint Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury. It was made universal for the Church in 1334 by Pope John XXII, who assigned it to the Sunday after Pentecost.

The feast of Corpus Christi was established by Pope Urban IV in 1264 to celebrate the institution of the Blessed Sacrament and to make reparation for the coldness and indifference shown to Our Lord present upon our altars. Its Mass and Office were composed by St. Thomas Aquinas. The procession of the Blessed Sacrament now associated with this feast may take place on the feast itself and at any time of the day, or on the following Sunday. All, without exception, ought to take an active part in this procession. It is an act of adoring homage and loving reparation offered up by the whole community.

The month of June is dedicated to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, and crowning the whole period is the great feast of the Sacred Heart, raised in 1928 by Pope Pius XI to the rank of a first class feast, having a special Mass and proper Preface. This same Pope ordered the recitation of an act of reparation throughout the world on this feast day. The feast is celebrated on Friday following the second Sunday after Pentecost.

In June also occur two important feasts of the sanctoral cycle—that of the nativity of St. John the Baptist on the twenty-fourth, and of Sts. Peter and Paul on the twenty-ninth. The former is probably the oldest feast in honor of a saint. That of the two great Apostles dates back to the fifth century. In many places it is a holyday of obligation, but not in the United States.

On November 1, 1950, All Saints Day of the Holy Year of Jubilee, Pope Pius XII solemnly pronounced, declared and defined it to be a divinely revealed dogma that the Immaculate Mother of God, Mary ever Virgin, was, at the end of her earthly life, assumed body and soul into heavenly glory. The feast of the Assumption is kept throughout the world on August 15, as a holyday of obligation. It is the principal of all the feasts of Our Lady. In many Eastern Churches it is called the Falling Asleep of the All-holy Mother of God.

The feast of Christ The King was established by Pope Pius XI in 1925 to be celebrated on the last Sunday of October each year. Its object is to reassert the authority of Our Lord to rule all nations, and to exhort His Church to teach the human race to bring back men to Him, and so to establish "the peace of Christ, in the Kingdom of Christ."

The festival of All Saints, on the first of November, a day of obligation, commemorates all the saints of God, canonized and uncanonized, known and unknown. It was once called All Hallows. It has been celebrated on that day since the time of Gregory III, in 731. All Souls Day, November 2nd, came somewhat later, in 998, having been established in France by

a certain abbot, St. Odilo, for monastic churches. To give greater help to the suffering souls, every priest is allowed to say three Requiem Masses on this day.

The great feast of the Immaculate Conception, which is the patronal feast of the United States and a holyday of obligation, was observed under the name of "the Blessed Virgin's Conception" for several centuries, having become universal about 1350. When the doctrine of Mary's Immaculate Conception was defined by Pius IX in 1854, the title of the feast was correspondingly changed, and it was made one of the greatest festivals of the Church year.

**Minor Feasts of Mary.** As late as the twelfth century only four feasts of the Blessed Virgin were universally observed—her Nativity, her Purification, the Annunciation and the Assumption. At present, owing to the devotion of various Pontiffs, the number has increased to about twenty.

A feast is observed in some parts of the world on January 23, commemorating the Espousal of the Blessed Virgin. It is of comparatively recent origin, having been established by the Franciscans with the approval of Pope Paul III, in the sixteenth century. The feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, on February 11th commemorates the first of the eighteen apparitions of Our Blessed Lady to St. Bernadette in 1858.

There are two feasts of the Seven Dolors or Sorrows of Mary.\* One comes on the Friday after Passion Sunday, and was instituted by Benedict XIII in 1725. The other, established by Pius VII in 1814, is kept at present on September 15.

The title of Help of Christians was given to the Blessed Virgin by St. Pius V after the great naval victory of the Christians over the Turks at Lepanto. The feast was established by Pius VII, after he had been released from captivity, and had returned to Rome, in 1815.

\* The seven sorrows commemorated are: the prophecy of Simeon; the flight into Egypt; the loss of Jesus for three days in Jerusalem; seeing her Son carrying His Cross; the Crucifixion; the descent from the Cross; and the entombment. Thus were fulfilled the prophetic words of holy Simeon: "Thine own soul a sword shall pierce."

On the second of July the Church celebrates the festival of the Visitation, commemorating the journey of Mary to her cousin Elizabeth. The origin of this feast is obscure. It became universal only in the fourteenth century, under Pope Urban VI.

The feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel is celebrated on the sixteenth of July. It honors the intercessory power of Mary as manifested in the benefits granted to wearers of her scapular, and was approved for the Carmelite order by Sixtus V in 1587. It was made a feast for the entire Church at a later date.

The festival of Our Lady of the Snows comes on August 5. It is based on an ancient legend which states that the site of the great Church of St. Mary Major in Rome was determined by a miraculous fall of snow in mid-summer; and therefore it commemorates the dedication of that church. In 1942, during the dark days of World War II, Pope Pius XII dedicated the human race to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and established a feast with a special Mass and Office in honor of the Immaculate Heart to be celebrated throughout the world each year on August 22nd.

The month of September is especially rich in the minor feasts of Mary. Her Nativity is celebrated on the eighth, although there is nothing to show that she was born on that day. This festival was established about the year 870.

The feast of the Holy Name of Mary is now commemorated on the twelfth of September, and was originally a Spanish holiday. It was extended to the whole Church by Innocent XI in 1684. On the twenty-fourth of the same month comes the festival of Our Lady of Ransom, the patronal feast of the Order for the Redemption of Captives.

October is the month of the Holy Rosary, and on the seventh of that month occurs the feast which honors Mary as the Queen of the Most Holy Rosary. The victory of Lepanto, mentioned above, took place on that day in the year 1571, at the very hour when all over the Catholic world the Rosary was being recited by order of St. Pius V for the success of the Christian arms. In commemoration of the 15th centenary of

the Council of Ephesus (431 A.D.), which declared Our Lady to be the Mother of God, Pius XI established the feast of the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin, to be kept on October 11th.

A tradition of very doubtful value states that Mary, at the age of three years, was presented in the Temple, and remained there until she had attained womanhood. A feast commemorative of this has been observed in various parts of the world since the twelfth century. It was suppressed by St. Pius V, but was later permitted by Sixtus V in 1585, and has been generally kept since the seventeenth century.

One of the lesser feasts of the Mother of God was formerly celebrated in many parts of the world a week before Christmas—the Expectation of the Blessed Virgin, meaning the expecting of her delivery, the birth of our Saviour being near at hand. The feast of the Queenship of Mary, instituted by Pius XII in 1955, is observed on May 31st.

---

A special section will be devoted to the history of Christmas Day. Besides these greater feasts, our Church celebrates many others during the year, each of which has its own interesting history—an annual cycle of glory to God and veneration towards God's servants who have fought the good fight, have kept the faith, and have gained their immortal crowns.

### 3. FASTING AND ABSTINENCE

The penitential practices of fasting and abstinence are of very ancient origin. The Church, in her earliest days, recognized the necessity for her children to "chastise the body and bring it under subjection," as St. Paul advises. "I see a law in my members fighting against the law of my mind and making me captive to sin. . . . The wisdom of the flesh is death, but the wisdom of the spirit is life. If I live according to the flesh, I shall die; but if by the spirit I mortify the works of the flesh, I shall live."

The doctrine of St. Paul has been repeated by every writer

in the whole list of the Church's teachers. Century after century those who have written of spiritual things have sought to impress upon us that we human beings are composed of a human body which is perishable and a soul which is immortal; that the body is striving ever for mastery over the spirit; and that, therefore, besides the external sources of temptation which we summarize as "the world" and "the devil," we have always with us another, even more dangerous, which we cannot shun, for it is a part of our very nature. This is the reason for mortification. Besides rendering the assaults of our bodily passions less dangerous for us, the practice of self-denial in things that are lawful will enable us to turn with greater earnestness to spiritual things.

**Fasting in the Jewish Law.** The Catholic Church took the practice of fasting from the law of the Old Testament, and has modified and adapted it to the necessities of her children. We find in the rules imposed by Moses on the Israelites that on the Day of Atonement a strict fast was to be observed by all; and the great lawgiver of the Jews himself fasted for forty days, as did the prophet Elias at a later date. In the warnings of the other prophets to the people of Israel there are many urgings to fasting as a means of reconciliation with God.

**In the New Testament.** The practice of fasting was sanctioned by our Blessed Lord, by example and by word. To prepare Himself for His public ministry, He retired into the desert and spent forty days in fasting and prayer. In one of His instructions to the Apostles He said—"When ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, sad. . . . Appear not to men to fast, but to thy Father, Who is in secret, and thy Father, who seeth in secret, will repay thee." In many passages of the New Testament we find how faithful the early Christians were to this practice. "As they were ministering to the Lord and fasting." (Acts, 13, 2—"Let us exhibit ourselves as ministers of God, in much patience, in fastings." (II Cor., 6, 6)

**History of the Church's Law.** Fasting, as a precept of the Church, goes back to very early times. We do not know pre-

cisely when it was enjoined upon the faithful as a command instead of a counsel, but it is mentioned as a long-established practice by Tertullian and other writers of his time. Among certain heretical sects of the first centuries the rigors of fasting and bodily mortification were greater even than among Catholics; but the austerities of the latter were far in excess of anything which we, living in these times, would deem possible.

Up to the eighth century, during the Lenten season and on certain other occasions, the faithful kept an absolute fast until sunset; and the meal taken then consisted of bread and vegetables. In some parts of the world even water was not used during the day. Eating at noon was not permitted at all. It was customary to have Mass celebrated in the evening, and many of the congregation received Holy Communion at that time, as both clergy and faithful were still fasting. The people usually assembled in their churches at three o'clock for the Divine Office of None, which was followed by Mass and Vespers, after which the single meal of the day was allowed. How would we Catholics of the twentieth century bear up under the rigorous régime of those early days?

**The Collation.** About the tenth century the breaking of the fast at noonday was generally introduced, and, a little later, the taking of a "collation" was permitted in addition to the daily meal.

The word "collation" is one which has changed considerably in meaning. The laws of the Benedictine Order required the monks to assemble in the evening for a spiritual reading, generally taken from the Lives of the Saints or other edifying books. These readings were called "collations," or conferences. On account of the long offices which they had previously recited, they were allowed on certain days to partake of some slight repast or luncheon, just before the reading; and thus the name of the spiritual exercise was gradually applied, not to the reading, but to the refreshment. This taking of a collation by the faithful in addition to the regular meal is traceable back



to about the year 1400, but until comparatively recent times the amount of food allowed was very small.

**The Law of Abstinence.** As the Church uses the word, abstinence signifies depriving ourselves of meat, that thus the body may practice penance and the soul be thereby sanctified. Besides the days on which the obligation of fasting is imposed, the Church has always observed days of abstinence. In the rigorous monastic life of the early Middle Ages it was deemed a relaxation to keep Sunday as a day of mere abstinence, without fasting; all the other days of the year were fasting-days for those austere monks, excepting from Easter to Pentecost, when abstinence alone was observed and the strict rules of fasting were dispensed with.

From Apostolic times Friday has been a day of abstinence, and the reason is obvious to every Christian. Our Blessed Redeemer died on that day for our sins, and we should commemorate His sufferings and offer some expiation ourselves by voluntary mortification.

In some parts of the world, at a very early date, Friday was a day not only of abstinence but of fasting; and on Wednesdays and Saturdays the use of meat was forbidden. But the severity of these laws led to their gradual modification; the observing of Wednesday as an abstinence day disappeared almost entirely after a time, and permission was granted by the Holy See in many countries to use meat freely on Saturday. By a dispensation dating from the time of the Crusades, the people of Spain and her colonies are exempt even from ordinary Friday abstinence under certain conditions.

In accordance with the provisions of Canon Law, as modified through the use of special faculties granted by the Holy See, the bishops of the United States have promulgated the following regulations.

**On Abstinence:** Everyone over seven years of age is bound to observe the law of abstinence.

*Complete abstinence* is to be observed on Fridays, Ash Wednesday, the Vigils of the Immaculate Conception and Christmas, and on Holy Saturday. On days of complete abstinence meat and soup or gravy made from meat may not be used at all.

*Partial abstinence* is to be observed on Ember Wednesdays and Saturdays and on the Vigil of Pentecost. On days of partial abstinence meat and soup or gravy made from meat may be taken only once a day at the principal meal.

**On Fast:** Everyone over twenty-one and under fifty-nine years of age is bound to observe the law of fast.

The days of fast are weekdays of Lent, Ember Days, the Vigils of Pentecost, the Immaculate Conception and Christmas. On days of fast only one full meal is allowed.

Two other meatless meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs; but together they should not equal another full meal.

Meat may be taken at the principal meal on a day of fast except on Fridays, Ash Wednesday and the Vigils of the Immaculate Conception and Christmas.

Eating meat between meals is not permitted; but liquids, including milk and fruit juices, are allowed.

When health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige. In doubt concerning fast or abstinence, a parish priest or confessor should be consulted.

**The Ember Days.** These days, sometimes called the Quarter Tenses (Latin, *Quatuor Tempora*, the four times), occur at intervals of about three months. They are the Wednesday, Friday and Saturday which follow December 13, the first Sunday in Lent, Pentecost and September 14.

Why are they called Ember Days? The word has nothing to do with embers or ashes. It may be from the Anglo-Saxon "ymbren," a circle or revolution; or it may be a corruption of "quatuor tempora"; for in Dutch the name is "Quatertemper," in German "Quatember," and in Danish "Kvatember"—whence the transition to Ember Days is easy.

Our Church is a merciful mother. Her wisdom recognizes the needs of our weak human nature in these strenuous twentieth-century days. She knows that the rigorous practices of the ages of faith would not be easy for us, and so she accommodates her laws to our weakness, requiring of us only what is reasonable. But while the details of her penitential rules may vary from age to age, their spirit remains the same. Whatever may be the conditions of our lives, we must practise penance in some form. We must devote ourselves to earnest prayer and frequent good works if our circumstances forbid grave austerities. While we may avail ourselves of the dispensations granted by the Church, we must comply with her laws as far as they bind us. She teaches that for each of us there is a constant warfare against the lower elements in our nature; and some degree of mortification is necessary if we would be victors in that conflict.

#### 4. ADVENT

It has always been the aim of our Holy Church to cause her children to reflect. She sets apart during the year two seasons, in which she tries to imbue the faithful with a spirit of penitential fervor. One of these seasons, which is called *Advent*, from the Latin word *adventus*, (arrival) embraces four Sundays, beginning with that which is nearest to the feast of St. Andrew, the thirtieth of November. The first Sunday of Advent, in our part of the Church, is always the beginning of the ecclesiastical year.

The spirit of the Church during this time is symbolized by the purple vestments, emblematic of penance, worn at her services on each of these Sundays and on some other days, in preparation for the great festival of the Nativity of our Blessed Lord.

**The History of Advent.** The origin of the observance of Advent is very obscure. Unlike Lent, which goes back nearly to apostolic times, it was not known in the first centuries of

the Church; in fact, the feast of Christmas was not celebrated in those earliest days of Christianity.

About the end of the fourth century the practice was established of having a few days of preparation for the proper observance of that great festival, and in some countries a regulation was put into force requiring the presence of the faithful at Mass each day from the seventeenth of December to the feast of the Epiphany.

These days of devotion before and after Christmas seem to have been the beginning of the observance of Advent. However, no general law regarding it existed for some centuries later. But the practice of the Church of setting apart several weeks of penance and prayer before the feast of our Lord's Resurrection led in time to the establishment, in many parts of the world, of a similar but shorter season as a preparation for the other greatest festival of our faith, the day of the Saviour's birth.

In the year 650 Advent was observed in Spain, and was longer than it is at present, for it included five Sundays. A little later the prohibition of the solemnization of marriages during this season was put into force, and various local laws were enacted by diocesan and national synods regarding fasting and abstinence; for the season of Advent has been looked upon as a time not only for prayer but for penance, though not to the extent that the Church requires during the season of Lent. By some of these regulations abstinence and fasting were enjoined from early in November to Christmas, and even from the date of the September equinox and the beginning of Autumn. But about the ninth century the time of Advent was arranged as we have it now—taking in four Sundays only. Thus the present practice of our Church in observing this holy season is of a very respectable antiquity; it has lasted more than a thousand years.

**Advent Penances.** In regard to penitential regulations during this season, the law and practice of the Church has varied greatly. In the earlier ages, after the establishment of Advent,

the rules were very strict, and it was observed almost as strictly as Lent. Later on, this strictness was considerably relaxed. In recent years the Fridays of Advent were kept as fasting-days in this and other English-speaking countries, but in France and other parts of continental Europe the practice of observing them died out long ago, except in religious communities. Then the Holy See granted further dispensations in favor of working people and their families; and the new code of Canon Law makes no mention whatever of any fast in Advent, except on the Ember Days and on the vigil of Christmas when that day does not come on Sunday. The idea of the Church has nearly always been that this holy season, while a penitential time, is not to be observed as strictly as Lent, and her most recent legislation has taken away even the few fasting-days that remained in force during Advent.

**Advent Liturgy.** Advent, then, is a time for devout and penitential preparation of the soul for the proper and worthy celebration of the great feast of Christmas; and the Church wishes us also during that season to prepare for the judgment which we all must undergo, both at death and at the second coming of our Blessed Saviour. The whole of the Church's practice and liturgy during Advent is filled with this spirit—with the praises of the Redeemer of the world, and with exhortations to the faithful to receive Him worthily into their souls.

In the Divine Office recited by the clergy during Advent the *Te Deum*, the hymn of joy and thanksgiving, is omitted. In the Mass, the exultant *Gloria in Excelsis*, the angels' song at Bethlehem, is not said or sung. The solemn celebration of marriage (that is, with Mass and nuptial blessing) is prohibited from the beginning of Advent to the feast of the Nativity inclusively. In the Advent Masses the Church uses purple vestments, the color of which always symbolizes penance. Flowers are not placed on the altar, except on the third Sunday, on which, as it were, a slight gleam of joy is permitted to shine through the gloom of this penitential season. This day

is known as *Gaudete* Sunday, from the opening words of the Introit of the Mass: *Gaudete in Domino* . . .—"Rejoice in the Lord; again I say, rejoice! Let your modesty be known unto all men; for the Lord is near."

The whole liturgy, in the Office and in the Mass, is arranged to manifest the prevailing spirit of penance mingled with hope. There is a marvelous beauty in the language which the Church uses in all her services during this season. The Breviary is filled with expressions of longing and of adoration for "the Lord, the King that is to come." The lessons read in Matins are taken from the book of the great prophet of the Incarnation, Isaias, who tells of the Man of Sorrows, suffering for the sins of His people—who describes the passion and death of the coming Redeemer and foretells His final glory. In the hymns of the Office the Church expresses her praise for the coming Christ, and prays that He may enlighten the world and prepare it for His second coming. On the last seven days before the vigil of Christmas a series of sublime antiphons is used, in which the Church calls upon the Divine Wisdom to teach us the way of prudence; on the Key of David to liberate us from bondage; on the Rising Sun to illumine those who sit in darkness, etc.

**The Advent Masses.** The various parts of the Mass are also appropriately chosen to express the spirit of our holy Church during the Advent season. The Epistles exhort the faithful to "put off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light, because the Redeemer is near." The Gospels speak of the Saviour coming in glory, and describe the ministry of St. John the Baptist, who "prepared the way of the Lord and made straight His paths."

Thus does the Church's liturgy take us back in spirit to the days when the Messiah had not yet come; and it shows us that the same spirit of preparation, of hope and prayer and penance, is as necessary now as it was then, if we are to profit by the Incarnation of our Blessed Lord. We are exhorted to prepare ourselves for His coming into our hearts by His grace, and for that other coming also, when He shall appear again

among men—not obscure, helpless and lowly, as at His birth in Bethlehem, but “coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and majesty”—when He shall come not as a Saviour, but as a Judge.

## 5. CHRISTMAS DAY

Year after year the Christmas season brings to the minds of all Christians the wondrous story of the Child in the manger, the shepherds on the Judean hills, the celestial song “Glory to God in the highest,” and the Angel’s message, telling that the Long-Expected One had come: “Fear not, for behold, I bring you tidings of great joy; for this day is born to you a Saviour.” (Luke 2, 10)

On that great day the altars gleam with myriad lights; the notes of joyful hymns resound in God’s temples. The faithful kneel in homage before the Christmas crib, wherein is depicted the mystery of Bethlehem. In throngs they adore, at the Masses of that day, Him who is mystically born again in that Adorable Sacrifice. Reverently they receive Him in the Sacrament of His love. And it is not only for us Catholics that this is a day of joy. Others celebrate it as well as we, though not always in the same spirit. All of mankind to whom even a part of the Christian faith has been given look upon Christmas as the greatest and most joyful of the festivals of the year.

**A Catholic Feast.** Christmas has, indeed, come to be a festival for all, and the universal observance of this Catholic feast is the more remarkable when we recall that in the early history of some of the American colonies, in Puritan localities, the holyday which marks Christ’s Birth was forbidden by law. It was only when immigration from the Catholic countries of Europe infused new vigor and new ideals into the life of America, that the anniversary of the Saviour’s Birth began to be a religious and social festival. At the present time some persons would like to completely commercialize and secularize this holyday, but its true Christian spirit is deeply rooted

in the minds of our people and it can never be reduced to a mere holiday.

**Celebration in Ancient Times.** How old is Christmas Day? When we see with what unanimity that great festival is celebrated at the present time, it is surprising to learn that it was probably not observed at all in the first three centuries, and came gradually into existence in the fourth. One would naturally think that the anniversary of so great an event as the birth of the Son of God would have been a day of religious joy from the earliest years of the Church; but it is clear that this was not the case. There is no mention of it in any of the oldest lists of Church festivals. Much more attention was given in the first centuries to the Epiphany, the beginning of the manifestations of our Lord to the world; and the commemoration of His birth, if observed at all, was combined in those times with that feast.

There was a great diversity of opinion among ancient authorities as to the birthday of our Blessed Saviour. Many writers, especially of the Eastern Church, assigned an entirely different season of the year from that observed at present. St. Clement of Alexandria quotes some who placed it on the twentieth of April or the twentieth of May, and a very common belief in the Orient was that our Lord was born on the sixth of January.

In the part of the Church which follows the Latin rite the celebration of Christmas on the twenty-fifth of December was begun probably about the middle of the fourth century. An ancient tradition assigned that day as the probable date of the great mystery of the Nativity. St. Augustine mentions it as well established in his day, and about the year 380 the Oriental Churches began to celebrate our Saviour's birth on the same date. In what year was Our Lord born? Since our Christian era is dated from the birth of Christ, we are apt to conclude that He was born exactly in the year 1 A.D. But in recent years historians have discovered that the earlier calculations were in error, and that Christ was born about six years earlier.



**The Vigil of Christmas.** What is a *vigil*? The word signifies "a watching." In ancient times nearly all the greater feasts were celebrated with much solemnity, and the ceremonies included the reciting of the Divine Office at stated hours. Parts of it were chanted late at night, the evening before the festival, and were followed by a Mass. The faithful were encouraged to be present at these services, and as a further preparation for the worthy observance of the feast they were required to fast on the day before. The practice of "watching" or attending the night office in the church is almost entirely abolished, except in religious communities, and the vigil has come to mean to the laity a day on which some of them at least are obliged to observe certain laws of fasting and abstinence. The vigil of Christmas is one of the few days on which the dispensation granted in favor of working people and their families to use meat is not in force. It is a day of fasting for some and of abstinence for all, unless grave reasons prevent. When this day falls on Sunday the fast and abstinence are *not* observed on the preceding Saturday.

**The Name of Christmas.** Why is this day called Christmas? This word, which we of English-speaking countries use as its name, shows the Catholic origin of the festival. Christmas is "Christ's Mass"—the Mass offered in honor of the birth of Christ. Probably few of our non-Catholic friends advert to the fact that the day which they celebrate so universally is a feast of the Catholic Church, taking its very name from the supreme act of Catholic worship.

This name seems to have come into use about the year 1038, and, in the early English language of that time, was written "Christes Maesse"; about a century later it had been modified to "Crist-messe"—and, as the English tongue developed into its present form, it finally became "Christmas." \* Nearly all the other languages of Europe use a word signifying "birthday"—in Latin, *Dies Natalis*; in Italian, *Il Natale*; and the French have softened the Latin form to *Noël*.

\* Other uses of the suffix *-mas* are Candlemas and Michaelmas.

In English books and accounts of old English customs we often find the day mentioned under the name of Yuletide, "the time of the Feast"—the word Yule being a modification of the Anglo-Saxon "Geol."

**How Our Church Keeps Christmas.** Christmas is everywhere a day of joy and gladness, and all the riches of the Church's liturgy are employed to express these sentiments. Rich vestments and the glow of candles, costly decorations and the strains of sweet music—all these are used to signify that she celebrates the earthly coming of our Redeemer as a festival, a day of happiness.

Christmas is in every part of the world a holyday of obligation—a day on which all the faithful are required to be present at Mass; and on account of the Church's desire to enrich both priests and people with an abundance of spiritual blessings, every priest enjoys on that day a special favor and privilege. He is permitted to celebrate three Masses. Ordinarily, on any other day except All Souls Day, he can say Mass only once. When there is a real necessity, in order that on Sundays and holydays the people may conveniently assist at the Holy Sacrifice, the priests of our country (and of many others as well) are allowed by special permission of their bishops, renewed each year, to celebrate Mass twice in one day. On Christmas Day, whether there is need or not, every priest is permitted, though not obliged, to offer the Adorable Sacrifice three times.

This is a custom of considerable antiquity, although it was originally practiced by the Pope only. It was later permitted to bishops, and finally to priests. In very early times the Sovereign Pontiff was accustomed to say three Masses on Christmas Day—one at midnight in the Liberian basilica (in which, according to legend, the manger of Bethlehem is preserved), as a conclusion to the nocturnal service or vigil; the second at the tomb of St. Anastasia, whose martyrdom is commemorated on December 25; and the last in the Vatican as the principal Mass of the day. This practice is said to date back to the fourth century.

This Roman custom was introduced into France, for bishops only, in the time of Charlemagne, and was later permitted to priests. Thence it gradually spread throughout the world.

Mystical writers give an explanation of the three Masses, stating that they symbolize the three births of our Blessed Lord—namely, His birth from the Father before all ages, His birth from Mary at Bethlehem, and His spiritual birth in the hearts of the faithful by sanctifying grace; but the real reason for the three Masses was, as stated above, that the Pope wished to observe the vigil by the first, to give a commemoration to the Roman virgin-martyr Anastasia in the second, and to celebrate the third as the solemn Mass of the festival in his own basilica.

**The Christmas Crib.** An interesting feature of our church decorations on Christmas Day is the “crib,” or representation of the stable of Bethlehem. It is oftentimes artistic, sometimes commonplace, occasionally grotesque; but in every case it gives evidence of the commendable practice of our Church, to “teach by showing”—to set before us some visible sign which will impress upon us, more forcibly than would mere words, some point of her doctrine or some event in the history of religion.

It is probable that the real stable of Bethlehem was a cave. At the present day a small hollow or grotto is shown as the place where our Divine Lord was born and was “wrapped in swaddling-clothes and laid in a manger.” We are told by tradition or legend that the cave was dug in the rear of a humble shed which served as a shelter for beasts of burden; and so the usual representation of the birthplace of our Redeemer as a thatched stable may not be very inaccurate.

This custom of erecting a crib in our churches at the Christmas time, with figures representing the Divine Infant, His Blessed Mother, St. Joseph, the shepherds, the Magi, etc., goes back to about the year 1260, and was introduced by the Franciscan Fathers in some of their Italian churches. It was evidently looked upon as a happy idea, for within a compara-

tively short time the practice had come into vogue in other parts of the world.

In our churches, on Christmas Day, the crib is always an object of interest and devotion. It brings before us, perhaps more vividly than would a sermon or a reading, the loving humility of our Blessed Saviour and the lowly beginning of that life which was from its very inception a life of suffering. Our holy Church urges us to kneel and meditate before it in the spirit with which the shepherds were filled on that first Christmas Day—with simple minds and firm faith making an offering of our hearts and souls to our Infant Lord, Who was born into the world for our redemption.

**Some Christmas Customs.** When we give or receive Christmas gifts, and hang green wreaths in our homes and churches, how many of us know that we are probably observing pagan customs? We do not wish to assert that they are not good customs; but they undoubtedly prevailed long before Christian times. The Romans gave presents on New Year's Day, and our bestowing of gifts at Christmas is a survival of that practice, as well as a commemoration of the offerings of the Magi at Bethlehem. The Yule-log, a feature of Christmas in old England, goes back to the days of the pirate Norsemen. Holly and mistletoe and wreaths of evergreen have been handed down to us by the Druids. And even our good old friend Santa Claus, that mysterious benefactor of our childhood days, existed in one form or another long before Christianity had attributed his virtues to St. Nicholas; in Norse mythology it was the god Woden, who was said to descend upon the earth each winter sometime between December 25 and January 6 to bless mankind.

The "Joy to all the people" which was announced to the Shepherds on the night of Christ's Birth pours over into our social and civil life. Although many of our domestic Christmas customs are pagan in origin, they have been christianized at least in so far as they promote a spirit of Christlike love of neighbor and bespeak "peace to men of good will."

**6. LENT AND HOLY WEEK**

The penitential season of Lent consists of forty fasting-days, being the weekdays of the six and one-half weeks preceding the great feast of Easter. The Sundays during this time are also a part of Lent, but are not observed as days of fasting. As explained elsewhere, the date of the beginning of this season varies from year to year, according to the date of Easter. The Church has instituted it as a remembrance of the forty days' fast of our Blessed Lord in the desert, and as a means of sanctification for her children—for she has always taught the necessity of penance for justification.

Lent is called by various names in various languages. In Latin it is *Quadragesima* (fortieth), from which are taken the Italian *Quaresima* and the French *Carême*. The English name, *Lent*, is from the Anglo-Saxon *Lencten*, meaning "Spring."

**The History of Lent.** The duration of this penitential season has not always been the same in the different ages of the Church's history. We cannot assert positively that Lent can be traced back to the Apostles, but we know that some sort of fasting time has been observed before the Easter festival from very early days. It is mentioned by Tertullian and St. Irenæus, and especially by St. Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, who defined that it was to be a fast of forty days; and rules concerning it were made by early Councils, prescribing fasting as a strict obligation. From about the fourth century it became a fast of forty days in many parts of the world, although the Greeks began it earlier than we do, ruling that there should be no fasting on the Saturdays of Lent (except Holy Saturday) and on the feast of the Annunciation. For some time the Roman Church observed the fast only for thirty-six days, beginning after the first Sunday of Lent; and it was not until the year 846 that a Council held at Meaux, in France, added four days before that Sunday. This practice, even then, was not generally followed, for as late as the eleventh century the Lenten season included only thirty-six fasting days in some

parts of Europe, and this is still the case in the diocese of Milan, in Italy.

It is said that in very early times there were so-called Renunciants, who subsisted on only two meals a week for no less than eight weeks preceding Easter—fasting strictly from the breakfast of Sunday until after Holy Communion on the following Saturday. This, however, was never an obligation, but merely a voluntary penance.

Nevertheless, the Lenten regulations of our Church were very severe, especially in the early Middle Ages. All flesh meat was forbidden, and also, for the most part, what were called “lacticinia”—milk, butter, cheese, eggs, etc.—and this prohibition extended originally to Sundays. On all the fasting-days only one meal was allowed, and this was to be taken in the evening. However, this extreme rigor was, after a time, somewhat relaxed; the meal could be taken at three o'clock, the hour of None in the Divine Office, and this was gradually advanced to midday—which, indeed, derives its English name of noon from that part of the Office. More details are given of the Church's ancient law in the chapter on “Fasting and Abstinence.”

**The Lenten Masses.** At Masses during the Lenten season (except those celebrated in honor of saints or on festivals) the whole tone of the Church's ritual is penitential. The Gloria, the joyful hymn of the angels at Bethlehem, is omitted. The Alleluias which are said or sung at other times are replaced by the “Tract,” which is used in nearly all the Masses after Septuagesima Sunday. Near the end of the Mass is inserted a “Prayer over the People,” which was originally intended for those who had not received Holy Communion at the Mass, just as the Postcommunion was intended for those who had.

**Laetare Sunday.** On the fourth Sunday of Lent the Church has a note of joy in her liturgy. That day is called *Laetare* Sunday, from the opening words of the Introit of the Mass, *Laetare, Jerusalem*—“Rejoice, O Jerusalem, and meet together, all ye who love her; rejoice exceedingly, ye who have

been in sorrow, etc." It is, as it were, a relaxation in the midst of penance, a gleam of light in the gloom of the Lenten time. The rubrics of the Church call for rose-colored vestments on this day, being probably a sort of compromise between the penitential purple and the lighter colors used on feasts of joy.

**Passion Sunday.** This is the fifth Sunday of Lent, and is so called because on it the more solemn part of the penitential season begins and the liturgy of the Church concentrates on the sufferings of our Blessed Lord. To symbolize this concentration the images in our churches are veiled in wrappings of purple, the color of penance, and remain thus covered until the end of the services on Holy Saturday.

## 7. HOLY WEEK

Since the earliest days of the Church the great feast of Easter was always observed with special solemnity in the liturgy. In accordance with the chronology of the Gospel account of the last days of our Lord's mortal life, it was only natural that the sacred triduum of Thursday, Friday and Saturday should develop. Finally, there was added the celebration of the triumphant entry of the Messiah King into Jerusalem on the preceding Sunday. Thus a special "Holy" or "Major" Week had become established, in which all Christendom annually re-lived and received graces from the fundamental mysteries of redemption through a succession of liturgical celebrations.

These celebrations were observed not only on the proper days but even at the proper hours, which were ascertained from the Scripture. The procession of the palms was accordingly celebrated on Sunday morning; the eucharistic celebration of Thursday in the evening; the death of Christ was commemorated on Friday afternoon. Saturday was a day of quiet mourning, and in the night of Saturday to Sunday took place the solemn Vigil celebration, which ended on the morning of Easter Sunday with the first Mass of Easter.

Since the early middle ages, however, there occurred a grad-

ual displacement of the liturgical celebrations of these days from the night (or evening or afternoon) hours to the respective forenoon or morning. These changes had a most radical effect, especially in the case of Holy Saturday; it was stripped of its original character, and instead of a day of penance and mourning, it became an anticipated Easter. The rites intended for the night lost their proper meaning.

With the advent of the great economic and social revolutions, the Church was forced to reduce the number of her holidays of obligation, including the last three days of Holy Week. The general participation of the faithful in the liturgical services of these days was all but forgotten. Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday were now weekdays like any other. The attendance of the faithful was so poor that most churches were almost empty in the morning. Soon there arose substitute popular devotions for the afternoon and evening, such as the "Tre Ore" or "Three Hours Agony." In a word, on the days of the greatest mysteries of the Church year, the liturgy of the Church was practically eliminated from the life of the faithful.

It was precisely this condition which occasioned a great liturgical restoration of the entire Holy Week. Pope Pius XII by a decree of November 16, 1955 promulgated the reform. A new liturgical book containing the texts and rubrics for Holy Week was published by the Holy See in January 1956. This book replaces the Roman Missal for these days and is of obligation for all who follow the Roman Rite.

The rites of Holy Week have therefore been restored, more firmly organized, and in part new and important rites have been introduced, especially the washing of feet on Holy Thursday and the general Communion of Good Friday. The main change, however, consists in the new prescription concerning the time of celebration.

**Second Passion Sunday.** This was the original name of Palm Sunday. It is now restored. The ceremonies of this day consist of the procession with palms and the ancient Passion Mass.



The celebrant, wearing red vestments and facing the people, blesses the palms placed on a table before the altar or held in hands of the faithful, while the choir sings the antiphon: "Hosanna to the Son of David." Then comes the reading or chanting of the Gospel concerning Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, after which follows immediately the procession as a renewal of that entry. This procession is meant to be a stirring public demonstration of faith in Christ the King. The entire congregation is solemnly invited from the altar to take part in the procession, which, led by the cross-bearer and the celebrant, moves out of doors, everyone bearing his blessed palm.

During the procession the choir sings the refrain "Glory, praise and honor to Thee, O Christ, Our King." When the procession re-enters the church, the choir sings: "As our Lord entered the holy city, the Hebrew children declaring the resurrection of life, with palm branches, cried out 'Hosanna in the highest.'" After a final collect, the celebrant removes his red cope and puts on the purple chasuble, and immediately begins the venerable "Passion" Mass of the day.

**Holy Thursday.** The morning Mass of Holy Thursday may be celebrated only in those cathedrals where the holy oils are blessed. Holy Communion may not be distributed at this Mass. Where the Mass of the Chrism is to be celebrated Matins and Laudes (Tenebrae) may be anticipated on Wednesday evening. No other public chanting of Tenebrae is permitted.

In the evening the parochial Mass—the Mass of the Lord's Supper—takes place at a convenient hour sometime between 5:00 P.M. and 8:00 P.M. Private Masses are entirely forbidden on Holy Thursday. Yet, if a great number of the faithful would otherwise miss Mass, the local bishop may permit one or two additional low Masses, but only in the evening.

The Sacred Particles received by the faithful on Holy Thursday and Good Friday must be consecrated at the principal Mass on Thursday. The celebrant no longer consecrates two large Hosts on Thursday, one to be consumed in that day's

Mass and the other to be used on Good Friday. Under the new regulations, he now consecrates one large Host for Thursday's Mass and a number of small Hosts for distribution to the people on Thursday and Friday. The ciborium containing the Hosts for Good Friday is transferred at the end of the Mass to the respository, where the faithful adore the Blessed Sacrament at least until midnight.

**The Washing of Feet.** After the Gospel of the evening Mass, the ancient practice of washing of feet may take place publicly. In imitation of what our Lord did to the twelve Apostles at the Last Supper, twelve lay men are selected for this service. The celebrant washes and dries the right foot of each man, as he says the prescribed prayers. Meanwhile the choir chants appropriate antiphons and hymns.

**Good Friday.** The solemn liturgical service of Good Friday must begin sometime between 3:00 P.M. and 6:00 P.M. To impress us with a sense of sorrow and desolation the Church has always forbidden the celebration of Mass on this day. Holy Communion, too, in more recent centuries was restricted to the celebrant only. By the decree of November 1955, however, Pius XII extended the reception of Communion to all the faithful.

The text of the Ordo for this day begins with readings from the Scriptures: from the Old Testament prophecies which foreshadow the sacrifice of Christ, from the New Testament the account of the actual sacrifice in the Passion according to St. John.

Nine solemn prayers are then offered for the following intentions: Holy Church, the Supreme Pontiff, all orders and ranks of the clergy, civil rulers, converts under instruction, the needs of the faithful, the unity of the Church, the conversion of the Jews, and for the conversion of infidels.

As the veiled Crucifix is gradually uncovered by the celebrant, the congregation sings three times "Venite adoremus" ("Come let us adore") in response to the celebrant's proclamation, "Look upon the wood of the Cross." Then after the clergy

have adored and kissed the Cross, all the faithful come forth to do the same.

During the "Adoration of the Cross" the choir chants the "Improperia" or "Reproaches." In moving words, our Crucified Lord tells us of the blessings He has lavished on His people and what they have done to Him in return.

Instead of the Mass of the Pre-sanctified, there is now a simple rite of Holy Communion. The Blessed Sacrament is brought to the main altar from the repository. Then the whole congregation joins with the celebrant in chanting the *Pater Noster*. After a few additional prayers, the celebrant receives a small Host from the ciborium, then distributes Holy Communion to all the faithful. Three short prayers after Communion are recited and the Good Friday service is at an end.

**Holy Saturday—The Easter Vigil.** From her earliest days the Church has celebrated this vigil with all possible solemnity. Originally this observance was held on Holy Saturday night. In the course of time, and for a variety of reasons, it was anticipated, first in the evening, later in the early afternoon and finally on Holy Saturday morning. This change in the time of the celebration was detrimental to the original symbolism of the rites.

Now the solemn Easter Vigil must begin at an hour which will permit the Mass of the Vigil to start at about midnight of Holy Saturday. This time will be between 10:30 P.M. and 11:00 P.M. Holy Saturday is a day of mourning in spirit at the tomb of Christ, without Mass or any other ceremony that day.

The Easter Vigil begins with a service of light. And the light is the light of Christ to illumine the darkness. In front of the darkened church, the celebrant strikes a flint and produces the new fire, which he then blesses. After that, the Easter (Paschal) Candle is marked with the Cross, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, and the numerals of the year. The celebrant then inserts five grains of incense in the candle and lights it from the Easter fire. The incense grains signify the

wounds in Christ's Body, now the glorious signs of Christ's triumph over death.

The lighted candle is carried into the dark church by the deacon, where three times he proclaims the glad news of Christ's Resurrection. Lifting up the candle, he sings "Lumen Christ" ("Light of Christ") as all genuflect and respond "Deo Gratias." The light of Christ is shared by His members as the flame taken from the Easter Candle is passed from one to another of the faithful, each holding his own small candle.

Arrived at the altar the deacon chants the Easter Song, the *Exsultet*. This is the gladdest hymn of all the Church year. By it we are invited to join in the praise of Christ risen from the dead. This is the holiest night of all human history—a truly blessed night when Christ rose from the dead.

The second part of the Easter Vigil centers around the mystery of baptism. Through this holy sacrament we die to sin to rise with Christ to grace. These rites consist of several parts. First, four lessons from the Old Testament are read—images and foreshadowings of Christian baptism. A portion of the litany of the Saints is sung by all present. Then the water for baptism is solemnly blessed for the great task it must perform in the renewal of souls. The water, therefore, is exorcised, blessed and anointed. The climax of this rite is reached when the Easter Candle—Christ—is lowered into the water and raised out again, even as He was lowered into death and rose from the tomb.

Holding lighted candles in their hands the members of the congregation, led by the celebrant, renew their promises of baptism. The litany is then concluded and the altar is prepared for the first Mass of Easter. No other Mass is so significant as this Easter Mass, which marks the solemn anniversary of Christ's passage from death to the glorious Resurrection, "very early on the first day of the week" (Mark 16, 2).

## Chapter Six

# The Sacramentals

---

### 1. THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

**What are Sacramentals?** Sacramentals are certain prayers, actions, and things which have been blessed by the Church that we might obtain from God spiritual and temporal benefits by their devout use. They obtain these benefits for us through the faith we bring to their use, and through the prayers which the Church offers for those who use them.

The chief favors we obtain from the sacramentals are: actual grace, protection from evil spirits, aid to devotion, forgiveness of venial sins, the remission of temporal punishment due to sin, and certain temporal blessings, such as health of body.

In this and the next few sections we shall discuss some of the principal sacramentals.

**The Sign of the Cross.** The most important sacramental of our Church, and the one most frequently used, is the sign of the cross. Whenever we use it we are reminded of the sufferings and death of our Blessed Saviour, and thereby we are filled with more fervent love, more profound gratitude and more earnest contrition. The sign of the cross is the symbol of our deliverance and the emblem of the mercy of God giving redemption to sinful man.

**A Summary of Our Faith.** The form of words which we use in making this sign, together with the action performed, manifests our belief in the principal truths of our religion. We say: "In the name"—not "names"—and thereby express our faith in the unity of God. We mention the three Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and thus show our be-

lief in the Adorable Trinity. The cross itself, made with the hand, manifests our faith in the incarnation, death and resurrection of our Blessed Saviour, and shows that we regard Him not only as God but as man—for that He might be able to die on the cross it was necessary that He should possess a human nature. Thus we have in this brief formula a summary of the most important articles of our faith. But the sign of the cross is more than this. It is a prayer to God, made in the name of our Mediator Jesus Christ, Who has declared: "If you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it unto you."

**How the Sign is Made.** The making of the sign of the cross is a very ancient practice. It probably goes back to Apostolic times, and was in common use in the second century. Among the early Christians it was usually made very small, by a slight movement of the finger or thumb, on the forehead or breast. In the days of persecution the faith of the Christian had to be concealed, and any more conspicuous sign would have put him in danger of death.

The devotion to the sign of the cross in those distant days is attested by many writers. They tell us that it was used by the more devout on every occasion. No work was begun without invoking God's blessing by this holy sign. The triple sign of the cross was employed very commonly in the early centuries of the Church and in the Middle Ages. It is not used at present except at the beginning of the Gospels at Mass. It is made by marking the forehead, the lips and the breast with a small cross, using the thumb, and is intended to remind us that our intellect must be attentive to the Word of God, our lips ready to announce His truths, and our hearts filled with love toward Him.

The ordinary method of making the sign of the cross is that which every Catholic learns in early childhood—the putting of the right hand to the forehead, to the breast and to the left and the right shoulder, with the words: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." In past

centuries the formula varied greatly. "The sign of Christ."—"The seal of the living God."—"In the name of Jesus."—"In the name of the Holy Trinity."—"Our help is in the name of the Lord, etc.," were used. One of these old forms, "Oh God, come to my assistance," is still in use at the beginning of Vespers and in other parts of the Divine Office.

As we shall see further on, important indulgences are to be gained by the sign of the cross, but only when it is made correctly and devoutly.

**In the Church's Liturgy.** No ceremony in the liturgy is performed without the sign of the cross. When a priest is ordained, his hands are anointed with holy oil to give them the power to confer blessings by the sign of the cross. In the administration of all the sacraments this holy sign is used at least once, and in some of them it is employed many times. In the ceremonies of baptism it is made fourteen times; in extreme unction, seventeen times.

When holy water is blessed, the sign of the cross is made over it twelve times. In the reciting of the Office by the clergy it is prescribed a great number of times. And especially in the Holy Mass we have all noticed that the celebrant makes the sign of the cross very frequently, signing himself, the book, the altar, the bread and wine, and even the Sacred Host and the Precious Blood after the consecration.

**The Indulgences.** According to the *Raccolta*, the official collection of indulgenced prayers, the faithful, as often as they sign themselves with the sign of the cross, with the invocation of the Most Holy Trinity, "In the Name of the Father, etc.," are granted an indulgence of one hundred days. Whenever they make the same holy sign with blessed water, they may gain an indulgence of three hundred days. (*Raccolta* No. 631)

This holy symbol of our salvation, then, should be frequently used by us. It teaches us our true dignity. It reminds us that we are the brethren of Jesus Christ. In making the sign of the cross we become partakers in the wonderful history of our faith, and companions of the glorious saints of our Church.

We are soldiers, and this is our weapon. The cross of our Redeemer has vanquished death, has overthrown the dominion of Satan. Let us, then, re-echo the words of St. Paul: "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

## 2. THE CROSS AND THE CRUCIFIX

The cross is one of the most important of Christian emblems, since it symbolizes the central mystery of Christian belief, the redemption of the human race through the ignominious death of Jesus Christ. One should distinguish however, between a cross and a crucifix. Although the symbolism is the same, the term crucifix designates a cross having the image of the suffering Saviour affixed to it.

**The Cross Among Pagans.** Among many nations the cross was in use for the execution of criminals. The most ancient practice was to hang the condemned person on a tree, either by nails or ropes; and this led to the employing of two pieces of timber for the same purpose. Our Blessed Redeemer was put to death in the cruel manner that was customary among the Romans for the execution of slaves and degraded criminals—namely, by being fastened to the cross with large nails driven through the hands and feet, the arms being extended on the transverse beam of the cross. The barbarity of scourging before the crucifixion, and the compelling of the condemned sufferer to carry his cross were all in keeping with the cruel Roman character.

It is remarkable that the cross, although an instrument of torture, was held in religious honor among pagan nations and was regarded as possessing extraordinary sanctity. The most ancient form was the "swastika," emblematic of the revolutions of the sun and consequently a symbol of life. In Egypt and Assyria the cross typified creative power, and many of the pictures and statues of the gods of those countries represent them carrying in their hands the *crux ansata*, or cross with a handle, possibly symbolizing the productive powers of Nature.



The Buddhist sects of India regarded the cross as an emblem of immortality, a sign of the life to come. The early explorers of Mexico and Peru found numerous crosses among the carvings in the heathen temples of those newly discovered lands. The crosses found in these pagan regions are all modifications of the symbol referred to above, emblematic of Nature and her forces. Although there is no real connection between these pagan crosses and the Sacred Christian symbol, it is curious that among these heathen the same signs typify earthly life which among Christians denotes spiritual and eternal life.

When Christianity had spread throughout the Roman world, the cross became everywhere an emblem of faith, an object of religious veneration, and one of the most common ornaments. The Church made both the cross and the crucifix sacramentals, by establishing formulas for blessing them—thus setting them apart as objects intended to inspire us with faith and devotion.

**The True Cross.** What became of the cross on which our Saviour died? The legend of the Finding of the True Cross is of great antiquity, and the event is commemorated by the Church on the third of May. The details may possibly have been added to in later ages, but the important facts rest on very good authority, namely, that of Saints Ambrose, Chrysostom and Cyril of Jerusalem.

The story is as follows: The pious Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, in the year 326 made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. She was then seventy-nine years of age. When she reached the Holy City she caused excavations to be made on Mount Calvary, and at a considerable depth found three crosses and, lying apart, the tablet bearing the inscription placed by Pilate's command on the cross of Christ. There seemed to be no means of knowing the cross on which our Saviour died; but at the suggestion of Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem, the three crosses were applied in turn to a sick woman, and at the touch of one of them she was immediately and miraculously cured.

The upright beam of the cross was kept in Jerusalem, and

the other was carried to Constantinople; and a large portion of this was afterwards sent to Rome, where it was preserved in the Church of Santa Croce. Tradition states that the portion left at Constantinople was taken to Paris in the thirteenth century, by St. Louis, king of France. The part left at Jerusalem was carried away by the Persians under Chosroes II, after they had captured that city. It was recovered by the Emperor Heraclius in 628, but only nine years later the Saracens took Jerusalem, and since that time there is no further mention of that portion of the True Cross.

**The Nails.** There is considerable difference of opinion as to whether three or four nails were used in the crucifixion of our Blessed Saviour. Various representations show sometimes two nails in His feet, sometimes only one. In certain pictures the feet are supported on a block of wood, a *suppedaneum*, or foot-rest. It is chiefly in the later pictures that the feet of our Lord are shown crossed and fastened with one nail. There is, however, no archeological evidence for the *suppedaneum*, and it therefore follows that two nails would be needed since the feet could not be crossed.

These nails have a legendary history of their own. One is said to have been cast into the Adriatic Sea by the Empress Helena when she was returning from Palestine, whereby a storm was quelled that had menaced the ship with destruction. A second nail was placed among the jewels of the royal crown of Constantine; another is said to be preserved in the cathedral of Milan, and a fourth at Treves.

It is hardly necessary to say, that these and many other poetic legends concerning holy things and persons are not articles of faith. We may believe them; we are not obliged to do so. They may be wholly or partly true, or they may be wholly or partly the product of the fervid imagination of some medieval romancer. We recognize their beauty, but we do not thereby oblige ourselves to believe them.

It is possible, however, that many of the alleged fragments of the True Cross which are preserved and venerated in vari-

## *The Externals of the Catholic Church*

ous places are genuine, as its discovery is probably a historical event, being fairly well authenticated, and it is likely that so great a relic would be kept and guarded with considerable care.

Piety and considerable historical evidence is claimed for several relics of the Passion of Our Lord. The inscription placed above Christ on the Cross is preserved in the Basilica of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem at Rome. The crown of thorns is kept at Paris. The point of the lance is in St. Peter's in Rome. The robe is in the Church of Treves. The veil of Veronica is at Rome. Part of the Pillar of the Scourging is in Rome, part in Jerusalem.

The winding sheet, or burial shroud has long been treasured in Turin, Italy. Lately it has received considerable attention by scientists whose interest was aroused by photographic negatives of the cloth. When the whole sheet is seen in reduced form, with the body stains appearing as highlights, the image of a man is clearly visible.\*

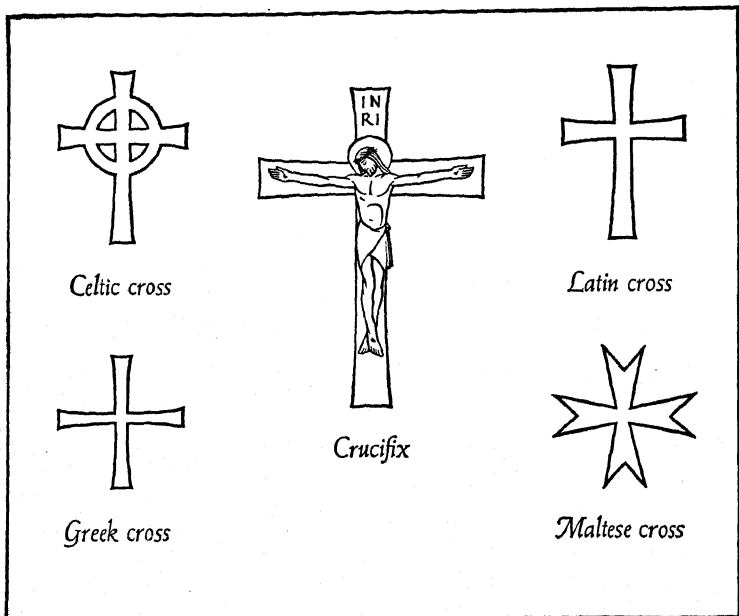
**Some Varieties of Crosses.** The form of the cross has been modified in different countries, and there are several distinct varieties. In some places the cross used for executions was in the form of the letter T—sometimes called the Tau cross, from the Greek letter. The ordinary cross, such as is generally shown in representations of our Saviour's crucifixion is the *crux capitata*, or headed cross, also known as a Latin cross, and tradition tells us that this was the form used on that momentous occasion. When the four limbs of the cross are of equal length we have a Greek cross, so called because it was largely used in medieval Greek architecture. A cross in the form of the letter X is known as St. Andrew's, that Apostle having been crucified on one of that description. A cross with four equal limbs of spreading or triangular form is a Maltese cross, so called because it was the badge of the military and religious order of the Knights of Malta. If the arms of a cross are connected by a circle it forms the well-known Celtic cross, of

\* Cf. *The Holy Shroud of Turin*, by A. S. Barnes, London, 1934.

which many ancient specimens may be seen in Ireland. A cross with two cross-bars is variously known as an archiepiscopal or patriarchal cross, because it is used in the heraldic arms of these higher prelates. There are also other variations, due to the ingenuity of artists and architects.

**The Cross in Christian Art.** Throughout the whole range of religious art, particularly in the Middle Ages, the cross has exercised a most powerful influence. The ground upon which the grandest churches were erected was made to assume a cross-shaped form, so that the very walls from their foundations upward might show that sacred sign. Crosses, exhibiting an endless variety of form and ornament, surmounted the lofty spires and gables of cathedrals and churches, and were used profusely for the interior adornment of these temples of God.

Among Catholics the cross has always been held in honor.



**Types of Crosses**

It appears on the lofty gable of the church and on the summit of the tapering spire rising far into the sky, as if to announce to all that "this is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven." Crosses are cut into the masonry and corner stone to attest the consecration of the edifice to Christian worship. They are graven in the altar stone, five in number, to symbolize the five wounds of our Blessed Lord, to bear witness to the sacrificial purpose to which the altar is dedicated. They are placed over the tombs of all, noble and lowly, to proclaim that each of the dead has died in the faith of Christ.

**The Crucifix.** The representation of our Saviour nailed to the cross is one of the important sacramentals of our holy religion. The Church requires the crucifix to be placed over the altar where Mass is to be offered, and during the Holy Sacrifice the priest bows his head toward it several times. It is also used in solemn ceremonies in the form of a processional cross, being carried at the head of the line of the clergy. As explained in the account of the ceremonies of Holy Week, the crucifixes in our churches are veiled from Passion Sunday to Good Friday as a sign of sorrow; and after the unveiling the clergy and laity devoutly kiss the feet of Our Lord's image, to express their gratitude for His infinite mercy and love.

The faithful are urged to keep prominently before them in their homes the figure of the crucified Lord, and the same blessed symbol is generally attached to the rosary which every fervent Catholic possesses and uses.

A very special indulgence has been granted to all who, after a worthy communion, recite on their knees before a crucifix or a picture of our crucified Lord the prayer beginning "O good and most sweet Jesus, before Thy face I kneel," which may be found in prayer books of recent date. This is a plenary indulgence, applicable to the souls in Purgatory.

Above the head of the figure of our Saviour a scroll or board is attached to every crucifix, bearing the letters I. N. R. I. This is called the "title," and represents the inscription affixed to the cross of our Lord by order of Pilate. What is the meaning

of the letters? They are the initials of the words *Iesus Nazarenus, Rex Iudaeorum*—"Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." Sometimes a skull and bones are shown at the bottom—the Hebrew name of Calvary (Golgotha) meaning "the place of the skull," probably because it was a burial ground for those who were put to death there.

### 3. HOLY WATER

It is interesting to note how often our Church has availed herself of practices which were in common use among pagans, and which owed their origin to their appropriateness for expressing something spiritual by material means. The Church and her clergy are "all things to all men, that they may gain all for Christ," and she has often found that it was well to take what was praiseworthy in other forms of worship and adapt it to her own purposes, for the sanctification of her children. Thus it is true, in a certain sense, that some Catholic rites and ceremonies are a reproduction of those of pagan creeds; but they are the taking of what was best from paganism, the keeping of symbolical practices which express the religious instinct that is common to all races and times.

Holy water, as our catechisms taught us, is "water blessed by the priest with solemn prayer, to beg of God a blessing on those who use it, and protection from the powers of darkness."

**A Symbol of Interior Cleansing.** Water is the natural element for cleansing, and hence its use was common in almost every ancient faith, to denote interior purification. Among the Greeks and Romans the sprinkling of water, or *lustration*, was an important feature of religious ceremonies. Cities were purified by its use, in solemn processions. Fields were prepared for planting by being blessed with water. Armies setting out for war were put under the protection of the gods by being sprinkled in a similar manner. Among the Egyptians the use of holy water was even more common, the priests being required to bathe in it twice every day and twice every night, that they

might thereby be sanctified for their religious duties. The Brahmins and others of the far Orient, and even the Indians of our own continent, have always attached great importance to ceremonial purification by means of water.

Among the Jews the sprinkling of the people, the sacrifices, the sacred vessels, etc., was enjoined by the regulations laid down by Moses in the books of Exodus and Leviticus; and it was undoubtedly from these practices of the Mosaic law that our Church took many of the details of her ritual in regard to holy water.

**When Was It Introduced?** The use of holy water in Catholic Churches goes back possibly to Apostolic times. There is a tradition that St. Matthew recommended it in order thereby to attract converts from Judaism by using a rite with which they were familiar in their former faith. However, we have no certainty that he introduced it, but we know that it can be traced back nearly to the beginning of our religion. It is mentioned in a letter ascribed by some to Pope Alexander I, and supposed to have been written in the year 117; but the genuineness of this letter is very doubtful. We find a detailed account of its use, however, in the "Pontifical of Serapion," in the fourth century, and the formula of blessing mentioned therein has considerable resemblance to that used at the present day.

**The Asperges.** The blessing of water before the High Mass on Sunday and the sprinkling of the congregation with it,\* which ceremony is called the *Asperges*, goes back to the time of Pope Leo IV, in the ninth century, and possibly even further. The word *Asperges* is the opening word of a verse of Psalm 50, which is recited by the priest as follows: "Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, O Lord, and I shall be cleansed; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow."

The custom of placing holy water at the door of the church for the use of the faithful is still more ancient. Among the Jews a ceremony of purification was required before entering

\* See illustration on page 279.

the Temple to assist at the sacrifices, and this undoubtedly suggested the Catholic practice of using holy water at the church door. It is said to have been in vogue in the second century, and we know that it is at least of very ancient date.

In the Middle Ages it was customary to use holy water when entering the church, but not when leaving it—the idea being that purification was necessary before entering the house of God, but that after assisting at the Holy Sacrifice it was no longer needed. However, the general practice now is to take it both on entering and departing, and this is to be recommended for the reason that the Church has attached indulgences to its use, and these may be gained every time it is taken.

**The Kinds of Holy Water.** Often a priest is asked: Is Easter water the same as the other holy water? The answer is that it has the same uses, but is blessed in a different manner and at a different time. There are four distinct kinds of holy water. The first kind is *baptismal water*, which is blessed on Holy Saturday, and should also be blessed on the eve of Pentecost. This water receives a special and solemn blessing, and the holy oils consecrated on Holy Thursday are mingled with it. It is used only for the administration of the sacrament of baptism. Water which has been thus blessed is the only licit matter for solemn baptism. However, the Sacrament is valid if merely ordinary water is used, and in private baptism the latter is lawful as well as valid.

The second kind is *water of consecration*, or “Gregorian water,” so called because its use was ordered by Pope Gregory IX. It is used by bishops in consecrating churches, altars and altar stones; and in its blessing it has wine, ashes and salt mingled with it.

The third kind is the so-called *Easter water*, which is distributed to the people on Holy Saturday. A part of this water is used for the filling of the baptismal font, to be blessed as baptismal water and to receive the holy oils; and the remainder is given to the faithful to be taken to their homes. In Catholic



countries, and in some parishes in our own, this water is used by the clergy for the solemn blessing of houses during Easter time.

The fourth and most common kind is the holy water which is blessed by the priest for the sprinkling of the people before Mass, and is placed at the doors of the church. This also is taken home and used for the blessing of persons and things.

Thus the only varieties of holy water that directly concern the faithful are the water blessed on Holy Saturday for them, and that obtainable at any time at the church. They have the same value and the same uses, although the formula of blessing is different.

**The Blessing of Holy Water.** When holy water is blessed, the priest reads several prayers, which include an exorcism of the salt and the water. An exorcism is the banishing of evil spirits. The Fathers of the Church teach us that when Satan caused the fall of our first parents he also obtained an influence over inanimate things intended for the use of man; and therefore, when any material object is to be devoted to the service of God, the Church often prescribes for it a form of exorcism, to free it from the power of the Evil One.

The prayers used in this ceremony are very beautiful, and express well the reasons for the use of holy water. Those said over the salt invoke the power of "the living God, the true God, the holy God," that whosoever uses it may have health of soul and body; that the devil may depart from any place in which it is sprinkled; that whoever is touched by it shall be sanctified, and freed from all uncleanness and all attacks of the powers of darkness. The prayers said over the water are addressed to the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, that through the power of the Blessed Trinity the spirits of evil may be utterly expelled from this world and lose all influence over mankind. Then God is besought to bless the water, that it may be effective in driving out devils and in curing diseases; that wherever it is sprinkled there may be freedom from pestilence and from the snares of Satan.

Then the priest puts the salt into the water in the form of a threefold cross, saying: "May this mingling of salt and water be made in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost"—after which another prayer is recited, in which God is asked to sanctify this salt and water, that wherever it shall be sprinkled all evil spirits shall be driven away and the Holy Spirit shall be present.

**The Meaning of the Salt.** Why does the Church use salt in holy water? Because it was a Jewish custom, and because of the symbolical meaning of salt. Just as water is used for cleansing and for quenching fire, so salt is used to preserve from decay. Therefore the Church combines them in this sacramental, to express the various reasons why it is used—to help to wash away the stains of sin, to quench the fire of our passions, to preserve us from relapses into sin. Moreover, salt is regarded as a symbol of wisdom. Our Lord called His Apostles "the salt of the earth," because by them the knowledge of the Gospel was to be spread over the world. The custom of using salt is a very ancient one, and is traced by some to the second or third century.

**The Liturgical Uses of Holy Water.** Holy Water is used in the blessing of nearly everything which the Church wishes to sanctify. The ritual contains hundreds of distinct benedictions in which it is used. Besides the pouring of baptismal water which forms the "matter" of the sacrament of baptism, the sprinkling with holy water is a part of the ceremonies of matrimony, of extreme unction and of the administration of the Holy Eucharist to the sick; and it is employed also in services for the dead.

The Asperges, or sprinkling of the congregation on Sunday, has a mystical meaning of its own. It renews every Sunday the memory of baptism, by which we have been sanctified and purified from sin; and it is intended also to drive away all distractions which might hinder us from the proper hearing of Mass. It is well to remember that the holy water need not actually touch every person in the congregation. The whole

assembled body of the faithful is blessed together, and all receive the benefit of the blessing, even though the holy water may not reach each individual.

**How We Should Use It.** Holy water should be used frequently. There is an indulgence of three hundred days every time it is taken. This indulgence was renewed by Pius XI in 1930, and in order to gain it there are three requirements: The sign of the cross must be made with the holy water, the person must have contrition for his sins, and he must say the words: "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." It should be borne in mind that while the use of holy water in any way may be beneficial, to gain the indulgence it is necessary to make the sign of the cross, to say the usual words, and to have in our hearts a spirit of true contrition.

#### 4. VESTMENTS

Man's nature is such that he needs external helps to assist him in fixing his attention on sacred things. We are all impressed to a remarkable degree by "pomp and circumstance." A king on his throne, clad in his royal robes, holding his sceptre and wearing his jeweled crown, is an imposing sight; all these accessories indicate his dignity and help us to realize his greatness. The same king without these trappings of royalty would possibly be a very insignificant object.

For this reason it has been customary in every age and country to invest those holding any position of dignity or practising certain avocations with some uniform or badge, by which their rank and duties are designated. The soldier wears his uniform, by which he is distinguished from the ordinary citizen. The policeman, the fireman, the railway employee, each has his special garb, marking him as set apart for some definite work.

This is done for a twofold purpose—that others may respect and obey him as far as is necessary, and that he may respect himself and be more conscious of his duties and more atten-

tive to them, on account of the uniform he wears. This is even more true of the religious garb. The priest wears it that he may be thereby distinguished from other men, and that he himself may be always reminded by it that he is "taken from among men to offer sacrifices and holocausts for them"—to be a mediator between the Almighty and His creatures.

In every religion since the world began, the practice has been in vogue of wearing some form of vestment. The priest has had a distinctive dress, whether he was an uncouth "medicine man" of some barbarous tribe, an augur of pagan Rome, or a priest of the Hebrew Jehovah. Here, as in many other cases, our Church has shown her wisdom by making use of a meritorious feature of other religions.

**A Sacramental of the Church.** The word *vestment* is from the Latin, and signifies simply clothing, but it is now used generally to denote the garments worn by the ministers of religion in the performance of their sacred duties.

Vestments are a sacramental—that is, they are set apart and blessed by the Church to excite good thoughts and to increase devotion in those who see and those who use them. They are the uniform of the priest when he is "on duty," while he is exercising the functions of his ministry and using the sacred powers which he received at his ordination.

**Among the Jews.** Under the Jewish law every detail of the vestments used in the worship of God was provided for by divine command. The garb of the highpriest and his assistants was specified most minutely as to material and form, and observance of these rules was enjoined under the severest penalties. The veneration of the Jewish people for the vestments of the highpriest was so great that they kept a lamp constantly burning before the repository of the sacred robes, just as we do now before the Blessed Sacrament.

When Christianity arose, no divine command was given concerning the dress to be worn by the priests of God. This was left to the judgment of the heads of the Church, and in the different ages of her history many changes have been made

in the number and form and material of the priestly vestments.

There is no record of any special form of them during the first four centuries. It is probable that the garb of the clergy in those times was the common dress of laymen. The outer garments worn by men of those days were long and flowing, a modified form of the old Roman toga; and consequently the vestments used in the divine service took the same general form. Gradually the custom was introduced of making them of rich and costly materials, to add greater beauty thereby to the rites of religion. When the hardy barbarians of the north had overwhelmed the luxurious nations of southern Europe and had brought in their own fashions of dress, the Church did not see fit to change the garb of her ministers as worn at the services of her ritual, but she permitted them to change their ordinary dress to some extent, and forbade them to wear their vestments except while officiating at sacred rites.

**Colors of the Vestments.** The Church ordinarily permits the use of five colors in the sacred vestments—white, red, green, violet and black. Rose-colored vestments are prescribed at the solemn Mass on the third Sunday in Advent and the fourth in Lent. Gold may be used as a substitute for white, red or green.

Each of these colors has its own meaning. The Sacrifice of the Mass is offered for many purposes and in honor of many classes of saints; and these various purposes are all designated and symbolized by the color of the vestments which the Church prescribes for each Mass.

When are these colors used? When the Church wishes to denote purity, innocence or glory, she uses white; that is, on the feasts of our Lord and of the Blessed Virgin, on the festivals of angels and of all saints who were not martyrs. Red is the color of fire and of blood; it is used in Masses of the Holy Ghost, such as on Pentecost, to remind us of the tongues of fire—and on the feasts of all saints who shed their blood for their faith. The purple or violet is expressive of penance; it is used during Lent and Advent (except on saints' days), and

also on the sorrowful festival of the Holy Innocents, unless this feast falls on Sunday—then red is used. Black is the color of mourning for the dead; it is worn at all Masses of Requiem for the departed, and also on Good Friday. Green is the color which denotes the growth and increase of our holy Church, and is also symbolic of hope; it is used at various times of the year, on days that are not saints' days.

**A Priest's Vestments.** The black gown of the priest, called a cassock or soutane, is not a vestment. It is simply the ordinary outer garb of a cleric, and in Catholic countries it is worn on the street as well as indoors.\*

The biretta, or cap, is also not a part of the vestments, although it must be worn when the priest is going to and coming from the altar, and while he is seated at certain parts of the service. This peculiarly shaped head-covering has a history of its own. It was originally a brimless soft cap of medium height. In putting this on and taking it off it became indented into folds by the fingers; after a time these folds were so sewn that they made a convenient wing or handle. There is no fold on the left side. The top is ornamented with a tuft or pompom. The color of the biretta varies according to the rank and dignity of the wearer. A fourhorned biretta is the principal mark of a priest who has received the title of Doctor from a university having power to confer academic degrees from the Holy See. A doctor is not allowed to wear this biretta at sacred liturgical functions. It is not a choir cap.

The vestments worn by the priest at Mass are as follows: The *amice*, the *alb*, the *cincture*, the *maniple*, the *stole* and the *chasuble*; and at certain other services he uses the *cope*, the *humeral veil* and the *surplice*. Each of these has its own history and its own symbolical meaning, expressed in the prayers which the priest recites when he is putting on the vestments.

**The Amice.** When a priest begins to vest for Mass, he first puts on an amice. This is an oblong piece of white linen, with strings attached by which it is fastened into place around the

\* See illustration on page 24.

shoulders. It has been worn in the Mass since about the year 800, and takes its name from the Latin *amictus*, a wrapper. It was formerly worn covering the head, and certain religious orders still use it in this manner until the beginning of the Mass. It is looked upon as a symbol of a helmet, by which the priest is protected against the assaults of Satan.

**The Alb.** The long linen gown worn by the priest is called the *alb*, meaning simply the white garment. The lower part of it is frequently made of lace. It is a survival of the white Roman tunic. As the vesting prayers tell us, its white color denotes the necessity of purity, both of soul and body, in him who offers the Immaculate Lamb of God to the Eternal Father.

**The Cincture.** This is the proper name for the girdle worn around the waist to bind the alb closely to the body. In some countries it is of the same color as the vestments used, but among us it is generally white. It is made of braided linen, or sometimes of wool, and is symbolic of continence, according to the prayer which the priest says while putting it on: "Gird me, O Lord, with the girdle of purity, and extinguish in me all concupiscence."

**The Maniple.** We now come to the vestments which vary in color from day to day, according to the object for which the Mass is offered or the saint who is honored in it.

A small vestment of peculiar shape is worn by the priest on his left arm. This is the *maniple*, and it was originally nothing more nor less than a handkerchief; but it has been so changed in form that it is now merely an ornament.

The word maniple is from the Latin *manipulum*, which has various meanings—something carried in the hand, a small bundle, a handkerchief, a sheaf of grain; and therefore this vestment is considered as symbolical of good works. It is the special badge of the order of subdeaconship, and is not used by those in lower orders.

**The Stole.** At Mass, and also in nearly every other religious function, the priest wears around his neck a long narrow vestment, the ends hanging down in front. When used at Mass,

these ends are crossed. The deacon at a solemn Mass wears a similar vestment, but in a different manner—diagonally from his left shoulder to his right side. The diagonal stole is therefore the badge of the order of deacon. The *stole* came into use about the fourth century, and was originally a sort of robe or cloak; but its form was gradually modified until it became a narrow strip of cloth. It is said by some to have been the court uniform of Roman judges, and to have been adopted by the Church to denote the authority of her ministers. According to the vesting prayer, it symbolizes immortality, and also the yoke of obedience under which the priest exercises his office.

**The Chasuble.** The most conspicuous part of the costume of the priest at Mass is the *chasuble*, the large garment worn on the shoulders and hanging down in front and behind. The rear portion is often, though not always, ornamented with a large cross.

The word chasuble is from the late Latin *casula*, a little house, because it is, as it were, a shelter for the priest. It is considered as a symbol of protection, of preservation from evil—a spiritual suit of armor. It is also said to signify charity.

This vestment has been greatly altered during the centuries of its history. It was originally a large mantle or cloak, with an opening for the head in the center, and had to be raised at the sides to allow the hands to be extended outside the cloak. The assistants at the Mass were obliged to help the priest by holding up the sides of the chasuble, and a trace of this practice may be noticed still in solemn Masses, where the deacon and subdeacon ceremoniously hold the edges of the priest's chasuble, although there is no longer any need for their assistance.

There is nothing explicitly prescribed in the liturgical books about the size and shape of the chasuble. At present, two chief forms of the chasuble are in use: that is, the small or square form, sometimes called Roman, and the ample or oval form, called Gothic. Dr. Adrian Fortescue, one of the best liturgists of our time, has some wise words in favor of the more ample style: "It is not a question of place, but of period of time. These





*Priest wearing cope*



*Priest wearing humeral  
veil over cope and  
holding monstrance*



*Priest vested for Mass,  
holding veiled chalice*



*Priest wearing cassock,  
surplice and stole*



*Deacon wearing dalmatic,  
maniple and stole*

## **Altar Vestments**

modern shapes (square, short) are not specially Roman; they came in at the same time nearly everywhere. And the older shape (full, ample) was used at Rome just as much as everywhere else. Rome is full of pictures and monuments which show that popes wore the same large vestments as everywhere else in the West, till Baroque taste swept over Rome too. Let us be as Roman as possible always. But in artistic matters let us look to Rome's good artistic periods. It would be absurd to defend mangled plainsong and operatic music as Roman. It is just as absurd to claim the name of the ancient city for only one period of her long artistic development. Skimped chasubles, gold braid, and lace are not Roman; they are eighteenth century bad taste." \*

**The Cope and Veil.** The *cope*, used at the Asperges, before a high Mass and at many solemn functions of the Church, was originally worn only in outdoor processions, and was considered merely as a rain-cloak, as is shown by its Latin name, *pluviale*, a protection against rain. The cape attached to it, which now has no use whatever, is a reminder of the large hood formerly used to cover the head in stormy weather. Our English name, cope, is from the Latin *cappa*, a cape.

The *humeral veil* is a large scarf-like vestment, worn on the shoulders of the priest at the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament when he holds the Sacred Host for the blessing of the people, and also when he carries the Blessed Sacrament in procession. It is also used by the subdeacon in solemn Masses, excepting those of Requiem.

**The Surplice.** This is a shortened tunic, usually of white linen, sometimes trimmed with lace with very wide sleeves. It is worn by the priest over his cassock at the administration of the Sacraments and at various services of the Church. It is the special garb of clerics not in sacred orders, and its use is tolerated for lay altar-boys, or acolytes in our churches. In its present form it is one of the most modern of vestments.

\* *The Vestments of the Roman Rite*, by Adrian Fortescue. New York, Paulist Press, 1925. Page 22.

The word surplice is from the Latin *superpellicium*—a dress worn over furs. In the Middle Ages it was allowed to the monks in cold countries to have fur garments, and over these a linen gown was worn in choir. It was later considered practically as an alb, and in the twelfth century it was usually so long that it reached the feet. Gradually, with the passage of time, it was made shorter for the sake of convenience.

**The Tunic and the Dalmatic.** The *tunic* is the vestment of subdeacons, the *dalmatic* of deacons. They are usually exactly alike, although, strictly speaking, the tunic should be of smaller size than the dalmatic. Each is of about the same length as the chasuble of the priest. These vestments hang from the shoulders, which are covered by projecting flaps; these are sometimes connected under the arms, so as to resemble short sleeves. The color, of course, varies according to the Mass, and on the back are usually two ornamental vertical stripes, but no cross.

A *tunic* signifies simply an outer garment. The *dalmatic* gets its name from a Roman garment made of wool from the province of Dalmatia, worn under the outer clothing in ancient times.

The tunic, according to the words used in conferring it at an ordination, signifies joy, while the dalmatic is looked upon as an emblem of righteousness and charity.

**The Broad Stole.** During the Lenten season, at High Masses, the deacon is directed by the rubrics to wear a broad stole, covering his other stole, instead of the usual dalmatic. This broad stole was not originally a stole at all; it was a folded chasuble—for, some centuries ago, the deacon wore a chasuble at Lenten Masses instead of a dalmatic, and was directed to take it off and fold it early in the Mass, putting it on again over his shoulder and wearing it thus during the chanting of the Gospel. For convenience, this folded chasuble was later replaced by a stole-like vestment, as we have it now.

**The Vestments of a Bishop.** These are numerous, and each has its own interesting history and its own symbolic meaning. The bishops are the links in the Apostolic chain, the pastors of

Christ's flock, the principal laborers in His vineyard. All the dignity which a bishop has by virtue of his office, and all the qualities which he should have to be worthy of his exalted position, are symbolized by the chief insignia which he is privileged to use.

**The Mitre.** The distinguishing mark of the episcopal office is the *mitre*, a tall double-pointed cap, probably of Oriental origin, which can be traced back to pagan times; at least, something very similar was worn by kings in Persia and Assyria long before the Christian era. As an ecclesiastical vestment it came into general use about the year 1100, although some form of tall and dignified headdress was worn considerably earlier. The present double or cleft form was evolved gradually; it was at first low and concave, and was subsequently increased in height and more richly ornamented. Its two points or horns symbolize the Old and New Testaments, which the bishop is supposed to explain to his people.

**The Crosier.** This, the bishop's pastoral staff is, of course, not a vestment, but may be mentioned here. It typifies his duties as shepherd of the flock. It is a copy of the shepherd's crook, used for the guidance and restraining of the sheep, and has been looked upon as the special badge of the episcopal office since the fifth century at least, and is so mentioned in the ritual of a bishop's consecration. It signifies his power to sustain the weak, to confirm the wavering, and to lead back the erring. The upper part is often very beautifully moulded and enriched with images and symbolic ornaments.

**The Ring.** On the third finger of a bishop's right hand he wears a large ring—a custom traceable to about the year 600. It was a signet ring originally, but is now considered as a symbol of faith or fidelity. The color and nature of the precious stone is left to the choice of the bishop, the only restriction being that sapphire is reserved for Cardinals.

**The Rochet.** A vestment somewhat like a surplice, but with closely fitting sleeves, is worn by bishops and domestic prelates at certain functions. This is called a *rochet*, from a late



*Bishop wearing cassock,  
rochet, mozzetta,  
skull cap, and pectoral cross*



*Bishop wearing mantelletta  
over rochet and cassock*



*Archbishop wearing mitre, chasuble,  
pallium, and holding crozier*

### **Vestments of Prelates**

Latin word meaning a coat. It is made of white linen, and is usually ornamented with lace.

When a bishop is celebrating a pontifical Mass, he is attired in three vestments—the chasuble of the priest, the dalmatic of the deacon and the tunic of the subdeacon, to signify that in his episcopal office all the various orders find their culmination and perfection. The last two vestments are necessarily made of thin material, so as not to be cumbersome.

**The Cappa Magna.** A long cope with a hood, the latter being lined with silk or fur, may be worn by the bishop at solemn functions. This is called the *cappa magna*—a large cope.

**The Pectoral Cross.** Attached to a chain which he wears around his neck is a cross of precious metal, which hangs on his breast, and thence derives its name, from the Latin *pectus*, the breast. This badge of the episcopacy came into use about the twelfth century.

The *Zucchetto* is a small skull cap used by the Pope, cardinals and bishops, and worn even under the biretta and the mitre. Its color is white for the Pope, red for cardinals, and violet for bishops.

**Other Episcopal Vestments.** At a bishop's consecration, gloves are blessed for him and placed on his hands. The practice of wearing them as a part of his vestments began probably about the eleventh century. They are worn only at a pontifical Mass, and then only to the washing of the hands. They are made of knitted silk, and are ornamented on the backs with crosses. They vary in color according to the Mass celebrated, but are not used in Requiem Masses.

At a pontifical Mass the bishop also wears stockings which are of woven silk and conform in color to the vestments, and low-heeled shoes called sandals, likewise of the liturgical color.

When he is seated during a Mass, or when he is conferring sacred orders, a sort of apron, called a *gremiale*, is laid upon his lap. Its original purpose was to keep his garments from being soiled; but after a time it became a formal vestment. It is often adorned with gold lace and other ornaments.

A bishop's cassock varies in color according to the occasion. On penitential days it is black with purple silk trimmings; but on other days he wears a purple cassock with crimson trimmings, called a choir cassock, at church functions; and on other occasions, an ordinary cassock of black with red trimmings and without train.

A bishop sometimes wears a short cape, or *mozzetta*, buttoned over the breast and provided with a small hood. This vestment signifies jurisdiction on the part of the wearer. It is worn by the Pope, cardinals, and by bishops within the limits of their diocese. It is never worn by a titular bishop.

Such, then, is a brief account of many of the ecclesiastical vestments which our Church prescribes for her prelates and other clergy in the functions of her liturgy, and of the garb which, at other times, points them out as "set apart." We should reverence these things, for many of them are true sacramentals of our Church; and when we see them, we should endeavor to remember the dignity which God has given to their wearers, and the symbolism by which these consecrated garments set before us the virtues which He wishes His bishops and priests to manifest in fulfilling the duties of their holy and exalted state.

## 5. THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

In every Catholic church there are pictured representations of various events in the Passion of our Blessed Lord. These enable the faithful to accompany our Redeemer, as it were, on that sorrowful journey which began at the house of Pilate and ended at the sepulchre. This practice is known as the Way of the Cross, and is a devotion replete with sorrow and penitential love towards Him who gave His life on the cross of Calvary for our salvation. The steps in this meditation are known as stations.

**The Origin of the Stations.** In the early days of the Church, when the spirit of faith was strong in the souls of Christians, no hardship was deemed too great when spiritual

advantages were to be gained. Vast multitudes of pilgrims undertook the arduous journey to the Holy Land that they might visit the places that had been sanctified by our Saviour's sufferings. Tradition had preserved a very accurate knowledge of these localities, and the devout pilgrims were accustomed to make what we now call the Way of the Cross, at the places which were the actual scenes of our Lord's Passion.

But Jerusalem became a Mohammedan city, under the sway of the Sultans; and even when the perilous journey had been made there was always danger from the despotic government and from the savage fanaticism of the Moslem people. The idea, therefore, occurred to several devout persons who had accomplished the pilgrimage, that it would be well to have some means of performing the same devotion in a safer way and of giving its benefits to those who were unable to make the journey to Palestine. The Blessed Alvarez, a Dominican of Cordova, in Spain, is said to have constructed several small chapels, each containing a representation of some part of our Lord's sufferings. A similar practice was adopted about 1350 by the Franciscan Minorities, who had been permitted by the Sultan to take charge of the Sepulchre of our Blessed Lord at Jerusalem, and who erected stations in many of their European churches, so that all the faithful who could not become pilgrims might make the journey in spirit. It was immediately seen that this was a most excellent devotion, well adapted to arouse in the hearts of Christians a fervent spirit of contrition and love of God; and it was, consequently, soon approved and recommended by the Holy See.

Since March 20, 1938 two things are required for the valid erection of the Stations of the Cross; namely, the faculty to erect the Stations, and the use of the prescribed form, found in the Roman Ritual. This faculty is limited to cardinals, all bishops who may not delegate their priests unless by special indult, and the major superiors and local superiors of the Friars Minor. These last mentioned enjoy the privilege of delegating their faculty to priests of their order.



**What are the Stations?** It is a common but erroneous belief that the Stations of the Cross are the pictures or reliefs or groups of statuary representing our Saviour on His journey to Calvary. These are not the stations. They are merely aids to devotion. The stations, to which the indulgences are attached, are the crosses, which must be of wood, and which are generally placed over the pictures. The images are not essential, and are only used that we may more vividly realize our Saviour's anguish and the greatness of our debt to Him.

The stations are fourteen in number. For some hundreds of years there was a diversity of practice in this regard, the number varying from eleven to sixteen in different places; but the Church finally ruled that they must not be more nor less than fourteen.

Some of the scenes depicted in the Way of the Cross are described in the Gospels; others are transmitted to us by tradition. Thus we have no scriptural authority for the falls of Jesus under the cross, nor for the beautiful story of Veronica. These are based on pious beliefs which have been handed down through many years.

The stations are generally affixed to the interior walls of the church,\* although in some countries it is not unusual to see beautiful stations erected in the open air, in the grounds of religious institutions and also in cemeteries, where it is an edifying sight to witness the public devotion of the Way of the Cross for the benefit of the departed ones whose bodies are buried there.

The reader may have noticed that the stations do not everywhere begin on the same side of the church. There is no fixed rule in regard to this; but they are always so arranged that our Saviour is represented as moving forward; so that the place of beginning and ending depends on the manner in which He has been depicted by the artist. Therefore in some churches you will find the first Station on the Gospel side, in others on the Epistle side of the main altar.

\* See illustration on page 62.

**The Indulgences of the Stations.** Pope Pius XI in 1932 revoked all former indulgences granted for the Stations of the Cross, because there was great uncertainty as to their number, and proclaimed new rich indulgences, making this pious practice perhaps the most fruitful of all our private devotions.

The faithful who with at least a contrite heart, whether singly or in company, perform the pious exercise of the Way of the Cross, where the latter has been legitimately erected, may gain a plenary indulgence as often as they perform the same; another plenary indulgence, if they receive Holy Communion on the same day, or even within a month after having made the Stations ten times; and an indulgence of ten years for each station, if for some reasonable cause they are unable to complete the entire Way of the Cross.

It is well to mention that the two essentials of the devotion are to think of the sufferings of Christ and to move from station to station. When a large crowd make the exercises collectively it is sufficient to meditate and to be joined in some way with the leader, such as kneeling and rising with him.

The same indulgences can be gained by those at sea, prisoners, sick persons and those who live in pagan countries as well as those lawfully hindered from making the Stations in their ordinary form, provided that they hold in their hand a crucifix, blessed for this purpose by a priest with the proper faculties, and recite twenty times with a contrite heart and devout sentiments Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be, namely one for each Station, five in honor of the five Sacred Wounds of Our Lord, and one for the intentions of the Pope. If reasonably prevented from saying all, they are entitled to a partial indulgence of ten years for each recitation of Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be.

Those who are too sick to pray may gain the same indulgences by devoutly kissing a crucifix so blessed, and saying some short prayer or ejaculation in memory of the Passion.

**For Ourselves and for the Souls.** We see, then, how our holy Church has made it easy for us to gain great spiritual

benefits, for our own souls and for the souls in Purgatory. She does not exact from us the rigorous penances of former ages. She does not require that we shall make a long and perilous journey. She tempers her laws to the weakness of her children, and permits us to gain in a very easy manner the favors which we would obtain if, like the pious pilgrims of old, we traversed land and sea to the Holy Places where our Blessed Saviour wrought the redemption of mankind.

## 6. THE HOLY OILS

A service of great solemnity and beauty takes place in every cathedral church on Holy Thursday of each year. The bishop blesses the oils which are to be used during the ensuing year in the administration of the sacraments, as well as in various consecrations and blessings of persons and things.

The ceremony of the Blessing of the Oils is full of significant symbolism. It requires the presence of a large number of the clergy, for the sacred oils are considered by the Church to be of such importance as to call for extraordinary pomp and imposing ceremonial. Few inanimate things receive more homage and honor than the oils which are to be used so often during the year in the imparting of God's grace through sacraments and blessings.

Each of us Catholics has received already some of the benefits given through these holy oils, namely, in the ceremonies of baptism and in the conferring of the sacrament of Confirmation; and we hope some day to obtain further graces through them in extreme unction; and yet it may be that we know little about them. Moreover, few of us are able to be present when the solemn blessing of them takes place in a cathedral church. Therefore this chapter will be devoted to a description of the nature, the uses, the history and the blessing of the holy oils.

**The Symbolism of Oil.** In the countries of the Orient and in southern Europe, olive oil has always been a necessity of daily life, much more than with us. It enters into the prepara-

tion of food; it is used as a remedy, internally and externally; in past centuries it was the chief means of furnishing light, being consumed in lamps; it was employed in ancient times by the athletes of the Olympic games, to give suppleness to their muscles. Hence we see the various symbolic meanings of which the Church takes cognizance when she uses it to give us spiritual nourishment, to cure our spiritual ailments, to diffuse the light of grace in our souls, and to render us strong and active in the never-ending conflict with the spirit of evil. The use of oil to express the imparting of spiritual strength is so appropriate that the Church employs it not only for the anointing of living beings, but also for bells and chalices and other lifeless things which are to be used as aids in the sanctification of her children.

The oils blessed on Holy Thursday are of three kinds—the oil of catechumens, the chrism and the oil of the sick. Each of them is oil extracted from olives, but the chrism is distinguished from the others by having balm or balsam mixed with it.

Each of these is blessed by the bishop with a special form of prayer, expressing the purpose for which it is to be used and its mystical signification as well.

**The Oil of Catechumens.** This kind of sacred oil is used in the ceremonies of baptism, and derives its name from that fact—a *catechumen* being an instructed convert who is about to receive the sacrament of baptism. As described in the section on the administration of that sacrament, the priest makes the sign of the cross with this oil on the person who is to be baptized, on the breast and on the back between the shoulders, with the solemn words: "I anoint thee with the oil of salvation, in Christ Jesus our Lord, that thou mayest have everlasting life."

Why are these unctions used? Because the catechumens are considered to be to some extent under the power of Satan until they have been united to Christ's mystical body by baptism. This oil is also employed for other purposes—in the ceremony of the *blessing of the font* or the baptismal water on Holy

Saturday, in the consecration of a church, in the blessing of altars and altar-stones, in the ordination of priests, and in the coronation of Catholic kings and queens.

**The Holy Chrism.** The *chrism* is generally held to be the *matter* or essential substance for the administration of the sacrament of confirmation. It is applied by the bishop in the form of a cross on the forehead of the person confirmed. It is used also in the ceremonies of baptism, an anointing being made with it on the crown of the head immediately after the pouring of the water. Its use is required also in the consecration of a bishop, and of a church, as well as in the blessing of chalices, patens, baptismal water and church bells.

The use of balsam in the chrism dates from about the sixth century. Balsam is a resinous substance which is procured from terebinth trees, which grow in Judea and Arabia; and similar substances of even greater excellence are obtained from various plants in the West Indies and tropical countries. In some oriental rites, a great variety of sweet-smelling spices and perfumes are used in addition to the balsam.

The mixing of this fragrant material with the sacred oil gives the latter the name of chrism, which signifies a scented ointment. As oil typifies the fullness of grace imparted through the sacrament, so balsam expresses freedom from corruption and the sweet odor of virtue.

**The Oil of the Sick.** This sacred oil, called in Latin *oleum infirmorum*, is the *matter* or necessary substance for the sacrament of extreme unction, and is also used in the blessing of bells. In the churches which follow the Latin rite this oil is always pure, without admixture; but in some eastern churches it contains a little wine or ashes.

As regards the use of this oil in extreme unction, we know that it was employed in Apostolic times practically in the same manner as now. St. James, in his Epistle, thus instructs the faithful of the early Church: "Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And

the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up. And if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." (St. James, 5, 14-15)

The use of oil as the matter of this sacrament is undoubtedly of divine institution, entering as it does into the very nature of the sacrament, which has been given to us by our Blessed Saviour and not by the Church.

**Ancient Practices.** The liturgical use of oil for other purposes, as in the ceremonies of baptism and holy orders and in other blessings and consecrations mentioned above, is, in nearly every case, of very ancient origin, being often traceable nearly to the times of the Apostles. In this, as in many other practices, our Church has retained and made use of something which had been employed in the ritual of Judaism; for in the Old Testament we find mention of the anointing with oil in several religious functions, such as the consecration of priests and kings, as well as in sacrifices, legal purifications and the consecration of altars.

The use of oil in the blessing of the font or baptismal water probably does not go back to very early times. The practice of giving a special blessing to the water is indeed very ancient, dating from about the second century, but we have no evidence that at that period oil was mingled with it. It is therefore probable that the present mode of imparting the Church's blessing to it is of more recent origin.

When our Church wishes to use any material object for sacred functions she usually sets it apart from other things by giving it a special blessing; thus it is distinguished from substances intended only for ordinary purposes. As regards oil, such blessings are recorded in the rituals of very early times, and do not differ greatly from those given at the present day. Even as far back as the fourth century two kinds of oil were solemnly blessed on Holy Thursday for sacramental uses, one being pure and the other mixed with balsam; the first was what we now call the oil of catechumens, and the other was the chrism. The third kind, the oil of the sick, was consecrated by

a more simple formula either on that day or at other times, and in some parts of the world it was customary to have this oil blessed as needed, by priests. This custom has persevered to the present day in some eastern rites, although among us, by Church law, the blessing by a bishop is always necessary.

**The Blessing of the Oils.** The grand ceremony of Holy Thursday requires the presence of a large number of the clergy. Besides the bishop and his immediate attendants, there are twenty-six priests, twelve wearing priests' vestments, seven vested as deacons, and seven as subdeacons. The bishop is robed in white vestments, and is the celebrant of the Pontifical Mass, and he proceeds with the Mass in the usual manner until just before the Pater Noster. At this point the oil of the sick is called for by him and is solemnly brought in, contained in a large vessel of silver, by a subdeacon accompanied by two acolytes. The bishop pronounces over it an exorcism to banish from it all influences of the Evil One. He then prays that the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, may come upon it, for the refreshing of mind and body, that it may be a remedy for all pains, infirmities and weaknesses.

The Mass then continues until after the communion, when the solemn consecration of the chrism and the oil of catechumens takes place. The oils are brought out from the sacristy by a procession made up of a censer-bearer, a subdeacon carrying a cross, two acolytes with lighted candles, two chanters, and all the priests, deacons and subdeacons enumerated above; two of the deacons carry the oils in large silver urns shrouded in veils, and a subdeacon bears a vessel containing the balsam; the chanters intone several beautiful verses, which are repeated by the choir.

The bishop then blesses, with appropriate prayers, the balsam which is to be mixed with the oil to form the chrism—the “fragrant tear of dry bark,” as the ancient and beautiful language of the Pontifical expresses it. He then mixes it with a little of the oil, and recites another prayer, that “whosoever is outwardly anointed with this oil may be so anointed inwardly

that he may be made a partaker of the Heavenly Kingdom." He then breathes three times on the chrism, and this is done also by the twelve priests. An exorcism is then recited over the oil, and a beautiful preface is intoned by the bishop, enumerating the sacred uses of oil in the Old Law, and invoking God's blessing on this holy oil which is to be used as a chrism of salvation for those who "have been born again of water and the Holy Spirit."

He then pours the mixed oil and balsam into the chrism-vessel, and, bowing to the consecrated oil, he chants three times, in Latin, "Hail, Holy Chrism," and reverently kisses the vessel—which salutation and homage are repeated a like number of times by each of the twelve priests.

Next comes the consecration of the oil of catechumens, which consists of an exorcism and a prayer of benediction. The bishop then chants three times "Hail, Holy Oil," and kisses the vessel containing it, all of which is repeated by each of the twelve priests. To the accompaniment of verses intoned by the choir the sacred oils are then solemnly borne back to the sacristy.

**The Holy Oils in Our Churches.** The priests of the various parishes, later in the day, obtain a sufficient quantity of the three oils for the needs of their churches and people. In each parish church these consecrated oils are kept with great care and reverence, being enclosed in suitable metallic bottles, which are preserved in a locked box called an *ambry* (from the old English *aumery*, derived from the French *armoire*, meaning a safe or arms-chest). This is affixed to the wall of the sanctuary.\* The oil of catechumens is usually labeled O. C. or O. S. (*Oleum Catechumenorum* or *Oleum Sanctum*); the chrism is distinguished by the letters S. C. (*Sanctum Chrisma*); and the Oil of the Sick (*Oleum Infirmorum*) bears the initials O. I.

The unused oils which may be left over from the preceding year are not to be used for any sacrament or any liturgical purpose. They are poured into the sanctuary lamp, and are consumed as ordinary oil.

\* See illustration on page 147.



This necessarily incomplete account of the beautiful ceremonies of Holy Thursday will show us the value which the Church attaches to these holy oils. She requires for their consecration a wealth of ritual which testifies to her appreciation of their importance in her liturgy; and she offers them a degree of homage which should teach us how holy and how efficacious for our salvation is this lifeless substance which she, inspired by her Divine Founder, consecrates for the benefit of us, her children, that through its use in sacrament and in blessing we may receive graces which we need for the saving of our souls.

## 7. CANDLES

The use of lights as an adjunct to worship goes back to the beginning of the Church, and even farther. Among the Jews and in many pagan rites the use of lights had long been looked upon as appropriate in connection with public homage to their God or gods. It is probable that among Christians they were first employed simply to dispel darkness, when the sacred mysteries were celebrated before dawn, as was the custom, or in the gloom of the catacombs; but the beautiful symbolism of their use was soon recognized by the writers of the early Church.

**The Symbolism of Candles.** Light is pure; it penetrates darkness; it moves with incredible velocity; it nourishes life; it illumines all that comes under its influence. Therefore it is a fitting symbol of God, the All-Pure, the Omnipresent, the Vivifier of all things, the Source of all grace and enlightenment. It represents also our Blessed Saviour and His mission. He was "the Light of the world," to enlighten "them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death."

Even the use of wax has its symbolic meaning. The earlier fathers of the Church endeavored always to seek out the mystical significance of Christian practices, and one of them thus explains the reason for the Church's law requiring candles to be of wax: "The wax, being spotless, represents Christ's most

spotless Body; the wick enclosed in it is an image of His Soul, while the glowing flame typifies the Divine Nature united with the human in one Divine Person." Others say that the blessing of candles on the day of the Presentation was suggested by the words of Simeon, who spoke of Our Lord as "the light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel." (Lu. 2, 32)

**The Blessing of Candles.** On the second of February the Church celebrates the festival of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, which may be considered as the conclusion of the series of feasts that centre around the stable of Bethlehem. Christmas Day presents to us the birth of the Redeemer; the Epiphany commemorates His manifestation to the Gentiles; and the Purification reminds us of the offering of our Saviour in the temple by His blessed Mother, as the Victim who should reconcile God and man. This day has been chosen by the Church for a very important ceremony, the solemn blessing of candles, whence the day is often called Candlemas—the Mass of the candles.

Why is this ceremony performed on the feast of the Purification? Probably because on or about that day the Roman people, when pagan, had been accustomed to carry lights in processions in honor of one of their deities; and the Church, instead of trying to blot out entirely the memory of this pagan festival, changed it into a Christian solemnity—thereby honoring the Blessed Mother of God by assigning to one of her feast days the solemn blessing of candles for Christian services.

The prayers which are used in this blessing are quaint and beautiful, and express well the mind of the Church and the symbolic meaning of the candles. God, the Creator of all things, Who by the labor of the bees has produced this wax, and Who on this day fulfilled His promise to blessed Simeon, is besought to bless and sanctify these candles, that they may be beneficial to His people, for the health of their bodies and souls; that the faithful may be inflamed with His sweetest charity and may deserve to be presented in the temple of His eternal glory as

He was in the temple of Sion; and that the light of His grace may dispel the darkness of sin in our souls.

**The Uses of Blessed Candles.** The candles used for liturgical services should be at least for the greatest part beeswax. This is clearly stated in the rubrics of the Missal and in various decrees of the Sacred Congregation of Rites. This is also demanded by the wording of many prayers in the Missal for the blessing of candles and by the symbolism expressed therein. Moreover, the Church has explicitly forbidden the use of candles made of stearine, paraffin or tallow for liturgical purposes or upon the altar at any time. Candles are used at the administration of all the sacraments except Penance—for all the others are usually given solemnly, while Penance is administered privately. They are lighted at Mass and other church services, at the imparting of certain blessings, in processions and on various other occasions.

The custom of placing lighted candles on our altars goes back, probably, only to about the eleventh century—before which time they were left standing in tall candlesticks on the floor of the sanctuary or in brackets affixed to the walls.

At Masses, candles are used as follows: At a solemn Mass six are lighted on the altar. At a Missa Cantata, sung by one priest, four are sufficient. At a Pontifical Mass, sung by a bishop in his own diocese, seven are lighted. Four are used at a bishop's private Mass, and two at all other Masses. These rules, however, do not prohibit the use of more candles on occasions of special solemnity. Bishops and certain other prelates have the right to use a reading candle, called a *bugia*, at their Masses.

At Vespers, six candles are lighted on the more solemn feasts; four only will suffice on other days. In the processions to the sanctuary before solemn services two candles are borne by acolytes, and these are also carried to do honor to the chanting of the Gospel and to the singing of certain parts of Vespers, etc.

**Votive Candles.** The use of votive candles has become very general in many churches. They are usually not blessed candles,

and are, therefore, not sacramentals. It is customary to use for this purpose stearic candles, which are made of other material than wax. They are commonly placed in large numbers in a candle holder of special form, before some statue or shrine, and are lighted by the people themselves, who give a suitable donation for the privilege.

A votive candle signifies literally that the lighting is done in fulfillment of a vow (Latin, *votum*), although in most cases the intention is merely to give honor and to manifest devotion to the saint before whose image the candle is lighted. In 1932 the Cardinal Vicar of Rome forbade such candles in the churches of the city, suggesting instead the offering of real beeswax candles for their proper use on the altar.

Such is the spirit of our Church in regard to blessed candles. The faithful in general have come to look upon them as among the most efficacious of the sacramentals. Every Catholic home should have one or more, to be used when the sacraments are to be administered; and when death approaches, it is a beautiful and pious custom to place in the hand of the dying Catholic a blessed candle, the light of which is an image of the faith which he has professed before the world, the grace which God has given to his soul, and the eternal glory to which he is destined.

**Lamps in Our Churches.** It may be well to mention here the use of lamps as an adjunct to Catholic worship—for, though they are not sacramentals, they have had from very early times a sacred character. In the catacombs they were used not only to give light but to honor the remains of martyrs.

Lamps, usually consisting of hanging glass vessels filled with olive oil or beeswax, often of very beautiful and costly design, are used in the Catholic Church as tokens of honor. At least one such lamp must burn day and night before the Blessed Sacrament. This is known as the Sanctuary Lamp.\* Throughout the United States, it is true, the sanctuary lamp is the sure sign of the Real Presence. In other countries, however, the

\* See illustrations on pages 134 and 147.

sanctuary lamp and the tabernacle veil (*conopaeum*) together form the correct and unmistakable signs of the Real Presence. Extra lamps of this kind may be lit, provided their number is uneven. Similar lamps may be burned before other altars, shrines, images, etc., as long as the *conopaeum* over and around the tabernacle signifies the presence of the Eucharistic Lord.

## 8. THE ROSARY

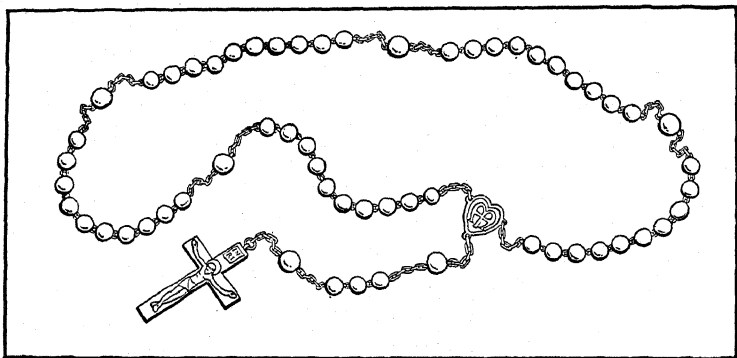
Repetition in prayer is a very ancient custom. It would seem to be natural for man to recite his prayers over and over, especially when he is inspired by a spirit of earnest devotion. Whether he is returning thanks for favors received or offering petitions to God, he finds that the repeating of his prayers satisfies his religious instincts. This usually leads to a resolution to say a certain number of prayers daily; and then the utility of having some counting device suggests itself at once. Hence comes the string of beads which we call a Rosary.

The use of some means of counting prayers is not restricted to Catholics. The Buddhist of India or Thibet has his long string of beads which he uses to measure his eternal repetitions of the praises of Buddha. The Mohammedan votary has his chaplet of ninety-nine beads, to count his fervent invocations to Allah.

**Who Gave Us the Rosary?** Strictly speaking, the rosary is a devotion which combines the repetition of prayers with meditation on certain events in the life of Our Lord and His Blessed Mother. This devotion takes its name from the Latin *rosarium*, a garden of roses, or a wreath of the same beautiful and symbolic flowers; or, according to some, more directly from the title "Mystical Rose," given to Mary in her Litany. The breviary lesson for the Feast of the Holy Rosary gives the credit to St. Dominic, the great founder of the Order of Preachers. "When the Albigensian heresy was devastating the vicinity of Toulouse, St. Dominic earnestly besought the help of our Lady, and was instructed by her (so tradition asserts)

to preach the rosary as an antidote to heresy and sin." From that time this kind of prayer was "most wonderfully promulgated and developed by St. Dominic, whom different Supreme Pontiffs have in various passages of their apostolic letters declared to be the institutor, and author of this devotion." That many Popes have so spoken is undoubtedly true. Among others, we have a series of encyclicals, beginning in 1883, issued by Pope Leo XIII, who assumes the institution of the rosary by St. Dominic to be a fact historically established; and these are supplemented by a very laudatory letter of Benedict XV, to the same effect.

Devices for counting prayers were not new, even in the days of St. Dominic. Many of the faithful in earlier ages could not read; and so they were accustomed to say repeatedly the few prayers they knew, especially the Our Father. We are told that the great Apostle of Ireland recited it a hundred times during each day and night. The early hermits said it many times daily, and kept an account by strings of beads, which were therefore known as "paternosters" long before St. Dominic's time. The first half of the Hail Mary came into use during the century before his birth; and there are extant conventual rules of that period requiring the recitation of 50 or 150 Aves—for which, undoubtedly, some counting device must have been used.



The Rosary devotion spread with great rapidity throughout the world, and has always been highly esteemed by the faithful in every walk of life. Many of the saints have had a wonderful love for this beautiful prayer. St. Alphonsus Liguori was most devoted to it, St. Francis de Sales recited it for an hour each day. All the spiritual writers have sounded its praises, and many indulgences have been granted to it by successive Pontiffs. St. Dominic called it "the rampart of the Church of God," "the Book of Life." In various papal briefs it has been described as "the salvation of Christians," "the dispeller of heresies," "the scourge of Satan" and "the promoter of God's glory."

In an encyclical dated September 1, 1883, Pope Leo XIII commanded, and he confirmed the mandate in perpetuity in the subsequent year, that from October 1st to November 2nd inclusively, in all parishes the rosary, the litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary and a special prayer in honor of St. Joseph, should be recited daily. He thus permanently dedicated the month of October to the holy rosary. His great zeal for the rosary and its power for good received a signal confirmation in the words of Our Lady of Fatima in 1917.

**The Beads of the Rosary.** The rosary is counted on beads which are arranged in decades, that is, in groups of ten small beads separated by a larger bead. The complete rosary consists of fifteen decades, but most rosary beads in use comprise only five decades. The beads may be of any suitable substance not easily broken. Formerly glass beads were forbidden, but they may now be used and indulgenced if they are solid. Hollow glass beads are not allowed, being too fragile. A crucifix, or medal stamped with a cross, must be affixed to the beads. It is recommended that they be not too elaborate in design, or too rich in quality, since devotion, not vanity, should be the reason for using them.

**How to Recite the Rosary.** The manner of reciting the rosary varies slightly in different countries, but the differences are only accidental. Essentially the devotion consists of the

recitation of an Our Father and ten Hail Marys followed by the Gloria for each mystery contemplated. Five of the fifteen mysteries comprise the usual devotion and suffice for gaining the rich indulgence attached.

It is the custom in America to precede the devotion with the recitation of the Apostle's Creed, an Our Father and three Hail Marys, and to conclude with the beautiful *Salve Regina*, or "Hail Holy Queen."

**The Mysteries of the Rosary.** The incarnation of Our Blessed Lord is the central point in the world's history. The Son of God became man that He might redeem us; and the meditations connected with the rosary are made on the principal events in that work of redemption, in order that honor may be paid to Him as our Saviour, and to His Blessed Mother as the most important auxiliary in affecting our salvation.

The meditations on the fifteen decades are divided into three classes. The joyful mysteries comprise the events from the Annunciation to the Finding in the Temple. The sorrowful mysteries recall the sufferings and death of our Saviour. The glorious mysteries extend from His Resurrection to the Coronation of Mary in Heaven.

The mysteries should be taken in turn, according to the days of the week—the joyful on Monday and Thursday; the sorrowful on Tuesday and Friday; the glorious on Wednesday and Saturday. On Sundays the mysteries assigned will depend upon the season of the year. During Advent and after Christmas the joyful should be meditated upon; during Lent, the sorrowful; during the rest of the year, the glorious.

"I cannot say the rosary devoutly. It is so long that I become distracted." This is a common complaint, and arises from the fact that many try to recite it without meditation on the mysteries. The mere repetition of the prayers is likely to become monotonous. To meditate on the mysteries is the most perfect and fruitful method of saying the rosary.

**The Indulgences of the Rosary.** The spiritual benefits of the rosary are very numerous, and are different in some respects



from those granted to other devotions. They are attached directly to the beads themselves, and are gained by anyone properly using the beads so blessed. The indulgences now granted for the recitation of the rosary were determined by Pope Pius XI in 1927 and in 1932. The faithful, whenever they recite a third part of the rosary (i.e., five decades) with devotion, may gain an indulgence of five years. If they recite five decades with others, whether in public or in private, they may gain an indulgence of ten years, once a day. Those who piously recite a third part of the rosary in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament publicly exposed or even reserved in the tabernacle may gain a plenary indulgence, on condition of confession and communion. The indulgences can be gained even though the decades are separated, provided the entire chaplet is completed on the same day. (*Raccolta* No. 360)

In addition to these general indulgences many priests have faculties to bless beads and attach to them the Dominican, the Briggittine, the Crozier and the Apostolic indulgences. If during the recitation of the rosary, the faithful are accustomed to make use of beads thus blessed, they may gain the other indulgences in addition to those enumerated above. For example, the Crozier indulgence, when imparted to beads, is five hundred days for each Our Father and Hail Mary.

NOTE.—Many other forms of beads for the counting of prayers have come into use through the devotion of the faithful, and have been approved by the Church. Space will not permit going into details concerning them. Among the better known are the Briggittine beads, consisting of seven Our Fathers in honor of the sorrows and joys of the Blessed Virgin, and sixty-three Hail Marys to commemorate the years of her life; a similar rosary in use among the Franciscans, with seventy-two Hail Marys, based on another tradition of Mary's age; the Crown of our Saviour, with thirty-three Our Fathers, in honor of the years of our Lord's life; and five Hail Marys in honor of His sacred Wounds; the beads of the Five Wounds, established by the Passionist Fathers, approved in 1823 and 1851,

consisting of five divisions, each having five Glories in honor of Christ's Wounds, and one Hail Mary in commemoration of the Sorrowful Mother; the Little Chaplet of the Immaculate Conception, and the Beads of the Blessed Sacrament.

## 9. SCAPULARS

This section will be devoted to the history and description of a sacramental which, in its different forms, is a channel of great graces and spiritual benefits, inasmuch as it gives its users a share in the merits and prayers of great associations of holy men and women.

The word *scapular* is from a Latin word which means literally the shoulder-blade. In many of the religious orders, such as the Carmelites and Benedictines, a garment is worn called a scapular, which forms a part of the monastic habit.\* It is a long piece of cloth, varying in color according to the order, with an opening for the head, and hanging down in front and at the back from the shoulders almost to the ground. It is worn over the monk's gown, and is open at the sides. In some religious orders the sides are fastened together under the arms; in others, formerly, they were hanging flaps which covered the shoulders, thus making the whole somewhat like a cross; and sometimes a cowl was attached, which could be drawn over the head.

**A Symbolic Yoke.** It is a curious fact that the original scapular of the monks undoubtedly was developed from a working garment or apron, such as was worn in those days by laborers. The monks found such a covering useful in their toil in the fields, to protect their monastic habit; and it was only about the eleventh century that it was recognized as a part of the religious garb and was blessed and imposed at the reception of a candidate. Then its use became a symbol of the burden of the monastic life. It was called, in the language of the ritual, "the yoke of Christ," "the cross" and "the shield"; and as the obligations of the religious life were never to be laid aside, so

\* See illustration on page 24.

(in many religious communities) the scapular was never to be removed, but was to be worn at night as well as during the day.

**The Scapulars of the Third Orders.** In the pious times which we call the Middle Ages, many devout lay persons were permitted to join the religious orders as *oblates*—that is, they remained in the world, but assisted regularly or frequently at the monastic services, united their prayers with those of the monks, and partook of the spiritual benefits of the devotions and good works of the order. These often received the religious garb, which some of them wore constantly; but gradually the custom prevailed of wearing it only at divine service. It was looked upon as a great privilege to die in the monastic habit and to be buried in it; and frequently it was given to those who were dying, or it was placed upon the bodies of the dead.

In later times it was found to be more convenient to dispense with the rest of the religious garb and to wear the scapular, much reduced in size, under the clothing. Thus it has come to pass that the associations of the laity known as *Third Orders*, such as those connected with the Franciscans and Dominicans, wear today as their badge a so-called “large scapular,” made of woollen cloth and measuring about 5 by 2½ inches. That of the Franciscans, often called simply the Scapular of St. Francis, is brown, gray or black in color, and has usually a picture of the Saint and one of the church of Portiuncula, where he was favored with a vision. Those who belong to these Third Orders must wear the scapular constantly in order to partake of the indulgences and privileges.

**The Small Scapulars.** Like the large scapulars for the laity, the first small scapulars were derived from the monastic habit. Many pious laymen associated themselves with various religious communities that thereby they might participate in the good works and consequent merits of those who had consecrated themselves to God. It was deemed proper to form these devout persons into societies whose badge was a miniature of

the scapular of the order. These societies or confraternities became sources of great good, and were rapidly extended throughout the Catholic world.

There are now sixteen small scapulars in use among Catholics. The early history of some of them is, to a great extent, obscure; but it is likely that the oldest of them is the Scapular of Mount Carmel. Each of the small scapulars consists of two pieces of woolen cloth, about two inches wide and a little longer, connected by two strings or bands so that when these rest on the shoulders one piece hangs at the breast and the other at the back. The bands need not be of the same color as the two pieces, except in the case of the Red Scapular. On each half of the scapular pictures or emblems are usually sewn or painted, and for some scapulars they are essential. While the two parts of the scapular must be of woolen cloth, these decorations may be of other material, such as silk or linen. Some of the faithful may imagine that the picture is the scapular, or at least adds to its efficacy. This is a mistaken idea. While a picture or emblem is necessary in some cases, the scapular is the woolen cloth, and richness of ornament does not enhance its religious value in any way.

**The Scapular Medal.** By a regulation made by St. Pius X in 1910, it is permitted to wear a medal instead of one or more of the small scapulars.

There is a story—which may be true or may not be—that the attention of the kindly Pontiff was first called to this matter by an African missionary who reported that the native Catholics found the wearing of the scapular difficult in the thorny jungles of the Congo. The permission intended at first for these children of the Church, to use a medal as a substitute, was finally given to all Catholics.

The wearing of several scapulars is inconvenient and possibly unsanitary, and this medal can replace any or all of them; that is, all persons who have been validly invested with a blessed woolen scapular may use the scapular medal instead—and if they have been invested with several, the medal will take the

place of all if properly blessed. This refers only to the small scapulars, for the medal is not a substitute for the so-called "large scapulars."

As said above, a new scapular may replace an old one without a blessing—but this is not the case with the medal. It must be blessed; and this can be done only by a priest who has faculties to bless and invest with the corresponding scapular. If the medal is to be used instead of several scapulars, a blessing must be given to it for each scapular which it is intended to replace. For each blessing the Church requires merely the sign of the cross.

The scapular medal must have on one side a representation of our Lord with His Sacred Heart, and on the other an image of the Blessed Virgin. It may be made of any kind of hard metal.

How is it to be worn? There is no rule about this. It may be hung from the neck, carried in the pocket or purse, or worn in any desired manner. If worn or carried constantly, it gives a share in all the spiritual privileges that would come from the wearing of the scapular or scapulars which it replaces.

**The Scapular of Mount Carmel.** In describing the various kinds of scapulars we shall first consider that which is best known—the brown scapular of our Lady of Mount Carmel. A beautiful story is told of its origin. In the thirteenth century there lived at Cambridge, in England, a holy man named Simon Stock, the Superior General of the Carmelite order. He was a man of such sanctity, wisdom and prudence that he was afterwards canonized by the Church. He is said to have declared that on the sixteenth of July, 1251, the Blessed Virgin appeared to him and presented him with a scapular, telling him that it was a special sign of her favor; that he who dies clothed with it shall be preserved from eternal punishment; that it is a badge of salvation, a shield against danger and a pledge of her protection.

Do we Catholics believe that this vision was vouchsafed to the holy Carmelite? We may—but we are not obliged to do so.

Nevertheless, the account of St. Simon's vision remains a pious and praiseworthy tradition; that is, it is quite credible that the saint was supernaturally assured of the protection of the Blessed Virgin for all who should wear this badge. This vision has been accepted as genuine by several Pontiffs, and has been cited by them as a reason for the granting of indulgences to those who wear the scapular.

**The Scapular Privileges.** The above promise is what is known as the first privilege of the Carmelite order, and it amounts to this: that all who out of true love and veneration for the Blessed Virgin constantly wear the scapular in a spirit of faith after they have been properly invested in it, shall enjoy the protection of the Mother of God, especially as regards their eternal welfare. If even a sinner wears this badge through life, not presumptuously relying on it as a miraculous charm, but trusting in the power and goodness of Mary, he may hope that through her intercession he will obtain the graces necessary for true conversion and for perseverance.

**The Sabbatine Indulgence.** The second privilege of the scapular is what is called the Sabbatine (Saturday) Indulgence. There has been much discussion concerning it, and its existence has been denied by many. It is claimed that any wearer of the scapular who shall have complied regularly with certain conditions will be released promptly from Purgatory, especially on the first Saturday after his death. Concerning this privilege, as stated, there is considerable doubt. Several Pontiffs seem to have been in favor of it. Benedict XIV and Paul V granted permission to the Carmelite Fathers to preach it to the people, and thereby would seem to have indirectly sanctioned it. "The faithful can believe that the Blessed Virgin will help by her continued assistance and her merits, particularly on Saturdays, the souls of the members of the Scapular Confraternity who have died in the grace of God, if in life they wore the scapular, observed chastity according to their state of life, and recited the Office of the Blessed Virgin or observed the fasts of the Church, practising abstinence on Wednesdays and Saturdays."

About this supposed privilege, then, we cannot speak decisively. It may be true, or it may not be. It is one of the pious beliefs which have not been expressly confirmed by the Church, even though a qualified or partial approval may have been given by individual Pontiffs. We may readily believe that our Blessed Mother consoles with special affection those who have worn the scapular, her livery, while on earth, and are now in Purgatory—especially if they have been chaste and devout—and that she will endeavor to bring them speedily to Heaven. But whether this will take place on the Saturday after death is another question.

**Investing in the Brown Scapular.** Among us, the investing in this scapular often takes place at the time of first communion or confirmation, but there is no rule to that effect. The investiture may be performed for infants; and after they have come to the use of reason they do not need a renewal of it.

Who can perform the investing? This was originally restricted to the priests of the Carmelite Order; but for many years our bishops have had the power of giving this faculty to all their priests. Therefore today, in our country, any priest having ordinary faculties in a diocese can invest in this scapular.

The form to be used is that prescribed by Pope Leo XIII in 1888, which is shorter than the one formerly in use. After a few introductory versicles and responses a prayer is offered to our Blessed Lord, asking Him to bless this habit which is to be worn for love of Him and of His Mother. The scapular is then placed on the shoulders of the recipient with an appropriate formula, as follows: "Receive this blessed habit, imploring the most holy Virgin, that through her merits thou mayest wear it without stain, and that she may defend thee from all adversity and lead thee to everlasting life. Amen."

The priest then declares that, by virtue of the power granted to him, the person invested is received into the Scapular Confraternity and is entitled to share in the spiritual benefits of the Order of Mount Carmel. And after another prayer to God ask-

ing a blessing on the new member and praying that he may receive the aid of our Mother Mary at the hour of death, he is sprinkled with holy water. This concludes the ceremony of investiture in this scapular.

**Benefits of the Brown Scapular.** What are the advantages and privileges which we gain by using it? All who have been invested in this scapular become sharers in all the fruits of the good works of the great religious order of the Carmelites—their prayers, meditations, Masses, penances, charitable works, etc. After death they share in all prayers of the Carmelites and in the weekly Mass which every priest of that order offers for the deceased members of the Scapular Confraternity.

Many indulgences may be gained—a plenary one on the day of receiving the scapular, under the usual conditions; another at the hour of death; and all Masses said for deceased wearers of the scapular have the advantage of a privileged altar—that is, a plenary indulgence is gained for the person for whom the Mass is offered. Besides these, there are many partial indulgences.

Many of the other scapulars, also, give to their wearers a share in the good works of some religious order, and in the merits gained by the members of the confraternity of that scapular.

**Scapular Rules.** The scapular may be given in any place—not necessarily in church; thus the sick may receive it in their beds. It must be worn so that one part hangs on the breast, the other on the back, with a band on each shoulder. If worn or carried otherwise, no indulgences are gained. It may be worn under all the clothing or over some of it; that is, inside or outside of the undergarments.

After one has been once invested, it is never necessary to have a scapular blessed. When one is worn out or is lost, the wearer simply puts on another without ceremony.

On any except the Red Scapular any suitable ornaments or emblems may be sewn or embroidered in other material than wool; these neither add to nor take away from the value of the



scapular. In the case of some scapulars, the investiture means reception into a confraternity; the blessing of the scapular and its imposition must then take place at the same time as the enrollment.

The scapular is intended to give its wearer a share in certain spiritual benefits and privileges. It must, therefore, be worn constantly. Laying it aside for a short time—an hour or a day—probably does not deprive one of these advantages; but if the wearing of it has been neglected for a long time, no indulgences are gained during that time. As soon, however, as the scapular is resumed, the spiritual benefits begin again.

**The "Five Scapulars."** It is permitted to attach several scapulars to the same pair of strings or bands, provided that the scapulars be different from one another and that both parts of each be used. It has long been customary with certain devout persons to combine five of the best-known scapulars. Those generally used are: The scapular of the Most Blessed Trinity, which is white, blue and red; the brown scapular of the Carmelites; that of the Servites, called the Seven Dolors, which is black; the blue scapular of the Immaculate Conception, and the red scapular of the Passion. Each of these will be described briefly below.

When these are used together, it is necessary that the bands should be red—because that color is strictly required for the last-mentioned, the red scapular of the Passion; and it is customary to wear this scapular uppermost, so that the images prescribed for it may be visible, and that of the Blessed Trinity undermost, so that the red and blue cross may not be hidden by the other scapulars.

As five scapulars worn together make rather a bulky appendage, the use of them has become less common of late, especially since the approval of the scapular medal as a substitute for any one or all of them, provided that it be lawfully blessed for that purpose—as will be explained later on.

**The Scapular of the Most Blessed Trinity.** This scapular is of white woolen cloth, bearing a blue and red cross, usually

only on the front portion. It is the special badge of the confraternity of the same name. When Pope Innocent III, in 1198, was considering the matter of approving the Order of the Trinitarians, an angel is said to have appeared to him, clothed in a white robe and bearing on his breast a cross of red and blue. This was accordingly assigned to the new community as their habit. Later, when the faithful sought to associate themselves with this order, a confraternity was established with this scapular as its badge of membership. Many indulgences have been granted to those who wear it, and these were reaffirmed by Pope Leo XIII in 1899.

**The Scapular of the Seven Dolors.** One of the great religious orders founded in the thirteenth century was that of the Servites; and soon after its institution many of the faithful sought a share in its good works and prayers. A confraternity was established in honor of the Seven Dolors or Sorrows of Mary. Their scapular is black, and often bears on the front portion a picture of the Mother of Sorrows. To those who wear it constantly many indulgences have been given, which were reaffirmed by Pope Leo XIII in 1888.

**The Scapular of the Immaculate Conception.** The order of Theatine nuns was founded by a saintly woman, Ursula Benincasa, who has been declared Blessed by the Church. She affirmed that the habit which she and her community were to wear was revealed to her in a vision by our Blessed Lord. She besought Him that the graces promised to the new order might be extended also to all who would wear a scapular of the Immaculate Conception. The use of this scapular was approved by Clement X and by succeeding Popes, and the various indulgences granted for it were renewed by Gregory XVI in 1845. It is of blue woolen cloth; on one of the parts is a picture of the Immaculate Conception, and on the other is the name of Mary.

**The Red Scapular of the Passion.** This owes its origin to a vision which our Lord vouchsafed to a member of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, in 1846. To her it was prom-

ised that all who would wear this scapular would receive every Friday a great increase in the virtues of faith, hope and charity. The faculty of blessing it belongs to the order of men founded by St. Vincent, known as the Priests of the Mission, or the Lazarists. Their Superior-General, however, can give this faculty to other priests. Several indulgences were granted to the wearers of this scapular by Pius IX in 1847. Both the scapular and the bands are of red woolen material. On one half is a picture of our Lord on the cross, with the implements of the Passion and the words "Holy Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, save us." On the other are shown the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, a cross and the inscription "Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, protect us."

We see, then, how many means our Church has granted to her children for partaking of the merits of great religious orders and confraternities. She has multiplied the scapulars so that each individual may find one or more that appeal to his devotional spirit; and she has enriched nearly all of them with indulgences for the wearers. They are uniforms of great societies, the members of which are banded together for the same ends—to glorify God, to honor His Mother, and to benefit one another mutually by the gaining of merits which are shared by all.

## 10. THE AGNUS DEI

In every form of religion, even in the grossest paganism, it has been customary to consider certain objects as holy, and to use them as means of supposed protection from evil. Among the ancient Romans such objects were employed for children, to guard them from all malign influences. These charms were of various kinds—images of the gods, herbs, acrostics formed of letters arranged in mystic fashion, and many others.

Now, to put one's trust in things of this sort, to imagine that inanimate objects such as these could protect against disease or other evil, was undoubtedly nothing but gross superstition. How is it, then, that we Catholics are permitted by our Church

to have amulets of many kinds, such as crosses, scapulars, medals and the *Agnus Dei*? Is this superstition? No; because the Catholic, unlike the pagan, does not trust in them on account of any inherent virtue which he imagines them to have, or any supposed magical power. He puts his trust only in the living God Who, through the prayers of His Church, blesses these material things and bids her children to keep and use them as memorials of Him, as symbols of His merciful providence. Through the Church's benediction these objects become vehicles of grace; they bring the divine protection upon such of the faithful as use them with earnest faith, ardent charity and firm confidence in God.

**What is the *Agnus Dei*?** The sacramental of our Church which is called an *Agnus Dei*, a Lamb of God, is a small flat piece of wax impressed with the figure of a lamb. These are blessed at stated seasons by the Pope, and never by any other person. They are sometimes round, sometimes oval or oblong, and of varying diameters. The lamb generally bears a cross or a banner, and often the figure of some saint or the name and coat-of-arms of the Pope are stamped on the other side. The *Agnus Dei* is usually enclosed in a small leather cover, round or heart-shaped, so that it may be preserved, and is intended to be worn suspended from the neck.

**History of the *Agnus Dei*.** The origin of this sacramental is a matter of great obscurity. When the people of Italy and other countries had been converted from idolatry, they retained some of their belief in charms and amulets; and it is probable that the *Agnus Dei* was devised as a substitute for these relics of paganism. Instead of attempting to repress totally a practice which was misguided indeed, but which showed an instinctive reliance on higher powers, the Church in many instances took the religious customs with which the people were familiar, and made these customs Christian. She eliminated all that savored of idolatry, and substituted for the superstitious charms of paganism the emblem of our Saviour, the Lamb of God.

They were first used in Rome, and it is possible that they go

back as far as the final overthrow of pagan worship in that city, about the fifth century. Indeed, there is some evidence that they were in use even a little earlier; for in the tomb of Maria Augusta, wife of the Emperor Honorius, who died in the fourth century, was found an object made of wax and much like our Agnus Deis of the present time. And we know, moreover, that it was customary in those days for the people to obtain fragments of the paschal candle after it had been extinguished on Ascension Day, and to keep them as a safeguard against tempest and pestilence. From this pious custom the use of waxen Agnus Deis probably arose. They began to come into common use at the beginning of the ninth century, and from that time we find frequent mention of them. They were often sent by Popes as presents to sovereigns or distinguished personages. The use of them spread widely, and up to the time of the Reformation they were everywhere regarded as an important sacramental of the Church. In the penal laws against Catholics in England, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, they were specified as a "popish trumpery," and the possession of them or the importation of them into the country was a felony.

**Blessed by the Pope.** Centuries ago, at Rome, the Agnus Deis were made by the archdeacon of St. Peter's of clean wax mingled with chrism, on the morning of Holy Saturday; and on the following Saturday they were distributed to the people. After a time it became customary for the Pope himself to attend to this, and at the present day the blessing is always imparted by him. What is called the "great consecration" of Agnus Deis takes place only in the first year of each Pontiff's reign and every seventh year thereafter. The pieces of wax are now prepared beforehand by certain monks, without the use of chrism. On the Wednesday of Easter week these are brought to the Holy Father, who dips them into water mingled with chrism and balsam, with certain appropriate prayers. On the following Saturday the distribution takes place with great solemnity, when the Pope, after the Agnus Dei of the Mass, puts a packet of them into the inverted mitre of each cardinal

and bishop present, and the remaining ones are sent to prelates and religious communities in all parts of the world.

**A Symbol of Our Lord.** The meaning of the *Agnus Dei* is best understood from the prayers used in the solemn blessing by the Holy Father. The wax, white and pure, typifies the virgin flesh of Christ. The lamb suggests the idea of a victim offered in sacrifice. The banner signifies the victory of our Lord over sin and death. As the blood of the paschal lamb protected the Israelites from the destroying angel, so shall this emblem of the Lamb of God protect him who wears it from many kinds of evil. The mercy of God is implored for the faithful who piously use and reverence the *Agnus Dei*; and He is besought to give His blessing to it, so that the sight or touch of the lamb impressed on it may guard us against the spirits of evil, against sickness and pestilence, against tempest, fire and flood; that it may strengthen us against temptations; that those who use it may be preserved from a sudden and unprovided death. Also in the prayers it is especially recommended to women who are expecting motherhood.

The *Agnus Dei*, then, represents our Blessed Lord; and he who would derive full benefit from its use must imitate Him in His lamblike virtues—innocence, meekness, indifference to the world. The angelic virtue of innocence—spotless purity of soul and body—is symbolized both by the wax and the lamb. He who wears it should be sinless. The lamb is meek, and the Lamb of God has told us to learn of Him, because He is meek and humble of heart. The lamb is “dumb before the shearer,” teaching us contempt for the world, silence under its persecutions, and indifference to its judgments and its vanities.

**How it is Worn.** There is no obligation to use the *Agnus Dei*. There is no special manner in which it must be worn, such as we have for the scapular. The *Agnus Dei* may be attached to the latter, or otherwise suspended from the neck, or it may be carried in any other way about the person. Though it is an important sacramental, there are no indulgences attached to its use. Its efficacy comes from the fact that it is a symbol of

our Lord, blessed by His Vicar upon earth. And we would do well to remember that it does not derive its value from the beauty of its outside covering. Whether this be plain or elaborate is of no importance whatever. Nor should any attempt be made to have it blessed. All Agnus Deis are blessed; they would not be Agnus Deis if they had not received the benediction of the Holy Father.

The solemnity with which this beautiful sacramental is blessed and distributed by the Sovereign Pontiff, the graces which are besought in the prayers by which it is consecrated, the benefits derived from its pious use, and the symbolical meaning which it possesses, all these show us that in the Agnus Dei we have a very efficacious means of grace and a powerful protection against the evils that threaten our bodies and souls.

## 11. PALM BRANCHES

The beautiful ceremony of the blessing and distributing of palms on Palm Sunday is a remembrance of our Saviour's entrance into Jerusalem a few days before His death. As He approached the city a great throng came forth to meet Him—some, perhaps, in a spirit of mere curiosity, to see the far-famed prophet and wonder-worker; others because they hoped to see some evidence of His miraculous power; and some because they believed in Him and recognized Him as the long expected Redeemer.

The Gospels tell us that the people conducted Jesus in triumph through the city gate, spreading their garments before Him as a mark of homage, and that they went before Him in a joyful procession, carrying palms and chanting hosannas of praise.

The Eastern palm which they used is the date tree, which forms a distinctive feature of every Oriental scene; and it must have been a graceful and inspiring sight to see the vast throng waving the beautiful palm branches as they marched towards the Holy City.

**A Symbol of Victory.** The palm is emblematic of victory, just as the olive branch is of peace; and the custom of using it to denote triumph and joy seems to have been widespread. Among the pagan nations victorious generals and conquering armies decked themselves with the spreading branches of the palm tree in their triumphal processions; and among the Jews the palm was used to express rejoicing, especially for the celebration of the harvest festival known as the Feast of Tabernacles. In Christian art the palm branch is often introduced in pictures of martyr saints, to signify the victory which they have gained and the triumph they are enjoying. And as the palm tree is a shade tree and produces fruit, it symbolizes well the protection of Divine Providence and the giving of grace.

The genuine Oriental date palm is, of course, the most suitable for the ceremony of Palm Sunday, but as this is practically unobtainable in many parts of the world, the Church allows the use of other kinds of branches. She states in the rules of the missal that they may be of "palm or olive or other trees." Some of our readers will remember when spruce or hemlock was used commonly in our churches, and it is only of late years that the southern palmetto has come into vogue. It is more suitable, because it considerably resembles the real palm.

**The History of the Blessing.** Palms are blessed and distributed to the faithful on only one day of the year—Palm Sunday. This, of course, changes in date from year to year, according to the date of Easter.

It is uncertain just when this beautiful custom began. In old Church calendars and other books there are various references which would lead us to suppose that it was practised early in the fifth century, but there is nothing very definite about it until the time of the English saint, the Venerable Bede, about the year 700. It is likely that the use of palms began in the miracle plays, or reproductions of the Passion of our Lord, which were common in the early Middle Ages. Just as at the Passion Play of Oberammergau at the present day, the actors in these earlier religious dramas endeavored to represent all the details of our



Saviour's life and sufferings, and it is probable that the triumphal entry into Jerusalem was shown on the stage with the use of palms. Then, following her usual custom of blessing anything intended for religious purposes, the Church began to give a solemn benediction to the palms and made them a sacramental.

**The Prayers of the Blessing.** By the 1955 reform of the Holy Week liturgy, the blessing of the palms has been shortened considerably. The palms are placed on the table in the center of the sanctuary, or held in the hands of the faithful, who may bring their own or receive palms at the door on entering the church. The celebrant wears red vestments, a sign of immortality, the victory of life over death, the triumph of Christ.

As the clergy enter, the choir bursts forth in a jubilant note, singing: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, O King of Israel! Hosanna in the highest!" When this joyous antiphon is finished, the celebrant blesses the palms with a simple prayer, and with holy water and incense. He then proceeds through the body of the church to bless the palms held by the faithful.

Palms are blessed primarily that they may be carried in the triumphant procession of this day. The prayer of blessing is as follows: "Bless, O Lord, we pray Thee, these branches of palm; grant that what we Thy people today outwardly enact in Thy honor, we may inwardly fulfill with utmost devotion, by triumphing over the enemy and attaching our hearts above all else to Thy merciful work of redemption."

The palms are intended also to bring blessings into our homes: "Lord, Jesus Christ, our King and Redeemer, we have carried these branches and sung solemn praises in Thy honor. Graciously let Thy grace and blessing rest wherever these branches are brought; with the power of Thy right hand defeat every evil influence and deception of the devil while granting Thy protection to those whom Thou hast redeemed."

The palms which have not been distributed are preserved until the following year, and, being then dry, are burned to

obtain the ashes for the ceremony of Ash Wednesday, when they are placed on our foreheads with the solemn admonition to remember that we are dust and shall return to dust—impressing upon us the stern truth that only by keeping ever in mind our last end and preparing for it may we hope to win the palm of final victory.

## 12. INCENSE

Our Holy Church has always recognized the value of rites and ceremonial observances, not only for increasing the solemnity of her services but for arousing a spirit of devotion in those who minister at them and those who attend them.

And because a religious practice happened to be of Jewish origin or had been used in the rites of paganism, the Church does not therefore look upon it as something to be necessarily condemned or forbidden. She has taken some of the details of her liturgy not only from the ceremonial law of Moses, but even from pagan worship. On account of this, some of her more biased critics have asserted that "Romanism is nothing but Christianized paganism"—an accusation which reveals the inbred prejudices of those who can find no word of praise for anything that is taught or done by the Church of Rome.

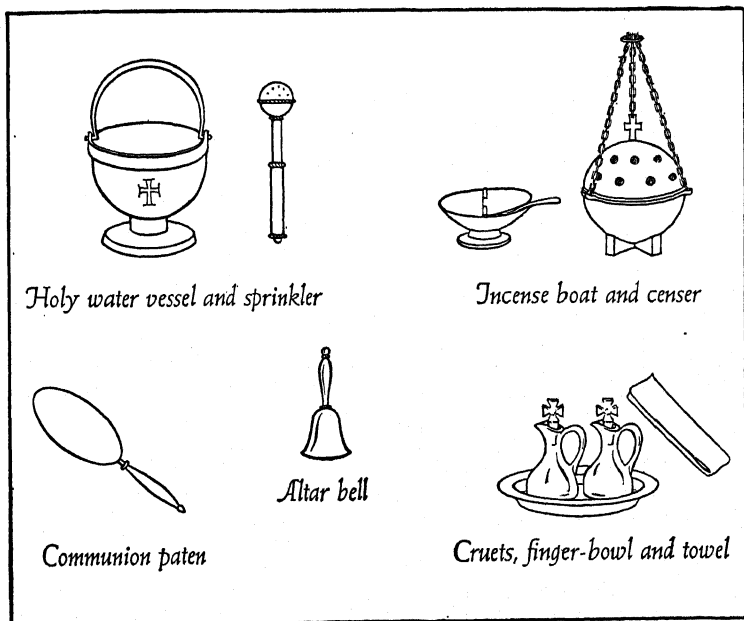
**Expressing Homage to the Deity.** The Catholic Church knows that in every form of worship, in every effort of man to do homage to his concept of the deity, there are many practices that are commendable, inasmuch as they are a good expression of religious sentiment, and she has adapted the best of these to the requirements of her ritual. Thus, for instance, we find in Catholic worship the use of holy water, which was not only a Jewish but a pagan practice; the wearing of medals and amulets, common to all the religions of antiquity; and the use of incense at religious functions. It is concerning the last of these that we shall treat in this section.

**The Incense and the Censer.** What is incense? It is a granulated aromatic resin, obtained from certain trees in Eastern and

tropical countries, especially from those of the terebinth family. When sprinkled upon a glowing coal in the *censer*, it burns freely and emits an abundant white smoke of very fragrant odor. Various spices are sometimes mixed with the resin to increase its fragrance.

The censer is a vessel in the form of a bowl, provided with a cover, and suspended from chains, so that it may be swung to and fro for the better diffusion of the sweet odor. When a person or thing is to be incensed, the censer, being held in the right hand, is elevated to the height of the eyes, and swung forward once or oftener, according to the requirements of the rubrics.

The incense is kept in a vessel known as a *boat* from its peculiar shape, and is transferred to the censer by means of a small spoon.



Various Liturgical Accessories

**History of Incense?** First of all, we find in the Scriptures many references to its use in Jewish worship. In the sanctuary of the Tabernacle of God an altar was provided for the burning of incense, morning and night. It is thus described in the ritual which Moses gave to the Israelites, in the book of Exodus: "Take unto thee spices . . . of sweet savor and the clearest frankincense . . . and when thou hast beaten all into very small powder, thou shalt set of it before the Tabernacle. Most holy shall this incense be unto you." It is also mentioned in the Psalms and by the prophets Isaias, Jeremias and Malachias, as well as in the gospel account of the vision of Zacharias, the aged priest, who was "offering incense in the temple of the Lord" when he received the promise of God that a son would be given to him. And of course we know that the Magi brought incense as one of their gifts to the infant Saviour.

In the ceremonies of pagan creeds incense had an important part. Its use is mentioned by Ovid and Virgil as a feature of the rites of Roman worship, being probably adopted from the Eastern nations with whom the Romans had come into contact. Among these, especially the Assyrians and Egyptians, it has been known almost from the dawn of history. The carvings of the tombs and temples of Egypt represent kings offering homage to the gods by burning incense in censers much like those used in our Catholic churches at the present day.

When did the Church begin to use it? We do not know exactly. There is no evidence that it was employed in Christian worship until about the fifth century, although when we consider to what an extent it was used in the rites of Judaism and how many times it is mentioned in the Scriptures, it seems probable that incensing as a part of the Catholic ceremonial, goes back to an earlier day. It came into use in the East before it was adopted by the Western Church, for the Orientals in the early centuries had a much more elaborate ritual than the Roman Church had. Incense was used at first at the gospel of the Mass only, but in succeeding centuries other incensations were introduced, not only at the Mass but at other services.

At the present day the use of incense forms a rather prominent feature of the more solemn services of our Church. In our Latin rite it is not employed at low Mass, but in solemn Mass incensings take place at several parts of the celebration. A brief description of these ceremonies will show how clearly the incense symbolizes the prayers of the faithful ascending before the throne of God.

**Incense at Mass.** Incense is used in solemn Mass at the introit, the gospel, the offertory and the elevation; but in the Mass for the dead the first two incensings are omitted. At each of the times when the censer is to be used, fresh incense is put into it and is blessed, usually by the celebrant. At the introit and the gospel the blessing is simple: "Mayest thou be blessed by Him in Whose honor thou shalt be consumed. Amen." At the offertory a more elaborate ceremonial is carried out. The blessing is given thus: "May the Lord, through the intercession of blessed Michael the Archangel standing at the right hand of the altar of incense, and of all His elect, deign to bless this incense and to accept it as an odor of sweetness. Through Christ our Lord. Amen." The celebrant then incenses the bread and wine which are upon the altar, with the words: "May this incense, blessed by Thee, ascend to Thee, O Lord; and may Thy mercy descend upon us." He next incenses the crucifix and the altar, saying, in the words of the 140th Psalm: "Let my prayer, O Lord, be directed as incense in Thy sight; the raising up of my hands as an evening sacrifice. Set a watch, O Lord, on my mouth and a door around my lips. Incline not my heart to evil words to make excuses in sins." And finally: "May the Lord kindle in us the fire of His love, and the flame of everlasting charity. Amen." The censer is also lifted as a mark of respect before the celebrant, ministers and assisting clergy at a Solemn Mass.

Incense is used also in many other public services of the Church—in processions, blessings and other functions, and in the absolution or obsequies for the dead. Not only persons but inanimate things are thus honored—things which are in them-

selves sacred, such as relics; things which have been previously blessed, such as crucifixes, altars and the book of the gospels; and things to which a blessing is being given, such as bodies of the dead and sepulchres.

On Holy Saturday, when the paschal candle is solemnly blessed in each parish church, five grains of incense are inserted into it, each being encased usually in a piece of wax resembling a nail. These are fixed in the wax of the candle in the form of a cross.

When an altar or altar stone is consecrated, grains of incense are burned upon it, and other grains are put into the *sepulchre*, that is, the cavity containing the relics, thus symbolizing the prayers and intercession which will be offered in Heaven by the saint whose sacred relics are enclosed within the altar on which the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered.

**The Symbolism of Incense.** The mystical meaning of incense is not difficult to comprehend. By its burning it symbolizes the zeal with which the faithful should be animated; by its sweet fragrance, the odor of Christian virtue; by its rising smoke, the ascent of prayer before the throne of the Almighty. As St. John tells us in the Apocalypse, or Book of Revelations: "The smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended before God from the hand of the Angel." (Apoc. 8, 4)

The use of incense, then, is a beautiful example of the wisdom of our Church which adapts to our own purposes all that is good in every creed, all that will typify the spirit with which she wished her children to be animated, all that will aid them to attain to true fervor, all that will add solemnity to the worship which she offers to God.

### 13. CHURCH BELLS

The use of bells for general and even for religious purposes is of very ancient origin, although it is likely that in early ages they were of very crude form and imperfect sound, and that they were gradually developed into their present perfection.

They are said to have been used by the ancient Egyptians in the worship of their god Osiris; but these bells were small, and rather in the form of a flat gong. Moses, who had been educated in the priestly class of Egypt, introduced them into the ceremonial of the Jewish religion.

Among the Romans there is no trace of their employment for religious purposes, apart from the processions of rejoicing after victories. In these triumphal events, which were partly of a religious character, expressing gratitude to the gods for success in battle, bells were sometimes mounted in chariots and joyfully rung during the progress of the procession.

**Bells in Christian Churches.** Bells came into use in our churches as early as the year 400, and their introduction is ascribed to Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, a town of Campania, in Italy. Their use spread rapidly, as in those unsettled times the church bell was useful not only for summoning the faithful to religious services, but also for giving an alarm when danger threatened. Their use was sanctioned in 604 by Pope Sabinian, and a ceremony for blessing them was established a little later. Very large bells, for church towers, were probably not in common use until the eleventh century.

In various museums of Europe many curious old bells are preserved, and particularly in Scotland and Ireland fine specimens may be seen of the ancient monastic bells of the Celtic abbeys. These are sometimes square in shape, and are made of bronze or iron sheets riveted together. Their sound, consequently, must have been discordant and far less powerful than that of our modern bells.

Bells were introduced into the Eastern churches about the ninth century and some of the largest in the world are to be found in the great cathedrals of Russia. The most enormous of these is the famous "Bell of Moscow" which, however, is not in condition to be rung, as a large piece is broken out of its side. It is about nineteen feet in height, and of nearly the same diameter. Moscow also boasts another gigantic bell, which weighs eighty tons and is nearly fourteen feet in diameter.

The largest bell on this side of the Atlantic is said to be that in the tower of the Church of Notre Dame in Montreal. It weighs nearly fifteen tons.

**Chimes and Peals.** In many European churches and in some of our own, beautiful chimes of bells have been installed, varying in number from eight to twelve or fourteen, and so arranged that the notes of the musical scale may be sounded upon them. In the old parish churches of England it is customary to ring the bells in a harmonious peal, in which all are rung at the same time, the volume of sound thus produced being enormous and the effect very beautiful.

Many of the bells used in churches are engraved with appropriate inscriptions, telling the various uses to which they are put. Some bear the title "Ave Maria," and are used especially for the Angelus; others have an invocation to St. Gabriel, the archangel of the Annunciation. On many of the bells in the old churches in England quaint verses were used, such as:

*Men's death I tell by doleful knell;  
Lightning and thunder I break asunder;  
On Sabbath all to church I call;  
The sleepy head I rouse from bed;  
The tempest's rage I do assuage;  
When cometh harm, I sound alarm.*

An idea which was common some centuries ago was that the sound of church bells was a sure safeguard against lightning and violent tempests; and therefore the bells were rung vigorously during storms.

**The "Passing Bell."** A beautiful and pious custom which prevailed in many Catholic countries was the "passing bell," which was rung slowly when a death was imminent in the parish. When the sick person was near his end the solemn tones of the bell reminded the faithful of their Christian duty of praying for his happy death and for his eternal repose; and after his spirit had departed, the bell tolled out his age—one short stroke for each year.



**The Angelus.** One of the most important uses to which church bells are devoted is the ringing of the *Angelus*. This practice is distinctively Catholic. There was nothing resembling it in Jewish and pagan rites. All religions, it is true, have had certain times for prayer; but they have had nothing at all like our *Angelus*, which consists essentially in the reciting of certain prayers at the sound of a bell at fixed hours.

The *Angelus* is a short practice of devotion in honor of the Incarnation of our Blessed Lord, and it is recited three times a day—at morning, noon and evening—at the sound of a bell. It consists in the triple repetition of the Hail Mary with certain versicles, responses and a prayer. It takes its name from the opening word of the Latin form: *Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae* ("The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary").

The history of this beautiful devotion is extremely vague. The *Angelus* possibly owed its origin to a practice which was not at all religious—namely, the curfew, or sounding of an evening bell as a signal that all must extinguish fires and lights and retire to rest. This was done principally as a precaution against conspiracy, especially in conquered countries. For example, when the Normans had invaded England and had overthrown the Saxon power, they imposed many strict and cruel regulations upon the people, among which was the curfew law, prescribing that all must be in their homes and with lights extinguished when the sound of the warning bell was heard. We have seen this custom of the curfew revived in our own day when the Allied troops occupied Germany after World War II.

Now, among a people who were Christian, it was natural that this bell should become a signal for nightly prayers. But the question may be asked, how did the custom arise of reciting prayers in the morning and at noon at the sound of a bell, and why were these prayers in honor of the Blessed Virgin? A rather vague tradition assigns these practices to St. Bernard, but there is no certainty regarding them. The prayers to Mary probably came into use gradually, and in this manner: In the

monasteries it was customary on certain days to recite the Office of the Blessed Virgin in addition to the regular office of the day; and this included the repetition of the salutation of the Archangel to Mary, with the other versicles, much as we have them now. The people began to use these as ejaculatory prayers, and recited them as a part of their evening devotions at the sound of the bell.

The earliest custom resembling our morning Angelus is traced back to Parma, in Italy, in the year 1318, when three Our Fathers and three Hail Marys were ordered to be recited, to obtain the blessing of peace; and the bell which gave the signal for these prayers was known as the "Peace Bell." A similar practice was prescribed in England by Archbishop Arundel in 1399.

The bell at noon was originally intended to summon the faithful to meditate on the Passion of Christ, and was rung only on Fridays; but after a time it was sounded also on other days, and the same prayers were recited as at morning and evening. This was ordered in the year 1456, by Pope Calixtus III.

**The Prayers of the Angelus.** At first the Angelus consisted only of the first part of the Hail Mary, repeated three times. This was prescribed for the success of the Crusades and the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre.

The Gospel narrative which is summarized so beautifully in this devotion is found in the first chapter of St. Luke, from which two of the versicles and responses are taken, the third being from the Gospel of St. John. Thus, by reciting it, we are reminded at morning, noon and night of Him Whose Name is "the only one under heaven given to men whereby they may be saved," and of her who is well entitled "our life, our sweetness and our hope."

**The Legend of the Regina Coeli.** During the season after Easter the Church substitutes the *Regina Coeli* for the usual prayers of the Angelus. The following legend, beautiful indeed but somewhat fanciful, is handed down concerning its origin:

"During the reign of St. Gregory, about the year 596, a severe

pestilence raged in Rome. At the Paschal season the Pontiff was taking part in a great religious procession to implore God's mercy on the stricken city. He was carrying in his hands a picture of our Blessed Lady which was said to have been painted by St. Luke and was reputed to be miraculous. Suddenly the sound of angels' voices was heard in the air, chanting the Regina Coeli. The Pope and people listened, amazed and filled with awe, until they had learned the words. The plague ceased from that moment."

Of course, there is no obligation to believe that such an occurrence ever happened. The legend is probably only the product of the fertile imagination of some medieval story teller. It is far more likely that the beautiful words of this anthem owe their origin to the genius and piety of some devout religious of the early Middle Ages. We know that it is at least of very ancient date.

**The Indulgences of the Angelus.** The faithful, who at dawn, at noon, and eventide, or as soon thereafter as may be, recite the Angelus, or at Eastertide the Regina Coeli, with the appropriate versicles and collects, or who merely say the Hail Mary five times, may gain an indulgence of ten years each time, and a plenary indulgence under the usual conditions if they persevere in this devout practice for a month. (Raccolta No. 219)

It is no longer necessary that the Angelus be said kneeling, although that posture is the proper one on every day except Sunday and Saturday evening, when the rubrics prescribe that it be said standing. Nor is it necessary now that it be recited at the sound of the bell. If one does not know the prayers of the Angelus he may still gain the indulgences if he recites the Hail Mary five times.

The manner of ringing the Angelus seems to have varied very little since the beginning of the devotion. Old monastic records, going back to the fifteenth century, show that the bell ringer was directed "to toll the Ave bell nine strokes at three times, keeping the space of one Pater and Ave between each of the three tollings." In those days the concluding prayer was not in

use; but when it began to be recited, the further ringing of the bell came into vogue, as we have it at the present day.

**The De Profundis Bell.** In some places, it is the custom to *toll* the bell an hour after the evening Angelus. This is called the *De profundis* bell. It is a reminder to the people to pray for the souls departed. An indulgence of three years is granted to those who devoutly recite the 129th Psalm, *De profundis*, or who say the Our Father, Hail Mary and the versicle: Eternal rest, etc., in supplication for the faithful departed. (Pius XI, 1933)

**The Tower Bell at the Elevation.** The practice of elevating the Sacred Host and the chalice at Mass, immediately after the consecration of each, was introduced in the Latin churches about the beginning of the thirteenth century. It was then deemed fitting that those who were not present at Mass should also be invited to adore their Eucharistic Lord. And so the practice was begun of ringing one of the great bells of the church, to give notice to all the people, that they might kneel for a moment and make an act of adoration.

No bells, large or small, are rung between the end of the Gloria of the Mass on Holy Thursday and the beginning of the Gloria on Holy Saturday, when the Church begins to anticipate joyfully the Resurrection of our Lord. Then both the sanctuary bell and the tower bells peal forth triumphantly, to announce that Christ has risen from the dead, to die no more.

**The Blessing of Bells.** The ceremony of the blessing of a church bell is one of the most elaborate and impressive in the whole liturgy of our Church; and this is not surprising when we consider the many and important uses to which bells are devoted in Catholic worship.

This blessing is given only by a bishop or by a priest who has special faculties from the bishop, empowering him to administer it. The bell is placed at the head of the main aisle of the church or in some other prominent place, and is so situated that the clergy may pass around it conveniently and that the interior may be reached without difficulty.

The bishop and clergy go to the bell in solemn procession, and recite aloud seven psalms, invoking the mercy of God on the Church and its members. Then the water which is to be used in the ceremony is blessed by the bishop in the same manner as ordinary holy water, except that an additional prayer is recited, asking that God's benediction be given to it, so that the bell which is to be blessed with it may have the power of overcoming the deceits of the wicked, and of preventing lightning, whirlwind and tempest; that when the faithful shall hear the bell, their devotion may increase and the services of the Church be rightly performed by them.

The bishop then begins to wash the bell with this water, and his attendants continue the washing over all the surface of the bell, inside and outside. In the meantime, six other lengthy psalms are recited by the bishop and clergy. Then a quaint and beautiful prayer is intoned by the bishop, asking God to give His grace to His people, that at the sound of this bell their faith and devotion may be increased, that the snares of the Evil One may be ineffectual, that the elements may be calmed, that the air may be healthful, that the demons may flee when they hear the sweet tones of the bell.

After the recitation of another prayer the bell is anointed with the oil of the sick in seven places on the outside, with the words: "May this bell, O Lord, be sanctified and consecrated, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Another prayer is chanted, and four crosses are made on the inner surface of the bell with the holy chrism. After still other prayers and a psalm, a gospel is sung by a deacon just as at a solemn Mass. The gospel selected is from St. Luke, describing the visit of our Blessed Lord to Martha and Mary. "Mary hath chosen the better part, which shall not be taken from her."

Such, then, is the history of bells and the liturgy of their blessing. They are assuredly a great help to us in the worship of God. They summon us to the services of the Church. They peal forth joyfully on the wedding day, as if to prophesy hap-

pinness and prosperity to the young couple who are beginning their life-long union. They toll mournfully as the corpse is borne to receive the Church's last blessing, to remind us of the duty of praying for the departed soul. And as our holy Church knows the value of frequent prayer, she has given us the Angelus, which raises our hearts to God three times a day, and reminds us of the Incarnation of our Blessed Saviour.

#### 14. RELIGIOUS MEDALS

A religious medal is a piece of metal, usually resembling a coin, struck or cast for a commemorative purpose or to increase devotion, and adorned with some appropriate device or inscription. The varieties of these medals are almost beyond counting. They have been produced in honor of persons, such as our Divine Saviour, His Blessed Mother and the saints; of places, such as famous shrines; and of historical events, for example, definitions of Church doctrines, jubilees, miracles, dedications, etc. They are made to commemorate events in the life of the wearer, such as first communion. They often recall mysteries of our faith; and some of them are specially blessed to serve as badges of pious associations, or to consecrate and protect the wearer. Many medals thus blessed are enriched with indulgences for the user.

**The History of Medals.** It is very likely that the use of medals among Christians came about because similar ornaments were common among many pagan races. There was in every form of paganism a constant endeavor to propitiate the deities who were adored and to secure their protection. Amulets, talismans and charms of various kinds were used, being generally worn suspended from the neck, as a supposed means of warding off danger, disease and other evils. Even after Christianity had become the prevailing religion, it seemed to be impossible to root out the practice of using some of these ancient pagan charms.

The Church, therefore, instead of trying to prevent it, en-

deavored to turn it to good ends by suggesting or tolerating the use of similar devices with Christian symbols. Our holy Church has shown her wisdom in this manner in regard to many pagan customs, purifying them and adapting them to her own purposes. What more natural than that the early Christian converts should wear symbols of their religion, just as in paganism they had worn amulets to secure the protection of their gods?

We find traces of the use of medals at a very early date, when the Roman Church was hiding in the catacombs. Some of these ancient medals are preserved in various museums, and are often marked with the *chrisma*, that is, the Greek monogram of the name of Christ. Others have portraits of the Apostles Peter and Paul, or representations of the martyrdom of certain saints.

**In the Middle Ages.** Later on it became customary to coin money with crosses and other religious emblems stamped on it, and such coins were often suspended from the neck and used as medals. About the twelfth century the great era of pilgrimages began, and at the famous shrines of Europe and Palestine the custom arose of making metal tokens or medals, to be used by the pilgrim as souvenirs of his pious journey, and also to attest the fact that he had really visited the shrine. These badges or "pilgrims' signs," as they were called, were generally worn conspicuously on the hat or breast. They were usually of lead, of circular or cross-shaped form, and were known by various names—the "tokens" of Assisi, the "crouches" or crosses signifying a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, scallop shells reproduced in metal, from the shrine of St. James of Compostella in Spain, crossed keys denoting a journey to the tomb of St. Peter, etc.

The use of religious medals, however, was not common in the Middle Ages. Somewhat later, about the fifteenth century, artistic bronze and silver medals were substituted for the rude pilgrim tokens. About 1475, and possibly earlier, the custom arose of making medals commemorative of the papal jubilees, and these were carried to all parts of the world by pilgrims who visited Rome to gain the jubilee indulgence.

In the sixteenth century the practice arose of giving a papal blessing to medals, and even of enriching them with indulgences for the wearers. And so the use of devotional medals spread rapidly throughout Europe, and celebrated artists and engravers occupied themselves with the designing of them.

**Varieties of Religious Medals.** To enumerate all the medals that have been issued or that are now in use would be an endless task. Specimens have been preserved of "plague medals" of the Middle Ages, used at times when pestilence was rife, as a protection against it. These often bore the picture of St. Roch or St. Sebastian and, more often still, that of the Blessed Virgin or of some one of her shrines. When comets were objects of dread, medals were made in Germany to shield mankind from the calamities that were supposed to follow these direful portents. Others commemorated legendary miracles and important historical events.

Among the religious medals in most general use in our country are the scapular medals, which are described elsewhere in this book; the various sodality badges, differing in design according to the nature of the societies using them; many varieties of medals of the Blessed Virgin under her various titles, such as the Mater Dolorosa, Our Lady of Victory, Queen of Heaven, Our Lady of Lourdes, of Perpetual Help, of Good Counsel, of Mount Carmel, etc. There are also the medals given to children at the time of first communion and confirmation, with appropriate devices; others in honor of our Blessed Lord, such as the *Salvator Mundi* ("Saviour of the world"), the Holy Childhood and the Infant of Prague. Then come the innumerable medals of the saints—those of St. Joseph, popular especially among German Catholics, St. Rita medals, St. Dominic, St. Aloysius, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Anthony, St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Alphonsus, St. Patrick, St. Ann, St. Agnes, the Guardian Angels, etc.

**The Medal of St. Benedict.** This highly indulgenced medal bears a likeness of the great "Father of the Monastic Life." In his right hand is a cross, beside which are the words *Cru*



*Patris Benedicti* ("The Cross of the Father Benedict"); in his left hand is the book of the Benedictine rule. At his feet are represented a chalice and a raven, symbols of the priesthood and of hermit life. Around the edge are the words *Eius in Obitu Nostro Praesentia Muniamur* ("At our death may we be fortified by His presence"). On the reverse side is a cross, on the vertical bar of which are the initial letters of the words *Crux Sacra Sit Mihi Lux* ("The holy Cross be my light"); on the horizontal bar are the initials of *Non Draco Sit Mihi Dux* ("Let not the Dragon be my guide"); and around are other letters signifying other Latin mottoes. At the top is usually the word *Pax* ("Peace") or the monogram I H S.

The Benedictine medal in its present form commemorates the 1400th anniversary of the birth of St. Benedict, celebrated in 1880. The right to make it is reserved exclusively to the Great Archabbey of Monte Cassino, in Italy. There are many indulgences for the wearers, including a plenary one on All Souls' Day, obtained by visiting a church on that day or on its eve, and praying there for the intention of the Holy Father.

The original medal of St. Benedict was first approved by Benedict XIV in 1741, and further indulgences were granted by Pius IX in 1877 and by St. Pius X in 1907.

**The Miraculous Medal.** There is a widely used medal known by this title because it takes its origin from a vision. It is a medal of the Blessed Virgin, and is used as a badge by our sodalities of the Children of Mary and of the Immaculate Conception. It bears on one side an image of our Blessed Mother standing on a globe. Around the picture are words "O Mary Conceived without Sin, Pray for Us Who Have Recourse to Thee." On the reverse side is the letter M surmounted by a cross and surrounded by twelve stars, and beneath are the hearts of Jesus and Mary, the one with a crown of thorns, the other pierced by a sword.

This beautiful medal has a remarkable history. It was given to the world through a vision which was vouchsafed to a holy servant of God, Saint Catherine Laboure, a French Sister of

Charity. On November 27, 1830, and on several other occasions, the Blessed Virgin appeared to her as depicted on the medal and commanded the saintly nun to cause the medal to be made. This was done, with the sanction of the Archbishop of Paris, within two years; and the use of this medal of the Immaculate Conception spread rapidly throughout the world. Many and great indulgences have been given to its wearers, and it has been an important factor in increasing devotion to the Blessed Mother of God, particularly among our young girls, the members of our parish sodalities.

**The St. Christopher Meddl.** One of the most popular religious medals of our day is that which is dedicated to the honor of St. Christopher. This third century saint is the Patron of Travelers, the heavenly protector of those who must journey from place to place. The story is told that this big-bodied youth served his God and his neighbor by carrying people over a dangerous river that had taken the lives of many. Among those he carried across was Jesus Christ Himself, who appeared to the saint in the form of a child. The story explains why he is pictured carrying a Child on his shoulders. He is the special helper of those who travel in automobiles and airplanes.

## 15. ASHES

On Ash Wednesday the Church begins the penitential season of Lent, the forty days of mortification during which her children are called upon to remember that they must chastise their bodies and bring them into subjection; that he who neglects to do penance is in danger of perishing; and that at all times the Christian must remember his last end and his return to the dust from which he was taken.

As we are all conscious that by nature we are "children of wrath," we are urged to appease the offended majesty of God by the practice of penance and mortification; and the Church teaches us this solemn duty by the impressive ceremony of the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday.

**An Ancient Practice.** Like many of the other symbolic practices of our Church, the use of ashes to express humiliation and sorrow is something which was common in other religions. Many references to it are found in the Old Testament. When David repented for his sins he cried out: "I did eat ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping." When the people of Nineveh were aroused to penance by the preaching of the prophet Jonas, they "proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth and sat in ashes." It is probable, therefore, that the use of ashes was introduced in the early Church by converts from Judaism because it was an observance with which they had been familiar in their former faith.

The Lenten fast, according to the ancient practice of our Church, began on the Monday after the first Sunday of Lent. Consequently the penitential season was then somewhat shorter than it is now; deducting the Sundays, there were originally only thirty-six fasting days. But about the year 700 it was seen to be fitting that the fast of the faithful should be of the same duration as that which our Blessed Lord had undergone; and the beginning of the season of penance was fixed on what we now call Ash Wednesday.

**Originally a Public Penance.** At first the ashes were imposed only on public penitents. In those austere days of ecclesiastical discipline, public expiation was always exacted as a reparation for public scandal. Those who sought reconciliation with God after grievous sin were required to appear at the door of the church in penitential garb on Ash Wednesday morning. They were then clad in sackcloth and sprinkled with ashes, and were debarred from the church services until Holy Thursday.

But there were always among the faithful certain devout souls who were not public sinners, but who wished to be sharers in the humiliation of Ash Wednesday. And so, gradually, it became the custom for all Catholics, including the clergy, to receive the ashes on that day. The earliest legislation decreeing this is found about the year 1090, and within a century from that time it had become a universal practice.

**The Source of Blessed Ashes.** The ashes used for this ceremony are obtained by the burning of the blessed palms of the previous Palm Sunday. In this the mystical writers of the Church have found a symbolic meaning. The palm typifies victory; and the ashes show us that we cannot gain the victory over sin and Satan except by the practice of humility and mortification.

**The Prayers of the Blessing.** The language of the blessing is very beautiful, and it is regrettable that our people are not made more familiar with these and other petitions which are used in the liturgy of our Church. In these prayers God is besought to spare us sinners; to send His holy Angel to bless these ashes, that they may become a salutary remedy; that all upon whom they are sprinkled may have health of body and soul. He is implored to bestow His mercy upon us, who are but dust and ashes; and, just as He spared the Ninevites, whom He had doomed to destruction, so the Church begs Him to spare us, because, like them, we wish to do penance and obtain forgiveness.

Such is the substance of the blessing, and then comes the solemn imposition. Rich and poor, cleric and layman, the tottering old man and the little child, all throng to the altar of God; and with the impressive words: "Remember, man, that thou art dust, and unto dust thou shalt return," the priest places upon the head of each those ashes which are such a striking symbol of our frail mortality. As a spiritual writer has said: "He mingles the ashes that are dead with the ashes yet alive," that the lifeless dust may impress upon us the solemn truth that we too are but dust, and that unto dust we shall return.

## 16. CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS

When we enter a Catholic church and examine its architecture, we find that in many parts of it there are ornamental details of various kinds—representations of animals and plants, crosses, monograms, and many other things. All of these have

a most instructive symbolism and an interesting history. They are emblematic of the great truths of Christianity, of our Saviour, of His Blessed Mother and the Saints, of our holy Church, and of the virtues which that Church teaches us.

The use of symbols in Christian art and architecture goes back to the very infancy of the Church. In the chapels of the Roman catacombs and in the subterranean churches of St. Clement, St. Praxedes, and other temples of early Christianity, crude mural paintings are still to be seen, containing ornaments and emblems typifying the faith of those who worshipped there. And in later centuries, when great cathedrals raised their domes and spires to heaven in every country of Europe, these mighty temples were enriched with a wealth of symbolic ornaments in sculpture, carving and painting. At the present day, in our own churches, many of these are still used in the details of architecture, in windows and interior decoration.

When you visit your own parish church, spare a few minutes from your prayer book to look around at the symbolic ornaments which you will find there. This will not be a distraction; on the contrary, it will be a help to greater devotion.

**They Teach Religion.** This section will explain the meaning of some of these symbols, which St. Augustine has well called *libri idiotarum*—"the books of the unlearned," because they are admirably adapted to present the truths of religion to the faithful, many of whom in past centuries were unable to read a printed page.

First among them there is the most important of all Christian symbols—the Cross, the sign of salvation, the sacred emblem of our redemption; but this is treated at considerable length elsewhere in this book. We shall treat briefly of the others that are most common in our churches.

**Animals as Symbols.** The lamb has been an emblem of our Saviour from the earliest period of Christian art. In the Jewish sacrifices it prefigured the coming Messiah, and when St. John the Baptist pointed Him out to the multitude he cried

out: "Behold the Lamb of God." The lamb is sometimes represented standing, bearing a cross or banner inscribed with these words; or lying, as if slain, on a book closed with seven seals, as described in the Apocalypse. It is also a general symbol of modesty and innocence, and it is therefore used as an emblem of the martyr-virgin St. Agnes, whose name signifies a lamb.

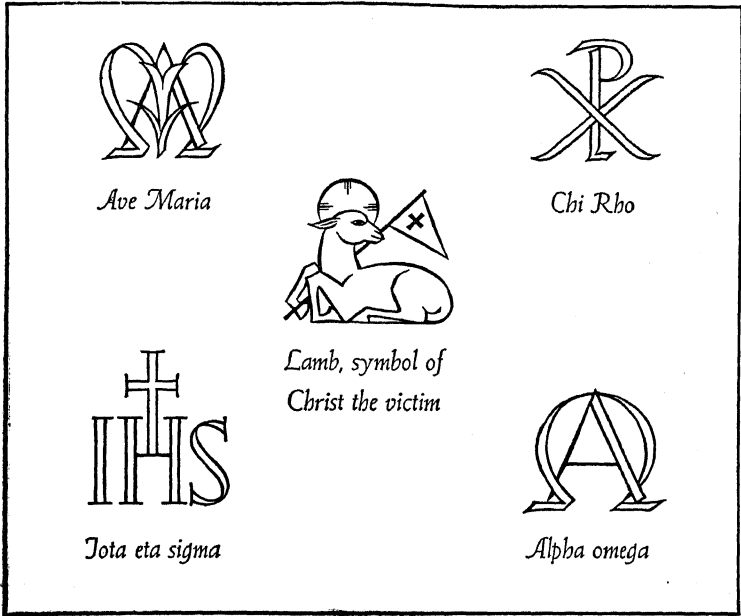
The dove is the special symbol of the Holy Ghost. "And lo! the Holy Spirit descended from heaven upon Him in the form of a Dove," at the baptism of Christ; and we see it also in pictures of the Annunciation, to signify the Incarnation of our Blessed Saviour by the power of the Holy Ghost.

The pelican, which, according to legend, feeds its young with its own blood, is an emblem of our redemption through the sufferings of our Lord, and particularly of the Blessed Eucharist, in which He nourishes our souls with His Body and Blood.

The Lion typifies our Saviour, the "Lion of the Fold of Judah." As will be told further on, it is also a symbol of the Evangelist St. Mark. It is emblematic of solitude, and is therefore sometimes shown in pictures of hermit-saints.

The dragon always represents Satan and sin. It is shown as being conquered by the powers of good, as in the scriptural account of St. Michael the Archangel and in the medieval legend of St. George. The serpent, another emblem of sin, is sometimes placed beneath the feet of the Blessed Virgin, to symbolize that "the seed of the woman shall crush his head." The serpent, however, when twined around a cross, is emblematic of the brazen serpent raised up by Moses in the desert—a prophetic figure of our crucified Saviour.

**Symbolic Plants.** There are various plants and flowers that have a symbolic meaning. The olive branch is an emblem of peace, and is often shown in the hand of the Archangel Gabriel. The palm is the special badge of martyrs. "I saw a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and tribes and tongues, clothed with white robes, and palms



*Ave Maria*

*Chi Rho*



*Lamb, symbol of  
Christ the victim*



*Iota eta sigma*



*Alpha omega*

**Some Liturgical Symbols**

in their hands." Thus did St. John describe the vast army of martyrs before the throne of God.

The lily, wherever seen, has but one meaning—chastity. We find it in pictures of the Annunciation, of St. Joseph (whose staff, according to an ancient legend, bloomed into lilies), and sometimes in representations of saints notable for their purity—for example, St. Anthony of Padua and St. Aloysius.

The rose is an emblem of love and beauty, and is symbolical of the Blessed Virgin under her title of "Mystical Rose"; it is also used in pictures of St. Elizabeth of Hungary (because of the well-known legend), and of other saints.

**Other Emblems.** A crown, of course, denotes kingly power. We see it in pictures of Mary as Queen of Heaven, of our

Blessed Lord when His kingship is to be emphasized, and of saints of royal blood. The crown of the Blessed Virgin is often shown with twelve stars, after the description in the Apocalypse; and from the same vision of St. John we get the crescent moon shown beneath the feet of Mary: "A woman clothed with the sun, having the moon beneath her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars."

A ship symbolizes the Church, the bark of Peter, buffeted by tempests but guided by God Himself. The anchor was an emblem of hope long before the beginning of Christianity, because it is the chief reliance of mariners in time of danger. Hence it has been adopted by the Church as a symbol, and is often combined with two others to denote the three great theological virtues—the cross for faith, the anchor for hope, the heart for charity.

Ears of wheat and bunches of grapes are often used as ornaments around the altar and on the sacred vestments. These are symbols of the Holy Eucharist, the true Body and Blood of our Lord under the appearance of the bread which is made from wheat and the wine which we obtain from grapes. The chalice, often surmounted by a Host, has the same signification.

A banner is an emblem of victory. It belongs to the military saints, and is also borne by our Lord in pictures of His Resurrection. A candlestick typifies Christ and His Church, the "light of the world." It is sometimes represented with seven branches, symbolic of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost or of the Sacraments. A skull or a scourge is emblematic of penance, and a scallop-shell, of pilgrimage.

**The Sign of the Fish.** A favorite emblem of early Christian times was a fish, generally resembling a dolphin. The Greek word for fish is *ichthus*. These form what is called an acrostic, being the initial letters of the words: *Iesous Christos, Theou Uios, Soter*—or, in English, "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour"; thus the fish was taken as a symbol of our Blessed Lord. It is found in many ancient inscriptions in the catacombs and elsewhere. The fish, because it lives in water, is also an



emblem of the sacrament of baptism; of the vocation of the apostles, the "fishers of men"; and of Christians in general typified by the miraculous draught of fishes mentioned in the Gospel of St. John.

The sign of the crossed keys, with or without the papal tiara, is symbolic of the power of the Pope to bind and to loose. "I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

**Emblematic Monograms.** Various letters and monograms, or intertwined characters, are also used as symbols and ornaments in the decoration of our churches—such as A. M., signifying *Ave Maria* (Hail, Mary); A. M. D. G.—*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* (to God's greater glory—the official motto of the Jesuits); and I. H. S., which is generally taken to be the initial letters of *Iesus Hominum Salvator* (Jesus, Saviour of men), but which is more probably an abbreviation of the Greek form of the name of our Redeemer, *Iesous*, the capital long E in Greek being shaped like our letter H.

We also see frequently the letters *alpha* and *omega*, the first and last of the Greek alphabet, signifying God, the Beginning and End of all things; and also the *chrisma*, or monogram of the Greek letters *chi* and *rho*, shaped like our X and P, but equivalent to CH and R in Latin or English.

**Symbols of the Saints.** The pictures and images of saints in our churches are often ornamented with emblems illustrative of some virtue of the saint or some event in his career. Generally they are crowned with a halo or nimbus, symbolizing the light of grace and sanctity. In many representations of martyr-saints the instrument of their martyrdom is shown. Thus we have the sword or axe for many saints, the arrows of St. Sebastian, the gridiron of St. Lawrence, and the toothed wheel of St. Catherine.

For saints who were not martyrs, emblems are used which typify the virtues which they practised, the work which they did, or the rank which they held—a banner and cross for missionaries, a mitre and pastoral staff for bishops, a crucifix for preachers, a crown of thorns for those noted for asceticism.

**Symbols of the Evangelists.** In some ecclesiastical decorations we may find four emblems, generally winged—the head of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle. This is symbolism of a very ancient date, having its origin in St. John's Apocalypse. It represents the four writers of the holy Gospels. The human head indicates St. Matthew—for he begins his Gospel with the human ancestry of our Blessed Lord. The lion, the dweller in the desert, is emblematic of St. Mark, who opens his narrative with the mission of St. John the Baptist, "the voice of one crying in the wilderness." The sacrificial ox is the symbol of St. Luke—for his Gospel begins with the account of the priest Zachary. And the eagle, soaring far into the heavens, is the emblem of the inspiration of St. John, who carries us, in the opening words of his Gospel, to Heaven itself: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

## Chapter Seven

# The Liturgical Books and the Bible

---

### 1. THE MISSAL

WHEN A PRIEST goes to the altar to begin the celebration of Mass he opens a large book, and the people know that the prayers which he recites vary from day to day, as they see him arrange the markers or ribbons with which the volume is provided. This book is called the Missal, that is, the Mass Book, and it contains all that is read or recited in the offering of the Adorable Sacrifice, and very complete "rubrics" or directions for the proper reading of each Mass.

The modern liturgical movement has reopened this treasury of the living liturgy to the use of the faithful. Even though the book used by priests at the altar is in the Latin language and contains the full texts of all the Masses approved by the Church, the well instructed layman can now possess and use translations of the official Mass book, either in whole, called a Daily Missal, or containing only the Masses of Sundays and Holydays, generally called a Sunday Missal. For our purpose we shall consider here the origin and growth of the complete Roman Missal. The greater our knowledge and familiarity with this precious Catholic heritage, the better we shall appreciate the grandeur and harmony of the daily oblation which is offered before the throne of God.

**The Liturgy of the Jews.** Among the "people of God" in Old Testament times, in the religion which was a foreshadow-

ing of the Christian faith, a special ritual was in use, based on direct revelation from God, in which the ceremonial rules were prescribed in the most minute details, and the observance of them was enjoined under the severest penalties. This liturgy was put into form by Moses, the great lawgiver of the Jews, and it continued in use in the worship of God down to the time when it was abrogated by the institution of the Christian Church.

**The Church's Liturgy.** As the essence of the Christian religion is contained in the Mass and the sacraments, which were unknown in the Jewish faith, it was necessary to create a new liturgy. This was done by the Church, and was done very slowly. Our Blessed Lord Himself instituted the Holy Sacrifice and the seven sacraments, but He did not make any rules about their administration. The authority for arranging all these details is contained in the power "to bind and to loose," given to the teaching body of the Church; and she also has the power to establish from time to time such sacramentals and other aids to devotion as may be conducive to the spiritual welfare of the faithful.

**The Growth of the Missal.** The Missal, in its present form, is the result of a long process of development that has gone on during nineteen centuries. In the early days of the Church's existence, when solemn Mass was the typical Mass, the texts used at Mass were scattered about in various books to suit the convenience of those who employed them. These were the sacramentary, which contained the essential parts used by the celebrant of the Mass (i.e., the Collects, Prefaces, Canon); the Lectionaries, one containing the texts of the Gospel used by the deacon and called the Evangeliarium, another containing the Epistles and used by the subdeacon called the Epistolarium. There was also the Antiphonarium or Gradual, containing the liturgical pieces needed by the singers, e.g., the Introit, Graduals, Tracts, etc. Besides these there was a book of rubrics or directives called an Ordo.

In the course of time, particularly when low Mass became

common, additions were made to the sacramentary, taken from the other books. The change was natural enough, since the celebrant began to recite the parts formerly sung by the other ministers, he needed their texts as well as his own. This change took place from the ninth to eleventh centuries. For several centuries then the old sacramentary and the new Missal were in use side by side, until the Missal took over completely in the fifteenth century.

The invention of printing, in the middle of the fifteenth century, greatly increased the production of Missals. The first printed Roman Missal was published in Milan in 1474. Even then there had arisen a great diversity of texts and usages. A uniform ritual was seen to be advisable in a Church which had a uniform creed, and so in the sixteenth century the Missal was produced substantially in its present form.

This action was recommended by the Council of Trent, and was put into effect by Pope St. Pius V, who thoroughly revised the Missal, making his edition the standard to which all others must conform.

An exception was made for some churches and religious orders which had a liturgy of their own going back over two hundred years, and they were allowed to continue the use of their own particular rite on account of its antiquity. Some of our readers may have noticed the differences in the Mass as said by members of the Dominican order from that celebrated by secular priests; and some, possibly, may have assisted at the Holy Sacrifice when it was offered by a priest of some Oriental Catholic rite, with strange ceremonies and chanting. The decree of St. Pius V prescribing the use of the revised Missal was issued in 1570; and, as it was not thoroughly obeyed in some parts of the world, a stricter law was made by Clement VIII in 1604 and again by Urban VIII in 1634. These three decrees are placed at the beginning of every Missal.

The great liturgical reform of St. Pius X was chiefly concerned with the Roman Breviary but it affected considerably the Missal also. The principal aim of this reform was that "the

very ancient Masses of the Sundays throughout the year and of weekdays, especially of Lent, should be restored to their proper places." The reformed Missal was issued in 1920 by the authority of Pope Benedict XV. Since then several other minor changes were brought about by succeeding popes, the latest of these being the introduction of the common Mass of one or more Supreme Pontiffs by Pope Pius XII in 1942.

The Missals in use in all churches following the Latin rite are printed entirely in Latin. The reasons for this are set forth fully elsewhere in this book.

**The Arrangement of the Book.** After the official documents of the popes who approved the Missal and its revisions, there is a treatise on the Church year and its parts, together with a general calendar for the Latin Church. Next come the rubrics, or rules for the guidance of the priest, and these are continued all through the book. The word *rubric* means "red," on account of the ancient practice among the Romans of writing in that color the important and explanatory parts of their legal documents. This practice is still continued in all the liturgical books of the Church, which are always in two colors—red for the explanation and rules, black for the text itself.

The body of the Missal consists of six parts: the Proper of the Season into the middle of which is inserted the Ordinary of the Mass, the Proper of the Saints, the Common of the Saints, the Votive Masses and the Masses for the Dead. There are also appendices of certain blessings and Masses proper to certain places.

**The Proper of the Season.** This section contains the formularies or texts proper to the Masses of the temporal cycle (from the first Sunday of Advent to the 24th after Pentecost), grouped around the two great feasts of Christmas and Easter, for the Sundays of the entire year and certain weekdays. Into the middle of this section—between the Masses of Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday—the unchanging framework or Ordinary of the Mass, has been inserted as a matter of practical convenience. The Ordinary is treated in a previous chapter.

**The Proper of the Saints.** In this part of the Missal, following not the ecclesiastical season but the date of the month, are given the Masses for the feasts of our Blessed Lady and the saints throughout the year. These comprise the Masses which date from the early centuries of the Church and those most recently added for the cult of newly canonized saints. Among them also are found Masses for six feasts of Our Lord. These Masses begin with the vigil of St. Andrew (November 29th) and go on until the feast of St. Silvester on November 26 following.

**The Common of Saints.** In this section of the Missal are given Masses for use on the feasts of such saints, according to their class (Apostle, pope, martyr, confessor, virgin, etc.) as have not a full proper Mass assigned for them in the Proper of the Saints. It also contains a Mass for the day itself, or the anniversary of the consecration of a Church. A common feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been added, and the five Masses of the Blessed Virgin for Saturdays, which are also votive Masses of the Blessed Virgin according to the liturgical season.

**The Votive Masses.** The Votive Masses are placed in two different groups: ten of them, distributed according to the days of the week, and thirteen for different occasions or intentions. In addition, there are given the collects for eleven other occasions or intentions. After the Votive Masses come the Occasional Prayers (*Orationes Diversae*), thirty-five of them, for use on behalf of certain persons, or on certain occasions or for certain intentions.

**The Requiem Masses.** There are six formularies of the Mass for the dead, although they differ only in the prayers, the Epistle and the Gospel. The Masses are followed by diverse prayers for the dead—seventeen in all. These are given for deceased popes, cardinals, bishops and priests, for a father and mother, for relatives, benefactors, etc. It should be understood that the offering of Requiem Masses is restricted to certain days. On festivals, except of the lower classes, low Masses in

black vestments are not allowed, and on some of the most important feasts even funeral Masses are forbidden.

**The Value of the Missal.** Pope Pius XII praised those "who, with the idea of getting the Christian people to take part more easily and more fruitfully in the Mass, strive to make them familiar with the Roman Missal, so that the faithful, united with the priest, may pray together in the very words and sentiments of the Church." (*Mediator Dei*)

The prayers of the Missal are the official prayers of the Church, which is the Spouse of Christ. There are two forces at work: our own individual souls offering homage to God, and the power of the whole Church, the Bride of Christ, uniting our imperfect appeal to its own perfect homage.

## 2. THE BREVIARY

Why do you priests spend so much time in reading from a little black book? Every priest has heard this question from his non-Catholic friends. The Catholic has a general idea that the priest is under an obligation to recite his Office every day, but few Catholics have any very clear notion as to what the Office is or why it is said.

**The Church's Public Prayer.** The Office is a prayer, and the most efficacious prayer ever composed. It is the one great public prayer of the Church, as the Mass is her one great sacrifice. This does not mean that the Office is said necessarily in public, but that the priest who offers it is not acting in his own name but in the name of the Church, even though he may recite it alone and almost silently. It is a prayer offered by ministers of God, who have been raised to the most exalted dignity on earth, that they may praise God in the name of all mankind and ask for grace for all the Church's children. It is said in the name of the Church and by her authority; hence it is the expression of her homage to her heavenly King.

When you see a priest reading his breviary, did it ever occur to you that you have a share in that prayer, that you derive



benefit from the recitation of that Office by him? He is taking part in the public prayer of the Church of which you are a member. Reflect that in this country alone there are over forty thousand priests, who daily spend more than an hour in offering this public prayer to God for the Church and for all her members—and the clergy of the United States form but a fraction of those of the universal Church. All over the world, in monasteries and in cathedrals, the Divine Office is solemnly recited at stated hours, and every priest in every land lays aside his other duties at some time each day to raise his heart to God and to join in offering to Him the public homage of His Church on earth.

**The Priest Is a Mediator.** In every form of religion the priest has been considered as a mediator—one who is to stand, as it were, between God and man, who was not only to offer sacrifices, which is always the greatest act of divine worship, but also to pray for the people, to present their petitions to the Deity, and to solicit His favors for them. This was true not only of the Jewish faith but of every pagan creed. Everywhere the priest was the appointed man of prayer, selected to propitiate the powers of the unseen world.

The priests of the Church of Christ are “the dispensers of the mysteries of God,” as St. Paul calls them. “Every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in the things that pertain to God.” (Heb. 5,1) This is the essence of the priestly character—that he is appointed to that dignity not for himself but for mankind.

The Catholic priest who says his Office, then, is not praying for himself alone. He is acting as a representative of all the members of the Church. He is your substitute, doing in your name what you and the generality of mankind have perhaps neither the time nor the inclination to do. He is uniting his prayers with those of the blessed in heaven in honoring the Creator of all things.

**What is the Breviary?** The book which a priest uses for the recitation of his Office is known as a breviary. Why is it so

called? The word "breviary" (from the Latin word *brevis*, "short" or "brief") would seem to indicate that the contents are not lengthy—and many an overworked priest on a busy Sunday may well wonder why that word is used. For his consolation it may be well to state that the whole Office is really much shorter than it was centuries ago. About the year 1100 a considerable abbreviation was made in it throughout the Church, and the new office book brought into use at that time was called a *breviarium*, or abridgment. A further shortening of some Offices and a rearrangement of nearly all went into effect by direction of St. Pius X, in 1912.

The breviary contains the Office which all priests and all clerics in sacred orders are obliged to recite daily under pain of mortal sin unless they are excused by a grave reason. It is made up of four volumes, adapted to the four seasons of the year, since all the Office in one volume would be too unwieldy.

These Offices are in Latin, and are made up of psalms, canticles, hymns, extracts from the scriptures, brief lives of the saints, parts of sermons by the great fathers of the Church (such as Gregory, Augustine and Chrysostom), short prayers, versicles, responses, and the frequent repetition of the Lord's Prayer.

**The Parts of the Office.** It is divided into seven parts known as the Canonical Hours, and in the Middle Ages it was the general practice to recite each part at its own hour; but the secular clergy of our day and many of the religious communities are not bound now to observe this practice strictly. Each priest is obliged to say the whole Office of the day within the twenty-four hours of the day, but at any hour or hours that may be convenient, saying as much at a time as he may be able or willing to recite. Moreover, he has the privilege of "anticipating," or saying the first part of the Office after two o'clock of the preceding day if he sees fit to do so. Thus, he may, for example, say a part of Tuesday's Office on Monday.

The first of the Canonical Hours is *matins*, or the morning office, which was recited originally before dawn; it is followed

by *lauds*, or praises of God. These together are usually reckoned as one "hour." The next division is *prime*, or the first, because it was said at the "first hour," or sunrise. Then *terce*, or third, recited at the third hour, nine o'clock; *sext*, or sixth, at noon; and *none*, or ninth, at three o'clock. *Vespers* is next, signifying the evening service, and then comes *compline*, or the completion, which was said at bedtime.

The Office varies from day to day. It may be a Sunday Office or a week-day Office or the Office of a saint. In the latter case it is different according to the saint who is honored, the hymns, prayers, etc., being modified by the class to which he or she belongs—an apostle, martyr, confessor or virgin.

Suppose, for instance, that the Church is celebrating today the festival of a saint who was a martyr. Every priest all over the world recites thirty-three psalms, three canticles, eight hymns, nine prayers, the Our Father five times and the Confiteor once.

He reads three extracts from the scriptures, three short chapters on the life of the saint, and three from a sermon by a father of the Church, besides eight *capitula* ("little chapters") of a few lines each, the *Te Deum* once, and a great number of short verses and responses taken mostly from the Bible.

**The History of the Office.** According to the best authorities, the Office, in some form at least, goes back to Apostolic times. In the beginning it was made up almost entirely of the psalms of David, and they are the groundwork of the breviary at the present day. In later centuries various prayers and lessons were added, and a great number of new festivals were established; every religious order had its own mode of reciting the Office, and there was little attempt at uniformity. The Council of Trent revised the whole Office, and the breviary authorized by that Council was published in 1602. This became practically universal, although some of the older monastic orders have been permitted to keep their ancient Offices, and a considerable diversity regarding the observance of festivals is allowed in different parts of the world.

St. Pius X authorized a complete revision of the breviary, as already mentioned. The new arrangement is such that all the psalms of the Bible, 150 in number, are usually recited within each week, thus going back to the ancient idea of emphasizing the divine psalmody as the substance of the Office. By a *Motu proprio* on March 24, 1947 Pope Pius XII authorized the use of the new Latin Version of the psalms in reciting the Office in public or in private.

We see, then, the excellence of the Divine Office of our Church, recited daily by her priests. That public prayer has been offered up for many centuries. The greater part of it is the inspired Word of God, taken from the Old and New Testaments. It treats of the lives of the most illustrious saints of God in every age; it contains eloquent discourses by the great fathers of the Church, and hymns as notable for their literary merit as for their pious sentiments. Except the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the sacraments, the Church possesses no treasure of grace so abundant as the Divine Office which her priests offer to God every day at her command.

### 3. THE RITUAL

Our Holy Church considers that all earthly things need sanctification, inasmuch as by the fall of our first parents the world became subject to the power of the Evil One; and so, from the earliest times, she has observed the practice of bestowing blessings on various objects. She wishes that not only the things employed in her services but also those that her children use in their daily life should be "sanctified by the Word of God and by prayer."

**History of the Ritual.** The Roman Ritual is a book which every priest has occasion to use frequently. The *ritual* means the "Book of Rites," just as the Missal signifies the "Book of the Mass," and the *Pontifical* the "Book of the Pontiff" or bishop. It has taken centuries to bring the ritual to its present form. In early times all the forms of blessing were not comprised in one

book; some were contained in the *sacramentary*, some in the Missal, some elsewhere. The first book resembling our ritual was entitled a *sacerdotale*, or "priest's book," and was published at Rome in 1537. In those days nearly every diocese had its own ritual and its own list of authorized blessings; and, to promote uniformity, the Council of Trent recommended that a new and complete ritual should be issued and should be used all over the world, at least where the Latin rite prevailed. In 1614 the learned Pontiff Paul V authorized a revised ritual which was put into form by a commission headed by Cardinal Julius d'Antonio, a man of remarkable zeal and ability. It had been re-edited by Benedict XIV in 1753 and many new blessings have been added to it at various times. In 1925, by the authority of Pope Pius XI, the Vatican Edition of the Roman Ritual was issued and henceforth all future editions must conform to this model. This new edition was revised, improved and enlarged in accordance with the norms of Canon Law, the rubrics of the Roman Missal, and the decrees of the Apostolic See.

**The Parts of the Ritual. The Sacraments.** The first part of the ritual deals with the rite of the sacraments which are ordinarily administered by a priest. Before each separate title there are rubrics and instructions pertaining to the requisites on the part of the minister as well as the recipient of the sacrament, and the necessary conditions required in the matter and form to be employed. Under the heading of baptism the ritual provides for the baptism of a child or an adult, the rite when a bishop baptizes, the blessing of the baptismal font outside of the usual times. After the title on penance there is given the form of absolution, the manner of absolving one who is excommunicated or interdicted or suspended. Concerning the Holy Eucharist there is a great amount of instruction in regard to the reservation, distribution and reception of Holy Communion, as well as the rite to be performed in administering the sacrament. It treats at length the law on Holy Viaticum. The rite and directives concerning the sacrament of Extreme

Uction are followed by the Seven Penitential Psalms and the Litany of the Saints, which may be recited when the last sacraments are being administered to the sick. Prayers for the visitation of the sick, the Apostolic Blessing, and the manner of commending a departing soul to God conclude this portion of the ritual. Logically the ritual then provides a large section on the office of the dead, the funeral rites for an adult and the burial of a child. Then comes the sacrament of matrimony, after which is placed (very appropriately) the prayers for "churaching", or the blessing of a woman after childbirth.

In this section of the ritual, the prayers and blessings and readings from the Sacred Scriptures used in praying for the sick and dying are a most beautiful and consoling manifestation of the solicitude of Mother Church for her children.

**Blessings.** One of the minor tragedies caused by the original fall of man in the garden of Paradise was that it upset and unbalanced the divine plan for the subordination of all nature to its End and Author. Man is restored to the divine plan and order by the redemptive power of the sacraments instituted by Jesus Christ. Irrational nature is enlisted in the service of God by the sanctifying power of the Church through her blessings and sacramentals.

Under the title of Blessings in the Roman Ritual, the Church has provided for the dedication of almost any imaginable creature to the glory of God. First comes blessings of persons: blessings of children, a sick child, an expectant mother, a new born infant, a mother after childbirth and pilgrims of all kinds. Among the personal blessings so popular among our people is the *blessing of St. Blaise*, which is administered on the third of February, the feast of the saint who is reputed to be the preserver from diseases of the throat. There are individual blessings designated for everything which the Church uses in her rites and ceremonies or offers for the veneration of her children. Not only is the church building and its cornerstone blessed with special prayers and ceremonies, but there are consecrations for altars and sacred vessels, and blessings for the

baptismal font, the tabernacle, oil stocks, vestments, stations, linens, candles, organ and bells.

Then there are the blessings for buildings. There is a special one for schools—for the Church is always the zealous promoter of Christian education and all varieties of useful knowledge. The blessing of a hospital or sanatorium, and of almost everything employed in the care of the sick is provided for in beautiful forms of prayer. Several blessings are given for dwellings. One of these is assigned to Easter time, when the priest (in many countries) goes from house to house, sprinkling holy water and praying that “as the blood of the paschal lamb protected the Israelites from the destroying angel, so may the Blood of Jesus Christ protect the inmates of this house from all evil.”

It is a laudable custom, when a new house is completed to have the priest visit it and invoke the mercy of God upon it and those who shall dwell in it. A blessing is given in the ritual for that purpose—that the edifice itself may be preserved from danger of destruction, and that spiritual and worldly blessings may come abundantly upon those who shall call it their home.

**Blessings for Living Things.** The tiller of the soil, the herdsman and the shepherd are the primary producers of wealth; and the prosperity—even the existence—of the human race depends upon the success of their labor. The piety of the faithful in every age has sought for the blessing of God and His Church upon flocks and herds and the products of the soil. And so we find many quaint blessings in the ritual for nearly every animal that is useful to man—cows, oxen, horses, sheep, fowl, bees; also a different form of blessing when any of the larger animals is sick. There are blessings, too, for the protection of the farmers' crops and granaries against harmful animals—mice, locusts, etc. The Church has always believed and taught that “every best gift, every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of Light”; that all things, even the lowliest, are directly subject to His providence.

**Blessings for Edibles.** This spirit of the Church leads her to extend her solemn blessings even to the things that are to be used for food and drink. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof"—and even the food which God provides for the nourishment of our bodies tends to some extent to the promotion of His glory. And so she gives her blessings for vines, fruits, eggs, oil, bread, cakes, cheese, butter—and even wine and beer. Our Church advocates temperance, indeed; but she knows, as we know, that the abuse, not the use, of these latter things is to be reprehended.

**Blessings for Other Things.** To permit the giving of God's blessing to the things which we use in our daily occupations, the Church has provided forms of benediction for many different objects—for the launching of a ship, for bridges, for wells and springs, for furnaces and limekilns; for granaries, bakeries, stables; for seeds and for a field after sowing; for medicines and surgical appliances. And that she may demonstrate that she appreciates modern inventions, she has added formulas for the blessing of steam engines, railroads, telegraphs, telephones—and, recently, for radio and television.

All these blessings show us that the Church wishes us to recognize our dependence upon God, Who bestows His gifts upon us so abundantly; and, that these may be useful to us spiritually and otherwise, the Church bestows her solemn blessing upon the things which we, the children of God, have received from our Heavenly Father.

**Processions.** "The sacred public processions and solemn rites of petition used in the Catholic Church have their origin in the very ancient institution by our holy forefathers. Their purpose is to arouse the faithful's devotion, to commemorate God's benefactions and render Him thanksgiving, or to implore the divine assistance; hence they ought to be solemnized with due attention and fervor. For they are the bearers of sublime and divine mysteries, and all who devoutly participate in them receive from God the salutary fruit of Christian piety."  
(Roman Ritual)



The ritual gives directions and texts for certain processions which are of regular occurrence, specified for certain days of the year, as on Candlemas, Palm Sunday, the greater lityany on the feast of St. Mark, the lesser litanies on the three Rogation Days before the Ascension, Corpus Christi, as well as other days according to the usage of the various churches. Besides these, there are directives for processions for extraordinary occasions of public interest, such as processions in time of war, in time of epidemic, or in thanksgiving.

Thus, the solicitude of the Church for her children is manifested, making all things instruments of God's blessing. "Everything God hath created is good, and nothing is to be rejected, so let it be received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the word of God and by prayer." (I Tim. 4, 4)

#### 4. THE BIBLE

It is expedient that Catholics be informed as to the Church's teaching concerning the Holy Scriptures, which are one of the two great foundations of the faith. This is more necessary at the present time than ever before. In the early days of Protestantism the Church had to combat the error of the reformers that the word of God was contained in the Bible alone; but in these irreligious days, when so many so-called Christians have come to treat the Bible as an ordinary book, when some of them even regard it as a series of Oriental myths, we Catholics should know what our Church holds and teaches concerning it.

**The Written Word of God.** The Bible consists of a number of writings, or books, written in different ages by men who were inspired by God. The books written before the coming of our Lord form the Old Testament; those written by His Apostles and Evangelists, the New. In the Catholic Bible there are forty-five books in the former and twenty-seven in the latter. The Protestant versions usually exclude seven books of the Old Testament and part of two others. The Latin Bible was translated from the Hebrew and Chaldean originals by

St. Jerome. It came gradually into use throughout the Christian world, and hence is known as the Vulgate or common version. It was finally approved, and all other versions were excluded, by the great Council of Trent. In 1945, Pope Pius XII ordered a new Latin translation of the Psalms in accordance with the primitive text.

Our Church holds, and has always held, that the Sacred Scriptures are the written word of God. In the words of the Council, she believes and teaches concerning the books of the Old and New Testaments, that "God is the author of each"—and, believing this, she also believes that the Scriptures can contain nothing but perfect truth in faith and morals.

But if this be so, does it follow that God's word is contained only in them? By no means. Our Church affirms that there is an unwritten word of God also, which we call Apostolic Tradition; and she maintains that it is the duty of a Christian to receive the one and the other with equal veneration.

How do we know that this teaching of our Church is true? From the whole history and the whole structure of the Old and New Testaments. If our Lord had meant that His Church should be guided by a book alone, why did He not at once provide the Church with the book? He did not do so. He commanded the world to listen to the living voice of His Apostles. "He that heareth you, heareth Me." (Luke 10, 16) For about twenty years after the Ascension there was not a single book of the New Testament in existence; and the various Epistles were written by the Apostles at infrequent intervals thereafter, to give to widely scattered churches instructions on points of doctrine and morals, and to correct prevailing errors and abuses. There is no mention of even an incomplete collection of the New Testament books until the year 180. All that these early Christians had was the living voice of the Church, contained in the preaching and teaching of the Apostles and their successors. As there was no New Testament during all those years, and as a large part of Christian doctrine is in no way contained in the Old Testament, it is evident that the Scrip-

tures could not have been in those days the sole deposit of Christian faith.

**Interpreting the Scriptures.** The Bible, in the words of St. Peter, contains "things hard to be understood." Who is to be its interpreter? Is it the individual, as Protestantism asserts, or is it the Church of God? A favorite and most impractical theory of the early reformers was that each Christian should interpret the Scriptures for himself. The Catholic teaching is that this is the work of the Church, the divinely appointed teacher of truth against which "the gates of hell shall not prevail." What has been the outcome of the Protestant idea of "private judgment?" If God had intended that each man should be his own interpreter—if the Holy Spirit were to guide each—the result would be, undoubtedly, that all would agree; for the Spirit of God could not teach truth to one and error to another. But what has been the actual result? Division and confusion, the multiplication of sects and heresies, and finally, the total rejection by many of the inspiration and the authority of the Bible.

The Catholic Church does not forbid the reading of the Bible by the faithful, on the contrary she recommends it; but she insists that caution be used in its interpretation; that all questions be referred to her as the divinely appointed guardian of revealed truth.

**The "Chained Bible."** Rather amusing (and somewhat exasperating) is the old and oft-repeated assertion that "the Catholic Church chained the Bible." She did, undoubtedly. The statement is perfectly true. Each church, in the Middle Ages, possessed usually a single copy of the Scriptures, a ponderous folio volume; and this was often chained to a reading-desk for the same reason that telephone books are secured to public phone booths, so that they would be available.

**The Douay Bible.** The translation of the Holy Scriptures used among English-speaking Catholics is commonly called the Douay version—though somewhat incorrectly, for the Bible was not translated into English at Douay, and only a part of it

was published there. Besides, the text in use at the present day has been considerably altered from that which originally bore the name of the Douay Bible.

The college at Douay, in France, was founded by exiled English priests in 1568. Within a few years political troubles caused the removal of its members to Rheims, and it was in the latter city that several of them undertook the work of preparing an English version of the Scriptures. The New Testament was published at Rheims in 1582, and the Old Testament at Douay in 1609.

The language of this first edition was fairly accurate, but was in some places uncouth and defective in style, following too closely the idioms of the language from which the translation was made. Consequently amended editions and even partially new translations were made, and of these the most widely used is that of Dr. Challoner, published in 1750, and plentifully provided with his notes, which have been added to since that time by various other editors.

The first Bible published in America for English-speaking Catholics, a reproduction of Challoner's second edition, was issued at Philadelphia in 1790; and between 1849 and 1857 Archbishop Kenrick published an excellent revision of the Douay version.

In 1941 the Church in America presented a newly revised English version of the New Testament known as the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine revision. It was prepared under the supervision of the Episcopal Committee of the Archconfraternity of Christian Doctrine and is the fruit of five years of labor on the part of forty-three Catholic biblical scholars. It is not a new version but a revision of the Rheims-Challoner version.

Although it was planned to revise the Old Testament English translation in the same manner, and though much of the work had been done, the project was relinquished in 1944 at the request of the Episcopal Committee in favor of making a new translation from the original languages of Hebrew,

Aramaic and Greek. The new undertaking was occasioned by a decision of the Biblical Commission and by the encyclical of Pope Pius XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, which encouraged recourse to the original languages and the application of recognized principles of textual criticism.

Other modern Catholic English translations of the Scriptures are: the Westminster version of the entire Bible, the New Testament of Father Spencer, and Monsignor Ronald Knox's translation of the whole Bible at the request of the Archbishop of Westminster.

When the Confraternity revision of the Bible is completed American Catholics will have a translation of the Scriptures of which they can justly be proud. There will no longer be any need for making odious comparisons between the elegant English of the "Authorized" Protestant Version, and the graceless prose of the Douay. We owe a great debt of gratitude to the translators and revisors of the Douay, but the Douay, representing, as it does, a faithful translation of the Vulgate, suffers from the defects of the latter. As the late Holy Father, Pius XII, pointed out in his encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, the "special authority" assigned to the Vulgate by the Council of Trent was not primarily in matters of critical competence, but in the realm of juridical use. It was judged "free from any error whatsoever in matters of faith and morals," which is quite another thing from being a perfect version of the original text. And just as the Douay contains inaccuracies for following the sometimes inaccurate Vulgate, so too, as Protestant scholars today readily admit, does the Authorized Version because of its total adherence to the Hebrew Massoretic text. Catholic and Protestant Biblical scholars today are united in their appreciation of the many new lights thrown upon the understanding of the Biblical text by the critical studies and discoveries of the last fifty years. Both groups recognize the deficiencies of Douay and Authorized Versions alike, and the need—which is being met—for new and better translations.

## Chapter Eight

# Devotions



### 1. THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART

IT IS NOT within the scope of this book to discuss the spiritual side of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of our Blessed Lord. There are scores of volumes that treat of the benefits of this special worship which we pay to our Divine Redeemer, and of the various ways in which it can be profitable to the souls of the faithful. The aim of this work is merely to give the history of Catholic practices and to explain their nature, their reasonableness and their use.

Each of the twelve months of the year has its special devotion. Some of these have been merely advocated by spiritual writers, with the intention of providing, throughout the year, a series of religious exercises for the devout. Others are authorized and approved by the Church, and those who practise them receive certain indulgences.

The month of June, as all Catholics know, is the month of the Sacred Heart. During it the Church urges the faithful to special zeal in the worship of the Heart of our Saviour, considered as a part of His sacred Humanity and as the emblem of His infinite love.

The devotion to the Sacred Heart is one which has become widely known only since the seventeenth century; and it was not sanctioned by the Church for general use until the latter part of the eighteenth. Though it is now recognized as an important element in Catholic worship, it met with strenuous opposition when it was first introduced—not only from the Jansenists (who had fallen into error regarding many doctrines

of the Church) but from earnest Catholics who objected to the new doctrine because they misunderstood it. It was Saint John Eudes who did most to clarify the theology underlying the devotion.

**Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque.** Homage paid to the Heart of Jesus is mentioned by spiritual writers as early as the twelfth century; but it was practised to a very limited extent until a little more than two hundred years ago. A humble and holy French nun, the saintly Margaret Mary Alacoque, within the space of a religious life of only nineteen years, instituted a devotion which bids fair to last forever. She became the apostle of the beautiful and now universal worship of the loving Heart of our Blessed Saviour.

She was born in the village of Lhautecour, in France, in the year 1647, and lived until 1690. After a childhood remarkable for sanctity, she entered the community of the Visitation nuns at Paray-le-Monial in 1671. Here she lived a life of mortification and prayer, and in return for her fidelity and fervor our Divine Lord is said to have vouchsafed her a privilege which He has frequently given to other holy souls. He appeared to her on several occasions; and in one of these visions He showed her His Heart, pierced with a wound, encircled with a crown of thorns, surrounded by flames and surmounted by a cross—as we see it usually represented in pictures and statues at the present day. He commanded her to practise and to teach others the devotion to His Sacred Heart, because of His ardent desire to be loved by men and His wish to give to all mankind the treasures of His love and mercy.

The pious nun sought the counsel of her superiors, and the account of her visions was received at first with incredulity. All her actions and her teachings were subjected to a most severe examination, and it was long before any approval was given to the devotion which she was endeavoring to establish. But the will of God cannot be opposed. The devotion spread rapidly through France, and was gradually established in other parts of the world. It did not at first receive the approbation

of the Holy See, for our Church is cautious in giving her sanctions to anything that savors of novelty in religion, and makes a long and careful scrutiny before she recommends a new devotion to her children. In 1794, however, Pius VI issued a decree approving the devotion to the Sacred Heart and granting indulgences to those who practise it.

**The Feast of the Sacred Heart.** Attempts had been made, in 1697 and in 1729, to have a day set apart in honor of the Sacred Heart, but on both occasions the proposal was rejected by the Congregation of Sacred Rites. In 1765, however, a number of churches were permitted to celebrate this feast, and in 1856 this permission was extended to the whole world, and the feast was fixed on the day after the octave of Corpus Christi, in the month of June. In 1889, under Leo XIII, the day was raised to a higher rank in the Church's calendar, and all mankind was solemnly consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In 1929, Pope Pius XI raised this feast to the highest rank with a new Mass with special Preface. He also ordered a public act of reparation in all churches that day. On account of the importance of this great June festival, the entire month of June is considered as being specially devoted to the worship of the Sacred Heart.

Margaret Mary Alacoque was pronounced Venerable by Leo XII in 1824, and was honored with the title of Blessed by Pius IX in 1864. Through her intercession many miracles have been performed, especially at the place of her burial; and on account of these and of the great devotion which she established, her name has been placed on the calendar of the Church's saints, and her virtues will be henceforth venerated by all Catholics. She was declared a saint by Pope Benedict XV in 1920.

**Why We Adore the Sacred Heart.** Let us examine into the reasonableness of this devotion. Are we obliged to believe the account of the visions of Margaret Mary? No. We are not obliged to believe anything supernatural except the truths that God has revealed to be accepted by all. This is a point that is



nearly always misunderstood by non-Catholics. Because we Catholics practise a devotion which was established by a woman who claimed to have had a vision, they regard us as votaries of superstition and our Church as a promoter of fanciful ideas, not reflecting that, even though the vision might be false, the devotion might be true. The Catholic Church does not assert that the French nun really saw our Blessed Lord; neither does she oblige us to believe it. She merely declares that the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is not only not opposed in any way to divine revelation, but that it is an excellent form of worship; and she recommends it to her children, urges them to make use of it, and grants spiritual favors to those who do so.

We shall state briefly the Catholic doctrine regarding the worship of the Sacred Heart. It is not a mere relative homage, such as we give to holy things or to holy persons. It is not the higher form of religious veneration, such as we pay to the Blessed Mother of God. It is supreme adoration, because it is paid to the physical Heart of Christ, considered not as mere flesh, but as united to the Divinity. We Catholics adore that Heart as the Heart of Christ, an inseparable part of Him. All the members of Christ are or may be the object of divine worship, because they are a part of His human nature and are thereby united to the Divine Nature of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

But why is the heart of Jesus selected as the object of this special adoration? Because His real and physical Heart is a natural symbol of the infinite charity of the Saviour and of His interior and spiritual life. The heart is a vital organ which, as it throbs within us, is part of our existence. It has always been looked upon as an emblem, sometimes of courage, sometimes of one's whole interior nature, but oftener of love. How often we hear such expressions as "Be of good heart," meaning "Have courage"; "He opened his heart to me," meaning "He told me all his secrets"; and our Lord Jesus, in asking our love, made the request in these words, "Son, give me thy heart."

We see, then, the reasonableness of taking the Sacred Heart of our Saviour as an object of our worship, not only because it is a part of Him, but because it symbolizes His love for all mankind.

From early times the Five Wounds of our Lord were venerated as the symbol of His Passion, and this devotion received the approbation of the Church. In like manner, in these later days, she has seen fit to sanction and recommend the worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to urge her children to offer their homage to that symbol of our Saviour's love, wherewith "He has loved us even to the end."

**A Symbol of Love.** We must remember, then, that while this devotion is directed to the material Heart of our Blessed Lord, it does not stop there. It includes also a spiritual element—namely, the infinite love of Jesus for us, which is recalled and symbolized by His Sacred Heart.

There is no devotion that has been extended throughout the Catholic world in so short a time. This means of realizing and honoring the all-embracing love of our Blessed Saviour would seem to have filled a long felt want in the hearts of the devout faithful. Religious communities of men and women have been established under the title of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and many societies have been formed among the laity with the special object of offering united worship to that adorable Heart. Among these the League of the Sacred Heart is the best known and the most flourishing in our country as well as throughout the Christian world.

**The First Fridays.** One of the greatest factors not only in making the worship of the Sacred Heart known but in distributing its spiritual benefits is the Devotion of the First Fridays. The faithful are exhorted to receive Holy Communion on the first Friday of each month for nine months in succession, and in many churches and chapels the exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament takes place, either during the whole day or in the evening, and special services are held in honor of our Eucharistic Lord and especially of His Sacred Heart, which

is the symbol of His unutterable love for us whom He died to save.

**The Immaculate Heart of Mary.** While expounding the doctrine of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Saint John Eudes laid the groundwork for another devotion which was to be developed later: that is the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Although the honor paid to Mary's Heart is not worship in the strict sense, her divine motherhood makes her mother's heart a special object of reverence.

Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary received its greatest impetus when the world heard about Our Lady's appearances in Fatima, Portugal, in 1917. Addressing the three privileged children she asked that her immaculate heart be honored by repentance and reparation for the outrages which a godless world had heaped upon her Divine Son.

In October, 1942 Pope Pius XII sanctioned this devotion by consecrating the whole world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, urging that the faithful individually carry out this consecration by prayer (especially the Rosary); by penance in enduring little crosses and performing acts of self-denial; and by receiving Holy Communion in reparation for sin. The last mentioned practice has become the devotion of the *First Saturdays*, a monthly Communion of Reparation after the manner of the First Friday devotion explained above.

## 2. THE INVOCATION OF SAINTS

No practice of the Catholic Church has received more attention and more abuse from her enemies than the ancient custom of honoring the heroic servants of God. Idolatry and superstition have been charged against her—and all the while the truth is available in hundreds of easily accessible books, even the elementary catechism. For those persons of good will who are seeking the truth, we set forth here a brief statement on what the Church teaches in this matter and some reasons for this belief and practice. Does the Catholic Church adore

saints? What does she believe and teach and practice concerning the saints?

That Church has been in existence over nineteen hundred years. It has on its list of known saints many thousands of names—men and women whom it honors, to whom, indeed, it pays real religious homage. But never in its history has it adored any one but God. It does not adore, and never can nor will adore the Blessed Virgin, for it recognizes and has always taught that she is a creature of God, and nothing more than a creature. She is a glorified human soul, more perfect and more lovable than any other save the human soul of her Son; she is worthy of the highest place and the most exalted honor that a creature can attain to in heaven, for through God's choosing of her for the destiny of being His Mother, through the abundance of graces which He bestowed upon her, and through her fidelity in corresponding with these graces, she has reached a degree of glory which places her higher than God's angels or His other saints—but she remains a creature. She is not divine. She is not in any sense a goddess. She is infinitely inferior to God. The honor which the Catholic Church pays to her is altogether of a different nature from that which is rendered to God. He is adored as the Creator and Supreme Ruler of all things; she is venerated as a saint of God and the greatest of saints, as our most powerful intercessor before His throne.

And what the Church holds and teaches concerning her is precisely what she holds and teaches concerning the saints of lesser degree. They are chosen friends of God; they are souls which have served Him well and have thereby won their heavenly reward. They are deserving of our homage because of their holiness; and, as they are still members of God's Church, they are united to us in what we call the Communion of Saints. We honor them, and they pray for us; but neither they nor the Blessed Virgin Mary can give us any grace or show us any mercy. They can simply present our prayers to the Almighty and unite them to their own; and we honor them with religious homage, in order that thereby we may obtain

the assistance of those beloved friends of God who stand before His throne.

**Adoration to God, Veneration to Saints.** The Catholic Church, then, makes a complete and clear distinction between the supreme worship which we give to God alone and the relative and inferior homage which we pay to the saints. Some of the confusion in the minds of non-Catholics may arise from the fact that the Catholic authors who wrote in Latin used the word *cultus* to denote both kinds of religious homage, and that we have no one word in English which will express the meaning of this word except "worship." But these Catholic authors always distinguished emphatically between the *cultus duliæ*, which we may translate "the homage of veneration," and the *cultus latriæ*, which signifies "the worship of adoration."

Veneration is paid to the saints; a higher form of it, called *hyperdulia*, is given to the Mother of God; but adoration is given to no one but God. Any attempt to give it to a creature would certainly be false worship—but the Catholic Church has never given it. She adores God and God only. She venerates His saints with religious homage.

**The Communion of Saints.** Is it reasonable to suppose that the saints can aid us? Why not? We who are here upon earth in the membership of Christ's Church are urged to pray for one another. We are told that we should go to God with the wants of others as well as with our own. Now, it is hard to see a reason why souls that are with God, that are enjoying everlasting happiness, should cease to exercise Christian charity, and should be unable or unwilling to intercede for us.

What do the Scriptures teach us—the Sacred Word of God to which our separated brethren appeal so constantly as the one "rule of faith"? In St. John's Apocalyptic vision, he saw the elders "prostrate before the Lamb, having each . . . golden vials, which are the prayers of the saints." (Apoc. 5, 8) It matters not whether the saints were on earth or in heaven; in either case their prayers are offered to God by those before His throne.

**An Ancient Belief.** The belief in the intercessory power of the saints is as old as the Church. It is alluded to in authentic writings, such as the "Acts of the Martyrs," in the second and third centuries. They are represented as interceding after death for the faithful upon earth. "In heaven," said the martyr Theodotus before his torments began, "I will pray for you to God."

And this Catholic doctrine is clearly set forth in the writings of the earlier fathers of the Church. Origen, among others, tells us that "all the saints that have departed this life care for the salvation of those who are in the world and help them by their prayers and mediation."

**How the Saints Hear Us.** If the saints of God have the power of interceding for us, it is certain that we must have communication with them, that they may be able to know our needs. We may be sure that God makes the Communion of Saints perfect on both sides—that we, members of His Church on earth, are able to speak to the members of that Church in Heaven, so that they may speak for us to Him. How is this effected? We do not know. Catholic theologians and spiritual writers have speculated about it, but we have no certainty as to the exact means which God provides for this communication. Some have supposed that the Almighty allows those who are in His presence to see in Him "as in a mirror" all that concerns them about earthly things. At any rate, the knowledge which they have and the petitions which they may receive from us depend entirely upon God's goodness—and beyond that fact our weak human intellect cannot go.

**Our Faith Regarding the Saints.** We Catholics, then, adore God alone. He is our Creator, our Redeemer, our hope here and hereafter. We believe that in heaven we have a host of friends. We believe that these friends are also friends of our Blessed Lord—that one of them is His Mother, loved by Him so dearly that He will grant her every prayer—that one is His foster-father, whom He revered upon earth and loves in heaven—that the others are His loyal servants who possess Him now and forever. We believe that all this "great multitude

which no man can number" is a component part of God's Church, and is united in bonds of charity with the other parts of that Church on earth and in Purgatory. We believe, therefore, that we should honor them because God has honored them; that we should pay religious veneration to them collectively and separately. And we believe also that they can and do intercede for us, that they hear our prayers and present them to Him Who loves them and us. When we offer homage to them, when we build churches and institute festival days in their honor, are we depriving God of adoration? No; we are adoring Him all the more, because we are honoring the results of His infinite graces, which have been the sole means of making these men and women saints of God.

All that we have said is confirmed in the beautiful words of Pope Pius XII in his encyclical, *Mediator Dei*: "We should imitate the virtues of the saints as they imitated Christ, for in their virtues there shines forth under different aspects the splendor of Jesus Christ. . . . But there is another reason why the Christian people should honor the saints in heaven, namely, to implore their help and 'that we be aided by the pleadings of those whose praise is our delight' (St. Bernard). Among the saints in heaven the Virgin Mary Mother of God is venerated in a special way. Because of the mission she received from God, her life is most closely linked with the mysteries of Jesus Christ, and there is no one who has followed in the footsteps of the Incarnate Word more closely and with more merit than she; and no one has more grace and power over the most Sacred Heart of the Son of God and through Him with the Heavenly Father. Holier than the Cherubin and Seraphim, she enjoys unquestionably greater glory than all the other saints, for she is 'full of grace,' she is the Mother of God, who happily gave birth to the Redeemer for us."

### 3. THE CANONIZATION OF A SAINT

In the previous section of this book we discussed the doctrine of the veneration of saints, and explained what Catholics do and do not believe concerning these friends of God. From the earliest ages of Christianity the saints have been honored publicly and privately by the Church. In the first three centuries public veneration was usually given only to martyrs; but when the days of persecution were over, the Church's practice regarding the saints took a wider scope. She began to give public homage to holy men and women who, in the religious state, had given up all things to follow their Master—to zealous missionaries who had carried the Gospel into pagan lands—to learned fathers and doctors who had explained the same Gospel in words of heavenly wisdom—and even to men and women of the laity who had lived lives of eminent sanctity.

We must remember that the saints whose names are on the authoritative list of the Church are not the only saints. They are only the declared ones. Their virtues were so great that the fame of them became widespread, and a spirit of devotion sprang up in the hearts of the faithful which in time led the Holy See to examine into the lives and works of these servants of God, and to command public veneration of them. But in heaven there are countless millions of souls—and every one of these souls is a saint. While we do not honor each of them separately, we honor them collectively. The special homage that is manifested in public veneration is only for those upon whose sanctity the Church has set the seal of her approval, and whose eternal blessedness is vouched for by her infallible voice.

**Beatification and Canonization.** In order that the prayers of the faithful may not be, as it were, misdirected—that is, offered to one who is not really a saint—the Church has commanded that no public homage shall be given to any individual who has not been *beatified* or *canonized*. Beatification



consists in the issuing of a decree permitting public religious honor to a certain person in a certain place, gives him the title of "Blessed," and generally allows Masses to be celebrated and offices to be recited in his honor, but usually in that place alone. Canonization is a precept of the Sovereign Pontiff commanding that public veneration be paid to a certain person by the whole Church, and gives him the title of "Saint." In brief, beatification is a permission to honor a person locally; canonization is the declaration that a person is a saint, to be venerated by the universal Church.

**By Decree of the Pope.** It is the Pope, and only he, who issues a decree of beatification or canonization. In early centuries bishops had the right or exercised the privilege of declaring, in their own dioceses, that certain persons were deserving of religious honor or beatification; but the need of uniformity in this important part of Catholic worship gradually caused the abolition of this practice, and Pope Urban VIII, in 1634, reserved to the Holy See all legislation concerning the veneration of saints.

Is the Pope infallible in issuing a decree of canonization? Or, in other words, can he make a mistake in declaring a certain person a saint? It is the general opinion of theologians that when the Sovereign Pontiff declares that a certain person is in heaven he is preserved by the Holy Ghost from the possibility of error. The veneration paid to the saints is a part of the Church's worship of God, for when we honor them we honor God Himself; and it is eminently proper that this worship should have in it nothing erroneous. This infallibility in canonizing, however, has not thus far been defined by the Church as an article of faith; and it is certain that the Pope is not necessarily infallible when he issues a decree of mere beatification.

**The Process of Canonization.** How is a saint canonized? It is a long and laborious process, calling for ample deliberation and most absolute proofs of sanctity. It may last for years, and even for centuries. There are two parts to the procedure.

The first is the beatification, during which the servant of God receives first the title of Venerable, and later that of Blessed. The second is the canonization proper, when he is finally enrolled in the list of those honored by the universal Church, and thereafter called a Saint.

The canonization of a martyr differs considerably from that of a person who was not a martyr. It is usually more quickly completed. There is less question of miracles as proofs of sanctity; his martyrdom for the faith is the essential point, and must be clearly proven.

A servant of God who is a non-martyr is called a "Confessor"—that is, one who has confessed and manifested his faith by the eminent holiness of his life; or, in the case of a woman, a virgin or non-virgin, according as her life has been spent in a state of celibacy or not. The beatifying and canonizing of these classes is a very complicated process, and a brief outline of it will be given, to show the scrupulous care which our Church exercises, to the end that her public homage shall be offered only to those who are really saints of God.

**The Investigations.** Inquiries are first made by authority of the bishop of the place wherein the person lived. These are of three kinds—as to his reputation for sanctity and miracles—to prove that he has not, thus far, been publicly venerated (this being prohibited before beatification)—and regarding his writings, if there are any. The result of these inquiries is sent to Rome, to the Congregation of Rites, and a Cardinal is deputed by the Pope as *relator*, or manager of the cause. The writings of the person (if any) are carefully examined by theologians, and an advocate and a *Procurator of the Cause* are appointed, who prepare all the documents that concern the case. These are printed and distributed to the Cardinals who form the Congregation of Rites, forty days before the date assigned for their discussion. And all this is merely to ascertain whether the cause is to be introduced or not.

If the Congregation is of the opinion that the matter should

be carried further, a commission is appointed to introduce it, and the Holy Father signs the approval of the said commission, using (according to custom) his baptismal name, not his papal title. The servant of God is thereafter known by the title of "Venerable."

Letters are sent to the Church authorities of the place or places wherein the person spent his life, directing them to make further inquiries concerning his sanctity and miracles, in general and in particular. The Congregation also examines the proofs that no public veneration has been paid him. The results of all these inquiries, which must be completed within eighteen months, are examined, and lengthy documents are prepared by the *Advocate of the Cause*, demonstrating the validity of all that has been thus far done. These are discussed at a special meeting of the Congregation, and it is the duty of the *Promoter of the Faith* (sometimes called "the advocate of the devil") to present difficulties and objections against the further consideration of the case.

**The Signature of the Pope.** Then comes the important part of the process, to which all that has preceded has been only a preparation. Three meetings of the Congregation of the Rites are held, at the last of which the Pope himself presides. At these the question is debated: "Is there evidence that the Venerable Servant of God practised virtues both theological and cardinal, and in a heroic degree?" At each meeting a majority of those who take part must vote in the affirmative in order that the matter may be carried further. Complete reports of each meeting must be prepared and printed. And at the last meeting the Pope is asked to sign the solemn decree that there exists evidence of heroic virtue. The Holy Father, after fervent prayer, confirms by his signature the decision of the Congregation.

**Two Miracles are Needed.** Even then, the case is far from complete. At least two important miracles wrought through the intercession of the servant of God must be proved. The evidence regarding these must be very clear, and is carefully

and thoroughly discussed in three separate meetings. Again three reports are made, and a decree is issued, confirmed by the Pope, that there is proof of miracles.

At a final meeting of the Congregation a last debate is held and a vote is taken; and on an appointed day the solemn ceremony of beatification takes place in the Vatican Basilica, on which occasion the Sovereign Pontiff issues a decree permitting public veneration (usually in certain places only) of the servant of God, who is thenceforth known as Blessed.

**The Canonization.** After the solemn beatification it is necessary that two more well-authenticated miracles shall be proved to have taken place through the intercession of the one who has been declared Blessed. When these have been discussed and confirmed at three meetings of the Congregation, another special meeting is held, at which the members consider the advisability of giving public universal veneration to the servant of God. And finally the Pope issues a *Bull of Canonization*, by which he no longer permits but commands the public veneration of the saint; and a great ceremony usually takes place in St. Peter's Church, at which the first Mass in honor of the new saint is celebrated and his image is solemnly venerated.

We see, then, what laborious and lengthy deliberation our Church uses when it is question of adding a new name to the long list of her saints. She does not hurry, for she does not need to do so; she will endure "all days, even to the consummation of the world." In some cases centuries have elapsed, and the cause is not yet completed. St. Isaac Jogues, S.J. and his companions who died as martyrs for the faith at the hands of American Indians in the middle of the seventeenth century were canonized in 1930. Yet, we have notable instances when the cause was so clear and the example of the holy one so needed at the time that the Pope raised some saints to the altar in a relatively short time after death. St. Maria Goretti, twelve year old martyr for chastity, was proclaimed a saint by Pope Pius XII in the Jubilee Year 1950 in

the presence of three hundred thousand persons, including the saint's mother. St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, the first American citizen raised to sainthood, was canonized in 1946, less than thirty years after her death. The causes of many others, saintly confessors and virgins, and thousands of martyrs for the faith in our own day, have not yet been passed upon by the Holy See. The vast number of cases presented to the Roman Congregation and the extreme care which must be exercised in considering them causes the list to grow but slowly.

It is a comforting thought that we are members of the same great Church as are the saints who are with God in heaven. We are still here in the conflict, in the midst of sorrow and sin; they have won and obtained their eternal reward—and they are our friends and our intercessors before the throne of God.

“I saw a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the Throne and in the sight of the Lamb.” (Apoc. 7, 9).

#### 4. THE VENERATION OF IMAGES

Even in this enlightened twentieth century and in this highly civilized land the average non-Catholic has a very hazy and sometimes a very erroneous idea of what Catholics believe. The prejudiced notions of a hundred years ago persist today in the minds of many. For them the Catholic is a worshiper of idols, a senseless dolt who bows down before lifeless things; who offers adoration to statues of dead men and women, and has almost lost sight of his Creator and Saviour.

**The Catholic Doctrine.** What is the teaching and practice of our Church with regard to images? Let us first set forth again the Catholic doctrine about worship. First of all, Catholics adore no one but God. Absolute and supreme worship is paid to Him alone, for He is the source of all good and of

all graces, and no other being has any power whatever to forgive or sanctify or reward us.

Our Church honors and venerates the saints and angels, with a relative and inferior homage, as friends of God, as having the power of interceding for us; but she has never held that even the most exalted saint is to be adored. A saint in heaven is simply a saved soul made illustrious by exceptional virtue.

Now the Church has maintained for many centuries that the representations of our Blessed Saviour or of a saint are worthy of honor; but she has never taught nor permitted that they shall be adored. A statue or a picture is, as it were, a portrait of the Redeemer or of a holy servant of God. It brings before our mind a vivid idea of the one whom it portrays. If the image be of our Lord Jesus Christ, He, of course, is entitled to the supreme worship of adoration, being God; but His image is not God, and is to be honored merely with reverence, not with adoration. If the statue or picture represents a saint, he or she is not to be adored, for a saint is not God. A relative homage only is to be rendered, even though the saint be the most exalted and holiest of creatures, the Blessed Virgin herself; and the image or portrait of the person thus venerated is to be honored only as a means for directing and increasing our homage and veneration toward that person.

**The Church's Decrees.** This matter was settled, once and for all, more than eleven hundred years ago in the second Council of Nice, in 787. "We define with all certainty and care that both the figure of the Sacred Cross and the venerable and holy images are to be placed suitably in the churches of God and in houses; that is to say, the images of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, of our Immaculate Lady the Holy Mother of God, and of the angels and saints. For as often as they are seen in these representations, those who look at them are ardently lifted up to the memory and love of the originals and are induced to give them respect and worshipful honor. So that offerings of incense and lights are to be given to these images, to the figure of the life-giving Cross, to the holy books of the gospels

and to other sacred objects, in order to do them honor. For honor paid to an image passes on to the one represented by it; he who venerates an image venerates the reality of him portrayed in it."

The year 787 is a long while ago; but the above is still the standpoint and teaching of the Catholic Church. The customs by which we show our respect and worshipful honor towards holy images have varied in different countries and at different times; but in no country and at no time has the Church permitted adoration or idolatrous worship of images. She has been obliged on many occasions to forbid excesses of reverence or such signs of veneration as might be misunderstood. In the decrees of the Council of Trent she states: "Images of Christ, the Virgin Mother of God and other saints are to be held and kept especially in churches. Due honor and veneration are to be paid to them, not that any divinity or power is in them to entitle them to be worshiped, or that anything can be asked of them, or that any trust may be put in them, because the honor shown to them is referred to those whom they represent; so that by kissing, uncovering to, or kneeling before images we adore Christ and honor the saints."

**The History of Images.** When the persecuted Christians of the first centuries were forced to hide themselves and their worship in the catacombs of Rome, they began to enrich and ornament these gloomy caverns with representations of our Saviour's life and miracles. And when they were able to practise their faith openly they took the abandoned temples of paganism and Christianized them with statues and crosses. In later ages, when the mighty cathedrals of Europe were built, the use of images for their adorning and for the inspiring of devotion became the universal rule and the genius of the world's greatest artists was employed to carve and to paint these ornaments of the house of God.

All through those centuries Catholics understood, as they understand now, that an image or a painting has no share in the adoration due to God alone. From the earliest days the

representation of Christ or of the saints was treated with respect, and gradually a tradition and practice arose of venerating these images with a ceremonial of religious honor.

In some Eastern Churches this honor was undoubtedly increased to an excessive degree. Prostrations, incensings, litanies and long prayers were offered before images. In Greek and Russian temples the walls are fairly covered with icons or tablets depicting a multitude of saints. After a time a natural revulsion came from this excess. A reformation was begun by certain Byzantine emperors and others, but, like many so-called reformations, it was ill-advised and was carried too far in the opposite direction. It resulted in the heresy of the Iconoclasts, or image breakers, who sought to root out all use and veneration of images in Christian churches. There were several outbreaks of this rebellion against the Church's discipline, and bitter persecutions were waged against those who continued to venerate images. Gradually the heresy died out, and the Eastern Churches of today, whether united to Rome or separated from it, make far more use of images than we of the Western rite.

When Protestantism arose, the zealous reformers were filled with a wild hatred toward anything which reminded them of the faith they had abandoned. Many of the priceless carvings, statues and painted windows of the ancient churches of Europe were ruthlessly destroyed, and the followers of the new religion offered their pure worship in bare conventicles or in once Catholic temples that had been denuded of everything that savored of Catholicity. In later times, in some Protestant denominations, there was a return to the æsthetic in worship; and carven altars, glowing windows, crosses and even pictures and statues, give testimony to the fact that the human mind feels the need of such outward helps for the furthering of religious devotion.

**Abuses are Possible.** In some parts of the world—perhaps even among us—the veneration of images may be said to need watchfulness today. Extravagances are possible; and excessive



devotion to an image, perhaps on account of some miraculous power which is claimed for it, may lead to a considerable neglect of more essential things. It is not edifying, nor is it an evidence of deep religious spirit, at a Forty Hours' Devotion, for instance, to see some of our people (in all good faith, doubtless, and with the best intentions) lighting scores of candles before the statue of good St. Anthony, while upon the main altar is enthroned the God Who created St. Anthony—Jesus, in the sacrament of His love, exposed for adoration.

Pope Pius XII condemned such misplaced zeal in this matter in his encyclical on the Sacred Liturgy. He wrote: "We now deem it our duty to censure the inconsiderate zeal of those who propose for veneration in the Churches and on the altars, without any just reason, a multitude of sacred images and statues, and also those who display unauthorized relics, those who emphasize special and insignificant practices, neglecting essential and necessary things. They thus bring religion into derision and lessen the dignity of worship." (*Mediator Dei*)

**A Reasonable Practice.** Is the veneration of images a reasonable practice? Why not? We render respect to other lifeless things simply because they symbolize something which we love or reverence. A loyal Englishman rises when he hears the strains of "God Save the King," because he respects the constitutional monarchy which rules his land; and he would rightly resent an insult offered not only to his king but to a royal statue or portrait. An American citizen salutes the flag of his country, and bares his head when the national anthem rings forth in honor of that beautiful emblem of liberty. He would shed his blood to avenge an indignity offered to his country's flag. Now if it be reasonable to show such respect to a piece of music, or a statue, or a square of colored bunting, why is it unreasonable to manifest it towards a portrait of our Saviour or of a holy saint of God?

Is the use of pictures and images helpful for the attaining of fervor in prayer and the increasing of devotion towards God? Undoubtedly. If you or I were in a distant land, separated from

one whom we love, would it not aid us to remember that loved one, if we had a portrait constantly before us? Images are aids to devotion, helping us to fix our attention on our prayers, to avoid distractions, to increase the fervor of our adoration of God and our veneration of the saints.

## 5. THE VENERATION OF RELICS

There is a point of Catholic doctrine which is generally misunderstood and nearly always misrepresented by those outside the Church. The veneration which Catholics show to relics is usually classed as "a superstition," "a form of idolatry," "a survival of paganism"—simply because our non-Catholic and anti-Catholic critics have no accurate idea as to what our Church believes and teaches concerning relics; because they seem to be incapable of distinguishing between adoration and veneration; and because they take it for granted that anything that ever existed in pagan religions must necessarily be false and wrong and unchristian.

**Not a Superstition.** Catholics are not superstitious when they give to relics the religious veneration which the Church permits. Catholics are not idolaters at any time, for they give adoration to none but God. Catholics are not guilty of paganism when they use a form of devotion which happens to resemble something that was found useful in pagan worship—for we must remember that paganism was not all false. It was the result of the instinct of worship which God has implanted in the nature of man. It was false inasmuch as it led man to worship false divinities; it was true inasmuch as it caused him to worship at all.

The veneration of relics is a primitive instinct. Even apart from religion, how common the practice has always been of preserving all that has had any connection with one who has been loved or revered! A lock of hair, a portrait, a little child's shoe—anything that has belonged to the object of our love—is treasured as if it were of inestimable worth. And in

religion the same holds true; for the honoring of relics is found in many other forms of religion besides Christianity. The Greeks honored the supposed remains of heroes, sages and demigods; the pious Buddhists still preserve and venerate the relics of Gautama. And these pagan examples were commendable in so far as they showed religious faith, even though the object of that faith was false.

**What are Relics?** What do we Catholics mean when we speak of relics? They are the bodies of departed saints, fragments of their bodies, or articles which they have used, such as clothing, vestments and the like—or, in the case of relics of our Lord, they are objects which are reputed to have been connected with His life or sufferings, such as the manger of Bethlehem, the crown of thorns, the nails, etc.

What does our Church teach concerning them? That teaching is clearly set forth in a decree of the Council of Trent: "The bodies of holy martyrs and of others now living with Christ (which bodies were the living members of Christ and the temples of the Holy Ghost, and which are to be raised by Him to eternal life and to be glorified) are to be venerated by the faithful, for through these bodies many benefits are bestowed by God on men; so that they who now affirm that veneration and honor are not due to the relics of the saints, that these are uselessly honored by the faithful, and that the places dedicated to the memories of the saints are visited in vain, are wholly to be condemned."

**Why Do We Honor Them?** The Catholic devotion to relics is founded upon two great principles of the Church's teaching regarding the saints. First, she honors the saints; and when they were living on earth they, like all men, were composed each of a body and a soul. The virtues which a saint practised were not virtues of the soul only; they were proper to the whole individual, to his body as well as his soul, for body and soul labored and suffered together. The soul of a saint is in heaven. Now the bodies of those who are in heaven are certain to rise again to a glorious immortality. The Church, then, joyfully

anticipates the glory which God will give to these bodies at the last day. She pays religious homage to them—even to small fragments of them; and she gives similar honor even to things that were closely connected with the earthly life of those servants of God.

Secondly, Catholics believe that God is sometimes pleased to honor the relics of the saints by making them instruments of healing and other miracles, and that He bestows graces and favors on those who keep and venerate them—for the honor that is paid to such relics is really veneration of the saint himself, which gives glory to God and secures for us the intercession of those who stand before God's throne in heaven.

**A Few Objections.** Is it not superstitious to suppose that there is a physical efficacy in a relic which will cause it to work a miracle? Probably it would be superstitious if we supposed it; but we do not. We believe that the relics of the saints are the occasion of the working of a miracle by God, through the intercession of the saint who is honored when the relic is honored. Far from believing that a relic can work a miracle by any power of its own, we Catholics do not believe that a saint, or even the Blessed Virgin, can do so. The power of God is the only power that can effect a miracle. The saint can merely, by intercession, obtain the exercise of that power of God in our behalf.

But does it not border on idolatry, or at least does it not detract from the worship of God, when honor is paid to relics? St. Jerome was a good Christian. Let us hear what he says. "We do not worship, we do not adore, for fear that we should bow down to the creature rather than to the Creator; but we venerate the relics of the martyrs, in order the better to adore Him whose martyrs they are." Could the Catholic teaching be set forth more clearly?

**As Old as the Church.** The Catholic practice of honoring relics goes back to the beginning of Christianity. When the brave martyrs gave their souls to God in the arena or at the fiery stake, there were always found equally brave Christians

who gathered together the dismembered remains, the blood or the ashes, and preserved them as a priceless treasure. Burial near the tomb of a martyr was especially desired by the pious faithful. Objects that had merely touched the remains of a saint were thereafter treated as relics. When the wood of the True Cross was discovered by the Empress Helena, it was soon divided into minute fragments, so that within a few years, in the words of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, it "had filled the whole world." And as the number of the Church's saints increased in the course of centuries, so also the number of venerated relics was multiplied. The people of every parish naturally desired to have a relic of the saint to whom their church was dedicated; and on account of the difficulty or impossibility of obtaining bodies or parts thereof, it became customary to venerate clothing, vestments and other things which were reputed to have been used by the saint.

**The Question of Abuses.** But have there not been many abuses and deceptions regarding alleged relics? Undoubtedly—hundreds of them. They were almost unavoidable in a matter which lent itself so easily to error and greed of gain. The demand for relics caused frauds to be perpetrated by unscrupulous men. Many of the writers of the Middle Ages tell us of grave abuses, of a regular trade in reputed objects of devotion which were, no doubt, mostly fraudulent. Popular enthusiasm and the rivalry among religious houses, each seeking to be known as the possessor of some great relic, caused many deceptions to be practised, intentionally or otherwise. Copies or models of relics were made, and in some cases these were afterwards confused with the originals. Objects which at first were venerated because they had touched a relic, were later considered to be relics themselves.

Against all these abuses the Church has constantly striven, by requiring the approval of the Holy See for newly found relics, by forbidding the sale of any such articles, and by restricting in every feasible way the veneration of those which have not at least a probable authenticity. It is true that she

has allowed the honoring of certain doubtful relics to continue. But we must remember that the passing of a final opinion upon many of these is no easy task. In some cases, veneration has been paid to them for many centuries—and devotions of an ancient date cannot be swept aside at a moment's notice without disturbance and scandal. Therefore, unless the evidence of spuriousness is so great as to amount to practical certainty, the Church usually lets them alone.

**Relics in Altar Stones.** The relics of two canonized martyrs are placed within every altar stone, and with them are sometimes included the relics of the saint in whose memory the altar is erected. In a fixed altar these relics are contained in a metal box or reliquary of oblong shape, which fits a cavity in the altar stone and is covered by a stone lid. When relics are exposed for public veneration in a church, they are usually contained in an elaborate reliquary, somewhat resembling the ostensorium used at the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Many of the great churches of Europe have large collections of relics—some undoubtedly genuine, some very probably spurious. Among the most famous are those of Rome, Aix-la-Chapelle, Cologne, Naples and Antwerp; and in the Church of St. Anthony, at Padua, are many relics of its titular saint and of other servants of God.

## 6. THE FORTY HOURS ADORATION

The central object of Catholic liturgy is the adorable Sacrament of the Eucharist. The great principle of the Church's worship here on earth is to copy the homage paid to our Blessed Redeemer by the Church in heaven. We are the Church Militant, and we are one with the Church Triumphant; and just as the saints and angels render unceasing adoration to God in heaven, so the members of the Church on earth must strive to do the same. The Church, moreover, wishes that all her children shall have their share in this continuous homage. She has, therefore, decreed that the devotion of the

Forty Hours shall be held every year, on the days fixed by the bishop of the place, and with the greatest possible solemnity, in all parish Churches and in other Churches in which the Blessed Sacrament is habitually reserved.

**Not an Old Devotion.** This devotion is comparatively new. Unlike some of the other ceremonies of the Church, its history goes back only a few centuries. It seems to have been gradually evolved from the solemn ceremonies of the Blessed Sacrament which were held each year on the feast of Corpus Christi, which festival was established by Pope Urban IV in the year 1264. In these public celebrations the Sacred Host was borne through the streets, but was at first entirely concealed. About a century later the custom was introduced of exposing It in a suitable vessel, very similar to the ostensorium used at the present day.

These processions aroused in clergy and people an earnest devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, and soon gave rise to the practice of leaving the Sacred Host on the altar for public adoration. This was found to be particularly useful at the carnival time, the two days immediately before Lent, when in many countries great excesses were committed and the people gave themselves up to unbridled license and dissipation. The bishops of the Church sought to awaken the faithful to better and holier things, to prepare them for the penitential season of Lent, and to make reparation to God for the insults everywhere offered to His majesty. For this purpose, on these two days, they adopted the plan of exposing the Blessed Sacrament solemnly in the churches for forty hours, in memory of the time during which the Sacred Body of Jesus was in the sepulchre.

**Introduced at Milan.** As nearly as can be ascertained, the modern practice of having the adoration in various churches on successive Sundays originated at Milan, in Italy, and was probably introduced by the Capuchin Order about the year 1537, when a severe visitation of the plague afflicted that city. Some investigators have attributed the devotion to Joseph da

Fermo, of the above order; others maintain that the honor belongs to a certain Father Bellotto, while still others urge the claims of a Dominican named Thomas Nieto, of St. Anthony Zaccaria and of a Barnabite, Brother Buono. All that we can be sure of is that the occasional exposition of the Blessed Sacrament goes back nearly to the year 1500, and that the making of the adoration practically continuous by holding it in different churches successively originated in Milan in or about the year 1537.

In 1539 the first indulgences for this devotion were granted by Pope Paul III. The practice spread to other cities, being especially promoted by Juvenal Ancina, an Oratorian Father who had been made bishop of Saluzzo, and who wrote many instructions relative to the Adoration of the Forty Hours. St. Charles Borromeo, that great saint and reformer, whose name is inseparably connected with the Milanese Church, also urged the devotion upon his priests and people. In those days, when European civilization was menaced by Moslem invasion, the prayers enjoined at the Forty Hours were usually for protection from the enemies and for the peace of Christendom. It was soon adopted in Rome, through the efforts and zeal of St. Philip Neri, and was finally established and regulated, substantially as we have it now, by Pope Clement VIII in 1592, "in order that the public trials of the Church may be lessened, and that the faithful may continuously appease their Lord by prayer before the Blessed Sacrament."

**The Clementine Instruction.** In 1731 Pope Clement XII issued a very complete code of regulations for the Forty Hours; and this, known as the *Clementine Instruction*, has been in force with few alterations since that date, and is still the law for the diocese of Rome, and is followed practically everywhere in the world.

The devotion was not introduced into the United States until the middle of the nineteenth century. Individual chapels and churches had held Forty Hours Devotion before 1853, when the saintly Bishop Neumann introduced it into the



diocese of Philadelphia. He deserves the credit for having made it a diocesan devotion. The Second Plenary Council of Baltimore officially introduced it into all the dioceses of the United States in 1868.

**The Rubrics and Ceremonies.** During the devotion, all the Church's homage centers around the altar of exposition, which is always the high altar of the church. At least twenty candles must be kept burning day and night. There must be continual relays of watchers before the Blessed Sacrament, but only priests and clerics (or in our country the altar boys who act in the place of clerics) are allowed to kneel in the sanctuary. All who enter or leave the church should go down on both knees and bow low in adoration; and all should remain kneeling while in the church.

No Masses are allowed at the altar on which the Blessed Sacrament is enthroned, except at the opening and closing of the Adoration. The opening Mass is called the Mass of Exposition. On the second day a *Missa pro Pace* (Mass for Peace) is said on another altar, reminding us of the original purpose of the Forty Hours Adoration. The closing of the devotion takes place at the Mass of Reposition or at an evening Holy Hour. At both the opening and closing the Litany of the Saints is chanted, and a procession with the Blessed Sacrament is held. No Masses of Requiem are allowed in the church during the Adoration.

Although originally planned to continue for forty hours, the devotion does not generally last so long, at least in our part of the world, for the reason that a sufficient number of worshippers could hardly be provided during the night. Hence in our dioceses the exposition usually lasts on the opening day till about nine o'clock in the evening; on the second day, from the Mass for Peace till the same hour; and on the closing day from an early Mass till evening, so as to have more nearly the forty hours.

**The Indulgences.** Several of the Popes have enriched the devotion with indulgences. A plenary indulgence, applicable to

the souls in purgatory, is obtained each day by one visit to a church where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, with confession and Holy Communion and the usual prayer for the intention of our Holy Father the Pope. There is an indulgence of fifteen years for each additional visit. At each visit one must recite five Our Fathers, Hail Marys, and Glories, and one more of each for the intentions of the Pope.

One of the great leaders of the Catholic Church in England—namely, Cardinal Wiseman—wrote these beautiful words concerning the Forty Hours Adoration: “In no other time or place is the sublimity of our religion so touchingly felt. No ceremony is going on in the sanctuary, no sound of song is issuing from the choir, no voice of exhortation proceeds from the pulpit, no prayer is uttered aloud at the altar. There are hundreds there, and yet they are engaged in no congregational act of worship. Each heart and soul is alone in the midst of a multitude—each uttering its own thoughts, each feeling its own grace. Yet are you overpowered, subdued, quelled into a reverential mood, softened into a devotional spirit, forced to meditate, to feel, to pray.”

**Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.** It may be well to give here a short account of this beautiful rite, which has become very common in our churches. The Sacred Host is exposed in an ostensorium, and is incensed during the singing of hymns, which vary in different localities, but which always include the *Tantum Ergo*. After the chanting of a versicle and prayer, the priest, wearing a humeral veil, makes the sign of the cross over the people with the ostensorium. This blessing is given in silence, but with us it is customary to have the sanctuary bell rung three times.

Wax candles, to the number of twelve at least, must be used, and the incensing may not be omitted. There is a diversity of customs in different countries regarding the hymns and prayers. In some places the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, the *Te Deum* or other hymns are sung before the *Tantum Ergo*.

This devotion is of rather modern origin. After the institu-

tion of the feast of Corpus Christi in 1246, processions and expositions of the Blessed Sacrament became common, and after a time the Sacred Host was carried in a transparent vessel resembling the ostensorium. Later on, especially in Germany, the continual exposition of the Blessed Sacrament came into vogue, although this was repeatedly condemned by the ritual laws. On some altars a sort of revolving tabernacle was devised, which could be rotated and opened thus permitting a view of the Sacred Host. In England and France the custom arose of having evening services in honor of the Blessed Virgin; and at these the Blessed Sacrament was sometimes exposed on the altar. It was natural, then, to give a blessing with the Sacred Host, for this had been previously done after processions. Thus the Benediction developed into its present form. It is often used as a conclusion of other services, such as vespers, the stations of the cross and the devotional meetings of sodalities, and has become deservedly popular in our times.

**Eucharistic Congresses.** Another modern demonstration of faith in the Real Presence is the constantly increasing number of large public gatherings in praise of the Eucharistic Christ. Foremost among these are the International Eucharistic Congresses. Clergy and laity from all over the world assemble in one city for the purpose of rendering homage to the Holy Eucharist by public adoration and general communions, and the discussion of means to increase devotion to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. The first congress owed its origin to Bishop de Ségur of Lille, France.

Similar congresses on a national scale have been held in many countries, and almost everywhere there is held annually a diocesan Eucharistic Day.

## 7. OUR DAILY PRAYERS

Every Christian feels the necessity of frequent communion with his God. He knows that the Almighty wishes each of us to present our homage and petitions to Him, so that we may

acknowledge His power and mercy, and may recognize our dependence upon Him. And as we receive favors from God every day, so our gratitude and homage should be offered to Him daily.

**The Lord's Prayer.** The greatest of all prayers is the Our Father. It is the one prayer that is entirely of divine origin. It was taught by our Lord to His disciples, and has been used by the Church since the very beginning of her history. The fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of the Gospel of St. Matthew contain the "Sermon on the Mount," and the sixth is largely an instruction on prayer. Our Blessed Lord gave to His hearers a model prayer addressed to His Heavenly Father, expressing adoration, recognition of God's attributes, and petitions for the graces, temporal favors, forgiveness and protection needed by mankind—and expressing all of these in a few sentences and in simple words.

The complete text of the Our Father is found in the Gospel according to St. Matthew. It reads as follows: "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." (Matt. 6, 9-13) It is also found in a shorter form in the Gospel of St. Luke (Luke 11, 2-4).

**The Concluding Words.** "For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen." Our Protestant friends (at least those of some denominations), use this sentence at the end of the Our Father. Are they right in doing so, or is there any authority for this addition to the Lord's Prayer? It is not found in the most authentic manuscripts of the Gospels, although it occurs in some of the old liturgical books of Eastern rites. In these books, however, it was not considered as an essential part of the Our Father, but as an "embolism," or added prayer, intended to increase the fervor and direct the intention of the faithful—a practice which was very common in the Oriental churches. We find an example

of another embolism in the prayer which immediately follows the Our Father in our Mass, consisting of a repetition in another form of the request, "Deliver us from evil." It begins as follows: "Deliver us, we beseech Thee, O Lord, from all evils, past, present and to come," and asks for peace and forgiveness through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, the Apostles and the Saints.

Therefore, when non-Catholics ask us why we make the Our Father shorter than their form, we should tell them that the added words which they use are not a part of the prayer as given by our Blessed Lord, but a pious addition which is ancient indeed, but which the Roman Church has not seen fit to adopt in her ritual. The latest Protestant Revised Standard Version of the New Testament (1946) omits these concluding words.

**The Hail Mary.** There is a prayer which Catholics recite more often than any other. It is the most familiar of all the prayers used by the Church to honor the Blessed Virgin. It forms the greatest part of the Rosary, a devotion that is practised at least occasionally by all Catholics and very frequently by the more fervent among them. It is recited at morning, noon and night, in the Angelus.

It is a prayer which owes its origin to inspiration from God, manifested through one of His angels, one of His saints, and His holy Church. It is one of the most complete and perfect of all prayers, expressing in a few words salutation, praise, congratulation, thanksgiving, and petition. This prayer is the Hail Mary.

It consists of three parts. The first is the salutation of the Archangel Gabriel to Mary, into which the Church has inserted her name: "Hail (Mary), full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women." (Luke 1, 28) The second part is composed of the words of Elizabeth to our Lady: "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb," (Luke 1, 42) to which is annexed the sacred name of Jesus. And the third part is a beautiful petition added by the Church of God, giving expression

to the feeling with which we Catholics regard the Mother of God, and declaring our confidence in her intercession: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

**The Origin of the Hail Mary.** What is the history of this beautiful prayer? For many centuries it was unknown—a circumstance which seems remarkable to us, who use it so frequently. We may well wonder how Catholics ever prayed without it; but it is a historical fact that the Hail Mary did not exist at all until the eleventh century, and even then only a part of it was used as a prayer.

Its origin was as follows: The monastic orders were accustomed to recite lengthy offices each day; and on certain feasts, especially those of the Blessed Virgin, these services were supplemented by the "Little Office" of Mary. In this the words of the Archangel and of St. Elizabeth were used repeatedly in the form of versicles and responses. Gradually it became a pious practice, not only for the monks but for the laity, to use these sentences as a prayer. In the year 1196 the bishop of Paris ordered his clergy to teach these words to their flocks, and within a short time the prayer became well known throughout the Catholic world.

A little later the holy name of Jesus was added, probably by Pope Urban IV, and the last part, "Holy Mary, Mother of God," etc., was introduced about the year 1500, as it was felt that this beautiful expression of devotion to our Mother would be more complete if it included a petition to obtain her powerful intercession.

**The Apostles' Creed.** In our daily devotions, after offering to our Heavenly Father the prayer taught to us by His Divine Son, and after having saluted her who is "full of grace," we are counselled to make a declaration of our faith, to express in words what we believe to be God's revelation to man. Each of us in early childhood learned a compendium of our Catholic faith, a formula which contains the most important truths of our Church's doctrine. This is known as the Apostles' Creed.

It is called a "Creed" from its first word—in Latin, *Credo*, I believe. Why do we call it the Apostles' Creed? Because throughout the Middle Ages there was a widespread belief that the Apostles composed it on the day of Pentecost. An ancient legend, dating back to the sixth century and perhaps further, tells us that when the Apostles were assembled at Jerusalem and had just received the Holy Ghost in the form of tongues of fire, each of them, inspired by the Spirit of God, contributed one of the articles of the Creed. According to the story, when the Holy Spirit had filled the souls of the apostles with knowledge and zeal, St. Peter arose and cried out, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth." St. Andrew continued, "And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord." St. James added, "Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost," etc. In this manner the twelve articles of the creed were supposed to have been composed.

Bear in mind, however, that all this is a legend, of uncertain origin and of very slight probability. There is no allusion to it in the Scriptural account of the events of Pentecost, and the whole story is probably the product of the vivid imagination of some Oriental or Latin romancer.

**A Profession of Faith.** The Apostles' Creed is, very likely, an amplified form of the "profession of faith" required in the early centuries from converts. In Apostolic times, as at the present day, those who desired baptism were obliged to make a statement of their belief; and it is probable that the Creed was brought to its present form gradually, being developed from the declaration which was exacted from those converted to the faith.

**The Confiteor.** This is a prayer which is used not only in daily devotions but on many other occasions—in the sacrament of penance, in the divine office, and especially by the priest at the beginning of the Mass.

Like the Creed, it takes its name from its first word. *Confiteor*, in Latin, means "I confess." The Confiteor is a general confession of sin, an acknowledgment of guilt, made in the

presence of God and His saints, and a prayer that the saints may intercede for the sinner.

The Confiteor was originally a part of the private prayers offered by the priest in preparation for Mass, expressing his unworthiness and asking for grace and forgiveness. After a time, about the tenth century, it became customary for the priest to say this prayer at the foot of the altar, and gradually it came to be regarded as a part of the Mass.

The Confiteor is used also at the administration of Holy Communion, publicly or privately; at Extreme Unction, and at the giving of the Apostolic blessing and indulgence to the dying.

Until quite recently it was usual to recite the first part of the Confiteor in the confessional before making the accusation of sins; but at the present time, for the sake of expediting the confession, it is recommended that it be said before entering, and that only the words "I confess to Almighty God and to you, Father," be used in the confessional.

**Asking the Intercession of Saints.** Why do we say the Confiteor? Why should one confess his sins to the Blessed Virgin and to the saints, none of whom have any power to absolve from sin? This objection may be found in some Protestant works. We answer that it is reasonable to make a general acknowledgment of our weakness and guilt before these as well as before God, because we wish their prayers in order to secure His pardon. Therefore we declare that we "have sinned exceedingly, in thought, word and deed." We state the reasons why we wish them "to pray to the Lord our God" for us, but we know full well that forgiveness cannot come from them; and so we conclude the prayer with the words: "May the Almighty God forgive me my sins, and bring me to everlasting life. May the Almighty and merciful Lord grant me pardon, absolution, and remission of all my sins. Amen."

**The Acts.** The purpose of the Acts of Faith, Hope and Love is to testify that we possess these three great "theological virtues"; and the Act of Contrition puts into words the sorrow for sin which is necessary for forgiveness.



For the Acts a different wording is to be found in nearly every manual of prayers, and the Church has not declared that any one form must be used. The version which is taught in our later catechisms is clear and concise.

The Act of Faith declares our firm belief in one God and three Divine persons; in the Incarnation of our Lord, and the redemption accomplished by Him; and in all the other truths that God's Church teaches.

The Act of Hope expresses our trust in God's mercy and our reliance on the merits of our Blessed Redeemer.

The Act of Love manifests our love of God for His own sake, because he is the Supreme Good, and our love of our neighbor for the sake of God; for our Lord has declared that the love of God is "the first and greatest commandment," and that "the second is like unto this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

The Act of Contrition is the declaration in words of that sorrow for sin which is absolutely required for its forgiveness. This also can be found in various forms, and the one now generally taught is perhaps better than some of the older versions, as it expresses clearly the motives of contrition and is fairly simple in wording.

**Prayers at Meals.** Our catechisms, after the daily prayers, insert a short form of prayer to be used before and after meals. The prayer before meals is known as a blessing, for it consists in the invoking of God's blessing upon us and upon what we are about to receive; and that after meals is called a grace, from the Latin word *gratiae* meaning thanks, because it expresses our gratitude for our food and all other favors which God has given us.

There is no strict rule about the wording of these prayers. In convents and religious houses the blessing and grace are somewhat long, being made up of several verses, responses and prayers. For the use of the laity the brief form in our catechism is sufficient.

Such, then, is the history and the analysis of the prayers

which our Holy Church recommends to us for daily use. Every Catholic should recite them at morning and night—the Our Father, to give homage to the Almighty and to invoke His protection; the Hail Mary, to honor our Blessed Mother and to obtain her intercession; the Creed, to profess our holy faith; the Confiteor, to acknowledge our unworthiness; and the Acts, to animate us with faith, hope, love and contrition.

The proper form and wording of these common prayers to be used in the United States are given in the Revised Edition of the Baltimore Catechism approved by the American Hierarchy in 1947.

## 8. THE LITANIES

In his devotions and prayers it seems to be natural for man to invent and multiply terms of praise. In many forms of worship the practice has existed of joining in one prayer the various titles of the deity adored and the various terms of salutation addressed to him; and here, as in many other pious practices, the Catholic Church has adapted to her own purposes something which was in common use in other religions. She has taken advantage of many commendable features of the Jewish and even of pagan rituals; and she has done this because in her wisdom she wishes to make use of everything which seems to promise good results in the exciting of devotion among her children.

**A Jewish Litany.** To illustrate the manner in which the Jews used what we now call a litany, we have only to refer to the 135th Psalm. This was used in the public worship of the Temple, being recited alternately by priest and people, and was also employed in private devotions. It enumerates the attributes of God, and consists of twenty-seven verses, each ending with the words "For His mercy endureth forever." This repetition gives the whole psalm the effect of a litany, such as is recited in our Church. In like manner we find in the Book of Daniel the canticle of the three youths in the fiery

furnace; each verse ends with the words "Praise and exalt Him above all for ever."

**How Catholic Litanies Begun.** In the early centuries of our Church's history it was customary to have prayers with responses, resembling our present litanies, in the Mass itself. The only trace of this practice that now remains is the repetition of the Greek words "Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison" ("Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy"), which originally formed a part of these Mass litanies.

When peace was granted to the Church after three centuries of persecution, public devotions and processions became common. These processions were called litanies, from the Greek word *lite*, meaning a prayer or supplication; and they were frequently held on days which had been religious festivals among the heathen. From this comes the practice which has endured to the present time, of reciting the Litany of the Saints in the Divine Office on the feast of St. Mark, April 25—a day which was in pagan times a great festival, celebrated with religious processions, to bring a blessing upon the newly planted fields.

This litany is recited also on the Rogation Days—the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday before the feast of the Ascension. The word Rogation means a petitioning, and the practice of saying the litany on those days goes back to the year 477, when it was prescribed by St. Mamertus, the bishop of Vienne, in France, on account of many calamities which had afflicted that country—earthquakes, tempests and the ravages of wild beasts. This was repeated year after year; the practice gradually spread throughout the world, and was finally approved by St. Leo III in the year 816. The object of these days of devotion is to beg of God, the Giver of all good, that He will preserve the fruits of the earth and bestow upon His creatures all necessary blessings.

**The Approved Litanies.** For the public services of the Church only five litanies are authorized. These are the Litany of the Saints, of the Blessed Virgin, of the Holy Name of Jesus,

of the Sacred Heart and of St. Joseph. In former centuries many litanies were in vogue; at one time they numbered about eighty. In 1601 Clement VIII prohibited the public recitation of any of these, except the Litany of the Saints and that of the Blessed Virgin. Somewhat later, despite this ruling, various other litanies came more or less into use, owing to the zeal and devotion (sometimes misguided) of the religiously inclined. Some of these litanies may be found in the older prayer books; but with the exception of the five mentioned above, they are not approved by the Church for her public services, even though some of them may be tolerated for private devotion. Certain litanies which have been published are almost heretical, imputing to the saints powers and attributes which belong to God alone, and changing the veneration proper to them into something very closely resembling the supreme homage which is due to the Almighty. Therefore in 1821 the Church issued a decree forbidding the public recitation of any except the two approved ones, and prohibiting any addition or modification of these unless by the especial sanction of the Holy See. As we shall see further on, the Church's approval has been given to three more litanies than were permitted by the above papal decrees.

**The Litany of the Saints.** This is the model of all other litanies, being much more ancient than the others which the Church uses. It is called the Litany of the Saints because it is made up of petitions addressed to various saints of different classes—apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins, as well as to Mary, the Queen of Saints. It was prescribed by Pope Gregory the Great in 590 for a public procession of thanksgiving which took place on the cessation of the plague which had devastated Rome. In a somewhat different form it was in use at a much earlier date, for it is mentioned by St. Basil in the fourth century and by others in the third—although it was probably much shorter then than it is now, for the reason that prior to the fourth century only martyr-saints were publicly honored by the Church. This can be seen in the Canon of the Mass, which

owes its present form largely to St. Gregory, and in which no saints are mentioned except martyrs.

The Church at the present day makes use of three forms of the Litany of the Saints. One, which is the most common, is used in many ceremonies—at the laying of the cornerstone of a church, at the blessing of a church or cemetery, on the Rogation Days, at the Devotion of the Forty Hours, and on some other occasions. Another form, somewhat shorter, is employed on Holy Saturday and the vigil of Pentecost. The third is that which is called the Litany of the Dying, or the “Commendation of a Soul Departing,” and the invocations and petitions are all offered to obtain God’s mercy on the soul that is about to appear before Him. The first or usual form is recommended for private devotion, and an indulgence of five years may be gained for its devout recitation.

**The Litany of the Holy Name.** This litany is made up of invocations expressing the various attributes of our Blessed Lord, with a petition for His mercy annexed to each of them. Its authorship is not known, but it has been ascribed to St. Bernardine of Siena and St. John Capistran, zealous preachers of the devotion to the Holy Name at the beginning of the fifteenth century. In the year 1588 Pope Sixtus V granted an indulgence of three hundred days for its recitation, and for many years it was used in various countries but not approved by the Church for public services, applications for such approval being rejected at various times. In fact, the prohibition by Clement VIII of any other litanies except those of the Saints and of the Blessed Virgin rendered the public recitation of this litany unlawful, but it continued to be used privately in many parts of the world.

In 1862, however, Pius IX gave his approval to one form of it, and granted an indulgence of three hundred days to the faithful of any diocese whose bishop had applied for it. Finally, in 1886, urged by the wonderful spread of the devotion to the Sacred Name of Jesus and the growth of the great society of men who honor that Holy Name, Leo XIII extended

this indulgence to all the world and thereby gave the Church's full approbation to this beautiful prayer. Pope Pius XI in 1933 increased the indulgences to seven years for each recitation.

**The Litany of the Blessed Virgin.** "Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." This sublime prophecy of Mary herself has been verified in all the ages of the Church's history. Even in early centuries the devout faithful found in Mary the fulfilment of many of the prophecies of the Old Testament, and discovered in the inspired verses of the psalmist many beautiful figures and symbols of the Blessed Mother of God. These were soon used as pious ejaculations, and new titles were invented from time to time; and all these were gradually woven into litanies of various forms. Thus after a time the Litany of the Blessed Virgin was moulded into shape, very much as we have it now.

Among the five litanies approved by the Church, this one is used perhaps more commonly than the others. It is often called the "Litany of Loreto," because it came into use about four centuries ago at the famous Italian shrine which, according to tradition or legend, contains the little house of Nazareth in which our Saviour dwelt in childhood. This litany is a series of beautiful invocations of our Blessed Mother, addressing her by various titles and beseeching her intercession.

Its origin is obscure and its authorship unknown. There is a legend that it was composed by the Apostles, after the Assumption of Mary into heaven—but it is only a legend; it has no historical foundation whatever. By some writers it is said to have been composed at Loreto in the thirteenth century; by others it is attributed to Pope Sergius I, in 687, or to St. Gregory the Great; but there is no real evidence that (in anything like its present form) it goes back beyond the latter years of the fifteenth century. Before that time, indeed, there were litanies of Mary—one in Gaelic, probably of the eighth century, and others of later date, in which the invocations were much longer than those in the Litany of Loreto. It was seen, after a time, that a litany composed of short ejaculations was more

effective and devotional and better adapted to public recitation; and so the Litany of Loreto was gradually developed until it became substantially as we have it now. At the shrine it was recited daily by thousands of pilgrims who gathered there, and in the year 1587 it was approved by Pope Sixtus V, who urged preachers throughout the world to promote its use among the faithful.

New petitions have been inserted into it from time to time. For instance, the title "Help of Christians," though used occasionally at an earlier date, was approved by the Holy See in commemoration of a great event in the history of the Church and of Christian civilization—the great naval battle of Lepanto, on October 7, 1571, when the Moslem hordes were frustrated in their attempt to conquer Europe. On the day of the battle prayers were being offered up, by order of the Sovereign Pontiff St. Pius V, in the churches of the world. The infidels were utterly defeated and their great fleet destroyed, and the nations of Europe were saved from the yoke of Islam through the intercession of the Blessed Mother of God.

The invocation "Queen of All Saints" was added by Pope Pius VII when he returned to Rome after his long imprisonment by order of Napoleon. The title "Queen Conceived without Original Sin" dates from 1846, although the solemn definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was not made until eight years later. The words "Queen of the Most Holy Rosary," used by Rosary societies for more than two hundred years, were not sanctioned for the whole Church until 1883. The invocation "Mother of Good Counsel" was approved by Leo XIII in 1903; and "Queen of Peace," was ordered by Benedict XV in 1917. On the occasion of the definition of the dogma of the Assumption in 1950, Pius XII added the title "Queen Assumed into Heaven," directing that it be inserted after the title "Queen Conceived without Original Sin."

What indulgences are annexed to the Litany of the Blessed Virgin? There are two, a partial and a plenary indulgence. Pius XI granted one of seven years every time it is said; and

anyone who recites it every day for a month may obtain a plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions.

The usual mode of reciting this litany is to say before it the beautiful prayer "We fly to thy patronage," and to conclude it with the "Hail, holy Queen," followed by the prayer "Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord"—but while all these are to be recommended, they are not necessary for the gaining of the indulgences. The litany itself is all that is required.

**The Litany of the Sacred Heart.** The fourth among the litanies approved by the Church is that of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Homage to the Sacred Heart of our Lord has become widely known only since the seventeenth century; and it was not until near the end of the eighteenth (in 1794) that the devotion was approved and indulgences were granted to those who practised it. The feast of the Sacred Heart had been previously observed in certain places, beginning about 1765; and in 1856 this festival was extended to the whole world. In 1889 it was raised to a higher rank in the Church's calendar by Leo XIII, and in 1899, the same Pontiff authorized the beautiful Litany of the Sacred Heart. In 1929 Pius XI raised the feast to the highest rank.

It begins, as do the other litanies, with petitions to the Persons of the Trinity, and contains thirty-three invocations to the Heart of Jesus, which is entitled "sacred temple of God," "burning furnace of charity," "fountain of life and holiness," and so on. The litany closes with the usual threefold prayer to the Lamb of God, with the versicle and response: "Jesus, meek and humble of heart: Make our hearts like to Thine," followed by a prayer to God the Father, asking for mercy in the name of God the Son. An indulgence of seven years may be gained by the faithful for each devout recitation of this litany.

**The Litany of St. Joseph.** One of the more recent of the litanies approved by our Church is that of St. Joseph. A spirit of devotion to the great Saint who was the foster-father of our Divine Lord and the spouse and protector of the Blessed



Virgin, has been constantly increasing among Catholics. In the earliest days of our Church it was customary to give religious homage only to saints who were martyrs; but even then the virtues of the holy St. Joseph were recognized and lauded. About the fourth century a festival in his honor was observed in some Eastern churches, but he was not venerated publicly in the churches of the Roman rite until the twelfth century, and his feast on March 19 was not established until the pontificate of Sixtus IV, about the year 1480. Another feast, that of St. Joseph the Workman, was established by Pope Pius XII in 1955, to be celebrated each May first. In 1870 Pius IX proclaimed St. Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church.

The Litany of St. Joseph was sanctioned by St. Pius X on March 18, 1909. It is beautiful in its wording, and is not unduly long. After the usual petitions to the Holy Trinity and one addressed to the Blessed Virgin, the litany is composed of twenty-five invocations expressing the virtues and dignities of St. Joseph. An indulgence of five years may be gained once a day by reciting it.

## 9. PSALMS AND HYMNS

A hymn meant originally a song of praise in honor of gods or heroes. It had a religious character which distinguished it from a mere laudatory ode in honor of a living man. Among the Jews it is not certain that hymns, in the modern sense, were sung, for the word as used in the Old Testament includes psalms and canticles.

From very early times psalms and hymns were sung in Christian assemblies. We have alluded elsewhere to the testimony of Pliny who, in a letter to the Emperor Trajan, in the year 104, mentions the Christian custom of singing a hymn to Christ as God in their "meetings before the dawn."

**How Psalms Are Used.** The Psalms of David, during the centuries of persecution, were the most natural expression of

the Church's sorrow and hope when trials weighed heavily upon her, of her joy in the midst of tribulation, and of her faith in the Redeemer Whose coming the Psalmist had prophesied.

These still form the greater part of the Church's liturgy. They are used in the Divine Office, and portions of them constantly occur in the words of the Mass. In the recitation of the Office they are chanted antiphonally; that is, alternate verses are said or sung by each half of the choir. This custom is attributed by some authors to St. Ignatius, a famous martyr of the early Church, by others it is said to have been introduced at Antioch during the reign of Constantine, by two monks named Flavian and Diodorus. In the Western Church this method of chanting was first practised at Milan, in the time of the great St. Ambrose. It is related that the Roman Empress Justina, an Arian heretic, sought to imprison Ambrose. His people gathered around him in his church to protect him, and spent several days in the alternate singing of the verses of psalms and hymns.

Under the patronage of Pope Pius XII, scholars of the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome made a new Latin version of the Psalter from the original Hebrew text. In 1945 by the *Motu Proprio* of the same Pope, this new Psalter is permitted in the public and private recitation of the Divine Office.

**The Sacred Canticles.** Besides the 150 psalms, the Breviary contains thirteen canticles taken from the Old Testament and three from the New. Some of these have been used in the Office since about the year 800, while others were added in the revision of the Breviary under St. Pius X.

Our Church also uses other canticles which are not found in the Scriptures—the *Te Deum*, the *Trisagion* and the *Gloria in Excelsis*. The *Te Deum*, according to an old legend, was sung by Saints Ambrose and Augustine after the baptism of the latter—but there is no foundation whatever for the story. The canticle has been attributed to a certain Nicetius, bishop of Treves in France, and also to St. Hilary of Poitiers. It is

recited at the end of Matins on most of the days of the year.

The *Trisagion* ("O Holy God, holy and strong, holy and immortal, have mercy on us") is said in Greek and Latin by the celebrant at the veneration of the cross on Good Friday, and is used in the prayers at Prime in the office on penitential days. It has been adopted into the Western Church from the Greek liturgy, and is traceable back to the fifth century.

The *Gloria*, or Greater Doxology, is used in the Mass, and is an amplification of the hymn of the angels at Bethlehem. It is a translation of an old Greek hymn, and was originally sung only at Christmas. Later it was extended to other joyful feasts, but up to the eleventh century it could be used by bishops only, except at Easter.

**Hymns of the Breviary.** About the sixth century the use of metrical hymns, often with rhyming stanzas, became common. Some of these go back even to an earlier date, being attributed to St. Ambrose.

The Breviary contains a great number of hymns—173 in all; and many of them are of great beauty. Some occur frequently in the Office, while others are used only once in the year, on particular feasts. We shall confine our attention to those that are used in the public services of the Church, and that are thereby more or less familiar to our readers.

The beautiful hymns in honor of the Blessed Eucharist are mostly the work of the "Angelic Doctor," St. Thomas Aquinas, in the thirteenth century. Among them are the *Adoro Te Devote*, the *Pange, Lingua*, which is sung in processions of the Blessed Sacrament, and of which the last stanzas form the *Tantum Ergo* at Benediction, and the *Verbum Supernum Prodiens*, of which the last portion, the *O Salutaris*, is usually sung at Benediction.

The anthems sung in honor of the Blessed Virgin at the end of Vespers are the *Salve, Regina*, used during most of the year, and probably written by Hermannus Contractus, a German monk, about 1050; the *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, by the same author, sung during and after Advent; the *Ave, Regina Coel-*

*orum*, by an unknown author, sung from the Purification to Holy Week; and the *Regina Coeli*, used during the Easter time, dating back probably to the tenth century.

Other well-known hymns to the Blessed Virgin are the *Ave, Maris Stella*, attributed to Fortunatus, bishop of Poitiers, in the sixth century—and the mournful *Stabat Mater*, used frequently in our churches at the Stations of the Cross. This was composed by Giacomone da Todi, a disciple of St. Francis, in the thirteenth century, and has furnished the text for the immortal music of Rossini.

**Hymns of the Missal.** The *Dies Iræ*, used at Masses for the dead, goes back to the thirteenth century, and was composed by a certain Thomas of Celano. It is written in rhyming three-line stanzas, giving a vivid description of the General Judgment, the sounding of the Angel's trumpet, the resurrection of the dead, and the gathering of all mankind before the tribunal of the Judge; and it ends with a prayer for the eternal rest of the departed.

The *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, the hymn to the Holy Ghost, is usually sung in our churches before the sermon, to invoke the aid and blessing of the Spirit of Wisdom. It is also used in the Mass and Office of Pentecost. By some it is attributed to Charlemagne, but it is more probably the work of St. Gregory the Great.

On Holy Saturday, at the blessing of the paschal candle, the *Exsultet* is sung—a long unrhymed hymn of praise and prayer. It is ascribed by some to St. Augustine, but is probably of somewhat later date.

The *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, used in the Mass of Corpus Christi, is the work of the great St. Thomas Aquinas. He was a master of Latinity, as of nearly every other branch of knowledge. His hymns in honor of the Blessed Sacrament are unsurpassed in poetic beauty. In stanzas of faultless rhythm and rhyme they give a clear statement of the Church's teaching regarding the Real Presence, combined with a spirit of prayerful devotion worthy of their saintly author.

**St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure.** There is a story connected with the composing of these hymns in honor of the Blessed Sacrament. When Urban IV established the office and festival of Corpus Christi in 1264, he directed St. Thomas, a Dominican, and St. Bonaventure, a Franciscan, to prepare appropriate words for the Church's ritual. When the task had been completed the two Doctors of the Church appeared before the Pontiff to submit the result of their labors. St. Thomas was requested to read his composition; and as the holy Bonaventure listened to the exquisite cadences of the *Pange, Lingua* and the *Lauda, Sion*, he quietly tore his own manuscript into small pieces; and when the Dominican had finished and the Franciscan was called upon, he replied with saintly humility that his hymns were unworthy to be compared with those which had just been read.

The beautiful *Adeste Fideles*, so familiar to us at the Christmas season, is not of ancient origin. It is probably of French or German authorship, and was first used in London in the chapel of the Portuguese Legation in 1797.

**Our English Hymns.** For a long time there was a very poor selection of Catholic hymns in our own language. Few of them possessed any artistic merit and many of them were decidedly bad in wording and music. Through the growing influence of the norms laid down by St. Pius X, a much improved type of Catholic hymnal is gradually filling a great need.

An excellent English hymn is "Lead Kindly Light" written by John Henry Newman, afterward Cardinal, before his conversion to Catholicism. It is sung more in Protestant churches than in our own. In beautiful and mystical language it expresses his seeking for the light of truth which shone so radiantly into his soul a few years later. The hymn "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name" is a free translation of the *Te Deum*. It was composed by the Rev. Clarence Walworth before his conversion, and first appeared in a Protestant hymnal in 1853. Its sonorous chords are well suited to male voices, and it is com-

monly sung at the meetings and services of Holy Name societies and as the closing hymn of many large religious gatherings.

## 10. PILGRIMAGES

The old Tabard Inn and Chaucer's motley band of travelers—old-world shrines with glowing lamps and throngs of pious worshippers—plodding wayfarers on lonely roads, "with scrip and staff and sandal shoon"—princes and "knights of high degree" journeying in beggar guise to Eastern lands to kneel at the Saviour's sepulchre—such are the visions that rise before us when we speak of pilgrims and pilgrimages.

The pious practice of making journeys to distant shrines, of arousing or increasing devotion by visiting a holy place, is by no means exclusively Catholic. It has its origin in the fact that religious impressions naturally become stronger in the places that have been hallowed by religious events. We know that mere change of scene has a stimulating effect on the mind of man; and that when the place visited is one of historic interest, it brings before the mind, more vividly than would a printed page, the events that have made it famous. What is true of merely natural impressions is even more true of those that are religious and devotional. To behold with our own eyes the very places that were once sanctified by the living presence of our Blessed Saviour; to kneel at the shrines that were the scenes of apparitions of the Blessed Mother of God; to join in the prayers of assembled thousands, of every rank and condition, from the remotest parts of the earth—all this is full of inspiration for the pious mind; all this fills the soul with a religious fervor and exaltation that could hardly be attained elsewhere.

**The Shrines of Other Creeds.** In nearly every form of religion it has been found that journeys to supposedly holy places are a very potent help to devotion. The place where the god or the hero had lived or had wrought some mighty

deed, or where wonders were supposed to be vouchsafed in answer to prayer, became the goal of pious worshippers.

The Jewish law imposed upon the heads of families as an obligation a pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the celebration of certain great festivals. The Romans had their shrines of Jupiter Capitolinus at Rome, of Apollo at Delphi, of Diana at Ephesus. To visit Mecca at least once in his lifetime is the ambition of the pious Mussulman. The great temples of India have their countless throngs of worshippers who have come to offer their homage to the Hindoo gods or to pray at the shrines of Buddha.

In encouraging the making of pilgrimages, then, our Church has made use of a practice which has produced good results in other creeds. In all her history pious pilgrims have journeyed to distant shrines. The early Christians longed to see the cave of Bethlehem and the grotto of the sepulchre; and almost from the time of our Lord's ascension they came in endless procession to Palestine, even from the outposts of Christendom. A pilgrimage to the Holy Places was often the fulfilment of a vow, and sometimes the performing of an imposed penance. And as the centuries rolled on, places of devotion were multiplied in every Christian country. Scenes of apparitions, hermitages of saints, churches which possessed the treasured relics of apostles and martyrs—everywhere these became the centres of pilgrimages. And, in answer to the fervor and faith of those who prayed at these shrines, God's mercy and power were undoubtedly manifested in many miracles.

**The Results of Pilgrimages.** Important natural benefits have also resulted from the wanderings of the pious pilgrims of the Middle Ages. A knowledge of geography and languages, an increase of commerce, the spreading of religion and science, and the founding of certain religious orders were the results of this intercommunication of men from all parts of Europe; and the desire of being able to visit Palestine unmolested by Moslem hordes was one of the principal motives

for the Crusades. The humble pilgrim who vowed a journey to the Holy Sepulchre was the forerunner of the lordly knight who set lance in rest that the sacred places of Christendom might be freed from Paynim rule.

In the Middle Ages the practice of going on pilgrimages became so common that it grew at times into an abuse. Thousands of pilgrims hastened from country to country, neglecting their duties to home and family—duties which, if fulfilled, would be, doubtless, far more profitable to their souls than prayers offered at this shrine or that. The author of the *Imitation of Christ* declares: "Who wanders much is little halloed." Long before, the great St. John Chrysostom had not hesitated to say that "there is need for none to cross the sea or fare upon a long journey; let each of us at home invoke God earnestly, and He will hear our prayers"; and St. Jerome, speaking of the pilgrimages to the Holy Places, gave utterance to a phrase that has become a proverb: "From Jerusalem and from Britain heaven is equally open."

**Recommended by the Church.** But this does not mean that pilgrimages are in themselves useless. If abuses be guarded against, our holy Church favors and recommends them. She looks upon them as an excellent means of devotion and penance, and of consequent purification and spiritual benefit; and even in this material age the making of a pilgrimage, as an expression of faith and religious zeal, has by no means fallen into disuse.

Does the Church ever require us to make pilgrimages? Not at the present day; for she looks upon them as being in no way necessary, though sometimes advisable. God is everywhere, and He is not to be sought exclusively in one place; His mercy and love, in answer to our prayers, may be manifested in our own homes and churches as benignly as at Lourdes or St. Anne de Beaupré. But nevertheless, our Church approves and recommends pilgrimages as a useful means of devotion, because she recognizes the fact that God has often granted and still grants favors in the form of graces, miracles and



worldly blessings at particular places, as a reward for the perseverance and fervor of those who have journeyed thither, and as an aid in increasing the devotion of the faithful to our Blessed Lord, to His Virgin Mother, and to His servants who are specially honored at certain shrines.

**Holy Year of Jubilee.** Every twenty-five years since 1450, with few exceptions, the popes have proclaimed the Holy Year of Jubilee. Special and extraordinary indulgences are granted to all the faithful who meet the prescribed conditions of confession, communion and prayers for the pope's intentions at the Basilicas of St. Peter, St. Paul, the Lateran and St. Mary Major in Rome. Practically all other indulgences for the living are suspended in the Holy Year.

The spirit of the pilgrims of old is still the ideal as proposed by Pope Pius XII in proclaiming the Holy Year of 1950: "And now, beloved children, there remains but to invite you, with paternal affection, to come to Rome in throngs during the Jubilee Year of expiation; we invite you to Rome which is a kind of second fatherland to the faithful of Christ in every nation. Here they may venerate the places where the Prince of the Apostles was buried after his martyrdom. Here they may see the sacred catacombs of the martyrs, the historic churches, the monuments of their faith and age-old piety. Here they may visit their Common Father, who awaits their coming with open arms and tenderly affectionate heart."

**Some Shrines of Pilgrimage.** While it will not be possible here to make any extended reference to the various pilgrim-shrines of the world, we can at least mention a few of the most famous. The land hallowed by the life and death of our Blessed Lord has always been pre-eminently the Holy Land for all Christians. And, next to the sacred places of Palestine, the Vatican hill where "the vast and wondrous dome" marks the spot where rests the body of the Prince of the Apostles, has long been the goal of pilgrim devotion. In many parts of the earth, in the New World as well as the Old, are churches erected in honor of the Blessed Mother of God, which have

become centres of devotion; for example, La Salette in France, Guadalupe in Spain, the Mexican shrine of the same name, and, greatest of all, Lourdes—where a million visitors journey every year to pay their homage to Mary Immaculate and to profit by her intercession. And other saints have been honored as well by the zeal of devout pilgrims. England cherishes the memory of the martyred Becket at Canterbury; Spain has its shrine of St. James the Apostle at Compostella; Ireland has its St. Patrick's Purgatory in bleak Donegal. In our own country a pilgrim-shrine has been established at Auriesville, New York, where three heroic Jesuits were tortured and slain by the savage Mohawks. Canada has its famous Beaupré, where the intercession of "la bonne Sainte Anne" is sought by thousands; and in several places that are nearer to us the votaries of the gracious mother of the Virgin seek alleviation of suffering by offering prayers before her altar.

We see, then, that the old simple Catholic faith is as strong now as it was in those dim days of long ago when in their thousands, along the roads of Europe or over the stormy seas to Palestine, the pious pilgrims journeyed, filled with an ardent desire to see the places hallowed by the Saviour, to kneel at sacred shrines, to offer their fatigue and sufferings as an expiation for their sins, and to secure the mercy of God and the intercession of the saints by fervent prayer.

## 11. INDULGENCES

The Catholic doctrine and practice of Indulgences deserve and need a thorough explanation. Few points in our religion are so little understood. Many of the devotions performed by the faithful have been enriched by the Church with these spiritual favors; we find that certain prayers or pious works procure an indulgence of forty days, or seven years, or in some cases a plenary indulgence—and a large proportion of Catholics will fulfill the prescribed conditions and gain the indulgence without having a very clear idea of what they are gaining.

There is no Catholic teaching which has been so persistently misrepresented by non-Catholic writers. The average essayist who attempts to treat of the events which led up to the so-called Reformation generally assails this matter of indulgences with much vehemence. According to such authorities, the strenuous and whole-souled Luther rose in his might against papal decrees which gave a full forgiveness of sin to those who paid for it. The indulgences granted by Leo X were even, they say, "a license to commit sin." The Roman power in the sixteenth century is alleged to have been so degraded that it publicly proclaimed that the giving of money for the building of St. Peter's Church would ensure "the pardon of all past sins and the condoning of all future offences," no matter how grievous they might be. Such are the statements gravely set forth by "historians"—and every word of them is a falsehood.

**The Meaning of an Indulgence.** What is an indulgence? It is *not* a forgiving of sins already committed. It is *not* a license or permission to commit sin, nor a pardon for sins that may be committed in the future. It is *not* a pardon for sin at all.

It is a remission of the punishment which is still due to sin after its guilt has been taken away by the sacrament of Penance. This remission is made by applying to the repentant sinner's soul the "treasure of merit" which the Church possesses.

Now this definition requires some explanation, and of an accurate kind; for the matter is somewhat abstruse, and misunderstanding is easy.

An indulgence never forgives sin. The guilt and the eternal punishment of sin must be taken away by other means, chiefly by the sacraments of baptism and penance; and, as we know, these cannot be of any avail to the soul in actual sin unless it is aroused to sincere and supernatural sorrow and a firm purpose of amendment. Before an indulgence can be gained, the soul must be free from mortal sin; that is, the guilt must be washed away and the eternal penalty which is deserved must be remitted—and until this is done there can be no question of an indulgence.

An indulgence cannot give a permission for future sins. The very thought of any such license is abominable and blasphemous. The Church strives to overcome evil, to inculcate virtue; and if she should countenance or connive at vice in any form she would be an agent of the devil, not the "mystical Body of Christ."

We see, then, that an indulgence cannot be "an encouragement to sin," or "a license or permission to sin," as some of our non-Catholic critics have asserted. It is rather a very salutary and powerful motive to repentance and to virtue.

**Temporal Punishment.** An indulgence takes away temporal punishment. The teaching of our faith is that after God through His Church's sacraments has forgiven our sins, after the eternal punishment has been remitted, a temporal punishment often remains. It does not remain after sins have been remitted through baptism; this first of the sacraments annuls both guilt and penalty entirely. If a sinner received baptism validly and worthily, and died before sinning again, there would be for him no Purgatory, no delay in entering Heaven.

But the forgiveness imparted in the sacrament of penance is less efficacious. After the guilt of mortal sin has been washed away by it, although there is no longer any fear of eternal punishment for the sins forgiven, there may remain a temporal penalty which (unless it be remitted) must be expiated before Heaven can be attained. It may be worked out wholly or partially in this world—by penances, mortifications, devotions, alms-deeds and other good works. If it remains on the soul at death it necessitates a stay in Purgatory—how long, in any particular case, we do not know; or it may be remitted by the Church through indulgences—and this remission may be accomplished while we are living in this world, or (through the charity of others) after we have been sentenced by Divine Justice to purgatorial pains.

**The Treasury of Merit.** When the Catholic Church grants indulgences, she is able to do so because she has access to an infinite store of merit, gained by our Blessed Saviour and the

saints. Our Redeemer's merits were sufficient, of course, to satisfy for all guilt and all penalty due to sin; His Church dispenses them to us. The Blessed Virgin Mary lived a life of perfect holiness; she did not need the abundant merits which she acquired, for she had no sins to atone for—and the Church can use her merits also for us. Many of the saints (not only the great and famous ones, but the multitudes concerning whose names or histories we know nothing) acquired far more merit before God than was needed for their own salvation. Now these merits have not ceased to exist. They are not lost. They are stored up, as it were, by Almighty God, and the Church makes use of them for those who need them, since those who gained them do not require them—just as if in some Utopian commonwealth all the surplus wealth of the successful citizens should be set apart for the poor and needy, and portioned out to them according to their necessities.

**Two Kinds of Indulgences.** Indulgences may be either *plenary* (Latin *plenus*, full, entire), which remit all the temporal punishment; or *partial*, which take away only a part of it. For the gaining of a plenary indulgence especially, it is necessary that it should be proclaimed by the Church and that the required conditions be fulfilled—one of these being the detestation of all sin and the purpose of avoiding even the least venial sin. Thus we can seldom be certain that we have gained the whole of a plenary indulgence, as we cannot usually be sure that we have thoroughly complied with these conditions. A plenary indulgence is understood to be granted so that if a person should be unable to gain it fully, he will nevertheless gain it partially, in keeping with his dispositions.

**Who Can Grant Indulgences?** The Pope, in virtue of the supreme authority vested in him by the words of Christ to St. Peter: "And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16, 19-20). Other prelates of the Church have a very limited authority to grant partial indulgences.

**How Indulgences Are Granted.** A person desiring to obtain any indulgence must, of course, be a member of the Church. He must perform the work enjoined exactly as it is prescribed. He must be in the state of grace at least before he finishes that work. He must have at least a general intention of gaining the indulgence. The conditions ordinarily prescribed for gaining a plenary indulgence and designated by the familiar phrase "under the usual conditions" are the following: confession, communion, a visit to a church or public or semi-public oratory, and prayer for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff.

The phrase "prayer for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff" is readily fulfilled by adding to the other prescribed works the recitation of one Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father—or any other prayer in keeping with each one's affection and devotion towards the Roman Pontiff. (*Raccolta*, footnote Page xv).

**The History of Indulgences.** The present practice of the Church regarding indulgences is the evolution of twenty centuries. Changes have been introduced, but they are changes of circumstances, not of principles.

In primitive times the discipline of the Church towards sinners was very severe. Heavy penalties, known as canonical penances, were exacted for grave sins; but if the penitent manifested extraordinary signs of contrition, these penalties were shortened and lessened, and this was done especially when persecutions were going on. It frequently happened in those days that thousands of Christians were in prison, suffering much and awaiting death. Their martyrdom was sure to effect their eternal salvation. They often wrote to the Pope or bishops a "letter of peace," offering their merits and sufferings as a substitute for the canonical penances demanded of some other Christians who were being disciplined for sins. The penalties imposed upon these latter were then remitted, and they were not only restored to full membership in the Church, but they received remission of their temporal punish-

ment in the sight of God. St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, tells us: "God can set down to the sinner's account whatever the martyrs have asked and the bishops have done for them."

Later on, as the law of canonical penances was made less rigorous, the Church often allowed a lesser work in place of a greater. Alms to the poor, the endowing of churches and monasteries, pilgrimages to holy places, and even short prayers—all of these were considered equivalent to many days or even years of severe penance; and here we find the reason why indulgences are entitled "of forty days," "of one year," etc. These words do not imply, as some might think, that by a certain prayer or good work we take away forty days or a year of Purgatory for ourselves or another. They mean that we get as much benefit (for ourselves or for a soul in Purgatory) as we would if we performed the severe canonical penances of former times for forty days or one year.

Plenary indulgences seem to have been granted only from about the eleventh century, and they were probably first given to the Crusaders. Pope Urban II decreed that "their journey would take the place of all penance," and later Pontiffs gave similar spiritual privileges to those who went to fight for the Holy Sepulchre or gave money for these expeditions.

From that epoch the history of indulgences becomes better known. They were given very freely by many Popes and for various reasons—for the dedication of churches, the canonization of saints, etc. Later on, certain great and popular devotions were enriched with indulgences, so that now they are attached to almost every pious practice. Even articles of devotion, such as crucifixes, medals, etc., may have these spiritual benefits annexed to them, for the advantage of the faithful who use them devoutly.

**Indulgences for the Souls.** The application of indulgences to departed souls which are in a state of penitential suffering is of rather ancient date. We find a mention of it in the ninth century, when Popes Pascal I and John VIII bestowed such indulgences on the souls of those who had died in defence of

the Church or Christian civilization; and in succeeding ages it became customary to proclaim nearly all indulgences as applicable not only to the living person who performed the prescribed work, but also to such departed ones as he wished to aid.

How does the Church possess such power? These souls in Purgatory are no longer subjects of the Church on earth; how, then, can she legislate in their favor? The answer is not difficult. She has no actual power over these souls. She cannot help them directly nor by any lawmaking authority. She only entreats God to accept the superabundant merits of Christ and His saints, and to dispense these merits for the entire or partial relief of those who are in Purgatory. She leaves the giving of these merits to God, trusting to His infinite mercy for the relief of His friends who are suffering in penitential fires.

This beautiful doctrine and practice of our Church shows us the loving maternal spirit which animates her. Penance is necessary for us, her children; for even when God's mercy has extended forgiveness to us, we still have reparation to make and a penalty to pay. But the Church wishes to make our penalty small, and she can do so because we are members of a great spiritual society which not only has been heaping up a vast treasure of merit for nearly two thousand years, but has access also to the infinite merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are a part of the great corporation which controls that spiritual treasure; and as we are needy, as we ourselves deserve little from God's hands except punishment, the Church gives us a share in this accumulated merit. And even after our earthly life is over, if we need God's mercy, we receive it by the prayers of His Church, of which we shall still be members. He will lessen or totally remit our deserved punishment because of the indulgences gained for us by those who are still on earth and still able to merit.



# Index

## A

- Abbatial church, 143  
Abbot, kinds of, 18  
Ablegate, 14  
Ablutions, 130  
Absolution: confessional, 60; papal power of giving, 5; priest's power of giving, 82; Requiem Mass, 159; ritual of administration, 313  
Abstinence, 194-197, days of, 198  
Abyssinian Catholic liturgy, 182  
Acolyte, Order of, 75; wearing of surplice, 238  
Acts (devotions), 356  
Acts of the Apostles: ref. to confirmation, 52  
*Adeste Fideles* (hymn), 369  
*Ad limina* visit, 16  
Adoption: impediment to marriage, 95  
Adoration of the Cross, 213  
Adoration to God, 329  
*Adoro Te Devote* (hymn), 367  
Advent, 199-203; beginning of liturgical year, 183; colors of vestments, 233; Sundays of, 183  
Advocate of the Cause (Vatican official), 335  
Affairs of Religious Orders, Congregation of, 13  
Affinity: marriage impediment, 96  
Agnus Dei (sacramental), 271-275; history of, 272  
*Agnus dei*, (prayer at Mass) 127; church music, 166  
Aisle, 146  
Alacoque, St. Margaret Mary, 323  
Alb, 235  
Alexian Brothers, 30  
Alleluia, 115  
All Saints Day (All Hallows), 191; holyday of obligation, 188  
All Souls Day, 191  
*Alma Redemptoris Mater* (anthem), 367  
Alpha (symbol), 301  
Alpha Omega (symbol): 299 *illus.*  
Altar: consecration of, 150; crucifix over, 225; equipment for Mass, 134 *illus.*; incensing of, 153; in early church, 142; in modern liturgical art, 147; relics in, 151; requisites for Mass, 132; vestments, 237 *illus.*; water of consecration, 228  
Altar bell, 123; 136; 279 *illus.*  
Altar-boy: wearing of surplice, 238  
Altar cards, 134 *illus.*; 136  
Altar cloth, 133  
Altar-stone, 132; engraved cross, 225; relics in, 346; water of consecration, 228  
A. M. (symbol), 301  
Ambo, 172

- Ambrose, St.: antiphonal chanting, 366; Ambrosian chant, 168; congregational singing, 171
- Ambry, 147 *illus.*; 252
- A. M. D. G. (symbol), 301
- Amen, 125
- Amice, 234
- Amulet, 272
- Anchor (symbol), 300
- Anchorites, 23
- Angel: veneration of images, 338
- Angelic Hymn: *see* Gloria
- Angelus, Ringing of the, 285
- Animals: as symbols, 297
- Anniversary Mass, 158
- Annunciation, Feast of, 189
- Anointing: of altar, 153; Baptism, 44; Confirmation, 53; Extreme Unction, 64; Holy oils, 247; ordination of priest, 81
- Antependium, 134
- Anthony the Hermit, St., 23
- Antiphonal chanting, 366
- Antiphonarium (book), 304
- Apostles' Creed, 354; in recitation of Rosary, 260
- Apostleship of Prayer (Cath. soc.), 36
- Apostolate, 21; of laity, 30-40
- Apostolic blessing: given to the dying, 68
- Apostolic Camera, 13
- Apostolic Chancery, 14
- Apostolic Delegate, 14
- Apostolic Legate, 14
- Apostolic Protonotary (title), 17
- Apostolic See: *see* Holy See
- Apostolic Vicar, 14
- Apostolic vicariates, 10
- Apse, 146; in early church, 142
- Aquinas, St. Thomas: *see* Thomas Aquinas, St.
- Arabic (lang.): use in Catholic liturgy, 180
- Arch: round, 144; in American churches, 146
- Archbishop, 15; insignia, 15; 10 *illus.*; vestment of, 241 *illus.*
- Archconfraternity of Perpetual Adoration (Cath. Soc.), 34
- Archiepiscopal cross, 224
- Architecture, Church: *see* Church architecture
- Architrave, 146
- Arezzo, Guido d' (musician), 168
- Armenian liturgy, 179; language used in, 181
- Ascension, Feast of, 90; Thursday of Ascension, 188
- Asceticism, 22
- Ashes, 294-296; church consecration, 150; obtained from burning of palms, 278
- Ash Wednesday, 294
- Asperges* (ceremony), 227; mystical meaning, 230; use of cope, 238
- Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, Dogma of the, 191; feast of, 188; history of feast, 191
- Athanasius, St., 25
- Augustinian Order, 26; rule, 25
- Auricular confession, 59
- Auriesville, N. Y. (shrine), 374
- Authorized Version (of Bible), 321
- Auxiliary bishop, 16
- Auxiliary societies, 32
- Ave Maria (symbol), 299 *illus.*
- Ave, Maris Stella* (hymn), 368
- Ave, Regina Coelorum* (hymn), 367

## B

- Baldacchino*: *see* *Ciborium*
- Ballot: in papal election, 7
- Balsam: chrism, 53; mixing in the oil, 251; use in the chrism, 249
- Baltimore, Plenary Council of (1866), 172
- Banner (symbol), 300
- Banns, Publication of, 98

- Baptism, 41-50; baptismal water, 228; oil of catechumens, 248; ritual of administration, 313; sponsors, 46; 95
- Baptismal font: blessing on Holy Saturday, 215; Easter water, 228; 62 *illus.*
- Baptismal water, 228; blessing on Holy Saturday, 215; oil of catechumens, 248
- Baptistery, 142
- Basil, St., 25
- Basilica, 143
- Bay (arch.), 146
- Beads of the Blessed Sacrament, 262
- Beads of the Five Wounds, 261
- Beatification, 332; as first step to canonization, 334
- Beaupré (shrine, Canada), 374
- Bell, altar: *see* Altar-bell
- Bell, Church: *see* Church bell
- Benedict, St., 25
- Benedict XV (Pope): reformed Missal, 306
- Benedictine medal, 292
- Benedictine Order, 28; monk's dress, 24 *illus.*
- Benedictine rule, 28; monasticism, 25; ritual, 177
- Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, 350
- Benedictus*, 160
- Bethlehem, Stable of, 207
- Bible, 317-321; American editions, 320; Douay version, 319; translations of, 317
- Biretta*, 234; priest wearing, 24 *illus.*
- Bishops, 15-20; altar consecration, 152; blessing of church bells, 288; blessing of Holy oils, 247, 251; celebration of three Christmas Masses, 207; church consecration, 148; Confirmation, 52, 55; election of, 16; papal election, 6; Secretary of, 19; tonsure ceremonies, 71; vestments of, 239, 241 *illus.*
- Bishops and regulars, Congregation of, 13
- Black Protonotaries, 18
- Blessed (title), 334
- Blessed Lady, Purification of Our (feast): *see* Purification of Our Blessed Lady
- Blessed Sacrament: *see* Eucharist
- Blessed Sacrament, Beads of the, 261
- Blessed Virgin: *see* Mary, the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God
- Blessed Virgin, Litany of the, 362
- Blessed Virgin, Mass of the, 111
- Blessing, 312; after childbirth, 102-105; before meals, 357; dismissal from Mass, 131; for the dying, 68; kinds described in Ritual, 314; nuptial, 92; of Agnus Dei, 273; of altar, 151; of ashes, 296; of baptismal water, 215; of bells, 249, 288; of building, 315; of candles, 254; of chalice and paten, 137; of food and drink, 316; of Holy oils, 247, 251; of Holy water, 228; of houses on Holy Saturday, 229; of living things, 315; of palms, 276; of paschal candle, 215; of sacred vessels, 140; of scapular medals, 265; of wedding ring, 90; at ordination, 82; uses of holy water in, 230
- Bonaventure, St., 369
- Books, Censor of (diocesan), 19
- Borromeo, St. Charles: Church music, 169; Forty Hours Adoration, 348
- Bracket (arch.), 146
- Bread: kind used in Mass, 118; *see also* Eucharist
- Bread and wine: *see* Eucharist
- Breaking of the Host, 127

- Breviary, 308-312; canticles contained in, 366; hymns contained in, 367  
*Brevis* (mus.), 168  
 Briggittine beads, 261  
 Broad stole (vestment), 239  
 Brothers, Societies of, 30  
 Brothers of Christian Schools, 30  
 Brothers of Mary, 30  
 Brown Scapular: benefits of the, 268; investing in the, 267  
 Bull of Canonization, 336  
 Burse, 138; 134, 139 *illus.*  
 Burial shroud (of Jesus Christ), 223  
 Burial society, 142  
 Buttress (arch.), 145  
 Byzantine church architecture, 144  
 Byzantine rite, 179
- C
- Cabrini, St. Frances Xavier, 337  
 Calendar, liturgical, 183-187; Gregorian, 186  
 Camera, Apostolic; 13  
 Candles, 253-257; altar equipment, 135; blessing of, 254; use of, 255; Tenebrae ceremonies, 211; as symbol, 300  
 Candlemas: *see* Purification of the Blessed Virgin, Festival of the Canonical hour, 310;  
 Canonical penance, 378  
 Canonization, 332-337; Bull of, 336  
 Canon Law, 19; marriage impediments, 94; marriage without a priest, 101  
 Canon of the Mass, 120  
 Canticle, 366; Old Testament, 365  
 Cap: biretta, 234, 24 *illus.*; mitre, 240; *zucchetto*, 242  
 Capital (arch.) 144  
 Capitular Mass, 111  
 Cappa: Dominican nun, 24 *illus.* *Cappa magna*, 242  
 Cardinal, 11-14; apostolic legates, 14; insignia, 10 *illus.*; papal election, 6  
 Cardinal Bishop, 12; papal election, 6  
 Cardinal Deacon, 12  
 Cardinal Priest, 12  
 Cardinals, College of, 7; membership, 12  
 Cards, Altar: *see* altar cards  
 Carmelites, Order of, 26; and the Brown Scapular, 265-268; rite, 179; Third Orders, 29  
 Carthusian monks, 28  
 Cassock: cleric's garb, 234; worn by bishop, 241 *illus.*; worn by priest, 24 *illus.*, 237 *illus.*  
 Catacombs, 142; saints' relics, 152; use of symbols in, 297  
 Catafalque, 158  
 Catechumen, 248  
 Catechumens, Mass of the, 112-117  
 Catechumens, Oil of, 44, 248  
 Cathedral, 143  
 Catholic Action, 31  
 Catholic Bible, 317  
 Catholic Central Verein, 34  
 Catholic College Students, National Federation of, 35  
 Catholic Lawyers, Guild of, 35  
 Catholic Men, National Council of, 33  
 Catholic Near East Welfare Association, 34  
 Catholic Students Mission Crusade, 35  
 Catholic Women, National Council of, 33  
 Cecilia, St., 163  
 Celano, Thomas of, 158  
 Celibacy of clergy, 83-88  
 Celtic cross, 223, 224 *illus.*  
 Cemetery, procession to the, 160  
 Censer, 278, 279 *illus.*

- Ceremonial: baptism, 42; blessing after childbirth, 103; blessing of the oils, 251; church consecration, 148; confirmation, 55; Extreme Unction, 64; Holy Orders, 70; investing in the Brown Scapular, 267; marriage, 88, 104; Forty Hours Adoration, 349; Mass, 117; tonsure, 71
- Ceremonies, Congregation of, 13
- Chaldean rite, 179
- Chained Bible, 319
- Chalice, 137, 134 *illus.*, 139 *illus.*; elevation of, 123; in ordination of priest, 81; veil, 138, 139 *illus.*; offering of, 119
- Challoner version (of Bible), 320
- Chamberlains, Papal, 18
- Chancel: *see* Sanctuary
- Chancellor, 19
- Chancery, Apostolic, 14
- Chanted Mass: *see* High Mass
- Chaplain, 20
- Chapel, 141
- Chapter of canons, 111
- Charity: symbolism of chasuble, 236
- Chastity, 84; vow of, 94
- Chasuble, 236; priest ordination, 81; worn by archbishop, 241 *illus.*
- Childbirth, blessing after, 102-105; ritual of administration, 314
- Chimes (of bells), 284
- Chi Rho (symbol), 299 *illus.*
- Choir: church consecration, 148; Church music, 168; in early church, 142
- Choral Chant: *see* Gregorian Chant
- Chrism, 249; baptism, 45; confirmation, 53; mixing of oil and balsam, 251; use in blessing church bells, 289
- Chrisma (symbol), 301
- Christe eleison*, 114
- Christian Brothers, 30
- Christian Doctrine, Confraternity of, 38
- Christian schools, Brothers of, 30
- Christmas, 203-208; feast, 185; forbidden by law in Colonial America, 203; history of, 204; holyday of obligation, 188; meaning of name, 205; number of Masses, 108; preparation during Advent for, 201; vigil, 205
- Christopher, St., medal of, 294
- Church (bldg.), 141-147; consecration of, 148-154; cross in art, 224; kinds of, 143; relics in, 346; requisites for Mass, 132; sanctuary, 147 *illus.*; Stations of the Cross, 243; symbols in art of, 296; water for consecration of, 228
- Church and state: marriage laws, 94
- Church architecture, 143; Gothic, 144; Roman, 144
- Church bell, 282-290; blessing of, 288; *De Profundis* bell, 288
- Churching: *See* Childbirth, Blessing after
- Church law: clerical celibacy, 85; impediments to marriage, 94; marriage, 93-101
- Church music, 161-173; Jewish worship, 162
- Church vessels, 132; 139 *illus.*; chalice, 137; cruets, 279; censer, 279; Holy water vessel, 279; incense boat, 279; monstrance, 138; on credence table, 135; paten, 137, 279; pyx, 140; ciborium, 138; luna, 140; touching of, 140
- Church year: *see* liturgical year
- Ciborium* (arch.), 146
- Ciborium* (vessel), 138, 139 *illus.*
- Cincture, 235

- Circumcision (of Jesus Christ) (feast), 189
- Cistercians, 28; rite, 177
- Clement XII (Pope): Forty Hours Adoration, 348
- Clementine Instruction, 348
- Clergy, 3; celibacy, 83-88; Holy Orders, 69-83; members, 71; parish, 20; vestments, 231
- Clerestory, 146
- Clerical dress, 24 *illus.*
- Clerical tonsure, 71
- Cloister, 147
- Closed times, Law of (marriage), 91
- Coadjutor, 16
- Coffer (arch.), 146
- Collation, 196
- Collects, 115
- College of Cardinals: *see* Cardinals, College of
- Collegiate church, 143
- Color, liturgical, *see* Liturgical colors
- Column: in American churches, 145; in Gothic architecture, 144; in Grecian architecture, 143
- Commendation of a Soul Departing: (litany), 361
- Common of Saints, 307
- Communion of Saints, 328, 329
- Communion paten: *see* Paten
- Communion: *see* Holy Communion
- Compline, 311
- Compostella (shrine, Spain), 374
- Conclave, 7
- Confession, 57-63; absolution, 60; condition for gaining plenary indulgence, 378; of sick person, 67
- Confessional, 62
- Confessor (title), 334
- Confirmation, 50-57; Holy chrism, 249; sponsor, 54
- Confiteor*, 355-356; at Mass, 129; Extreme unction, 67
- Confraternities, 34; Scapulars, 264; Servites, 270; *see also* under specific name as Immaculate Conception, Confraternity of the, etc.
- Confraternity of the Most Holy Name of God and Jesus, 35
- Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, 34; revision (of Bible), 320
- Congregation singing, 171
- Congregations, Religious, 29
- Congregations, Roman, 13; duties of, 12; *see also* under specific name of Congregations as Consistorial Congregation, etc.
- Conopaeum, 133
- Consanguinity: impediment to marriage, 95
- Consecrated altar, 132
- Consecrated oils: *see* Holy oils
- Consecration (at Mass), 122; described in Ritual, 314; of altar, 150; of church, 148; of oils, 250; of chalice and paten, 137; of holy chrism, 249; water of, 228
- Consent (in marriage ceremony) 89; 97
- Consistorial congregation, 13
- Consistories, papal, 12
- Consultor, 19
- Contrition: in confession, 59; for indulgence, 378
- Contrition, Act of, 357
- Conventual Mass, 111
- Cope, 238; worn by priest, 237 *illus.*
- Coptic rite: language, 179; liturgy, 181
- Corbel (arch.), 146
- Cornice (arch.), 146
- Coronation, Papal, 8
- Coronation, Mass of, 8
- Corporal, 138, 139 *illus.*
- Corpus Christi (feast), 190; established, 347; holyday of obligation, 188
- Council, Congregation of the, 13

- Cowl: Franciscan frier, 24 *illus.*  
 Credence table, 135, 147 *illus.*  
 Credo, 166  
 Creed: at Mass, 117  
 Crib: in churches for Christmas, 207  
 Crime: marriage impediment, 96  
 Cross: Adoration of the, 213; archiepiscopal, 15; as an emblem, 220; church consecration, 153; finding of the True Cross, 221; forms of, 223; pectoral cross, 242; symbolism of the, 220; types of, 224 *illus.*; veneration of images, 338  
 Cross, Sign of the: *see* Sign of the Cross  
 Cross, Stations of the: *see* Stations of the Cross  
 Crossed keys (symbol), 301  
 Crown: as emblem of power, 299; papal, 9  
 Crown of our Saviour (beads), 261  
 Crown of thorns: preserved in Paris, 223  
 Crozier, 240; worn by archbishop, 241 *illus.*  
 Crucifix, 225, 224 *illus.*; altar equipment, 135; defined, 220; table prepared for Extreme unction, 66 *illus.*; unveiling on Good Friday, 213  
 Crucifixion, 220  
 Cruets, 279 *illus.*  
*Crux capitata*: *see* Latin cross  
 Crypt, 147  
 Curate, 20
- D
- Daily Missal, 303  
 Daily Prayers, 351-358; Apostles' Creed, 354; Confiteor, 355; Hail Mary, 353; Our Father, 352; the Acts, 356  
 Dalmatians: Slavonic liturgy, 179  
 Dalmatic, 239; worn by deacon, 237 *illus.*  
 Datary (congregation), 13  
 David, Psalms of, 365; in the breviary, 311  
 Days of fast and abstinence, 198  
 Deacon, 77; church consecration, 149; diagonal stole special badge of, 236; singing of the Gospel, 116; wearing of broad stole, 239; wearing of dalmatic, 239; wearing vestments, 237 *illus.*  
 Dead, Indulgences for the, 379  
 Dead, Prayers for the: in the Missal, 307; Mass, 124; Requiem Mass, 154; ritual, 314  
 Deans, Board of, 19  
 Decree, Papal: *see* Papal decree  
 Dedication (of a church), 148  
 Defensor Vinculi, 19  
 Delegate, Apostolic, 14  
*Deo Gratias*, 131  
*De profundis*, 160; bell, 288  
 Destroying impediments: *see* diriment, impediments  
 Devotions, 322-380; Angelus, 285; daily prayer, 351-358; of First Fridays, 326; of First Saturdays, 327; Forty Hours Adoration, 346; indulgence, 374-380; invocation of saints, 327; litany, 358; pilgrimage, 370; Rosary, 257; Stations of the Cross, 243; to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, 327; to the Sacred Heart, 322; veneration of relics, 342  
 Dialogue Mass, 111  
*Dies Irae* (hymn): Missal, 368; Requiem Mass, 158  
 Difference of worship: marriage impediment, 96  
 Diocesan Attorney, 19  
 Diocesan bishop, 15  
 Diocesan consultor, 19  
 Dioceses, 5; clergy, 15-20; ecclesiastical jurisdiction, 10

- Diocletian, Persecutions by, 142  
 Diriment impediments: marriage, 94; sponsorship, 48  
 Dismissal from Mass, 131  
 Disparitas cultus: marriage impediment, 96  
 Dispensation: from marriage impediments, 95  
 Divorce, 94  
 Dome, 146  
 Domestic prelate (title), 17  
 Dominic, St.: Mendicant Order, 25; Rosary legend, 257  
 Dominical cycle: *see* Temporal cycle  
 Dominican Order, 26; nun's dress, 24 *illus.*; rite, 178; Third Order, 29  
*Dominus vobiscum*, 117  
 Donegal (shrine, Ireland), 374  
 Douay Bible, 319  
 Doublebarred cross, 15  
 Dove (symbol), 298  
 Dragon (symbol), 298  
 Drinking water: table prepared for Extreme unction, 66 *illus.*  
 Dying, Litany of the, 361
- E
- Eagle (symbol), 302  
 Early Christian Church: architecture, 142; exorcist, duties of, 74; music, 162; sign of the fish, 300; use of Greek language, 174; use of symbols, 297  
 Easter, 184; history of feast, 189  
 Eastern Orthodox Church, 177-182; church bell, 283; church consecration, 150; confession, 57; Julian Calendar, 187; married priests, 84, 86; veneration of images, 340  
 Easter water, 228  
 Ecclesiastical jurisdictions, 10  
 Ecclesiastical Tribunals, 13  
 Ecclesiastical vestments: *see* Vestments  
 Ecclesiastical year: *see* Liturgical year  
 Election: of Bishops, 17; of Pope, 6  
 Elective monarchy, 6  
 Elevation (at Mass), 122; ringing of tower bell, 288; use of incense at, 281  
 Ember Days, 198  
 Emblematic monogram (symbol), 301  
 Encyclical, 11  
 Entablature, 146  
 Ephpheta (ceremony), 44  
 Epiphany, 185; history of feast, 189; holyday of obligation, 188  
 Episcopal ring, 240  
 Episcopal vestments, 239, 241 *illus.*  
 Episcopate: *see* Bishop  
 Epistolarium, 304  
 Error in personam (marriage), 97  
 Espousal of the Blessed Virgin, Feast of, 192  
 Essenes, 22  
 Eucharist: 106 ff.; Benediction, 238, 350; Bread and Wine for, 118; ceremonies on Good Friday, 213; vessels pertaining to, 138, 139 *illus.*, 140; Communion at mass, 128; consecration at mass, 122; consecration on Holy Thursday, 212; Corpus Christi celebration, 347; elevation, 122; Forty Hours Adoration, 346; hymns in honor of, 367, 369; in early church, 142; kinds of host, 118, 139 *illus.*; Sanctuary Lamp, 256; tabernacle, 133; wheat and grapes as symbol of, 300  
 Eucharistic Congress, 351  
 Eucharistic fast, 130  
 Evangeliarium, 304  
 Evangelists, Symbols of the, 302



- Examiner (official), 19  
 Examiners, Board of (dioceses), 19  
 Exempt Bishop, 16  
 Exorcism, 43; blessing of holy water, 229; blessing of holy oils, 251; duties of exorcist in early church, 74  
 Exorcist, Order of, 74  
 Expectation of the Blessed Virgin, Feast of, 194  
 Expedition, Offices of, 14  
 Exposition: of the Blessed Sacrament, *see* Forty Hours Adoration; Mass of, 349  
*Exultet* (hymn), 368; blessing of paschal candle, 215  
 Extension Society, 34  
 Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, Congregation for, 13  
 Extreme Unction, 64-69; ritual of administration, 313; table prepared for, 66 *illus.*  
 Extreme youth: marriage impediment, 97
- F**
- Faith, Act of, 357  
 Faithful, Mass of the, 117-132; defined, 112  
 Family Rosary Crusade (Cath. soc.), 34  
 Fasting, 194; days of, 198; during Lent, 185, 209; for Holy Communion, 130; Fridays of Advent, 201  
 Fatima (Portugal): appearances of Our Lady, 327  
 Feasts and Festivals, 187-194; Church year, 184; holydays of obligation, 188; colors of vestment, 233; minor feasts of Mary, 192; of the Sacred Heart, 324  
 Fidejussor: *see* Sponsor  
 Finger-bowl, 279 *illus.*  
 Finial, 145  
 First Fridays, Devotion of the, 326  
 First Saturdays, Devotion of the, 327  
 Fish (symbol), 300  
 Five Scapulars, 269  
 Five Wounds, Beads of the, 261  
 Fixed altar, 132; relics, 346; requisites for Mass, 132  
 Fixed feast: 184, 185  
 Flying buttress, 145  
 Fasting, 194; days of, 198; during Lent, 195, 209; for Holy Communion; *illus.*; rite, 178  
 Friars Minor: *see* Franciscan Order  
 Friars Preachers, Order of, 26  
 Francis of Assisi, St., 25  
 Friday: abstinence, 197  
 Frieze, 146  
 Funeral service: ceremonial, 156; Requiem Mass, 157
- G**
- Gallican rite, 177  
 Gargoyles, 145  
*Gaudete* Sunday, 202  
*Gloria* (cantic): 367; in Mass, 114; church music, 166  
 Gloves (vestment), 242  
 God, Adoration of, 329  
 Godparent: *see* Sponsor  
 Good Friday, 213; black vestment prescribed, 234; *Tenebrae*, 211  
 Goretti, St. Maria: canonization, 336  
 Gospel (*see also* Bible): in Mass, 116, 202; use of incense at, 281; Book of Gospels (Evangeliarium), 304  
 Gothic chasuble, 236  
 Grace, sacramental, 41  
 Grace (prayer), 357  
 Grace, tribunals of, 13  
 Gradual, 115, 304

- Grave, Procession to the, 160  
 Greater Doxology: *see* Gloria  
 Greater Patriarch, 15  
 Grecian architecture, 143  
 Greek (lang.), 174; Uniat Greeks, 179; use in Byzantine rite, 179  
 Greek cross, 223, 224 *illus.*  
 Gregorian Calendar, 186  
 Gregorian chant, 165; notation, 167  
 Gregorian Holy water, 150  
 Gregory the Great, St.: church music, 168; Gregorian chant, 165; Litany of the Saints, 360  
 Gregory XIII (pope): Gregorian Calendar, 186  
 Gremiale, 242  
 Groining, 146  
 Guadalupe (shrine, Mexico), 374  
 Guadalupe (shrine, Spain), 374  
 Guido d'Arezzo (Lt. mus.), 168  
 Guild of Catholic Lawyers, 35
- H
- Hail Mary, 353; origin of, 354; recitation during the Angelus, 285; recitation of Rosary, 260  
 Halo, 301  
*Hanc igitur oblationem*, 122  
 Headed cross: *see* Latin cross  
 Heart of Jesus, Devotion to the: *see* Sacred Heart, Devotion to the:  
 Helena (Byz. Empress): legend of finding of the True Cross, 221; legend of the crucifixion nail, 222  
 Heraldry: insignia, 9, 12, 15, 17; 10 *illus.*  
 Hermits, 23  
 Hermits of Saint Augustine, Order of, 26  
 Hierarchical insignia, 10 *illus.*  
 Hierarchy, 3  
 Hierarchy of Order, 4  
 High Mass, 110; Asperges, 227; number of candles, 135, 255; wearing of broad stole at, 239  
 Hilarion, St., 25  
 Hindering impediments (to marriage), 94  
 Holy Childhood Association, 34  
 Holy chrism: *see* Chrism  
 Holy Communion: at mass, 126, 128; ciborium, 138; condition for gaining plenary indulgence, 378; Confiteor, 356; of priests on Good Friday, 213; on first Friday of each month, 326; paten used for, 279 *illus.*; ritual of administration, 313; *see also* Eucharist  
 Holy Cross, Congregation of the, 29  
 Holydays of obligation, 188  
 Holy Eucharist: *see* Eucharist  
 Holy Ghost: dove as symbol of, 298; hymn to, 368  
 Holy Ghost, Mass of the: 111; color of vestments, 233  
 Holy God, We Praise Thy Name (hymn) 369  
 Holy Mass: *see* Mass  
 Holy Name, Litany of the, 361  
 Holy Name of Jesus (feast), 189  
 Holy Name of Mary (feast), 193  
 Holy Name Society, 35  
 Holy Office, 13  
 Holy oil, 247-253; baptism, 44; blessing of on Holy Thursday, 213; Confirmation, 53; Extreme Unction, 64; holy chrism, 249; oil of the sick, 249; table prepared for Extreme Unction, 66 *illus.*  
 Holy Orders, Sacrament of: 4, 69-83; diriment impediment to marriage, 95; Mass of Ordination, 107; tonsure, 71  
 Holy Rosary: *see* Rosary

- Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, *see* Mass  
 Holy Saturday: 214; baptism in early church, 41; blessing of baptismal water, 228; blessing of homes, 315; distribution of Agnus Dei, 273; distribution of Easter water, 228; singing of *Exultet*, 368; *Tenebrae*, 211  
 Holy Scripture: *see* Bible  
 Holy See, 10  
 Holy Sepulchre, Pilgrimage to, 372  
 Holy Sepulchre, Rule of the: *see* Carmelites, Order of  
 Holy Thursday: 212; blessing of chrism, 53; blessing of holy oils, 247; *Tenebrae*, 211  
 Holy Viaticum: 65-66, 130; ritual of administration, 313  
 Holy water: 226-231; altar consecration, 150; blessing of, 229; blessing of church bells, 289; church consecration, 148; history of, 227; kinds of, 228; table prepared for Extreme Unction, 66 *illus.*; vessel for 279 *illus.*  
 Holy Week: 209-216; bell ringing rules, 288  
 Holy Year of Jubilee, 373  
 Homes, Blessing of, 315  
 Honorary: (title), 18  
 Hope, Act of, 357  
 Humeral veil: 238; worn by priest, 237 *illus.*  
 Hydraulic organ (mus.), 163  
 Hymns: 365, 367; Church music, 169; in English, 369  
*Hyperdulia* (veneration to Our Lady), 329
- I
- Iconoclastic controversy, 340  
*Jesus Nazareus, Rex iudaeorum*: inscription on crucifix, 226  
 Images, Veneration of, 337-342  
 Immaculate Conception: Feast of, 192; holyday of obligation, 188  
 Immaculate Conception, Confraternity of the, 34  
 Immaculate Conception, Little Chaplet of the, 262  
 Immaculate Conception, Scapular of the, 270  
 Immaculate Heart of Mary, Devotion to the, 327  
 Immersion, 42  
 Immortality of soul: Requiem Mass, 155  
 Impediments: to marriage, 93; to sponsorship, 48  
 Imposition of hands, 80  
 Impotency (marriage impediment), 97  
*Improperia*, 213  
*In articulo mortis*: plenary indulgence, 68  
 Incense: 278-282; use at mass, 114  
 Incense boat (vessel), 279  
 Incensing of the altar, 153  
 Indulgence: 374-380; annexed to the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, 363; announced at church consecration, 154; at Extreme Unction, 68; conditions for gaining, 378; for departed souls, 379; for prayer recited before crucifix, 225; for taking holy water, 231; Forty Hours Adoration, 349; for making the sign of the cross, 219; Litany of the Holy Name, 361; of the Angelus, 287; of the *De profundis*, 288; of the Rosary, 260; Saturday, 266; Stations of the Cross, 246; to wearers of scapular, 266; to wearers of the Brown Scapular, 268; to wearers of miraculous medal, 294; *see also* Plenary indulgence  
*Indulgentiam*, 129

Infallibility, Papal: 5; in canonizing, 333  
 Ignatius of Loyola, St., 26  
 I.H.S. (symbol), 301  
 I.N.R.I., 225, 224 *illus.*  
 Innocent III (pope): confession, 59; scapular, 270  
 Inquisition, Congregation of the, 13  
 Insignia: archbishop, 15; bishop, 17; hierarchical, 10 *illus.*; papal, 9  
 Interpretation of Scripture, 319  
 Introduction (Mass), 120  
 Introit: Mass of Catechumens, 113; Requiem Mass, 158; use of incense, 281  
*Iota eta sigma* (symbol), 299 *illus.*  
*Ite, missa est*, 107, 131  
 Investiture, in the Brown Scapular, 267

## J

Jesuits, 26  
 Jesus, Holy Name of (feast), 189  
 Jesus, Society of, 26  
 Jesus Christ: candlestick as symbol of, 300; Communion, 126; confession, 57; crucifix, 225; devotion to the Sacred Heart of, 322; doubtful date of birth, 204; entrance into Jerusalem, 275; fasting, 195; feasts, 189; lamb as symbol of, 297; lion as symbol of, 298; medals, 292; mysteries of the Rosary, 260; Our Father, 352; relics of the Passion, 223; serpent as symbol of, 298; Stations of the Cross, 243; store of merit, 377; symbolism of Agnus Dei, 274; veneration of image, 338  
 Jewish religion: childbirth purification, 102; fasting, 195; feasts and festivals, 187; psalms as

origin of litany, 358; revelation of ceremonial rules, 303; use of ashes, 295; use of incense, 280; vestments, 232  
 John, St.: eagle as symbol of, 302  
 Joseph, St.: litany of, 364  
 Jubilee, 373  
 Julian Calendar, 186  
 June: Feasts in, 191; month of the Sacred Heart, 322  
 Jurisdiction, ecclesiastical, 10  
 Jurisdiction, Hierarchy of, 4  
 Justice, Signature of, 13  
 Justice, Tribunals of, 13

## K

Keys (papal insignia), 9  
 Keystone (arch.), 146  
 Kiss of Peace, 128  
 Kyrie eleison, 114

## L

Laboure, Ste. Catherine: vision of the Blessed Virgin, 293  
 Lactinia prohibition, 210  
*Laetare* Sunday, 210  
 Lamb (as emblem), 272, 297, 299 *illus.*  
 Lamentations, of Tenebrae, 211  
 Lamp: use of, in church, 256; *see also* Sanctuary Lamp  
 Lantern (arch.), 146  
 La Salette (shrine, France), 374  
 Last blessing, 68  
 Last Gospel (at Mass), 131  
 Lateran Basilica, 373  
 Lateran Council (1215): confession, 59  
 Lateran Treaty, 11  
 Latin (lang.): use of, 173; church music, 171  
 Latin cross, 223, 224 *illus.*  
*Lauda Sion Salvatorem* (hymn), 116, 368

- Lauds, 311  
 Lay apostolate: 30-40  
 Lay baptism, 45  
 Laymen's societies: *see* Confraternities  
 Lazarists, 271  
 Lead Kindly Light (hymn), 369  
 League of the Sacred Heart, 36  
 Leavened bread, 118, 180  
 Lectionaries, 304  
 Lector, 73  
 Legal relationship: marriage impediment, 94  
 Legate, 14  
 Legion of Mary, 38  
 Legislative power, Papal, 5  
 Lent: 209-216; ashes, 294; colors of vestments, 233; fasting, 194, 196; wearing of broad stole, 239  
 Leonine Sacramentary, 115  
 Leunis, Father John, 39  
*Libera* (hymn): 166; Requiem Mass, 159  
 Lily (symbol), 299  
 Lion: as symbol of Jesus Christ, 298; as symbol of St. Mark, 302  
 Litany: 358-365; of the Dying, 361; of the Holy Name, 361; of the Sacred Heart, 364; of St. Joseph, 364; of the Blessed Virgin, 362; of the Saints, 360  
 Little Chaplet of the Immaculate Conception, 262  
 Liturgical books: 303-321; Breviary, 308; Missal, 303; Ritual, 312  
 Liturgical altar, 147  
 Liturgical colors, 233  
 Liturgical Movement, vi, 176  
 Liturgical symbols: 296-302, 298 *illus.*; animals, 297; of Evangelist, 302; of saints, 301; plants, 298  
 Liturgical year: 183; festivals, 187; Gregorian Calendar, 186; Missal, 306  
 Liturgy: Advent, 201; Ash Wednesday, 295; blessing of ashes, 296; blessing of church bells, 288; blessing of palms, 277; canonization process, 333; Christmas, 206; church music, 161; Forty Hours Adoration, 346; Holy oil, 250; Latin, 174; Mass of Catechumens, 113; Mass of the Faithful, 117; missal, 303; of the Jews, 303; Psalms of David, 366; sign of the cross, 219; use of holy water, 230: *see also* Eucharist; Mass; Sacramentals; Sacraments  
*Longa* (mus.), 168  
 Loreto (shrine, Italy), 362  
 Loreto, Litany of, 362  
 Lord's Prayer: *see* Our Father  
 Lourdes (shrine, France), 374  
 Love, Act of, 357  
 Low Mass: 110; change in liturgical books, 304; number of candles, 135  
 Luke, St.: ox as symbol of, 302  
 Luna or Lunula (vessel), 140, 139 *illus.*
- M
- Major Orders, 75  
 Malabar Catholic, 179, 180  
 Maltese cross, 223, 224 *illus.*  
 Maniple: 235; worn by deacon, 237 *illus.*  
 Mantellate (vestment), 241 *illus.*  
 Mark, St.: lion as symbol of, 302  
 Maronite ritual, 179, 180  
 Married priests, 86  
 Marriage: *see* Matrimony, Sacrament of  
 Martyr saints: canonization process, 334; emblems, 301; palm as badge of, 298; relics of, 343; veneration of, 332  
 Maryknoll Fathers, 29

- Mary, Legion of, 38
- Mary, the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God: 328; anthems in honor of, 367; childbirth symbolism, 102; devotion to the Immaculate Heart of, 327; feasts of obligation, 189; Litany of the Blessed Virgin, 362; Masses for feasts of, in Missal, 307; medals, 292; minor feasts of, 192; miraculous medal, 293; shrine of pilgrimage, 373; store of merit, 377; the Hail Mary, 353; veneration of images, 338; vision of St. Simon, 265
- Mass: 106-132; altar equipment, 133, 134 *illus.*; amice, 234; Canon of the, 121; chanting of Gloria, 367; church dedication, 154; church music, 169; colors of vestments, 233; Confiteor, 356; Dominican rite, 178; during Advent, 201; during Lent, 210; Holy Communion, 128; Holy Saturday, 215; Holy Thursday, 212; honoring new saint, 336; hour of, 109; hymns sung at, 368; kinds of, 110; missal, 303; *Missa pro Pace*, 349; nuptial, 91; of Exposition, 349; of Reposition, 349; of the faithful, 117; of the Pre-sanctified, 213; Ordination Mass, 82; Pope's coronation, 8; Requiem, 154; requisites for, 132-141; sacred vessels, 139; sign of the cross, 219; Syriac rite, 180; tower bell at elevation, 288; Uniat Greek rite, 180; use of candles, 255; use of incense, 280; use of Psalms of David, 366; *Missa de Angelis*, 157; *see also* Missal
- Matins: 310; Holy Week, 211
- Matrimony, Sacrament of: 88-93; canonical form, 98; impediments, 94; laws, 93-101; Nuptial Mass, 91; ritual of administration, 314; sponsorship, 48; without a priest, 100
- Matthew, St., symbol of, 302
- Maundy Thursday: *see* Holy Thursday
- Meat, abstinence from, *see* Abstinence
- Medals, Religious: 290-294; miraculous medal, 293; of St. Benedict, 292; scapular, 264
- Mediator Dei* (encyclical), vii, 176
- Melchites: language used by, 179
- Memento, 124
- Mendicant orders, 25
- Messenger of the Sacred Heart* (periodical), 36
- Metropolitan archbishop, 15
- Milan, Cathedral of: nail of crucifixion preserved, 222
- Milanese rite, 179
- Military Mass: hour of mass, 109; requisites for Mass, 132
- Minor basilica, 143
- Minor Orders, 72
- Miracle: required for canonization, 335
- Miraculous medal, 293
- Misereatur*, 129
- Miserere*, 212
- Missa*: *see* Mass
- Missa Cantata*: *see* High Mass
- Missa de Angelis*, 157
- Missal: 303-308; altar equipment, 136, 134 *illus.*, first printed 305; hymns of the, 368; prefaces, 120
- Missa pro Pace*, 349
- Missa Quotidiana*, 158
- Missa Recitata*, 111
- Missa Solemnis*: *see* Solemn High Mass
- Mission church, 143
- Mitre: 240; papal insignia, 9; worn by archbishop, 241 *illus.*

- Mixed religion: marriage impediment, 94  
 Moderator General, 36  
 Monasticism: 22; abstinence, 197  
 Monastic Orders: 23; dress, 24 *illus.*  
 Monk, 25; scapular, 262; tonsure, 71  
 Monogram, Emblematic, 301  
 Monsignor (rank), 17  
 Monstrance: 138, 139 *illus.*; held by priest, 237 *illus.*; Sacred Host exposed in, 350  
 Month's Mind, 158  
 Morals, Papal infallibility in, 5  
 Mortal sin, 59  
 Most Blessed Trinity, Scapular of the, 269  
 Most Holy Name of God and Jesus, Confraternity of the, 35  
 Most Holy Redeemer, Congregation of the, 29  
 Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Feast of: *see* Sacred Heart, Feast of  
 Mother of God: *see* Mary, the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God.  
*Motu Proprio* (by Pius X): church music, 170  
 Mount Carmel, Scapular of, 265  
 Movable altar, 132  
 Movable feast: Easter, 184  
 Mozarabic rite, 177, 179  
*Mozzetta*, 243, 241 *illus.*  
 Music, Church: *see* Church music  
 Musical notation, 167  
 Music Commission, 19  
 Mysteries of the Rosary, 260  
 National Council of Catholic Men, 33  
 National Council of Catholic Women, 33  
 National Federation of Catholic College Students, 35  
 Nativity cycle: feasts, 185  
 Nativity of Mary, Feast of, 193  
 Natural law: impediments to marriage, 94  
 Nave: 145; partitions in early church, 142  
 NCCM (National Council of Catholic Men), 33  
 NCCW (National Council of Catholic Women), 33  
 NCWC (National Catholic Welfare Conference), 32  
 Nestorians: use of Syro-Chaldaic, 181  
 Newman Clubs, 35  
 New Testament, 317  
 Nice, Council of: clerical celibacy, 85; decree on veneration of images, 338  
 Nicene Creed: Mass, 117  
 Nimbus, 301  
*Nobis quoque peccatoribus*, 125  
 None, 311  
 Notaries, College of, 17  
 Notation, musical, 167  
 Nuncio, 14  
 Nuns, 28  
 Nuptial blessing, 92  
 Nuptial mass, 91

## O

- N  
 Nails: used in crucifixion of Jesus Christ, 222  
 Naming of child, 50  
 National Catholic Welfare Conference, 32  
 Oath of obedience, 82  
 Oblates, 263  
 Obligation, Holydays of, 188  
 Occasional Prayers, 307  
 October, Month of Rosary, 193  
 Offerens: *see* Sponsor  
 Offertory: 118; use of incense, 281

- Office (prayer): 308; history of, 311; parts of, 310; use of Psalms of David, 366
- Oil: see Holy Oils
- Oil of catechumens: see Catechumens, Oil of
- Oil of the Sick: 249; anointing of church bells, 289; Extreme Unction, 64
- Old Testament, 317
- Oleum infirmorum*: see Oil of the Sick
- Olive branch (emblem), 298
- Omega* (symbol), 301
- Open air Mass, 132
- Opus Dei* (secular institute), 31
- Orate, fratres*, 119
- Orationes diversae*, 307
- Oratory: 141; requisites for Mass, 132
- Orchestra: use in church, 165
- Ordinary, 16
- Ordinary of the Mass, 306
- Ordination Mass, 118
- Ordination of priest, 80
- Ordo, 304
- Oremus*, 117
- Organ: in church music, 163
- Oriental Affairs, Congregation on, 13
- Ostensorium: see Monstrance
- Our Father: 352; at Mass, 126; recitation of Rosary, 260
- Our Lady: see Mary, the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God
- Our Lady of Lourdes, Feast of, 192
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Feast of, 193
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Order of, 26
- Our Lady of Ransom, Feast of, 193
- Our Lady of the Snows, Feast of, 193
- Our Lady, Sodality of, 39
- Ox (symbol), 302
- P
- Pachomius, St., 23
- Paganism: use of incense, 280; use of medals, 290; use of the cross, 220
- Palestine, Pilgrimage to, 371
- Palestrina, Giovanni Pierluigi da, 169
- Pall, 138, 139 *illus.*
- Pallium: archbishop's insignia, 15, 241 *illus.*; papal insignia, 9
- Palm branch: 275-278; burning to obtain ashes, 296; symbol of martyrs, 298; symbol of victory, 276
- Palm Sunday, 275
- Pange, Lingua* (hymn), 367
- Papacy: see Pope
- Papal Chamberlain, 18
- Papal Consistories, 12
- Papal decree, 333; litany approved, 360
- Papal Infallibility: see Infallibility, Papal
- Pardon, 59
- Parish clergy, 20; marriage, 100
- Parish church, 143; membership, 100
- Partial indulgence, 377
- Particular Council, 39
- Parochial Mass, 111
- Paschal candle: altar equipment, 135; Holy Saturday ceremonies, 215; insertion of incense into, 282
- Paschal cycle, 185
- Paschal Mystery, 184
- Passing bell: ancient custom of the, 284
- Passion, Congregation of the, 29
- Passionist Fathers, 29
- Passion Sunday, 211
- Pastor: 20; minister of confirmation, 52; qualifications to celebrate marriage, 99



- Pastoral staff, 240  
 Paten, 137, 139 *illus.*, 140  
 Pater Noster: *see* Our Father  
 Patriarch, 15  
 Patriarchal basilica, 143  
 Patriarchal cross, 224  
 Patrini: *see* Sponsor  
 Pauline privilege, 96  
 Paulists, 30  
 Paulist League, 34  
 Paul of the Desert, St., 23  
 Pax Romana, 35  
 Peace, Mass for, 349  
 Pectoral cross: 242; worn by bishop, 241 *illus.*  
 Pelican (symbol), 298  
 Penance, Sacrament of, 57-63, 375; *see also* Confession  
 Penitential practices: abstinence, 197; Advent, 200; after ordination, 82; ashes, 294; fasting, 194; Lent, 209; Public penance, 60  
 Pentecost, 184; colors of vestments at, 233; history of feast, 189; liturgical year, 183  
 Perpetual Adoration, Archconfraternity of, 34  
 Persecutions, Christian: underground churches, 142; saints' relics, 152  
 Personal blessing, 314  
 Peterspence, 9  
 Pier (arch.), 145  
 Pilaster (arch.), 146  
 Pilgrimage: 370-374; medals as souvenirs, 291; to Holy Land, 244  
 Pillar (arch.), 145  
 Pinnacle (arch.), 145  
 Pious associations, 34  
*Piscina*, 147  
 Pius V, St. (Pope): church music, 169; revision of Missal, 305; Roman Missal, 177  
 Pius IX (Pope): Litany of the Holy Name, 361  
 Pius X, Bl. (Pope): church music, 170; liturgical reform, vi, 305  
 Pius XI (Pope): Catholic Action, 31; indulgences for the Stations of the Cross, 246; lay apostolate, 31  
 Plague medals, 292  
 Plain chant: *see* Gregorian Chant  
 Plants: as symbols, 298  
 Plenary indulgence: 377; Forty Hours Adoration, 349; history of, 379; Extreme Unction, 68; Stations of the Cross, 246; through Holy Communion on first Friday of each month, 326  
 Pontiff: *see* Pope  
 Pontifical Mass: 110; bishop's vestments, 242; blessing of the oils, 251; number of candles, 135, 255; of Holy Thursday, 251  
 Pope: 4-11; beatification decree, 333; blessing of Agnus Dei, 273; canonization of saints, 333, 335; Christmas Mass, 206; crossed keys symbol of power of, 301; election of, 6; election of bishops, 17; number of, 10; granting of indulgence, 377; infallibility, 5; insignia, 10 *illus.*; prayer for the intentions of the, 378; titles, 8  
 Portable altar, 132  
 Porter, order of, 73  
 Portico (arch.), 145  
 Prayer: 351-368; at meals, 357; conditions for gaining plenary indulgence, 378; Rosary, 257  
 Preface (Mass), 120  
 Prefect Apostolic, 16  
 Pre-Sanctified: Liturgy of, 180; on Good Friday, 213  
*Presbyterium*, 142  
 Previous marriage: marriage impediment, 96  
 Priest: 79; as mediator, 309; baptism, 42; blessing of holy water, 229; celibacy, 83; daily

- Mass celebration, 108; dress, 24 *illus.*; holding monstrance, 237 *illus.*; jurisdiction to hear confession, 60; ordination, 80; power to forgive sins, 58; power to invest in the Brown Scapular, 267; qualifications to celebrate marriage, 99; recitation of Office, 308; vestments, 232, 237 *illus.*; wearing cope, 237 *illus.*
- Priests of the Mission, 271
- Primate archbishop, 15
- Prime, 311
- Primitive Christian Church: *see* Early Christian Church
- Prince of the Church (title): *see* Cardinal
- Private baptism, 45
- Private Mass: *see* Low Mass
- Procession, 316; bearing of candles, 255; carrying of crucifix, 225; church consecration, 148; Corpus Christi celebration, 347; of the Blessed Sacrament, 190; Palm Sunday, 277
- Procurator Fiscalis, 19
- Procurator of the Cause (Vatican official), 334
- Profession of faith, 355
- Promoter of the Faith (Vatican official), 335
- Propagation of the Faith, Congregation for the (Propaganda Fide), 13
- Propagation of the Faith, Society for the, 34
- Proper consent: in marriage, 97
- Proper of the Saints, 307
- Proper of the season, 306
- Prophecies: recitation on Holy Saturday, 215
- Protestantism: abolition of images, 340; added sentence to the Our Father, 352; confirmation, 51; number of books in Bible, 317; use of organ, 164
- Protonotary Apostolic, 17
- Provincial Bishop, 16
- Psalms: 365; church music, 168, 169
- Psalter, 366
- Publication of Banns: (marriage), 98
- Public propriety: marriage impediment, 97
- Purgatory: 376
- Purification of the Blessed Virgin, Festival of the: blessing of candles, 254; history of feast, 189
- Purificator, 138, 139 *illus.*
- Pyx (vessel), 140, 66 *illus.*
- Q
- Quadragesima: *see* Lent
- Quarter Tenses, 198
- R
- Reader, Order of, 73
- Rector, 19
- Redemptorists, 29
- Red Scapular, 270
- Regina Cœli* (anthem): 368; legend of origin of the, 286
- Registration, Marriage, 101
- Relator (Vatican official), 334
- Relics:, 343; altar, 151; true cross and nails, 223; veneration of, 342-351
- Religious Congregations, 29
- Religious dress, 24 *illus.*
- Religious medals: *see* Medals, religious
- Religious music: *see* Church music
- Religious orders: 21-30; approval by pope, 5; of women, 28; wearing of scapular, 262
- Religious sects: in East, 177

- Reliquary, 346  
 Renaissance church architecture, 144  
 Renunciant, 210  
 Repentance, 59  
 Reposition, Mass of, 349  
 Repository (vessel): 140, 139 *illus.*, 212  
 Requiem Mass: 154-161; black vestments prescribed, 234; defined, 111; Missals of the, 307; *Dies Irae*, 116, 158; kinds of, 158; use of incense, 281  
 Reredos (arch.), 146  
 Resurrection: feast, 184, 189; ringing of bells, 288  
 Ring: episcopal, 240; wedding ring, 90  
 Rites, Book of: *see* Ritual  
 Rites, Congregation of, 13; canonization process, 334  
 Ritual: 312; editions of, 313; parts of, 313; *see also* liturgy  
 Rochet, 240, 241 *illus.*  
 Rogation Days, 359  
 Roman chant: *see* Gregorian chant  
 Roman chasuble, 236  
 Roman congregations: 13; duties of, 12  
 Roman Missal: 303; publication of, 178  
 Roman Ritual (book), 312  
 Rome, Bishop of (title), 8  
 Rome, Italy: Holy Year, 373  
 Rosary Holy: 257-262; 158 *illus.*; beads, 259; crucifix, 225; feast of the, 193; indulgences of the, 260; month of October dedicated to, 259; mysteries of the, 260; the Hail Mary, 353  
 Rose (emblem), 299  
 Rota, 13  
 Roumanian (lang.): use in Catholic liturgy, 179  
 Rubrics: 306; Forty Hours Adoration, 349
- S
- Sabbatine Indulgence, 266  
*Sacerdotale* (book), 313  
 Sacerdotal Society of the Holy Cross and the work of God, 31  
 Sacramentals: 217-302; *Agnus Dei*, 271; ashes, 294; candle, 253; church bell, 282; crucifix, 225; holy oils, 247; holy water, 226; incense, 278; palm branch, 275; religious medals, 290; sacred vessels, 141; scapulars, 262; vestments, 231  
 Sacramentary (book): 304; blessings contained in, 313  
 Sacraments: 41-105; Baptism, 41; Confirmation, 50-57; Eucharist, 122; Extreme Unction, 64-69; Holy Orders, 69-83; Matrimony, 88-93; Penance, 57-63; ritual of administration of, 313; sign of the cross in administration of, 219; use of holy oils, 248  
 Sacraments, Congregation of the, 13  
*Sacrarium*, 147  
 Sacred College: *see* Cardinals, College of  
 Sacred Consistory, 13  
 Sacred Heart: Devotion to the, 322-327; Feast of the, 191, 324, 364; League of the, 36; Mass of the, 111  
 Sacred Host: *see* Eucharist  
 Sacred Orders, 75  
 Sacred Penitentiary, 13  
 Sacred Scripture: *see* Bible  
 Sacred vessels: *see* Church vessels  
 Sacrifice, Offering of the (Mass), 123  
 Sacrifice-banquet, 126  
 Sacrifice-oblation, 117  
 Sacristy, 146  
 St. Andrew's cross, 223

- St. Basil, Rite of, 180  
 St. Benedict, medal of, 292  
 St. Blaise, Blessing of, 314  
 St. Christopher medal, 294  
 St. James the Apostle, Epistle of:  
   Extreme Unction, 65  
 St. John Chrysostom, Rite of, 180  
 St. John, Gospel of: prologue, 131  
 St. John the Baptist, Feast of, 191  
 St. Joseph, Feast of, 188, 190, 365  
 St. Joseph, Litany of, 364  
 St. Mark, feast of, 359  
 St. Mary Major, Basilica of, 373  
 St. Matthew, Gospel of: Our  
   Father, 352  
 St. Paul, Basilica of, 373  
 St. Peter, Basilica of, 373  
 St. Peter the Apostle for Native  
   Clergy, Society of, 34  
 St. Sulpice, Society of, 29  
 St. Vincent de Paul, Society of, 39  
 Saints: canonization of, 332-337;  
   feasts, 185; invocation of, 327-  
   331; Litany of the, 360; Masses  
   for, in the Missal, 307; medals,  
   292; mentioned in Confiteor, 356;  
   relics in altars, 151, 343; relics  
   in altar-stone, 346; store of  
   merit, 377; symbols of, 301; ven-  
   eration of, 329; veneration of  
   images of, 338  
 Saints, Litany of the, 360  
 Sts. Peter and Paul, Feast of: 191;  
   holyday of obligation, 188  
 Salt: use in ritual of baptism, 43;  
   symbolic meanings, 43, 230; use  
   in Holy water, 229  
*Salve, Regina* (anthem), 368  
 Sance bell, 124  
 Sanctoral cycle, 184  
 Sanctus: bell, 124; candle, 135;  
   in Mass, 121  
 Satan: dragon as symbol of, 298  
 Sanctuary: 146, 147 *illus.*; in early  
   church, 142  
 Sanctuary Lamp: 134, 147 *illus.*;  
   256  
 Scapulars: 262-271; Benedictine  
   monk wearing, 24 *illus.*; Brown  
   Scapular, 267; Five Scapulars,  
   269; of Mount Carmel, 265; of  
   St. Francis, 263; of the Immacu-  
   late Conception, 270; of the  
   Most Blessed Trinity, 269; of the  
   Seven Dolors, 270; privileges,  
   266; Red scapular, 270; worn by  
   Dominican nun, 24 *illus.*  
 Scapular Apostolate, 34  
 Scapular medal, 264  
 Schismatic sects: in East, 181  
 Schools, Superintendent of, 19  
 Seal of Confession, 61  
 Second orders, 29  
*Secreta* (secret prayers), 120  
 Secretariate of State, 14  
 Secret ballot: papal election, 7  
 Secret prayers, 119  
 Secret Sacrament: *see* Confession  
 Sects, Schismatic: in East, 181  
 Secular institutes, 30  
*Sedilia*, 147 *illus.*  
*Signatura*, 13  
*Semi-brevis* (mus.), 168  
 Seminaries and universities, Con-  
   gregation of, 13  
*Septuagesima*, 185  
 Septuagint, 174  
 Sepulchre: use of incense, 282  
 Sermon, 117  
 Serpent, (symbol), 298  
 Servants of the Blessed Virgin  
   Mary, Order of the, 26  
 Services for the Dead: *see* Dead,  
   Prayers for the  
 Servites, 26  
 Servite Sisters, 29  
 Seven Dolors, Scapular of the, 270  
 Seven Sorrows of Mary, Feasts of,  
   192

- Sext, 311  
 Ship (symbol), 300  
 Shrine: enumeration of most important, 373; pilgrimage to, 370  
 Sick, Oil of the: *see* Oil of the Sick  
 Sick, Sacraments of the, *see* Extreme Unction; Holy Viaticum  
 Signature of Favor, 13  
 Signature of Justice, 13  
 Sign of the Cross, 217-220; baptism, 42; Canon of the Mass, 121; symbolic meaning, 217  
 Simple vow: marriage impediment, 94  
 Sin: Act of Contrition for, 357; canonical penance for, 378; dragon as symbol of, 298; remission of, 378; *see also* Absolution; Penance, Sacrament of; Confession  
 Singing, Congregational, 171  
 Sion, temple of: consecration, 148  
 Sisters, 28  
 Sistine Chapel: Papal election, 7  
 Skull cap, 241 *illus.*  
 Slavonic (lang.): use in Catholic liturgy, 179, 180  
 Society for the Propagation of the Faith, 34  
 Societies of Brothers, 30  
 Society of Jesus, 26  
 Society of St. Peter the Apostle for Native Clergy, 34  
 Society of St. Vincent de Paul, 39  
 Sodalities:, 34; badge, 292  
 Sodality of our Lady, 39  
 Solemn baptism, 45  
 Solemn marriage: prohibited during Advent, 201  
 Solemn Mass: 110; early liturgical books, 304; incensing, 281; number of candles, 135, 255  
 Solemn vow: 29; marriage impediment, 95  
 Soul, Immortality of, 155  
 Soutane: *see* Cassock  
 Sovereignty, Papal, 4  
 Spiritual relationship: diriment impediment to marriage, 95  
*Sponsa Christi*, 30  
 Sponsor: baptism, 46; confirmation, 54; duties of, 47; impediments, 48  
 Spandrel (arch.), 146  
 Springer (arch.), 146  
 Sprinkler, 279 *illus.*  
*Stabat Mater* (hymn), 116, 368  
 Staff, Gregorian (mus.), 167  
 Stall (arch.), 146  
 State, Secretariate of, 14  
 Station, 143  
 Stations of the Cross, 243-247; 62 *illus.*  
 Steeple (arch.), 145  
 Stipend: for Mass, 110  
 Stockings (vestments), 242  
 Stock, Simon, St., 265  
 Stoicism (philos.), 22  
 Stole, 78-79, 81, 235; worn by deacon, 237 *illus.*; worn by priest, 237 *illus.*  
 Studies, Congregation of, 13  
 Subdeacon, Order of: 75; maniple, special badge of, 235; wearing of tunic, 239  
 Suffragan Bishop, 16  
 Sulpicians, 29  
 Sunday: 184; Capitular Mass, 111; during Lent, 209; *Laetare* Sunday, 210; Mass, 110  
 Sunday Missal, 303  
 Sunday of Advent: beginning of liturgical year, 183, 199  
 Surplice:, 238; worn by priest, 237 *illus.*  
 Susceptor: *see* Sponsor  
 Symbolism: of candle, 253; of incense, 282; of devotion of the Sacred Heart, 326; of Holy oil, 247, *see also* Sacramentals  
 Syrian rite: language, 179  
 Syrian Uniats, 180  
 Syro-Chaldaic liturgy, 181

## T

- Tabernacle, 133, 134 *illus.*, 139  
*illus.*; consecration, 148  
Tabernacle of God (Jerusalem):  
incense burning, 280  
*Tametsi* (decree), 98  
*Tantum Ergo*, 350  
Tau cross, 223  
*Te Deum*, 366; translation into  
English, 369  
Temporal cycle, 184; text for  
Masses of, 306  
Temporal power: crown denoting,  
9  
Temporal punishment, 376  
Tenebrae, 211  
Terce, 311  
Third Orders (Tertiaries): 29;  
wearing of scapular, 263  
Third Sunday (of Advent), 233  
Thomas Aquinas, St.: 369; hymns  
composed by, 367  
Thomas of Celano: *Dies Irae*, 158  
Three Hours Agony, 214  
Tiara, 9  
Titles: of Pope, 8  
Titular Archbishop, 15  
Titular Bishop, 16  
Titular Protonotary Apostolic, 18  
Tomb: cross placed over, 225;  
used as altars, 152  
Tonsure, Clerical, 71  
Towel: 279 *illus.*; table prepared  
for Extreme Unction, 66 *illus.*  
Tower bell, 288  
Tract (reading), 115  
Transept, 146  
Trappistines, 28  
Trappists: *see* Cistercians  
Treasury of Merit, 376  
Trent, Council of: revision of the  
breviary, 311  
*Tre Ore*, 214  
Tribunals, Ecclesiastical, 13  
Trinity, 218  
Trinity Sunday, 190

- Triple crown, 9  
*Trisagion* (canticle), 367  
True Cross, 345  
Tunic, 239  
Tympanum (arch.), 143

## U

- Uniat Greek rite, 179  
United States: feasts of obligation,  
188  
Unleavened bread, 118

## V

- Vatican: papal election, 7; shrine  
of pilgrimage, 373  
Vatican City, 11  
Veil: worn by Dominican nun, 24  
*illus.*; *see also* humeral veil  
Veiled chalice: altar equipment,  
134 *illus.*; held by priest, 237  
*illus.*  
Venerable (title), 334  
*Veni, Creator Spiritus* (hymn),  
368; church consecration, 150  
*Veni, Sancte Spiritus* (hymn), 116  
*Verbum Supernum Prodiens*  
(hymn), 367  
Vespers, 311; number of candles,  
255  
Vessels, Church: *see* Church ves-  
sels  
Vestment: 231-243; Advent purple  
vestments, 199; alb, 235; altar  
vestments, 237 *illus.*; amice,  
234; archbishop's insignia, 15;  
broad stole, 239; *cappa magna*,  
242; change of color on Holy  
Saturday, 215; chasuble, 236;  
cincture, 235; colors of, 233;  
cope, 238; crosier, 240; dal-  
matic, 239; episcopal ring, 240;  
gremiale, 242; humeral veil,  
238; maniple, 235; mitre, 240;  
*mozzetta*, 243; of archbishop, 241

- illus.*; of bishop, 239, 241 *illus.*;  
of priest, 234, 237 *illus.*; pectoral  
cross, 242; priest ordination, 81;  
rochet, 240; stole, 235; surplice,  
238; tunic, 239
- Vestry, 146
- Vexilla Regis* (hymn), 213
- Viaticum, *see* Holy Viaticum
- Vicar Apostolic, 16
- Vicar General, 19
- Vicariate, Apostolic, 10
- Victimæ Paschali* (hymn), 115
- Vigil, 205
- Vigilance, Committee of (diocesis), 19
- Vincentian Fathers, 30
- Violence: marriage impediment, 97
- Virgin Mary: *see* Mary the Blessed  
Virgin, Mother of God
- Vision of St. Catherine Laboure, 293
- Visitation, Feast of, 193
- Votive candle, 255
- Votive Mass, 111; arrangement of  
Missal, 307
- Vow: 21; baptism, 44; lay apostolate,  
31; pilgrimage as fulfilment of,  
371; religious congregations,  
29; votive candle, 256
- W
- Washing of the fingers, 119
- Water, holy: *see* Holy water
- Water of Consecration, 150
- Wax: symbolism of, 253; use for  
preparing Agnus Dei, 273; use  
for preparing candles, 255
- Way of the Cross: *see* Stations of  
the Cross
- Winchester organ, 164
- Winding sheet (of Jesus Christ),  
223
- Wine: use in mass, 119
- Witness (marriage), 98
- Women's religious orders: 28; Sec-  
ond orders, 29
- Word of God, 318
- X Y Z
- Xaverian Brothers, 30
- Year, Church: *see* Liturgical year
- Yuletide: *see* Christmas
- Zucchetto*, 242

















(Continued from front flap)

Since its first publication, however, many changes in the external, social aspects of the Church have come about. In 1918 the Church completed her vast codification of Canon Law. Then the Liturgical Movement, following Blessed Pius X's impetus, gained new momentum, completely transforming the attitude of the faithful towards their official forms of worship. Likewise, the role of the laity in the life of the Church has developed apace. Thus a thorough renovation of the book was indicated.

In his revision Father O'Leary, a pastor, Newman Club chaplain, and author of *Fundamental Rubrics*, has recast and modernized this standard handbook without losing the graceful style that helped popularize the original. The new illustrations by William V. Cladek, an artist long associated with the Liturgical Movement, exemplify the best in contemporary liturgical art.



As a source of information for Catholics and non-Catholics alike, BISHOP FULTON SHEEN calls it a "*really indispensable book.*"

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY



134 733

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY