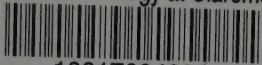


School of Theology at Claremont



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THE CATHOLIC RELIGION

*A manual of instruction
for members of
the Anglican Communion*

VERNON STALEY

Golden Jubilee Memorial edition
Revised by
BRIAN GOODCHILD

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Foreword by
The Bishop of Leicester



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Members of the Anglican Communion*

BY
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FOREWORD

This book remained in print for seventy years, but has not been available in new copies for the past twenty. Its long life ended when the Church of England began to be affected by the change of Christian climate that is most readily identified by the Second Vatican Council, but was in fact a much greater movement of response to contemporary history.

Now Staley's work can be seen in a different perspective of time and thought. Like all theological compendiums (including St Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*) it proves too small for its purpose. The Christian Faith can no more be defined in a book than God can be contained in his Church; yet the new perspective makes this book's usefulness clearer.

Here we have a sober statement of Anglican orthodoxy. Though some of its details, some of its preoccupations, are dated, it makes one point clear: the opposite of catholic is not protestant, but heretic. When Staley goes on to quote that 'every heresy is the intellectual vengeance of some suppressed truth' we are assured that he was too wise to believe he could define the whole faith in a single volume. So we expect wisdom in him, and find much of it.

March 1983

✝ RICHARD LEICESTER

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PREFACE

TO THE REVISED EDITION

This is still Vernon Staley's book. Our task has been to remove as far as is possible unnecessary repetition, and certain material relative to matters which no longer deserve or receive the attention which they commanded in Staley's day. It has been necessary to add teaching about problems peculiar to our own times, which were never envisaged by the original author; and we have incorporated into the text Staley's biblical footnotes, while his other footnotes now appear at the ends of the chapters.

We have retained Staley's language which, although somewhat dated, speaks with a directness which seekers after Catholic Truth will find stimulating and informative, for our need now, as in Staley's day, is for "sound learning, made available to the public, in order to combat the dangers of secularism, and of those who believe that there is nothing to believe, or that Christianity is a thing of the past".

Our hope is that what his book did to promote the Catholic Revival, during the first half of the present century, it will do once more for Catholic Renewal as the twentieth century draws to its close.

May this revised and abridged edition, commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Oxford Movement, be a lifelong companion, guide, philosopher and friend to members of the laity as they shoulder an ever increasing responsibility in the life of God's Holy Catholic Church.

Isleham, 1983

BRIAN GOODCHILD

PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION

The Church of England has been the witness for God in this land for about fifteen centuries, through all changes, all crises of trial and suffering, and in its main essential principles, it is the same now as it has been from its beginning, when Augustine and Aidan, and other saintly missionaries, brought Christianity to our Saxon forefathers, and Alfred the Great defended it against the heathen Danes, till they too were received into the bosom of the Church.

The Church has passed through great varieties of outward circumstance, equally with the English nation itself. For many centuries it was subject to the Papal See – then for a time the State ruled it, when the State assumed its most absolute form. When the Puritans attained power, the Church was altogether suppressed and its services proscribed. It was re-established at the Restoration, but soon after, drained of its best blood through the secession of the Non-Jurors. Then ensued a long period of spiritual decline. At last there came a revival through the Evangelical movement, and of late years a still greater quickening through the Oxford movement, which has stirred the whole body of the Church with new life and power. Yet during all these eventful changes the Church never lost the grace of the Apostolic Ministry, nor the Sacraments, nor the Catholic Creeds, nor even a real measure of its old constitutional government.

Moreover, the Church of England has learnt valuable lessons from the various outward circumstances through which it has passed. It has retained the principle of dogmatic teaching of which Rome impressed upon it so great an example. At the revival of learning in the sixteenth century, it learned the value of free enquiry and the importance of truth on all questions as against mere authority. It imbibed quickly the incalculable benefit of the opening of the Holy Scriptures to the people through the invention of printing. It learnt tolerance through the terrible sufferings of persecution, itself having sorely suffered, while unhappily for a while it joined in inflicting such suffering, sharing the public feeling

Preface

that prevailed everywhere at the time, that such methods were the rightful means of suppressing dangerous error. It had impressed upon it with more than ordinary power the claims of the individual conscience through the Puritan movement, of which this truth formed the main groundwork. From the Evangelical revival it acquired a deepened sense of the doctrines of grace and of the soul's secret communion with God, and now the Oxford movement has brought home to us with unprecedented force the view of the Church as the mystical Body of Christ, and the life-giving grace of the Sacraments.

It is not difficult to see how these lessons, thus taught us, have affected the mind of the Church of England, have left their mark upon it, and have given it some of its most characteristic qualities of thought and feeling.

The greatest loss the Church of England has ever known is the Wesleyan secession. It has been often shewn how that movement arose from men with strong Church tendencies, men trained in our Universities on Church principles. But the enthusiasm which so powerfully stirred them to preach the Gospel among the masses, was at the time misunderstood, and met with no sympathy in the depressed condition of the Church which was suffering from a long series of conflicts, ecclesiastical and civil. But the first design of these ardent mission-preachers was not to separate from the Church, rather to supplement its work; but circumstances gradually drove them on beyond their original aims, and thus the largest rent from the body of the Church of England, in spite of the anxious desires of its first leaders, was unhappily consummated.

The question of the Establishment of the Church is not treated in this volume. The question is external to the Church's life, though its life is affected by it. But the life of the Church is the same, whether established or disestablished. And its claims upon its members are the same. The Church has been in alliance with the State ever since it was founded. It is this which has made the English nation to be a Christian nation, and as the faith it has received is the Catholic faith, it has thus become a Catholic nation. There is no doubt much to be considered on this question: but one point alone seems necessary to explain, as it touches the faith of the Church.

Preface

It is sometimes thought that the State determines the faith of the Church, because Lay Judges, appointed by the State, are joined with the Bishops in cases of Appeal from the Church Courts – those Judges being members of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. But it has to be borne in mind that those Judges do not settle the matters in dispute of their own mind, but only as interpreting the Church's documents. The decisions are made according to what they believe the Church's documents to mean. Mistakes may thus be made, but any such mistake may be remedied by subsequent decisions. The Church's documents remain the same. They are not changed, though there may be differences of interpretation; even when any wrong may have been done for a time, the right may prevail at last.

This has been the case on a very important question of the present day. The decisions of the Judges on 'the Ornaments Rubric,' relating to the Church's Ritual, had for some years been unfavourable to the changes lately made. Now at last these adverse decisions have been reversed, and the last judgement of the Court has sanctioned the old Catholic customs which we have inherited from early ages. The Ornaments Rubric has at last been interpreted on true principles.

This volume exhibits what I believe to be a true view of an English Churchman's faith and practice. It has been wished simply to state the truth, without attacking others. But it is impossible to make our position clear without alluding to the causes which have separated us from the Church of Rome, and which therefore imply opposition. And so likewise with regard to those who have parted from us, and formed separate communities. There has been no wish to condemn, except so far as the mere assertion of the truth we profess and the belief we hold, is itself a condemnation. We pray for reunion both with the divided portions of the Catholic Communion, and the dissenting bodies in England: we feel the sadness and the loss involved in these separations. We are conscious that there may be blame on our side, as well as on the side of those opposed to us. We can recognise their good while we assert our own claims. We are anxious to avoid any act or deed which might aggravate the divisions that exist, and desire rather to do all in our power, as opportunity occurs, that might tend to remedy these sad troubles. We long only

Preface

that the truth may prevail, and that God may be honoured by every effort anywhere made to heal the breaches of His Zion.

Among the quotations made in this volume, those from Dr Pusey's writings will be found to be most numerous. This has been done in the belief that from his great learning, his fulness of exposition, and his untiring labours, he is the most valuable witness to the Church's truth on the various subjects which have been discussed among us of late years, and these discussions have embraced a very wide range of teaching.

I would add that definite doctrine, and a clear understanding of the truth, are of the utmost value in promoting a consistent Christian life. What we do and are, greatly depends on what we believe. Our life is the fruit of our faith. And it is surely the first duty of Church-people to learn as fully and as clearly as they can, what the Church teaches, and what faithful men have gathered from the authorities to which the Church directs us.

That there may be a blessing on this work; that it may be found helpful to those who are earnestly seeking to live to God, and who 'ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein' that they may 'find rest for their souls,' is the prayer and earnest desire of the undersigned.

St John's Lodge, Clewer
13 July 1893

T. T. CARTER
(*Hon. Canon of Christ Church, Oxford and
Warden of the House of Mercy, Clewer*)

PART ONE

THE CHURCH OF GOD

God is in the midst of her,
therefore shall she not be removed.

Psalm 46. 5

Lo, I am with you alway,
even unto the end of the world.

Matthew 28. 20

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Almighty God in his love created all things.

It was needful that man should have the power to reject God, and to withhold his love and service. In no other way could his will be really free. Man, failed, and so fell away from God.

But God's love was so great that, even though rejected by man, He would not leave him to his ruin. God pursued fallen man with a love which is as astonishing as it is touching. The history of the human race is the history of God's patient love following man, in order to bring him back to himself.

All along the ages we find God enlightening man's mind by his truth, cleansing his heart by holy inspirations, and aiding man's will by his power.

1

Whilst God was thus dealing with the human race in general, He willed, in his wisdom, to work in a more special way within a narrower circle. At first, history tells of God's particular dealings with individuals and families, as with the patriarchs; then with one nation, that of the Jews; and, lastly, when Christ came, with all nations without distinction.

But in time God, in his mercy, made choice of Abraham and his family. God now began to reveal himself more fully. He promised in solemn terms that Abraham should be the founder of a great nation, and that in him all families of the earth should be blessed. 'Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him.' (Gen. 18. 18.)

The nation which sprang from Abraham was chosen by God to

be his 'peculiar people,' (Deut. 14. 2.) an elect nation. The nation thus chosen consisted of the Hebrew race, commonly known as the children of Israel, or the Jews.

Shortly after the death of Abraham, a great famine spread over the land of Canaan, where the family of Abraham dwelt. All the descendants of Jacob, numbering seventy persons, journeyed into Egypt, and there greatly multiplied. The king of Egypt fearing that, in case of war, they might side with his enemies, reduced them to slavery. From this bondage God rescued his people by the hand of Moses, whom He raised up to be their leader. Under the guidance of Moses the whole nation, now great in number, was led out of Egypt into the wilderness of Sinai, and there organised to form a Church. (Acts 7. 38.) To this church, the whole of the Jewish nation belonged. Thus organised, the Jewish Church received from God the moral law, the right of approaching him by sacrifices, the divine blessing, and, above all, the promise that from their midst should spring in due time the divine Deliverer, the incarnate God himself.

Such were the elect people, 'the Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.' (Rom. 9. 4, 5.)

As time went on, God raised up the prophets to be the teachers of his people, and by them made known further truths concerning himself, his coming in the flesh, his sufferings and exaltation, and the redemption of the whole human race.

It is true that God's love and mercy were over all nations, yet it was with the Jewish Church that He thus closely dealt. Outside its pale, there was no clear revelation and no special blessing. The Gentiles, i.e., all nations other than the Jews, are described by St Paul as 'aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise.' (Eph. 2. 12.) Our Lord himself declared that 'salvation is of the Jews;' (John 4. 22.) for the Jewish Church was the covenanted sphere of God's favour, and the home of his truth. Though promises to the nations outside the Jewish Church were given, they also depended upon the coming of the Deliverer, the Son of God made man.

‘When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.’ (Gal. 4. 4.) His birth, his sufferings, his rejection, and his exaltation, had been foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures. He came under the law, obeying all its precepts.

Jesus Christ did not come to destroy the old Church, and to build ■ new one on its ruins; but rather He caused the old Church to pass into a higher state of existence. He said – ‘Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.’ (Matt. 5. 17.) He was born and lived on earth within the bounds of the Jewish Church, with its scriptures, laws, sacrifices, and rites; and in his own person gave to them a fuller meaning, and a new power to save and to heal the souls of men. In his person, and through his grace, the old types passed into new and living realities. Thus the Christian Church grew out of the old religion, as the leaves and flowers of a plant grow out of the stem. The Christian Church lay in the womb of the Jewish Church, and was its offspring. Our Lord himself clearly taught this continuity between the two Churches, by speaking of the Christian Church as ‘Israel.’ (Matt. 19. 28.) There is but one Israel, or chosen people, from the beginning to the end.

God’s purposed dealings with mankind through Christ, were too wonderful to be carried into effect without due warning. There was need of long and careful preparation for the Incarnation, and its application in the Christian Church. This preparation was made by God by means of the Jewish Church. Its great work was to prepare the way for Christ and for God’s fullest revelation of truth, and his richest outpouring of grace in Christ. ‘The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.’ (Gal. 3. 24.)

The prophecies, types, and figures of the Old Testament find their fulfilment in Christ himself, and the Christian Church.

The revelation of the Old Testament is completed in that of the New Testament.

The old sacrifices are fulfilled in the sacrifice of the Lamb of God on Calvary, and its continual application in the Holy Eucharist.

The moral law in the ten commandments is perfected, and raised

to a higher meaning by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount, and made binding upon Christian people.

The priesthood is summed up and perfected in Christ, the great high priest, and continued in the Christian ministry; the hereditary descent of the sons of Aaron finding its counterpart in the spiritual descent of the apostolic succession.

The royal priesthood of the Jewish nation finds its expression in the lay priesthood of the Christian Church.

The sacrament of Holy Baptism takes the place of the rite of Circumcision, and the Holy Eucharist of the Jewish Passover.

The fasts and festivals of the Jewish Church make way for those of the Christian Church, whilst the Jewish Sabbath passes into the Christian Sunday.

In short, the old Church was fulfilled in the new; and the Jewish religion, filled with new meaning and endowed with new powers, through the coming of God in the flesh, and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, passed into THE CATHOLIC RELIGION.

CHAPTER 2

THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH

There is in our midst a vast society named the Christian Church – the Church of God. If we are not already members of this society, we are at least conscious of its presence. What is the origin of the Christian Church; from whence did it come; who was its founder?

To this question there is but one answer – ‘The Lord hath founded Zion.’ (Isaiah 14. 32.) It was through the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and the gift of the Holy Ghost that the ancient Church of God passed into its catholic or world-wide phase on the day of Pentecost. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, made man, is the founder of the Christian Church.

This is clear from our Lord’s words to St Peter, when he confessed him to be the Son of God – ‘upon this rock I will build my Church.’ (Matt. 16. 18, *also See Note, p9.* Jesus Christ regards the Church as his own, He speaks of it as ‘my Church;’ and He claims to be its founder, for He says ‘I will build my Church.’

It is worthy of note that this is our Lord’s first mention of the Church. It was drawn from his lips, as it were, by the first confession of the truth of the Incarnation. St Peter was the first to confess belief in the incarnate Lord; he had just owned ‘the Son of Man’ to be ‘the Son of the living God.’ (Matt. 16. 13-20.) The promise of the Church is based upon this earliest confession of the Incarnation, and follows it as part of one and the same great design. The Church is the kingdom of the Incarnation: it is the sacred society in which the benefits which flow from the Incarnation of our Lord are extended from age to age. The Son of God came into the world to save man in a kingdom. This kingdom is his Church. It is the new creation of which He, the incarnate Lord, is the head and the life.

The work which the Church is planned to fulfil towards mankind, is too great to rest upon any but upon God himself. A Church founded by man, would be at best but a human society, subject to change and error, and liable to pass away. Such a Church would

afford no security or safety to the soul. We could not rely upon it; we could not place any confidence in its offices towards us. Our hope of salvation in the Church, rests upon the fact that the Church is the kingdom of our incarnate Lord – a divine kingdom of which He is the founder, and in which He has pledged himself to save man. Against this Church ‘the gates of hell shall not prevail.’ (Matt. 16. 18.)

It may be asked – Are we joined to Christ by being joined to the Church? or are we joined to the Church by being joined to Christ? This question can only be answered by saying – Whichever way it is, the result is the same; for the Church is one with Christ, and He is one with the Church. ‘He is the head of the body, the Church.’ (Col. 1. 18.)

NOTE
ON CHRIST'S PROMISE TO ST PETER
(Matt. 16. 17-20.)

The Church has received no certain or fixed tradition as to what our Lord meant by 'the rock' in this passage. Some of the fathers taught that Christ himself is the rock, others that the faith in his Godhead and Messiahship which St Peter confessed is meant, others again that St Peter is the rock. Several of the fathers held two of these opinions together, and some held all three. St Augustine in his earlier writings taught that St Peter is the rock, but he afterwards gave up that view, and held that Christ is the rock. His words are - 'I said in a certain place of the apostle St Peter, that upon him, as upon the rock, the Church was founded. . . . But I know that afterwards I most often expounded that saying of our Lord - "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock, I will build my Church" as meaning upon him whom Peter confessed saying - "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."' Let the reader choose which of these two interpretations is the more probable' (*Retract.* lib. i. c. 21). The fact that this great teacher changed his mind as to the meaning of the passage, and left it an open question to his readers, shows that he had no idea that any important doctrine depends on its interpretation.

It is very noticeable that, if we except the popes and persons closely associated with the Roman see, the fathers, who understand the rock to be St Peter, in no way connect our Lord's promise with the institution of the papacy.

St Peter may be regarded as the rock, because he first confessed belief in the person and office of Christ, and first was nominated to be an apostle. He was first in order amongst the twelve, but had no jurisdiction over the rest of the apostles. He was not their lord, but their leader: he was 'primus inter pares,' i.e., first among equals. The fathers lay great stress on the *equality* of the apostles.

If St Peter is a rock upon which the Church is built, we must remember that the other apostles are also spoken of as foundations of the church (*see* Eph. 2. 20; Rev. 21. 14). The power of the keys, promised first to St Peter, was afterwards promised by our Lord to *all* the apostles in similar words (*compare* St Matt. 16. 19 *with* 18. 18); and it was simultaneously communicated to *all* (St Thomas excepted) by our Lord's mysterious breathing, and by his words of power, on the evening of the day of his resurrection (*see* St John 20. 21-24).

The Author is indebted to the Revd F. W. Puller for the substance of the foregoing Note.

CHAPTER 3

THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

1. THE FOUNDATION OF THE MINISTRY

When Jesus Christ came, the Jewish Church, with its divinely appointed ministry, existed in its full strength. God had taken one tribe out of the twelve to be the priestly tribe, and one family of that tribe to bear the highest office of the priesthood. His choice fell upon the tribe of Levi, and, in it, on the family of Aaron. (Exod. 28. 1; Num. 3. 1-11.) Members of this tribe and family alone formed the divinely-appointed ministers of the Jewish Church.

But this order, which typified the priesthood of our Lord, was not intended to continue when He came. It was the will of God that the Aaronic priesthood should pass away, and that a better and more enduring priesthood should take its place. The priesthood which was to supplant it was that which had been prefigured in the days of Abraham by the mysterious Melchisedec, of whom we read in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis.

(i)

It is important that we should see wherein the difference between the priesthood of Aaron, and that of Melchisedec lay. In what way was the latter superior to the former, that it should supplant it?

The priesthood of Aaron was hereditary, being handed down from father to son; it was but for a time, and was destined to pass away. The priesthood of Melchisedec was inherent in himself, and independent of others; it was to endure unto the end of time. Moreover, there was a feature in the priesthood of Melchisedec which was wanting in that of Aaron. Aaron was a priest simply; Melchisedec was a king as well as a priest. Melchisedec is described as 'king of Salem, priest of the most high God.' (Heb. 7. 1.)

(ii)

The priesthood of Melchisedec was fulfilled in our Lord. In the Psalms, He is described as a 'priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.' (Ps. 110. 4.) In the Epistle to the Hebrews, He is five times spoken of by the same title. (Heb. 5. 6, 10; 6. 20; 7. 17, 21.)

When our Lord came, He took upon himself for our salvation the threefold office of prophet, priest, and king. He was anointed by the Holy Spirit in his incarnation, and at his baptism, to be—

The prophet, who should teach man about God.

The priest, who should reconcile man to God.

The king, who should subdue man to God.

These three offices were summed up in his own person: and were bestowed upon him never to be taken from him. Now, in heaven, at the Father's right hand, Jesus Christ is still the prophet, the priest, and the king of his Church.

He no longer exercises these offices towards the Church on earth in visible presence, but through a divinely-appointed ministry. He has been pleased to choose and to set apart a certain order of men, to represent him in his Church below.

The first of this long series of representatives to whom He gave authority to act for him, were the apostles whom He chose out of the body of believers. (Luke 6. 13, etc.) Our Lord gave them the title of 'apostles,' i.e., those who are sent forth. The apostles were men sent forth by Christ to be the prophets, or teachers, priests, and rulers of his church. To the apostles our Lord said — 'As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.' (John 20. 21.) Jesus chose these men to be with him, and so trained them to take, in some sense, his place when He should leave the earth.

In like manner, the apostles were divinely instructed to choose others to take their place, and to succeed to their office at death. In this way provision was made for the continuation of the ministry founded by our Lord, and for the perpetuation in the Church of his threefold mission as prophet, priest, and king.

On the eve of his ascension into heaven, He bestowed mission or authority upon the ministry whom He had chosen, saying — 'All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye

therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.' (Matt. 28. 18–20.)

To shew how truly Jesus Christ intended the Christian ministry to represent him in the world, He declared to its first members – 'He that receiveth you receiveth me,' (Matt. 10. 40.) and 'He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me.' (Luke 10. 16.) It is impossible to find words which shall set forth more strongly the divine origin and authority of the Christian ministry.

(iii)

In the words, 'Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you,' (John 15. 16.) Jesus Christ taught that the Christian ministry is derived from above, and not from below. Of the Christian ministry, as well as that of the Jewish Church, the words of God are true – 'I have given your priest's office unto you.' (Num. 18. 7.)

The term *clergy* is now used in speaking of the Christian priesthood. This word signifies those upon whom the sacred lot has fallen – those chosen by God to a sacred office. The clergy are not only the organs of the people, they are much more than this; they are the ministers of Christ.¹ Thus it is their first duty to represent God to the people as his ambassadors. An ambassador is one who represents the king who sends him. The clergy can say – 'We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.' (2 Cor. 5. 20.)

It is most important to notice this. The members of parliament who govern our land, receive their authority from below – from those who choose them as their representatives: they represent the people. But the ministers of the Church receive their authority by commission from Jesus Christ, whom they represent. They are the messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the Lord. Thus the authority of the priesthood of the Church of God is derived from

above. The clergy are sent by God to the people. Every minister of the true Church can say – Christ has sent me to represent him: I speak and act for him: I am his minister: I am come to minister ‘in the person of Christ.’ (See 1 Cor. 4. 1; 2 Cor. 2. 10.)

It is important also to notice that when Christ sends men to be his representatives, He does not part with his power; He only puts it forth. When the deputies of the king administer law in distant lands, they do not dethrone the king; they maintain and exercise his authority. It is so with the Christian ministry. Christ keeps the power in his own hands, putting it forth by means of his ministers. This truth gives the explanation of the old saying, *ubi sacerdos, ibi Christus* i.e., where the priest is, there is Christ.

The very greatness of the claim of the clergy to act ‘in the person of Christ,’ is their safeguard against pride. What room is there for self-exaltation in a system in which self is merged and lost in another, and in which the man fades and the Lord is more and more? The priesthood must never lose sight of St Paul’s teaching – ‘We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.’ (2 Cor. 4. 7.)

2. THE APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION

The power to act as ministers of Christ was given by Jesus Christ in the first instance to the apostles. But this ministerial commission was not intended to be exercised only by them, and to cease when they died. The Christian ministry was formed as the divinely-ordered means of applying the blessings of the Incarnation to mankind; and the Incarnation is not a passing event in the world’s history, but an abiding reality. The permanent character of the ministry which Christ ordained, rests upon the permanent character of his Incarnation.

Our Lord intended that the office which He bestowed upon the twelve apostles should live on, after their deaths, as long as the world lasts. The apostolic ministry is an abiding fact in a world of change.

It is true that the commission – ‘Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things

whatsoever I have commanded you,' was given to the apostles; but it was accompanied by the promise – 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' (Matt. 28. 19, 20.) It is as though Christ had said – Teach and baptize all nations, and I will be with you in so doing. Moreover, He promised to be with the apostles in performing these ministerial acts 'unto the end of the world.' But how could He be with the apostles personally in their work 'unto the end of the world?' He knew that the apostles would die like other men, and therefore the promise of being with them as individuals 'unto the end of the world,' could not be our Lord's meaning.

(i)

'The end of the world,' of which our Lord spake, has not yet come; how then is his promise to the apostles fulfilled?

The only possible meaning of the saying 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world' is this – I will be with the ministry of which you are but the first members.

Thus, we have the great promise on which the doctrine of the apostolic succession rests. As Christ was with the apostles ratifying and confirming their official acts, so He has pledged himself to be with their successors as long as his mediatorial kingdom lasts. We have thus the best possible grounds for believing in the continuity of the apostolic ministry, as it now exists among ourselves.

(ii)

But how was this continuity, or succession, to be secured?

It was to be secured by the apostles in their life-time providing successors to their office. As our blessed Lord ordained the twelve to be his representatives when He left the earth, so the apostles chose others to take their place when they in turn were withdrawn by death. This plan of continuing the apostles' ministry was to be carried on from age to age until the end of time. As a fact of history, it has been carried on. It is now nearly two thousand years since our Lord's promise was made. During this long period, successors of the apostles, first receiving, and then in turn handing on the divine power and authority which Christ gave to the twelve, have never

been wanting. The apostolic succession is the link or bond which connects the Church of the twentieth century with that of the first century.

In passing on the ministerial office to their immediate successors, the apostles used the laying on of hands. This ceremony signifies the transfer of authority, and it gave its name to the rite of ordination. Ordination is the setting apart of men to be ministers of Christ. The apostles laid their hands upon their successors, and these successors in turn did the same to others. There are several instances of this method of passing on the ministerial offices in the New Testament. (*See Acts 6. 6; 1 Tim. 4. 14; 5. 22; 2 Tim. 1. 6.*) What was then done has been done ever since. Every bishop, priest, and deacon, is now set apart by the laying on of hands. By this means there has been no break in the transmission of the ministerial commission in the Church of God, from the times of the apostles down to our own day.²

(iii)

The greatest possible care has ever been taken in this matter, to secure the true succession. It became a rule of the Church in very early days, that at least three successors of the apostles (or bishops as they were called), should lay their hands upon the heads of those whom they admitted to the highest office of the ministry.

The figure of a chain, reaching link by link from the apostles' days down to our own times, has been used in describing the apostolic succession. But the connection between the chief ministers of the Church and the apostles, is not so much of the nature of the chain, as of a vast network. If by chance one strand of the net should fail, yet the whole would not be broken up. 'It has been mathematically argued that, even if we make the absurd supposition of one consecrator in twenty at any particular moment in history having been, through some accident, himself not validly consecrated, the chances will be 8,000 to 1 against all three consecrators in any given case being in like position.'³

The reason for this extraordinary care is to guard against the loss of the Apostolic succession – a loss which would result in the dying out of the church as our Lord constituted it. A Church stands or

falls by the apostolic succession. We shall see in the next section that the apostolic succession is the pledge of a valid ministry, and of valid sacraments. The term *valid* implies the fulfilment of God's conditions whereby certainty is secured. That which is valid rests upon the security of the divine covenant. Without a ministry possessing Christ's authority, there can be no certainty that we possess valid sacraments conveying the grace which they express; and if there is uncertainty about the sacraments there is uncertainty as to union with Christ. Without the divinely-appointed ministry of the Church, we have no guarantee that the covenanted grace would continue. Should the apostolic succession die out, there would be need of a second appointment directly by our Lord, and of a second day of Pentecost with a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We need not contemplate such a disaster, for our Lord's promise stands sure – 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.'

(iv)

It has been already shewn that all the great features of the Christian Church are prefigured in the Old Testament. The apostolic succession is an instance of this. The chief ministers of the Jewish church were the high priest, and the priests. They are described as the 'sons of Aaron,' for they were descended from him by *natural* descent, the priestly powers being handed down from father to son. The apostolic succession is by *spiritual* descent, through the laying on of hands.

Aaron, the first high priest, was called directly by God to the office; the apostles were called by Christ himself. It was the will of God that the office of high priest should continue after Aaron's death. At the close of his life, we read that God said, 'Aaron shall be gathered unto his people. . . . Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up into mount Hor: and strip Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son.' (Num. 20. 24, etc.)

This custom was continued in after years, as we learn from Exod. 29. 29, 30 – 'And the holy garments of Aaron shall be his sons' after him, to be anointed therein, and to be consecrated in them. And that son that is priest in his stead shall put them on seven days, when

he cometh into the tabernacle of the congregation to minister in the holy place.' The newly-made high priest was to wear the vestments of his predecessor to show the continuity of the office, and to mark its complete identity with that of his predecessor. We have in all this a great foreshadowing of the apostolic succession in the Christian Church.

Christ is gone up: yet ere He pass'd
From earth, in heav'n to reign,
He formed one holy Church to last
Till He should come again.

His twelve apostles first He made
His ministers of grace;
And they their hands on others laid
To fill in turn their place.

So age by age, and year by year,
His grace was handed on;
And still the holy Church is here,
Although her Lord is gone.

J. M. NEALE

3. APOSTLES AND BISHOPS

Our blessed Lord is the fountain-head of the Christian ministry. In his sacred person, He summed up all the offices of the ministry. Thus, in the New Testament He is named –

1. APOSTLE (Heb. 3.1)
2. BISHOP (1 Peter 2.25)
3. PRIEST (Heb. 5.6)
4. DEACON or servant, as the name means (Luke 22.27)

A sovereign sums up in himself all the lower offices of the State. The greater includes the lesser. This is true of the apostolate, or apostolic office. In a secondary sense the apostles were founders of the ministry. St Paul declares that the Church is 'built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets.' (Eph. 2. 20.) All ministerial authority was lodged in them, and in their hands all

official power was centred. The lower orders or grades of the Christian ministry, which were to be developed as occasion arose, lay dormant in the apostles.

(i)

The first of these orders to be called out by the apostles was the lowest order, that of the 'deacons.' This was followed by the creation of a second order, named in the New Testament, 'elders' or 'bishops.' But though members of this second order were at first sometimes called 'bishops,' they were not bishops in the special sense in which the term afterwards came to be used. The word *bishop* means 'overseer.' These so-named bishops were members of the second order who had the oversight of congregations. Thus, in the days of the apostles, there were three orders in existence, viz:

1. APOSTLES sent by Christ.
2. ELDERS OR BISHOPS
3. DEACONS sent by the apostles.

But when the time drew near for the apostles to depart this life, they selected members of the second order to succeed them in the government of the Church, and in the ordaining of her ministers. Gradually the name 'bishop' ceased to be applied to the second order, and became restricted to the first order.

Upon the death of the apostles, these bishops took their place, and became chief ministers of the Church.

(ii)

The apostolate contained the germ of the Christian ministry. At first the episcopate, or order of bishops, slept in the apostolate. During the closing years of the first century, the apostolate was merged in the episcopate. The order of apostles passed away, and that of bishops took its place as a permanent institution in the Church. The one order grew out of the other as a branch of the apostolic stem. In a special sense the bishops became successors of

the apostles, inheriting the fulness of ministerial power. The three permanent orders were now –

1. BISHOPS
2. ELDERS,⁴ OR PRIESTS
3. DEACONS

Whatever confusion appears to exist as to the names given to the various grades of the Christian ministry in the New Testament, it is quite clear that from the apostles of Jesus Christ sprang the threefold order known henceforth by the titles of ‘bishops,’ ‘priests,’ and ‘deacons.’ ‘Without these three orders,’ says St Ignatius (AD 110) ‘no Church has a title to the name.’ (*ad Trall.* iii.)

This threefold order dates from New Testament times, and has been continued through the apostolic succession to our own days without break. Thus in the Preface to the services for ordaining the clergy of the Church, in the Prayer Book, we are taught – ‘It is evident unto all men diligently reading the holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the apostles’ time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ’s Church; bishops, priests, and deacons. Which offices were evermore had in such reverent estimation, that no man might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as are requisite for the same; and also by public prayer, with imposition of hands, were approved and admitted thereunto by lawful authority.’

(iii)

The subject of which we are treating is of such great importance, that it is well to quote the carefully weighed words of the late Dr Liddon. In the course of a sermon preached at the consecration of two bishops⁵ in St Paul’s Cathedral on St Mark’s Day, 1885, this great preacher said – ‘When we say that bishops are successors of the apostles we are not formulating a theory, but stating a fact of history. In one sense, indeed, every presbyter succeeds the apostles; like them he ministers the Word and Sacraments of Christ. In

another the apostles have no successors; they alone were privileged to found the Church of Christ, and while founding it to wield a world-wide jurisdiction. . . . If bishops do not singly share in the world-wide jurisdiction which belonged to the apostles, and which could only now be wielded by the universal episcopate acting together, they do in other respects reproduce from age to age among men the fulness of the apostolic authority.

‘There are . . . two, and only two . . . theories of the origin and character of the Christian ministry. Of these one makes the minister the elected delegate of the congregation; in teaching and ministering he exerts an authority which he derives from his flock. The other traces ministerial authority to the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, who deposited it in its fulness in the college of the apostles. ‘All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations.’ ‘As my father hath sent me, even so send I you.’ The apostles, thus invested with the plenitude of ministerial power, detached from themselves in the form of distinct grades or orders of ministry, so much as was needed, at successive epochs, for building up and supporting the Church. First, they created an order specially charged with the care of the poor and with the administration of Church funds, although also, empowered to preach, and to administer the sacrament of baptism. Next they bestowed on the Church a larger separate instalment of ministerial power – that of the presbyters or bishops – as in those first days the second order was called indifferently. To this order all ministerial capacity was committed, with the exception of that of transmitting the ministry. Lastly, St Clement of Rome tells us, that, desiring to avoid controversy which they foresaw, the apostles ordained certain men to the end that, when they should have fallen asleep in death, others of approved character might succeed to their special office. Such were Timothy and Titus: not yet exclusively called bishops, but certainly bishops in the sense of the sub-apostolic and of our own age; men who, in addition to the fulness of ministerial capacity, had also the power of transmitting it. In Crete, Titus receives explicit authority from St Paul to ordain presbyters; at Ephesus, Timothy has particular directions from St Paul respecting the way in which charges against presbyters are to be received. Thus we see in Timothy and Titus the exercise of what is distinctive both in

episcopal orders and episcopal jurisdiction; and unless the pastoral epistles are not of apostolic origin, the three orders existed in their completeness under the eyes of St Paul. Within the compass of the New Testament, there are two other facts which point to the establishment of the episcopate in apostolic times. One is the position of St James-the-less at Jerusalem; he seems to have been an apostle who already occupied the more localized and restricted position of a bishop. This appears in the place assigned to him at the Council of Jerusalem, and in the formal visit which St Paul paid him at a later period, but especially in the unanimous testimony of the second century, which spoke of him as Bishop of Jerusalem. The other fact is the representation in the Apocalypse of the 'angels' of the seven churches. What were these angels? Guardian spirits of the churches they cannot have been, since some of them were guilty of grave faults. Nor can they have been the churches themselves, since St John distinguishes the angels and the churches as having the distinct symbols of stars and candlesticks. Each angel represents a church, for the faith and practice of which he is responsible; and it would be difficult to express more exactly the position of a primitive bishop.⁶

4. THE EPISCOPATE, OF DIVINE ORIGIN

Is the episcopate, or order of bishops, essential to the Church's life, or not? Are bishops merely *useful* to the well-being of the Church, or are they *necessary* to its very existence?

To these important questions there is but one answer, and it is this – The episcopate is of divine institution in the Church, and therefore a necessity. The old saying 'No church without a bishop,' not only expresses a fact of history, but a great truth also. There never has been a Church without a bishop, and there never can be.

To quote the words of Sanderson,⁷ the learned Bishop of Lincoln (AD 1660) – 'My opinion is that episcopal government is not derived merely from apostolical practice or institution, but that it is originally founded in the person and office of the Messiah, our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, who, being sent by his heavenly Father to be the great Apostle, (Heb. 3. 1.) Shepherd, and Bishop (1 Pet.

2. 25.) of his Church, and anointed to that office immediately after his baptism by John, with power and the Holy Ghost (Acts 10. 37, 38) descending then upon him in a bodily shape, (Luke 3. 22.) did afterwards before his ascension into heaven, send and empower his holy apostles, giving them the Holy Ghost likewise, as his Father had given him, in like manner as his Father had before sent him (John 20. 21.) to execute the same apostolical, episcopal, and pastoral office, for the ordering and governing of his church, until his coming again; and so the same office to continue in them and their successors unto the end of the world.' (See Matt. 28. 18–20.)

This teaching is in accord with the testimony of the whole Church from the first, which sets forth the order of bishops as a divine institution, both permanent and necessary.

The episcopate was instituted for four great ends, viz., to be

- (a) THE FOUNT OF THE MINISTRY
- (b) THE BOND OF UNITY
- (c) THE GUARDIAN OF THE TRUTH
- (d) THE INSTRUMENT AND PLEDGE OF GRACE

- (a) THE EPISCOPATE, THE FOUNT OF THE MINISTRY

The bishops, as successors of the apostles, sum up all the offices of the Christian ministry. In the episcopate lies the germ of the three orders of the ministry – bishops, priests, and deacons. A bishop can do all that a priest or a deacon can do. Thus, the whole work of the Christian ministry might, if need be, be performed by the one order of bishops only. But the bishops give out, or delegate, certain of their powers to others, who are named priests and deacons. This giving out of power is termed ordination. The priesthood exercises a considerable portion of the episcopal office, but only a portion; the diaconate, or order of deacons, exercises a still smaller portion. Priests and deacons in acting for the bishop act for Christ, whom the bishop represents.

In ordination the bishop separates certain of the laity to become the clergy, and bestows upon them authority to minister as his representatives. The bishops, and the bishops only, have power to

perpetuate the ministry in its various grades. They do this by handing on the authority received from Christ through the apostolic succession. It is on this ground that the Church holds that no one can act as a minister of Christ in the Church either lawfully or validly, without ordination by a bishop.

(b) THE EPISCOPATE, THE BOND OF UNITY

The episcopate, or order of bishops, exists as a safeguard from schism or division. Those who separate themselves from their lawful bishops become schismatics. To separate from the bishops, is to separate from the Church of which the bishops are the rulers. Loyalty to the rulers of the State is the bond of union in the nation; when this loyalty is withheld, disunion or revolution is the result. To separate from the bishops is an act of disloyalty to Jesus Christ, whose representatives they are.

The idea of the episcopate as a bond of unity is strongly insisted upon by early writers. For example St Ignatius (AD 110), the great and glorious martyr, bishop of Antioch, and a disciple of the Apostle St John, wrote – ‘He who does anything apart from the bishop, and presbytery, and deacons, is not pure in his conscience.’ (*ad Trall.* 7.) ‘For as many as are of God and of Jesus Christ, they are with the bishop.’ (*ad Philad.* 3.) St Ignatius is but enlarging upon the teaching of the New Testament, where the continuing in ‘the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship,’ (Acts 2. 42.) is named as a mark of Church unity.

In the writings of Tertullian (AD 200), we learn that certain bodies claiming to belong to the Church were thus challenged – ‘Let them produce the account of the origins of their churches; let them unroll the line of their bishops, running down in such a way from the beginning that their first bishop shall have had for his authorizer and predecessor one of the apostles, or of the apostolic men who continued to the end in their fellowship.’ (*De præscript.* c. 32.)

St Cyprian, bishop of Carthage and martyr (AD 250), sets forth the unity of the episcopate as the pledge of the unity of the Church. Of his teaching we shall read in a later chapter of this book.

Thus we see that in very early times, the order of bishops was regarded as the bond of unity in the Church.

However, if a bishop become heretical the faithful no longer owe him allegiance.

(c) THE EPISCOPATE, THE GUARDIAN OF THE TRUTH

As the guardian of the true faith, the episcopate is the guarantee against heresy. Heresy is false doctrine obstinately held or taught. The true faith was revealed by Christ and his Holy Spirit to the apostles in all its completeness. The apostles handed down this body of teaching to their successors, the bishops. By this means the true faith was to be preserved in the world. St Paul alludes to this mode of handing down the truth in his words to Timothy, the first bishop of Ephesus. He writes – ‘Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou has heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.’ (2 Tim. 1. 13, 14.) ‘The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.’ (2 Tim. 2. 2) St Paul is speaking of the deposit of Christian truth, which was entrusted to Timothy, as a bishop, to uphold and to guard.

St Irenaeus (AD 175), in speaking of the succession of bishops in the local Church of Rome, says – ‘The blessed apostles (St Peter and St Paul), then having founded and built up this Church, committed the ministry of the episcopate to Linus. Of this Linus, Paul makes mention in the Epistle to Timothy. Anacletus succeeds him. After him, in the third place from the apostles, Clement obtained the episcopate, who had both seen the blessed apostles, and been with them, and still had the preaching of the apostles ringing in his ears, and their tradition before his eyes.’⁸ St Irenaeus, in speaking of Polycarp, goes on to say – ‘And Polycarp, too, not only having been instructed by the apostle, and having lived continually with many who had seen Christ, and having also been appointed by apostles bishop in Asia, in the Church at Smyrna . . . uniformly taught these things, which he had also learned from the apostles, which also the Church hands down, which also alone are true.’⁹

One of the chief duties of the episcopate is to hand on the Christian faith, whole and undefiled, as it came down from the apostles of Jesus Christ. To aid the bishops along the ages in this

great task, our Lord promised the guidance of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth. His words are – ‘I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth.’ (John 14. 16, 17.)

This great promise is similar in its terms to that in which our Lord pledged himself to be with the Apostles ‘alway, even unto the end of the world.’ (Matt. 28. 20.) In each case the promise of the divine presence was made in the first instance to the apostles, but made in such terms as to include their successors, the bishops, throughout all time. Our Lord will be with the apostles *ALWAYS*; the Spirit of truth will abide with them *FOR EVER*. But as the apostles soon after died, it is clear that these promises were made not to the apostles only as individuals, but as representatives of the Christian ministry, of which they were the first members. In no other way could the twofold presence of Christ and his Spirit be vouchsafed ‘alway,’ and ‘for ever,’ but to the successors of the apostles, the bishops of the Church.

It is also to be observed that the idea of *teaching* is specially connected with both these passages. Our Lord’s presence is guaranteed to the apostles and the bishops in ‘teaching the nations to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;’ (Matt. 28. 20.) and the Holy Spirit will be with them ‘for ever’ as ‘the Spirit of truth.’ (John 14. 16, 17.) The same blessed Spirit who revealed the truth to the apostles enabled their successors to witness to that truth.

When heresy sprang up, it was exposed and rejected by the bishops, acting alone or in council. The Councils were great assemblies of bishops of the Church. In these Councils, the bishops declared the true faith as it had been handed down to them from the apostles. They restated the old faith from the beginning, as they had received it.

As an example of this, we may instance the heresy of Arius, who denied the Godhead of our Saviour. Three hundred and eighteen bishops met in council at Nicaea in the year 325, and condemned the heresy, by declaring the truth which they had received through their predecessors from the apostles. ‘So have we received’ was the witness they bore. We have their statement of faith in the Nicene Creed, which attests, with all possible fulness, the Divine Nature

of our Lord Jesus Christ. This decision was received by the whole Church, and thus we are certain that it has the authority of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth.

As other heresies arose, they were met and condemned in like manner; the bishops speaking out, and the church at large confirming their decisions.

(d) THE EPISCOPATE, THE INSTRUMENT AND
PLEDGE OF GRACE

The streams of grace flow in the Church through the sacraments, which are called 'the channels of grace.' Our Lord committed the sacraments to the keeping of the apostles and their successors, the bishops and clergy of the Church. St Paul speaks of the clergy as 'stewards of the mysteries of God. (1 Cor. 4. 1.) These 'mysteries' are certain deep truths revealed by God, which pass the understanding, such as 'the mystery of the Holy Incarnation;' but chiefly and above all, 'the mysteries of God' mean the sacraments, called in all parts of the Church by the name of 'the holy mysteries.' Of these sacraments the bishops and clergy are the stewards – the guardians and dispensers.

The sacraments can be duly celebrated only by those who have been authorized by Christ; that is, by the apostles and their successors. This is true not so much as a matter of mere order, but as resting on our Lord's revealed will. Unless the sacraments are ministered by persons duly qualified, there is no security that they convey grace. Thus it comes about that the means of grace depend upon a lawful ministry.

In the words – 'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,' (Matt. 28. 19.) Christ instituted the sacrament of Holy Baptism.

In the words – 'Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. . . . This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me,' (1 Cor. 11. 24, 25.) He ordained the sacrament of his Body and Blood.

In the words – 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye

remit, they are remitted unto them,' (John 20. 22, 23.) He instituted the ordinance of Absolution.

'There is not in the world' says Bishop Jeremy Taylor 'a greater presumption, than that any should think to convey a gift of God, unless by God he be appointed to do it.'¹⁰

To say, 'I baptize thee,' or 'This is my body,' and 'This is my blood,' or 'I absolve thee,' would be presumptuous, unless the person who used these solemn words was duly authorized by God to do so. There is, moreover, no guarantee that such words would effect what they mean, unless used by competent persons, that is to say by the bishops and those sent by them.¹¹

Thus we see, that the episcopate is the warrant or guarantee of sacramental grace. Those bodies of Christians who have lost the apostolic succession, have lost with it the divine warrant of such grace. God may excuse those who act in ignorance, and He may reward their faith by some gift of grace; but if so, it is as outside the covenant, and such grace is 'uncovenanted grace.'

To sum up what has been said in this chapter, we may add, that to be united in the Body of Christ, which is the Church – to know the truth – to be assured that we are within the covenanted sphere of grace – it is needful to place ourselves under the rule, guidance, and ministry of the bishops of the Church of God. In the words of St Ignatius 'WHERE THE BISHOP APPEARS, THERE LET THE PEOPLE BE, AS WHERE JESUS CHRIST IS, THERE IS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.'¹²

NOTES

1. 'The priest may be defined as one who represents God to man, and man to God. It is moreover indispensable that he should be called by God, for no man 'taketh this honour to himself.' The Christian ministry satisfies both these conditions. . . . The Christian minister is God's ambassador to men; he is charged with the ministry of reconciliation; he unfolds the will of heaven; he declares in God's name the terms on which pardon is offered; and he pronounces in God's name the absolution of the penitent. . . . Again the Christian minister is the representative of man to God – of the congregation primarily, of the individual indirectly as a member of the congregation. The alms, the prayers, the thanksgivings of the community are offered through him. He is a priest, as the mouthpiece, the delegate, of a priestly race.' – Bishop Lightfoot, *The Christian Ministry* pp. 267, 268.
2. 'The Church has a principle of perpetuity imparted to it by God through his

promise, who is her head and lord. Her succession of bishops mounts up by a golden chain, link by link, to the apostles, with whom and with their successors Christ promised to be always, even to the end of the world.' – Pusey's sermon, *The Church the Converter of the Heathen* p. 13.

3. Gore, *The Ministry of the Christian Church* 2nd Ed., p. 109.
4. The original word for 'elder' in the New Testament is always 'presbyter,' which was afterwards shortened to 'prester,' and then to 'priest.'
5. Bishop King of Lincoln, and Bishop Bickersteth of Exeter, were consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, eight bishops assisting at the laying on of hands. This is an illustration of practice named on page 15.
6. *A Father in Christ* pp. 8–11
7. *Works* vol. v. p. 191, ed. Jacobson.
8. Quoted by Pusey in the note at the end of his famous sermon, *The Rule of Faith* p. 65.
9. Quoted by Pusey, *The Rule of Faith* p. 66.
10. *The Rule of Conscience*. Book iii. Chapter vi. Rule 12.
11. In cases of extreme necessity, where no minister of the Church can be had, baptism by a layman or a woman, with water and in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, though irregular, has been recognized as valid.
12. *ad Smyrn.* 8.

CHAPTER 4

GRADES AMONGST THE BISHOPS OF THE CHURCH

The Christian ministry, consisting of the three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons, has already been shewn to be of divine institution. It cannot therefore be changed to any other form of ministry, and it will continue to be *the ministry* of the Church until the end of the world.

But as the Church grew and spread in the world, it was found convenient to make distinctions of rank in each of the three orders of the ministry. This was specially the case with the bishops, the chief ministers of the Church.

(i)

In early times bishops were much more numerous than they are now. Every city had its bishop, and at first all bishops were equal. But as time went on, it came about quite naturally that the greater the city, the greater was the dignity of its bishop; the rank or civil importance of the city passing on to its bishop. And it followed quite naturally, too, that the bishops of smaller towns in surrounding districts or provinces, placed themselves under the protection and guidance of those of the greater cities. This is the origin of what is known as 'the provincial system,' which was not long in becoming universal, covering the whole ground of the Church.

This plan of grouping the Churches of a province under the bishop of its chief town, came about as a matter of Church order or organization: it was no part of the divine institution of the ministry, or of the divine constitution of the Church. The bishops at the head of provinces were styled metropolitans, a name derived from the word 'metropolis,' the mother city or capital.

The Revd F. W. Puller, in treating of the rise of metropolitans, writes – 'As a rule, Christianity would get a footing first in the metropolis of each region. The other lesser cities would be

evangelized by missions sent forth from thence; and so the suffragan sees would look on themselves as daughters of the metropolitan see. The metropolitan bishop was the natural centre of unity for the bishops of the province. When a see became vacant, it would be the metropolitan who would call together his brother bishops to consult about the appointment of a worthy pastor to succeed to the empty throne; and the metropolitan would naturally preside at the preliminary meetings for consultation and election, as well as at the consecration service itself. If troubles arose among the bishops, whether heresies or schisms or quarrels or other wrong doings or if new and difficult questions emerged, concerning which it seemed desirable that the neighbouring bishops should act together, it would be natural for the bishops to meet in synod, and it would also be natural that the metropolitan should take the initiative and summon his bretheren; and the metropolis would normally be the obvious place of meeting. Under such circumstances the metropolitan would of course preside, and in most cases he would be entrusted by the synod with the duty of seeing that its decisions were carried out. Thus, by the natural course of events, and by the free action of the essentially co-equal prelates, a certain precedence and pre-eminence, and, more than that, a certain right of initiative and of inspection and of administration, would by common consent be lodged in the occupant of the metropolitan see.¹

(ii)

In time 'the provincial system' developed in some parts of the Church; but never universally, into what is known as 'the patriarchal system.' In certain regions particular groups of provinces became subject to the bishops of the greater cities. Amongst the great cities of the world in the early days of Christianity were Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch. These cities owed a further prominence in the eyes of Christians to their connection with great names in the Church. Thus both St Peter and St Paul had spent some time in Antioch. Rome received the apostolic succession from St Peter and St Paul,² and both of these apostles were martyred and buried there; the Church of Alexandria was founded by St Mark the Evangelist. To this list must be added Jerusalem, the Mother Church of

Christendom, which owned St James, a relative of our Lord, as its first bishop. Later on Constantinople, as it rose into fame as the emperor's seat, and as the second city in the world, was added to the list. The bishops of these cities were regarded as men of rank in the Church, and upon them, in time, was bestowed the title of 'patriarchs' – a word which signified 'the heads of families.' The groups of provinces under the care of these patriarchs were named 'patriarchates.' The patriarchs presided over the metropolitans, who in turn presided over the bishops of provinces. In the West, during the middle ages, the chief archbishops who presided over national Churches, were called 'primates.' The patriarchates were five in number; four being situated in the East, and one in the West. The patriarchates in the East were Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem; whilst that in the West was Rome.³ The patriarchates took their names from the cities in which the patriarchs resided. The patriarchs were regarded as the five presidents of the Church. Amongst the patriarchs, the custom of the Church allowed grades in rank of honour. The first place was naturally given to Rome, because Rome was the capital of the empire, and also from its connection with the greatest of the apostles, St Peter and St Paul. If religious considerations *alone* had determined the order of precedence, Jerusalem must have ranked first. Next to Rome, in rank of honour, came Constantinople, as being the seat of the Roman Emperor and his court, and hence called New Rome. In the general Council of Chalcedon held AD 451, it was enacted that 'as the fathers fitly bestowed precedence upon the throne of Old Rome because it was the imperial city . . . moved by the same consideration, equal precedence be awarded to the most holy throne of New Rome,' i.e., Constantinople, 'judging reasonably that the city honoured by the seat of the Empire, and by the Senate, should enjoy equal rank with the old imperial Rome, and like her be magnified in ecclesiastical matters, having the second place after her.'

(iii)

To sum up what has been said, we again quote the words of the Revd F. W. Puller, 'By divine right all bishops were inherently

equal, but by custom and ecclesiastical legislation the bishops of the metropolitan sees acquired certain rights, which were delegated to them by their brother bishops. Moreover, among the most important Churches a certain order of precedence grew up, which corresponded with the civil dignity of the cities in which those Churches existed; and, finally, the Churches which were founded by the apostles were treated with peculiar reverence.⁴ We must be careful to note, that, whilst the distinction between bishops, priests, and deacons, is a matter of divine appointment, these grades amongst bishops are not so. They were made for the sake of convenience in the better government of the Church. The distinctions are distinctions of honour, and of influence, and of strictly limited jurisdiction, and are useful as a matter of Church order; they are not essential to the Church's life. St Cyprian teaches this, when he speaks of our Lord 'giving to all the apostles an equal power,' and of their being 'endued with an equal fellowship both of honour and power.'⁵ St Jerome, writing AD 393, says likewise – 'wherever there is a bishop, whether it be at Rome, or Eugubium, whether it be at Constantinople, or at Rhegium, whether it be at Alexandria, or at Zoan, his dignity is one, and his priesthood is one . . . all alike are successors of the apostles.'⁶

NOTES

1. *The Primitive Saints and the See of Rome* pp. 11, 12.
2. St Irenaeus in speaking of the local Roman Church writes:– 'The blessed apostles (St Peter and St Paul) having founded and built up the Church (of Rome) committed the episcopate to Linus.' – Iren. iii. 3.
3. The claim of Rome to be the patriarch of the whole West rested on State legislation, and from a Church point of view was unauthorized. Even North Italy under Milan maintained its independence for a long time. North Africa can hardly be said to have ever yielded to the Roman patriarchate. Gaul did not submit until forced to do so by the emperors. The ancient British Church was independent of any patriarch. Originally the Roman jurisdiction was limited to the seven provinces of Central and Southern Italy, and to the three islands of Corsica, Sardinia, and Sicily. The subject is fully treated in Puller's *Primitive Saints*.
4. *Primitive Saints* p. 18.
5. *The Unity of the Church* Oxford translation. Library of the Fathers, 1876. p. 134.
6. *Letter cxlvi*. To Evangelus.

CHAPTER 5

THE ENDS FOR WHICH THE CHURCH EXISTS

From what has been already said in this work, it may be gathered that the Church of God is a divine society, existing in the world for great ends. At the risk of some slight repetition, it will be useful to dwell briefly upon the chief purposes for which the Church exists in our midst.

Our blessed Lord, by his incarnation, brought the fullness of grace and truth to the earth. 'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth.' He wills to bestow his grace and to make known his truth in and through his Church. In Holy Scripture, the Church is described as 'the bride' (Rev. 21. 9.) or spouse of Christ. It has been said that the spouse of Christ has two breasts, the breasts of grace and truth, by which she nourishes her members. Thus we are to regard the Church as—

1. THE SPHERE OF GRACE
2. THE HOME OF THE TRUTH
and hence as—
3. THE ARK OF SAFETY

1. THE CHURCH, THE SPHERE OF GRACE

Man is a creature gifted with intelligence, affection, and will. By a right use of these endowments, he is by *nature* able in some measure to know, to love, and to serve God. That he may be able to do these things more perfectly, God adds to man's natural endowments ■ supernatural gift, that is to say, a gift above nature. This supernatural gift is termed *grace*. By grace man is lifted out of the natural order, and placed in ■ higher condition. This higher condition is known as a 'state of grace.' In a state of grace man is able to know, to love, and to serve God more perfectly.

God has organized his Church as the sphere in which man may,

in this life, be received into a state of grace. It is in the Church that Christ lifts us out of the order of nature, and places us in the state of grace, and thus fits us for the life of glory in heaven. The Church of God on earth is the highway of grace; the sure and trustworthy road along which we may pass to glory. It is in the Church, and through the Church, that our Lord Jesus Christ still carries on his work of saving men by uniting them to himself. Within the Church, we are within the circle of covenanted grace. Outside the Church there is neither the warrant nor the certainty of grace.

In the words 'I am the vine, ye are the branches,' (John 15. 5.) our Lord teaches a great truth. As the sap flows from the vine through the branches to the foliage and fruit, so his grace flows through the Church to her members. It is the office of the Church, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, to put men in union with, and to keep them in union with, Jesus Christ, the Author of grace.

2. THE CHURCH, THE HOME OF THE TRUTH

The Church is a divine society to which are entrusted the treasures of grace and truth for the benefit of mankind. We have seen that in the ages before God was made man, He was gradually disclosing his truth to mankind as men were able to bear it. This disclosing is commonly called 'revelation.' God's revelation was complete in Jesus Christ. He, as God made man, was 'full of truth.' Jesus said – 'I am the Truth.' (John 1. 14; 14. 6.) He came to bring the truth in all its fulness to mankind.

The sum of truth was communicated by Christ through the Holy Spirit to the church. To the apostles our Lord said – 'But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father shall send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you;' and again – 'When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth.' (John 14. 26; 16. 13.) In this manner the early Church became possessed of all the truth. St Jude tells us that 'the faith was once delivered unto the saints.' (Verse 3.) The word 'once,' here means literally 'once for all.' The Church might be called upon to

explain and enlarge upon the faith thus given, but she could never add to it.

The truth of God was too precious a treasure to be cast loose among mankind, and so left to take its chance in the world. It needed a home in which it might be preserved free from human error, and a guardian which should keep it and hand it down unimpaired to future ages. Such a home and such a guardian is 'the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.' (1 Tim. 3. 15.) As Dr Gore says – 'It is conceivable that our Lord might have proclaimed a certain body of truth, and then left it to make its own way, to advance by its own weight among mankind. He might have scattered truth at random, like 'bread upon the waters,' over the area of human need. But in fact He did something different, He enshrined the truth deliberately in an organized society.'¹

It is the office of the Church to explain aright Christ's teaching. This duty she is enabled to fulfil through the aid of the Holy Ghost, who abides with the Church. Man needs a trustworthy teacher of the doctrine of Christ; such a teacher is the Church of God. She is a teacher holding a divine warrant, and her warrant rests upon the words of her Lord – 'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' (Matt. 28. 19, 20.)

3. THE CHURCH, THE ARK OF SAFETY

The Church being by God's appointment the sphere of grace and the home of the truth, it follows that there can be no safety outside the Church. This conclusion applies to all those to whom the Church has been sufficiently proposed, and who have had the opportunity of entering her fold. We are not called upon to give judgment as to the final state of those who remain and die outside the Church on earth. 'Them that are without God judgeth.' (1 Cor. 5. 13.) Whilst rightly anxious about their salvation, we must leave them to the mercy of God who alone knows whether they have heard and rejected his call to enter the true fold. We may hope that those who had not the chance of joining the Church on earth, or who never realized her claims, may, if they have been true to conscience, be

received into the Church during the time of waiting between death and the last judgment.

‘All knowledge of religion is from God, and not only that which the Bible has transmitted to us. There never was a time when God had not spoken to man, and told him to a certain extent his duty. . . We are expressly told in the New Testament, that at no time He left himself without witness in the world, and that in every nation He accepts those who fear and obey him. It would seem, then, that there is something true and divinely revealed, in every religion all over the earth, overloaded, as it may be, and at times even stifled by the impieties which the corrupt will and understanding of man have incorporated with it; so that revelation, properly speaking, is an universal, not a local gift; and the distinction between the state of Israelites formerly and Christians now, and that of the heathen, is, not that we can, and they cannot attain to future blessedness, but that the Church of God ever has had, and the rest of mankind never have had, authoritative documents of truth, and appointed channels of communication with him. The Word and the Sacraments are the characteristic of the elect people of God . . .’²

When men realize that the Church is a divine institution, the body of Christ, the temple and the organ of the Holy Ghost, the covenanted sphere of grace and truth, it becomes to them a matter of the highest importance to know where the Church is, that they may belong to it, and so be within the Ark of Safety.

NOTES

1. *The Mission of the Church* p. 8.
2. Newman, *Arians of the Fourth Century*. 4th edition, pp. 79, 80.

CHAPTER 6

THE DIVISIONS IN THE CHURCH

The idea of unity underlies all the figures by which the Church is described in the New Testament. The Church is there spoken of as – the kingdom of heaven, the body of Christ, the temple of God, the bride, the branches of the vine. There is but one kingdom, one body, one temple, one bride, one vine. This ‘oneness’ or unity, exists in reference to Jesus Christ; He is the king of the kingdom, the head of the body, the builder of the temple, the bridegroom, the vine. The great thought running through all the New Testament descriptions of the Church, is that of the Church’s unity in itself through its union with Jesus Christ.

In the New Testament, the word *Church* is used in two senses. It is used, as it has been used so far in this book, of the one divine society founded by Jesus Christ. Again, the word is used of lesser parts of the one Church, as, for instance, when we read in the Revelation of St John the Divine of the seven Churches of Asia. (1. 11.) But we are not to suppose that such Churches were independent or rival bodies of Christians; they were merely portions of the one world-wide society which Christ described as ‘my Church.’ (Matt. 16. 18.)

The unity of the Church rests upon Jesus Christ, its divine founder and head. The Church is one in itself, because it is one with him. The Church is one *in* him, and one *with* him. Of this unity the episcopate, or order of bishops, is the pledge. This is the view taken by St Cyprian in his great work ‘on the Unity of the Church.’ In commenting on St Paul’s words – ‘There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all . . .,’ (Eph. 4. 4–6.) St Cyprian writes – ‘This unity firmly should we hold and maintain, especially our bishops, presiding in the Church, in order that we may approve the episcopate itself to be one and undivided. . . . The episcopate is one; it is a whole, in which each enjoys full

possession. The Church is likewise one, though she be spread abroad and multiplies with the increase of her progeny.⁷¹

St Cyprian teaches that the unity of the Church depends upon the unity of the order of bishops sent by Christ, and upon the sacraments which they minister. He teaches that the episcopate forms but one undivided body, each bishop being in direct communication with Jesus Christ, and the minister of his grace, which is the life of the Church.

Thus the unity of the Church is not destroyed by death, for death cannot sever union with Christ. The greater part of the Church is not now on earth: only the lower limbs of the body of Christ are upon earth. The great majority of Christians are in the next world, where they are still in the unity of the Church; for they are one with Christ, who is the centre of unity. The centre of unity is not on earth, but in heaven.

But what about the sad divisions in the Church on earth, which are only too painfully visible? These divisions are, to everyone who realizes what Christ meant his Church to be, a cause of sorrow and shame. From the first, such divisions were not uncommon. St Paul speaks of them in his Epistles more than once. These early divisions were generally of brief duration, affecting, whilst they lasted, but small portions of the Church. But as time went on, greater and more serious disunion took place which has lasted for centuries, and still continues. First and foremost, there is the division between East and West, which dates from the twelfth century; and later, there is that further division which took place in the West between the Church of Rome and that of England, a large part of Germany, and other European countries, which has already lasted for 400 years.

Let us briefly consider the causes which led to these lamentable divisions in the Church.

(i)

First, we will speak of the great and disastrous division between East and West; we can trace the working out of this great rent in the Church to various causes. Amongst these we may instance the use of different languages. The theological language of the East was Greek, that of the West was Latin. As fresh heresies arose, new

words had to be coined to state the truths assailed. It is not hard to see what grave difficulties would arise in selecting terms which, whilst they shut out error, conveyed the same meaning to persons of different languages. Dr Newman says – ‘The difficulties of forming a theological phraseology for the whole of Christendom were obviously so great . . . not only had the words to be adjusted and explained which were peculiar to different schools or traditional in different places, but there was the formidable necessity of creating a common measure between two, or three languages – Latin, Greek, and Syriac. The intellect had to be satisfied, error had to be successfully excluded, parties the most contrary to each other, and the most obstinate had to be convinced.’²

A second and more serious cause of separation between East and West, arose in reference to what is known as the ‘filioque clause’ in the Nicene Creed. This Creed, as its name shows was first drawn up by the General Council held at Nicaea AD 325.

As the Creed left the Council, it concluded with the words – ‘And I believe in the Holy Ghost.’ On the rise of a new and dangerous heresy which denied the Godhead of the Holy Ghost, a second General Council was called. One hundred and fifty bishops assembled at Constantinople, AD 381, and proceeded to enlarge upon the Creed of Nicaea. In its completed form, the conclusion of the Creed ran thus – ‘And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, and the Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the prophets. And I believe One Catholic and Apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the Life of the world to come.’

It will be observed that the words ‘and the Son’ (in Latin ‘filioque’), to which we are accustomed, coming after ‘Who proceedeth from the Father,’ are here omitted. As the Creed was accepted by the Council, ‘the filioque clause’ was not yet added.

How did the words ‘and the Son’ find their way into the Nicene Creed, as we now know it in the West? ‘It was first introduced in reciting the Creed in Spain, apparently from ardent zeal in resisting the Arian heresy which had spread there in great force. The use extended from thence into France and Italy, and after a while the

Roman see accepted and sanctioned it. This occurred in Charlemagne's time.³

It is certain that no difference of doctrine was intended, but the Easterns at once objected to the addition on the ground that it was unauthorized. They held that no change could be made in a Creed which was received from a General Council, without the consent of a Council of equal authority. We are in justice bound to admit that their objection was a good one. A great dispute was raised, in which the Bishop of Rome supported the unauthorized addition. The Eastern Church has consistently maintained the objection all along, and maintains it still.

A third cause of division between East and West, lay in a long series of disputes between the bishops or patriarchs of Rome and Constantinople. Of these it is most painful to speak. They can only be described in the words of the Gospel – 'there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.'

The early councils allowed the first place among the five patriarchs of the Church to the Bishop of Rome. But it was a primacy of honour, and not of authority – a primacy of leadership, and not of lordship. His position in regard to the other chief bishops of the Church, was somewhat similar to that of the foreman in regard to other members of a jury. The patriarch or pope of Rome was regarded as 'primus inter pares,' i.e., first among equals; but no grant of lordship over his brother-bishops was allowed him. In the disputes of which we are speaking this was forgotten, the bishops of Rome claiming unlawful superiority over the bishops of Constantinople. There were doubtless grave faults in a lack of love and humility on both sides; but in truth it must be admitted that the bulk of the blame of the division lay with the bishops of Rome. A study of history leads to the conclusion that the Roman claims lay at the root of the schism between East and West – a schism which has already lasted for more than 700 years, and still remains unhealed.

The second great rift in the Catholic body is that which took place in the West, chiefly between the Roman and Anglican Churches in the sixteenth century. Of this sad division, and the causes which led to it, we shall have occasion to speak more fully in the second part of this work.

A third rift in the Catholic body occurred in the nineteenth century when the historic Dutch Church was excommunicated by Rome, and became what is now known as the Old Catholic Church, with which the Church of England is in full sacramental fellowship.

(ii)

The divisions may be described in St Paul's language as 'schism *in* the body,' rather than schism *from* it. No one of these portions of the Catholic body lost any of the essentials of Church unity – the possession of the apostolic succession, the divinely-appointed sacraments, the creeds, and the moral law. There is good reason to believe that the divisions in the Church are of such a nature, that her organic unity through union with Christ and the indwelling of his Holy Spirit, has not been broken. There is such a thing as *internal* unity, as well as *external* unity. We believe that external unity may be broken, whilst internal unity remains undisturbed; or as Dr Pusey puts it, that 'suspended inter-communion alone does not destroy unity.'

These divisions in the body are of the nature of serious wounds, rather than of amputation of limbs. We may regard the divisions in the Church under the figure of a serious quarrel amongst brothers, by which the natural bond of a common parentage is not broken. Brothers may be disunited, but they remain brothers still.

The only thing which can mortally affect the unity of the Church, is the loss of any of the essential links ordained by our Lord to keep us united to himself. We may believe that nothing was done in any of the cases we are considering, to cut off any of the portions of the Catholic Church from Jesus Christ.

At present the Eastern, the Roman, the Old Catholic, and the Anglican portions of the Church, make up the Catholic body – the Universal Church. 'The Church is to be regarded as the divinely-ordained organ and keeper of doctrine and the means of grace, and as standing or falling by the apostolic succession. And as this can only be found in the Western, Eastern, Old Catholic, and Anglican Communion – these four together make up the historic universal Church. No one of these communions forms the whole Church, but

is only a part. If a mirror was broken into three pieces, and the largest of these, having had its edges cut straight, was separately framed, this newly-framed portion would have a unity of its own, but not the unity of the original mirror; it would represent such an unity as is exhibited by the Roman Catholic Church at the present time.

These divisions of which we have been speaking are exceedingly sad – they are sad, as being contrary to the mind of our blessed Lord, expressed in his great eucharistic intercession the night before He died – they are sad, as hindering the spread of the gospel, and the conversion of the world to Christ – they are sad as a ground of perpetual reproach.

It is our duty to possess a spirit desirous of re-union, and to keep up such a spirit by earnest prayer, and in all ways of speech and feeling as ever ready for re-union when the path shall be opened to us. The touching words at the conclusion of Dr Pusey's third and last Eirenicon are worthy of record, and with them we will bring this sorrowful chapter to a close—

‘But we are children of common fathers, of those who, after having shone with the light of God within them upon earth . . . now shine like stars in the kingdom of their Father. Sons of the same fathers, we must in time come to understand each other's language. . . . Evil days and trial-times seem to be coming upon the earth. Faith deepens, but unbelief too becomes more thorough. Yet what might not God do to check it, if those who own one Lord and one faith were again at one, and united Christendom should go forth bound in one by love – the full flow of GOD'S Holy Spirit unhemmed by any of those breaks, or jars, or manglings – to win all to his love whom we all desire to love, to serve, to obey. To have removed one stumbling-block would be worth the labour of a life. But He alone, the author of peace and the lover of concord, can turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers. “O Lord, in the midst of the years revive thy work; in the midst of the years make known: in wrath remember mercy.” ’

Prayer for Unity

O Lord Jesu Christ, who saidst unto thine apostles, Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; regard not our sins, but the faith of thy Church; and grant her that peace and unity which is agreeable to thy will, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end Amen.

NOTES

1. Treatise V. *On the Unity of the Church* Oxford Translation, Library of the Fathers, 1876. p. 134.
2. *Arians of the Fourth Century* Appendix. pp. 433, 434.
3. Carter, *The Roman Question* 2nd edition, p. 5.

PART TWO

THE CHURCH

IN

ENGLAND

CHAPTER 7

THE CONVERSION OF ENGLAND

There is perhaps no subject of greater interest to an English Churchman, than that which is raised by the question – How did the Church of God come to this land? Various answers have been given. Some have thought that St Paul, in his journeyings to the West, preached the gospel here: others, that Joseph of Arimathea, who buried our Lord, was the first missionary: others again, that a British king named Lucius begged Eleutherus, a bishop of Rome, to send Christian teachers to this land. But there is no sufficient evidence for any of these tales, and they are regarded by historians as unreliable.

However, as Christians were to be found in all honest walks of life it is probable that the Faith was brought to Britain initially by the tin merchants who came to Cornwall, and by soldiers of the Roman armies, though the Celtic Church claimed to have come from St John at Ephesus.

(i)

At the opening of the fourth century, we are met with the great story of the martyrdom of St Alban, a Roman soldier, who was beheaded for the faith of Christ at Verulam, now known as St Albans, in Hertfordshire. It is a matter of history that in the year 314, three British bishops were present at the Council held at Arles, a city of Gaul: and that again, in the year 359, the presence of three British bishops is noted at the Council of Ariminum in Umbria, on the Adriatic.

Up to this time the historical notices of the Church in this land are brief and scanty. But we know enough to be assured that the Church of Christ had reached Britain while St Peter and St Paul were yet alive.

The fact of British bishops being present at the Councils just named, affords undoubted evidence that the British Church was

recognized as a true and living branch of the One, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ.

(ii)

Some time after this a terrible desolation fell upon this land, and on the Church of this country, though out of it, through much suffering, a greater life was about to arise. It happened in this manner. Roman troops for some years had occupied Britain. On their departure in the fifth century, the Britons left to themselves were unable to cope with the wild tribes of the North, and to protect themselves they invited over from Germany the Saxons, a heathen tribe. The Saxons came, and saved the Britons from their foes. But after a while the Saxons coveted this fair land, and determined to expel those whom they had come to assist, massacring them, or driving them out. The Britons found safety only in the mountainous regions of Wales, the distant moorlands of Cornwall, and Brittany in Gaul. With the expulsion of the Britons, every vestige of the Church settlements outside these regions perished. 'Wherever the invaders came, sweeping on like a vast destroying force, the Church's orderly system fell before them; the worship of Woden and Thor drove out the worship of Christ.'¹ It was as though a sponge had passed over the country and the night of heathenism again set in.

The Saxons, coming over from Germany in increasing numbers, took possession of the whole land, which was afterwards called by the name of England. The British Church at first made no attempt to convert the conquerors, and they continued in their heathenism for many years.

At last came the first movement for the conversion of the Saxons, and that too from a singular cause. By some means or other a number of Saxon boys from Britain were taken to Rome to be sold as slaves. Standing in the slave-market, their fair faces and golden hair attracted the notice of a priest (or deacon) named Gregory, who made enquiries concerning their nation and religion. We give the story in the words of Dr Bright - 'Passing through the Roman market, Gregory saw some boys exposed for sale. . . . Let us try to picture him, as he stands still, attracted by the sad sight of those

helpless lads, whose white skin and golden hair were proof enough of their Northern parentage, and were associated with a beauty of face which their unhappy condition would make all the more touching. He who, in after years, used to take pains with the teaching of his young choristers, was moved to the very soul with pity for the slave boys: he asked from what country they came. The slave owner answered, "From Britain: the people there have these fair complexions." Then came the question, as from Gregory's full heart, "Are they heathens or Christians?" "Heathens." He sighed, "Alas! that such bright faces should be in the power of the prince of darkness. How do you call their nation?" "Angles." Then, with that fondness for playing on the sound of a name, with a serious thought under the playfulness, Gregory replied, "Tis well – they have Angels' faces; it were meet they should be fellow-heirs with Angels in heaven. What is their native province?" "Deira"; (we might translate, Yorkshire): and Gregory's ear, catching its name, suggested the comment, "They must be rescued *de ira Dei* (i.e., from the wrath of God)." One more question: "Who was their king?" "Aella." "Alleluia, praise to God the Maker ought to be sung in those parts." He passed on, and saw the boys no more.²

Soon after, when Gregory became bishop of Rome, he sent out a band of some forty monks with a priest named Augustine at their head, as missionaries to convert the Saxons. This was in the year 597. They landed in Kent; and Ethelbert the king of that part of England, whose wife, a daughter of the king of Paris, was already a Christian, gave them permission to settle in the Isle of Thanet. From thence they removed to Canterbury, which now became the head-quarters of the Roman missionaries. The king was baptized, and, as was usually the case, the tribe followed his lead. In this way, the kingdom of Kent, was converted to Christianity.

Augustine was anxious that the British Christians, who had taken refuge in Wales and Cornwall, should place themselves under his authority. Two meetings were arranged between them and Augustine, the first at a place named Augustine's Oak, thought to be situated south of the river Severn, the second at Bangor situated in Wales. At the latter of these meetings seven British bishops were present. Augustine asked them to join with him in preaching to the Saxons, and to give up certain customs in which they differed from

the Roman uses. They refused both requests, and also to accept him as their archbishop, claiming their succession from St John at Ephesus. The division continued until the close of the thirteenth century, when the British Church was finally integrated into the province of Canterbury.³

(iii)

Whilst rightly grateful to Rome for thus taking the lead in the conversion of England, we must not forget that there are other sources of our English Christianity, possessing a more extensive influence. The Roman mission was successful as regards the kingdom of Kent, enlarging its influence as far as London, and partly into Essex, but it advanced no further. A Roman missionary indeed, Paulinus, was sent to the North as chaplain to the bride of Edwin the king of Northumbria, a daughter of Ethelbert. For a while he succeeded in making converts. But when Edwin was slain in battle, and there was a great slaughter of his people Paulinus fled, the Church he had founded was well-nigh destroyed, and Northumbria sank back practically into heathenism.

It was then that Oswald, who succeeded Edwin and recovered the lost kingdom of Northumbria, resolved to restore Christianity. For this purpose he sought a bishop of the Church of God. On the western coast of Scotland lies a small island named Iona, upon which a powerful body of Christian monks from Ireland had settled. These men were members of what is known as the Celtic Church. From Iona in the year 635, a holy bishop named Aidan came forth on his eventful mission. Bishop Lightfoot thus tells the deeply interesting story of his being sent. 'Aidan was not the first choice of his spiritual superiors for this arduous work. The first missionary sent out from Iona failed... He returned speedily to Iona disheartened, reporting that these Northumbrians were a stubborn and impracticable people, with whom nothing could be done. Aidan was present at this conference. He broke in, "Brother, it seems to me that thou hast been unduly hard upon these untaught hearers, and has not given them first according to the apostle's precept the milk of less solid doctrine, until gradually nurtured on the word of God they should have strength enough to digest the more perfect

lessons." All eyes were turned upon the speaker. Here was the very man whom the work demanded. The humility, the patience, the gentle sympathy, the wise discretion, the whole character of the man flashes out in this simple, eager utterance."⁴

Aidan came forth from Iona, and made his head-quarters at Lindisfarne, a little island which, at low water, may be approached from the coast of Northumberland. Here, Aidan received fellow-workers from Iona, and further gathered round him twelve English boys, whom he trained to become missionaries to their heathen countrymen. It is an interesting fact that four of these boys in later years became bishops. Under Aidan and his fellows, Christianity was restored to the North. It is well to remember that Aidan neither sought nor received sanction from Rome or Canterbury, but was sent at the request of King Oswald by the Celtic Church, as missionary bishop of the North.

In comparing the work of Augustine and Aidan, Bishop Lightfoot says – 'It was in the year 635 – just thirty years after the death of Augustine – that Aidan commenced his work. Though nearly forty years had elapsed since Augustine's first landing in England, Christianity was still confined to its first conquest, the south-east corner of the island, the kingdom of Kent. Beyond this border, though ground had been broken here and there, no territory had been permanently acquired for the Gospel.⁵ Then commenced those thirty years of earnest energetic labour, carried on by these Celtic missionaries and their disciples from Lindisfarne as their spiritual citadel, which ended in the submission of England to the gentle yoke of Christ.'⁶

(iv)

Thus far we have dwelt upon the work of Augustine and Aidan, and their disciples. But there are others, of whom we must briefly speak, who shared in the conversion of England.

The year before Aidan came to Northumbria, a portion of England named Wessex received the Christian faith at the hands of a missionary named Birinus. His origin is uncertain, but we know that he went to Rome, and on promising to preach the gospel in parts of England which had not yet been visited by any Christian

teachers, the bishop of Rome caused him to be consecrated a missionary bishop. Birinus became the first bishop of Dorchester, and laboured with great success in heathen Wessex.

There is yet the name of another founder of the Church in England to which we must refer, that of Felix. Felix came from Burgundy without any direct communication with Rome. He was consecrated abroad, as Bishop of Dunwich, a town on the coast of Suffolk, now covered by the sea, where for twenty years he laboured in the conversion of East Anglia. We have in the town of Felixstowe a survival of his name.

It is upon the foundations laid by these and such like holy men, that the English Church is built. They are our Fathers in Christ, and to them we owe a vast debt of gratitude.

NOTES

1. Bright, *Waymarks in Church History*, p. 300.
2. *Early English Church History*, pp. 36, etc.
3. 'There is, a real continuity between the British and the English Church; but it consists in this, that by slow degrees – by a complex process which extended through some five centuries, the English Church absorbed the British into its one body; the older and smaller stream flowed into the younger and larger, and became a veritable and inseparable part of it.' Bright, *Waymarks in Church History*, pp. 298, 299.
4. *Leaders in the Northern Church, St Aidan*, pp. 43, 44. Bishop Lightfoot gives a shortened account of the story as found in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, Book iii. chap. 5.
5. East Anglia had been partly converted in the first instance by the Roman missionary Paulinus.
6. *Leaders in the Northern Church, The Celtic Mission*, p. 9. See Warren, *Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church*, p. 14.

CHAPTER 8

THE SETTLEMENT OF THE ANGLO SAXON CHURCH

In the last chapter we referred to the mixed sources of English Christianity. It will be useful now to trace the way in which the various missions of which we have spoken were united to form the English Church, and how the English Church came to accept the authority of the bishop of Rome.

(i)

There came at last, as might have been expected, a collision between the Roman and the Celtic missionaries and their disciples. The customs of the two bodies differed in several particulars. The main difference was as to the time of keeping the great Easter festival – the followers of the Roman mission observing it at one time, those of the Celtic mission at another. The difference naturally caused great confusion. To solve the difficulty, a conference was held at the Abbey of Whitby, under Oswy, the Northumbrian king, Oswald's successor. This was in the year 664.

By this time the belief had grown that the Church of Rome, which had been founded by the two apostles, St Peter and St Paul, had specially the authority of St Peter in its favour; and also that St Peter himself had the keys to the kingdom of heaven, to open and to shut at his will. Arguments were heard on both sides, and the king decided in favour of the Roman use, basing his decision on the idea that Rome represented St Peter, 'that door-keeper, whom I will not contradict . . . lest haply when I come to the doors of the kingdom of heaven, there should be none to unbar them.'¹ The result of this conference was mainly due to the influence of Wilfrid, formerly one of the twelve boys whom Aidan had gathered round him at Lindisfarne; who, though brought up by Celtic monks, had become a staunch supporter of the Roman usages.

This decision involved far more than the question of keeping

Easter. It naturally followed that Rome should be looked to as the arbiter in all differences, and the referee in questions which might afterwards arise. It is however to be observed, that, important as the decision at Whitby was, it was but a voluntary act on the part of the English Church acting under royal authority. There was no question of divine right, otherwise there could have been no choice. It is quite impossible that such saintly men as the Celtic missionaries could have been ignorant, as they certainly were, of the Roman claims, if such claims were a matter of divine right. All this is to be borne in mind, for it affects the action of the English Church at the time of the Reformation.

Bishop Lightfoot, in speaking of the decision at Whitby, says – ‘This was the first rivet of the Roman yoke, which was to press so heavily on England in the generations to come. Yet it would be foolish to ignore the immediate advantages of this submission. The Church of England needed unity before all things. But this was impossible, while there was one Church in the North looking to Iona for guidance, and another in the South owing allegiance to Rome. Moreover, the fuller development of the English Church required that it should be drawn into the main stream of Christian civilisation which at this time flowed through Rome. While we are thankful that the foundations of our Northumbrian Church were laid on the simplicity and devotion, the free spirit, the tenderness and love, the apostolic zeal of the missionaries of Iona, we need not shrink from acknowledging that she learnt much from the more complete organization and the higher culture of which Rome was then the schoolmistress.’²

(ii)

This same year the yellow fever caused a dreadful mortality throughout England. Many Anglo-Saxon bishops died, and among them the archbishop of Canterbury. By this time the whole land, with the exception of Sussex, had become Christian, and a general desire arose to push forward the work of the Church. The first thing needed was to knit together the scattered missions of the Church, and for this purpose a master-mind was needed. Oswy, king of Northumbria, and Egbert, king of Kent, the two most powerful

princes, agreed that it would be well to select an Englishman to be archbishop of Canterbury. One of the Kentish clergy was chosen, but having gone to Rome for consecration, died there.

After some delay, the bishop of Rome made choice of a priest of the Eastern Church, named Theodore, who was consecrated at Rome in the year 668. Theodore was a Greek monk, a native of Tarsus, St Paul's city. He was a man of years and experience, a scholar, and withal possessed with large sympathy. He arrived in England on Sunday, 27 May, AD 669. Shortly after his arrival he was joined by one Hadrian, who had previously been offered the archbishopric, but had declined the offer. Traversing together the whole land, they soon became acquainted with the people and their needs; organizing schools and monasteries as occasion presented itself, and correcting such abuses as then existed. Theodore appears to have won his way everywhere by his tact and sympathy. With the support of the clergy, he began to carry out his great plans for the consolidation of the isolated missions of the Anglo-Saxon Church.

Theodore's primacy was a very eventful crisis in the history of the Anglo-Saxon Church. Hitherto made up of scattered missions, under his direction it was knit into an organic whole; the number of bishops was nearly doubled; the land was divided into dioceses, and the foundations of the parochial system, as we have inherited it, were laid.

NOTES

1. Bede, Book iii. chapter 25.
2. *Leaders in the Northern Church*, p. 50.

CHAPTER 9

THE CAUSES OF THE REFORMATION

In this chapter we propose to trace out further stages by which the English Church became more completely subject to the bishop of Rome; and to tell of the various abuses which crept in, and which led in the end to the Reformation in the sixteenth century.¹

(i)

From the days of Theodore to the Conquest, there elapsed a period of four hundred years. During this time the power of the Roman see gradually increased, and its influence in the affairs of the English Church grew more and more. But it acquired yet greater strength through the Norman Conquest. William the Conqueror, to establish his position according to the belief of that time, besought the Pope to sanction his expedition, and he entered England with this supposed authority. The Norman kings followed the same course. The climax to this unhappy idea of subjection to Rome was reached in the great conflict about investitures; i.e., as to whether the pope or the king should appoint to bishoprics. In the weak reign of King John, Pope Innocent III deposed the King, and bestowed the kingdom upon Philip of France, urging him to take possession of England, on the ground that it was part of the pope's empire. The quarrel had been as to the see of Canterbury. John, to save himself, knelt before the pope's legate, and owned that he held his crown from the pope, and that England, both in civil and ecclesiastical matters, was subject to the Roman see.

The struggle between the popes and the sovereigns of England continued till a strong king arose, Edward III, (1327-1377) who, backed by bishops and nobles, decreed that 'neither John nor any other person could subject the nation to another power without the consent of the nation.' An annual payment of one thousand marks known as the 'CENSUS,' established by King John as an acknowledg-

ment of the dependence of the kingdom on the pope, ceased in consequence of this decree.

It is needless to speak further of the struggle between the popes and the English Government. We will only add that the results varied according to opportunities offered to either side – the popes striving to gain their own objects, the English Government struggling for its liberties – the strife turning in favour of one side or the other as the power alternated.

(ii)

Deep grievances were felt at the heavy exactions pressing on both clergy and laity alike. The popes claimed 'PETER'S PENCE.' This was originally a voluntary offering made as far back as the year 787, partly as an alms, and partly for the sustenance of a house for English pilgrims in Rome. With the exception of the reign of Edward III this tax was paid regularly for a period of 700 years.

In addition to this the popes claimed a further tax, named 'ANNATES.' Annates were the first fruits of vacant bishoprics and other benefices. Before a bishop could be consecrated, it was needful to possess a document called a 'bull.' The name was given from the Latin 'bullā,' which signified the leaden seal attached to such documents. These 'bulls' were only issued by the pope, and had to be paid for. Besides this, the newly made bishop had to pay in advance the whole of the first year's income to the Roman court. Amongst the lower clergy every promotion involved the payment of annates.

But more serious than all this, was the pope's interference with the liberties of the English Church by means of what was named 'PROVISIONS.' By this is meant that the pope provided beforehand a person to fill the next vacancy in any benefice he named. Sometimes this claim was exercised with good effect, but frequently the reverse was the case. By means of 'provisions' the most prominent positions and the best livings in the Church were filled by foreigners, many of whom resided abroad, and never even visited their parishes, etc., knowing neither the speech nor the face of their flocks, all the time drawing the revenues of such benefices. Of these persons so provided for by the popes, Archbishop Trench says –

'Perhaps, taking all things into account, and above all that many thus appointed were "persons detestable in life and morals" (so one writing in 1311 assures us), this was in most instances the least harmful course they could pursue, and their absence the greatest favour which they could confer. . . . These 'provisions' were resented everywhere . . . and no wonder. The scale on which foreign ecclesiastics were quartered on the land, the extent to which the patience of Englishmen was tried, may be estimated by the fact that in the year 1240 Pope Gregory IX, sent to the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishops of Lincoln and Salisbury, requiring them to provide for three hundred Romans in the earliest vacant benefices which they had at their disposal, and restraining them from presenting any others until these his nominees had first been provided for.'²

The spiritual care of the people had fallen into a state of decline which is now scarcely conceivable. The condition of things may be understood from the fact, that Cardinal Wolsey, living always at court as Chancellor and Prime Minister, held at the same time the archbishopric of York, and the three bishoprics of Tournai in Belgium, Lincoln, and Winchester. The state of ignorance among the people became such, that, as Mr Simmons shews in his notes on *The Lay Folk's Mass Book*, as times went on, their part in the services of the Church became less and less, until the Mass became an exclusively clerical service.

(iii)

In all ecclesiastical suits, the Roman see came to be regarded as the final 'COURT OF APPEAL.' These ecclesiastical suits included all questions or disputes concerning the actions, injury, or property of ecclesiastical persons or corporations; and beyond this, cases touching wills and inheritance. It was no doubt an advantage to be able to carry causes to an independent and disinterested authority in a distant land. By means of such appeals it is easy to see what an enormous power was given to the popes. In the hands of some popes this power was used wisely, and with undoubted impartiality. In other hands, alas! the greed of gold entered in, and a grievous system

of bribery prevailed – bribery so shameless that it is a pain even to refer to it at all.

The late Archbishop Trench speaks very strongly as to the abuses which eventually prevailed in the Roman court. He says – ‘the whole organization (of the curia) seemed little better than a vast and elaborate machinery for the wringing, under every conceivable pretext, of the greatest possible amount of money from the faithful, and hardly seeming to exist for any other end. . . . Marvellous indeed was the ingenuity displayed. For example, it was claimed – Clement IV, being the first who advanced this claim – that all dignities, benefices and the like, which became vacant through the death of the beneficiary while at Rome, should for the next turn be in the pope’s gift. But the matter did not rest here. Again and again the net was stretched wider, and at the same time its meshes woven closer, that it might embrace more and more within its folds. Thus Boniface VIII, extended the claim, so as to include every ecclesiastical office held by persons dying within two days’ journey of the spot where at the time of death the Curia might be. It was a fruitful source of revenue. In the necessity of things there was a constant influx of the higher ecclesiastics to Rome; and these, detained there by interminable suits or by other causes, were exposed, not to speak of the ordinary chances of mortality, to the deadly Roman fevers, which then as now were ever watching for their prey.’³

What the effect of this traffic in holy things had upon the souls of the people, it is not difficult to conceive.

(iv)

But there were behind these glaring scandals, other more serious abuses affecting the spiritual life of the people; of these it is our duty to speak honestly yet sorrowfully.

First, as to what were known as ‘INDULGENCES.’ About the year 1510, Pope Leo X was raising money to build the great church of St Peter at Rome. To further this object, the sale of indulgences was suggested by some of his advisers, and permitted by the pope himself. At the first, these indulgences related only to Church censures; and it was taught that they could only avail for those who

had the proper dispositions of heart. But these limitations were soon overpassed. A corrupt teaching prevailed that in the intermediate state of waiting between death and judgment, souls were in material flames and undergoing pains which differed little, save in their temporary character, from the sufferings of the lost in eternity. These pains were regarded not only as a means of purification, but also of punishment. This place of suffering was named *purgatory*. In 1477, Pope Sixtus IV, declared that indulgences might be obtained which would save such souls from the pain with which they were visited in purgatory.

It was urged that our Saviour's merits saved from everlasting death, but that the temporal punishment due to sin had to be borne by sinners, and that this was worked out in purgatory. It was taught moreover that our Saviour's sufferings and death were more than sufficient to pardon sin, and to redeem the world. To the merits of Christ were added those of the saints of whom it was profanely taught that they had done more good than their own salvation demanded. These merits of Christ and of the saints were regarded as housed in a bank, upon which the pope could draw for the benefit of the living and departed.

Thus the remission of sins in this life, and relief from the punishment of sins in purgatory, came to be regarded as a gift of God which could be purchased with money. It is easy to see how all this made light of the need of repentance for sin, and 'it is not wonderful that earnest preachers of repentance long before Luther should have been filled with the deepest indignation at this murder of souls, for so they were wont to call it; should have declared that Christ is the only Indulgence, and in plainest words have warned the poor deceived people that trusting in those bought with money they were trusting in a lie.'²⁴ Dr Pusey considered that the sale of these indulgences very chiefly caused the Reformation.

Again and again loud voices were raised calling for reform of these evils, and demanding a reformation of the Church in its head and members. But in vain. All desires for reform by means of Councils were alike of no avail. The dread of loss of power, and other motives were too strong, and the papal court turned a deaf ear to all these demands. Instead of setting itself in the front, and taking the lead in a great reform, with a truthful acknowledgment of sins and

imperfections, the Roman court made it a chief concern, at the time, to foil the attempts then very earnestly made to effect a wholesome reformation.

(v)

Beyond all these abuses there was another nearer home; and of that we must briefly speak.

In treating of the conversion of England we referred to the part taken in that work by certain monks, as Augustine and Aidan. The word *monk* signifies 'one who dwells alone,' but the term also applies to both priests and laymen who made a home together in religious houses, or monasteries. The monks bound themselves not to marry, to possess no personal property, and to live a life of obedience to rule. In the middle ages the monks played a most important and valuable part in the affairs of church and nation. The monasteries were the training schools of the clergy, the homes of art and learning, the refuge of the sick and aged. It was the monks who kept the lamp of knowledge bright in dark and dismal times, and to them England owes a large debt. But they had their day, and their glory was destined to pass away.

By degrees a great proportion of the land came into their hands, and also great wealth; the monks fell into idle and luxurious ways, and lost their fame for zeal and holiness.

Of the *friars* or 'brothers' as the word means, we must also speak. These were men who left the world, and devoted themselves to the service of the Church; they 'embodied the ideal of the evangelical life, as in those ages conceived, more completely than any of the preceding orders had done. Living upon alms, and thus finding a table everywhere spread for them, they did not require, as the others did, permanent landed endowments before they could found their houses. They basked moreover in the peculiar favour not of the people only but of the popes, who soon recognized in them their most faithful and their most efficient militia.'⁵

The friars, as also with some exceptions the monks, placed themselves under the patronage and protection of the popes, who freed them from all control of the bishops. This exemption from episcopal control led to laxity of discipline and morals. Moreover the monks and friars made themselves offensive to the parish

priests, drawing away people from their lawful shepherds, and creating a kind of schism. This was specially the case with the friars. Of them Archbishop Trench says – ‘The monks had not been permitted to celebrate, except within their own walls, the divine offices; and for a long while there had not been more of them ordained than were actually necessary for this. But these, with other privileges, as to baptize, to hear confessions, to administer extreme unction, to bury in their own churches – this last permission a very mine of wealth – were all accorded to these favoured friars, who exercised their intrusive ministrations where they would, with no licence obtained from the bishop, no leave granted by the parish priest. They are accused of everywhere seeking to undermine the respect of the people for their appointed guides; bidding all come to them, who knew the secrets of spiritual direction, who could discern between leprosy and leprosy; who were not dumb dogs, blind guides, as were others. And multitudes came; being only too glad to confess their sins to the wandering friar whom they never had seen before, whom perhaps they never should see again; so sparing themselves the shame of a confession to their own clergy; not to say that as a rule, if we may believe Chaucer’s word concerning the mendicant absolver, “He was an easy man to give penance.” The mischief reached such a height that Pope Innocent IV in 1254, made some feeble efforts to revoke or limit these special privileges which his predecessors had lavished on their new favourites with so prodigal a hand. The orders, however, had grown too strong, and succeeded in retaining nearly all which had been once conceded to them.’⁶ The parish clergy were powerless to cope with the monks and friars, who were backed up by the popes. Here again was a state of things which cried aloud for remedy.⁷

By degrees, and for various reasons of which we have not space to speak here, the religious orders came to be objects of dislike to the people of England. To all these preparations for a religious revolution, must be added the spread of learning so greatly aided by the invention of printing in the year 1440. Of the latter, it has been said that it was a ‘new gift of tongues, which lent wings to knowledge, and put within the reach of hundreds and presently of thousands, precious lore which had hitherto been within the reach of but two or three.’

The first translation of the New Testament from the original language appeared in 1525, but a few years preceding the Reformation. Men's eyes were opening to the errors and superstitions of the time, and they began to question the truth of much that they had been taught.

(vi)

England was fully ripe for a great religious revolution. Popular preachers, Wycliffe being the chief, had been stirring the people against the many abuses of the times. The air was full of inflammable materials, which only awaited some cause sufficiently exciting to set them alight. At last came the spark that set fire to the train so long prepared for the explosion – in Germany, the sale of Indulgences by the Dominican friar, Tetzl – in England, the unrighteous resolve of Henry VIII to divorce his queen.⁸

It was a time when the Roman see, if it were to preserve the unity of the Church, should have put itself at the head of the reforming movement. It did nothing of the kind but resisted all pressure for the assembling of a Council, until it was too late. The Council of Trent summoned at length by the pope, did not meet, or put forth any decision, until the Reformation in its earliest and strongest movement was over. The decrees of this Council were not published until 1564, in Queen Elizabeth's reign.

There were no doubt very grievous circumstances connected with the English Reformation, chiefly the arbitrary, cruel, and licentious dealings of Henry VIII, and the greed of Henry and his nobles in despoiling the religious houses for the sake of their lands and abounding wealth, on which they laid their hands. It has been well said that 'the prize they fought for was *the goods*, and not *the good* of the Church.' But no unprejudiced mind can doubt that there were grievous superstitions that needed removal, doctrines which had to be reconciled with the word of God, and Church order which had to be restored both in the episcopal and parochial systems, and freedom to be asserted both in civil and ecclesiastical matters. The authority of the bishops had been lowered by the extravagant claims of the Roman see, the bishops being regarded as so many curates of the pope. The great part of our contention is the truth that the

authority of our bishops is derived directly from Christ himself, and is independent of the papacy.

The appeal made by our divines during the Reformation period, was to a General Council of the universal Church freely assembled, as against a Council meeting in Italy under the immediate influence of the Roman see.

This same appeal we have inherited; but alas! the doctrine of the infallibility of the pope, and the refusal of the Roman Church to admit the validity of our ordinations, (Upon this point *see* pp. 68-73) have extinguished for the present the prospect of the calling together of a General Council.

However, since the time of John XXIII there has been a change of heart in the Roman Communion so that we are now jointly seeking a reconciliation.

NOTES

1. In speaking of the Reformation, we should remember that though this great movement began in the 16th century, it was not confined to that period. The Reformation was continued and brought more fully into shape by the Caroline divines in the 17th century, whose spirit the leaders of the Catholic Revival in the 19th century so largely inherited.
2. *Medieval Church History*, Second Edition, pp. 342, 343. Mr Aubrey Moore in his *Lectures and Papers on the History of the Reformation*, speaking of the amount of money drained from the country into the papal coffers, tells us that in the reign of Henry III the foreign clergy drew 60,000 marks in one year, a sum larger than the revenues of the Crown.
3. *Medieval Church History*, pp. 339, 344, 345.
4. *Medieval Church History*, p. 347.
5. *Medieval Church History*, p. 237.
6. *Medieval Church History*, pp. 239, 240.
7. To show the extent to which the religious orders prevailed, Mr Aubrey Moore estimates that 1200 to 1300 monasteries and friaries had been established in England. For in the State returns of ecclesiastical and monastic property, which was made in 1535, the revenue of the monasteries is stated to be about £160,000 per annum. — *History of the Reformation*, pp. 128, 130.
8. Whilst the sale of indulgences was mainly *the cause* of the Reformation on the Continent, the same cannot be said of the King's divorce; it was rather *the occasion* than *the cause* of the Reformation in England. Roman Catholic controversialists strive to shew that the English Reformation stands or falls with the character of Henry VIII and his advisers; but there can be no doubt that a crisis would have been reached in some other way, even if Henry VIII had never existed. The Reformation, when it came, was only the final act of a long struggle.

CHAPTER 10

THE RESULTS OF THE REFORMATION

We are free now to learn more about the Reformation, and its effects upon the Church and religion of this land. The word *reformation* signifies 'the shaping again,' i.e., the putting something into shape which was out of shape. Reformation is not the destruction of an old thing, and the making of a new thing to take its place; but the improving of the old, so that it still lives on under restored conditions. Thus reformation is much the same as restoration. It is most important to notice that the Reformation did not exchange the ancient Church of England for a new Church, neither did it exchange the old religion for a new religion. But what it did was this – it freed the old Church from certain grave abuses, and purified the old religion from many harmful superstitions, which, in the middle ages, had attached themselves to the Church. But there was no point where it could be said, 'here the old ends, and the new begins.'

It is only fair to admit that things went much too far in more than one direction; as for example – the rejection of erroneous teaching as to the state of the dead, led to an imperfect belief in the value of prayers for the departed; or again, where the usurpation of the pope was succeeded by the tyranny of the king. These were, in some degree, the natural results of a great reaction. And it is only right to say, that whilst the great essentials of Christian faith and practice were by God's good providence preserved, there were grievous losses in less important matters, which it is our duty to strive to repair as being part of our Catholic heritage.

The changes made in the reign of Henry VIII have been described as nothing more or less than a revolution under the form of law. The first steps were taken in a constitutional manner. In 1530, an Act of Parliament was passed which forbade application to Rome for relief from certain English laws. These dispensations, as they were called, had caused great vexation to the Church, and the popes had no right to grant them. In 1531, all payments claimed by the Roman

see were forbidden to be made any longer. These taxes amounted on an average to about £3,500 a year, a sum representing vastly more in our money of to-day. In 1533, a third act was passed forbidding any appeal to Rome from the English courts. In the next year, Convocation, the parliament of the Church, unduly influenced by dread of the king, decided that the popes had no more right given them by God over the kingdom than any other foreign bishop. Whilst regretting the manner in which it was brought about, it will be seen nevertheless that these acts were simply a reclaiming of the ancient independence of the English State, and the English Church.

Six years later, in 1539, the Holy Bible in English was circulated, and, a few years after, the services of the Church were read in our own language. The chalice in the Holy communion was restored to the laity, who were now allowed to seek absolution after confession as their consciences directed, and not of compulsion as hitherto. Much superstition concerning the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Communion of Saints was removed. The appeal all through the Reformation time was to the Holy Scriptures, as interpreted by the teaching of the primitive Church and the fathers, and to the decisions of the General Councils of the Church. This appeal is ours to-day.

The reader must be careful to notice that no official steps were taken to sever the connection of the English Church with that of Rome, although the nation willed to have it so, and the action of Convocation favoured it. When the actual separation with Rome came, as it did in Elizabeth's time, the Roman court struck the final blow and caused the schism, the Pope excommunicating the Queen and absolving her subjects from their allegiance.

The primacy in honour and precedence allowed to the bishops of Rome in the early Councils, was in no way denied at the Reformation; and it is not denied by the English Church now, for she acknowledges General Councils which owned it. But this primacy must be distinguished from that lordship and vexatious interference which, in the middle ages, the popes claimed and exercised in England. No steps of any kind were taken to sever the English Church from those foreign Churches in communion with

the pope. Members of these Churches are allowed to hold benefices in the English Church without re-ordination.

The apostolic succession was continued without break, bishops being consecrated all through Reformation times by bishops of the old apostolic line. The sacraments, deriving their security and value from the apostolic succession, were continued. The appeal to antiquity, as the test of truth, was clearer than before. Thus the English Church, by God's mercy, issued from the Reformation a true and living branch of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of Christ.¹ In the words of Mr Aubrey Moore – 'The continuity of the English Church was the first principle of the English Reformation, and the apostolical succession, so carefully preserved through all changes, was the answer to the charge of schism, as the retention of the three Creeds and the recognition of the four Councils was the answer to the charge of heresy.'² These are matters of such great importance, that we will proceed to treat them more fully in the following chapters.

NOTES

1. 'I make not the least doubt in the world, but that the Church of England before the Reformation and the Church of England after the Reformation are as much the same Church as a garden before it is weeded and after it is weeded, is the same garden; or as a vine, before it be pruned and after it is pruned and freed from luxuriant branches, is one and the same vine.' – Archbishop Bramhall's *Works*, i. 2.
2. *History of the Reformation*, p. 229.

CHAPTER 11

ANGLICAN ORDERS

The claim of any body of Christians to be a portion of the Catholic Church, stands or falls by the Apostolic succession. Apart from this succession there is no Catholic ministry of the Word and the Sacraments.¹ The possession of a ministry in direct line with the apostles, and the maintenance of the Catholic Faith, makes the difference between the Church and a sect. Thus the question of the validity of our orders, i. e., whether the clergy of the English Church are rightly ordained, is one of vital importance. Valid consecration is the corner-stone of the whole ecclesiastical edifice.

As an historical fact, the apostolic succession was continued without break in the English Church all through the Reformation times, by bishops of the old apostolic line. As this statement has been disputed, it is necessary to produce proofs of its truth.

(i)

On the death of Edward VI, Mary succeeded to the throne, and under her the breach with Rome was, for a time, healed. The pope sent over Cardinal Pole as legate to reconcile the Church and nation to the Roman see. Mary died on 17 November, 1558, and her death was followed within a few hours by that of Pole, who had been consecrated archbishop of Canterbury in 1556. Thus the throne and the archbishopric of Canterbury were vacant at the same time. Elizabeth succeeded to the crown, and at once commenced to restore the reformed religion. Her first care was to fill the vacant archbishopric. Her choice fell upon Matthew Parker, a man who appeared likely to maintain the liberties of the English Church against Roman interference, and sound doctrine against the heretical teaching of the foreign reformers.

After the needful preliminaries, Parker was consecrated archbishop of Canterbury in the chapel of Lambeth Palace on 17 December, 1559, by Barlow, sometime bishop of Bath and Wells,

then elect of Chichester; Scory, sometime bishop of Chichester, then elect of Hereford; Hodgkins, suffragan bishop of Bedford; Coverdale, sometime bishop of Exeter.² The Lambeth register gives a long and minute account of this great event.

Broadly speaking, the consecration of archbishop Parker³ was the connecting link by which the apostolic succession in the English Church was continued after the final breach with Rome. Objections have been, until recently, urged as to the validity of his consecration, which are met thus:—

(1) It was not till many years after archbishop Parker's consecration that the fact was questioned. A miserable charge known as the 'Nag's Head fable' was trumped up to disprove the consecration. 'In 1604, i.e. forty-five years after Parker's consecration, an exiled Anglo-Romanist priest of the name of Holywood, in a controversial book printed at Antwerp, alleged that Parker and some of the other bishops were consecrated (so to call it) by a mock ceremony, all together at one time on a day unspecified at the Nag's Head tavern, by Dr Scory (who had been really consecrated bishop in 1551), who was himself in turn consecrated in the like mock way by them. . . . During the twenty years following 1604, every Anglo-Romanist writer, with scarcely a single exception, and with suicidal eagerness, repeats the story exultingly, although in varying and contradictory forms.'⁴ The fact of Parker's consecration is now placed beyond all doubt, and the Nag's Head fable, which bears upon its face the mark of falsehood, is given up by all respectable controversialists. Educated Roman Catholics are now heartily ashamed of this baseless invention.⁵

As so often happens, God brings good out of evil; and this is true in the case of this unfortunate story, for there is hardly any fact of history which has been more carefully looked into than the consecration of archbishop Parker. As the result of a most searching examination, the record and evidences of the event have been made public in all their fulness.⁶

(2) The chief consecrator of archbishop Parker was Barlow. It has been questioned whether Barlow was really a bishop himself.

Before answering this objection, it is well to state, that, though the chief, he was not the sole consecrator of Parker. Barlow was assisted by three other bishops, who along with him laid their hands

on Parker's head, each of the four bishops repeating the words of consecration. We quote from the record of Parker's consecration – 'After certain prayers and suffrages to God . . . the bishops of Chichester and Hereford, the suffragan bishop of Bedford, and Miles Coverdale, laying their hands upon the archbishop, say in English – "Take the Holy Ghost," thereby following the ancient use enjoined in the Exeter Pontifical.'

The three bishops were present not only as witnesses, but as consecrators. Thus, even if it were true that Barlow was not consecrated, the defect would have been made good by the bishops who assisted him. The objection to Barlow's authority rests on the fact that the record of his consecration is missing in the register at Lambeth. But this omission need cause no uneasiness, for, at this period the Lambeth registers were most carelessly kept. During the archiepiscopate of Cranmer, in whose time Barlow would be consecrated, out of a total of forty-five consecrations, eight other consecrations are also omitted, besides five omissions out of eleven translations from see to see. In the case of Pole, the previous archbishop in Mary's reign, three of his seven consecrators have no records.

But though the particular record is wanting, there is ample evidence that Barlow *was* consecrated; the various steps of his advancement to the episcopate are clearly traceable, and good evidence exists that he acted and was treated – as a bishop. As Dr Lingard, a Roman catholic writer, observes – 'For ten years Barlow performed all the sacred duties, and exercised all the civil rights of a consecrated bishop; he took his seat in Parliament as Lord Bishop of St David's. He ordained priests: he was one of the officiating bishops at the consecration of Bulkley.'⁷

It is worthy of note that bishop Barlow's consecration was never disputed until eighty years after the event.

(ii)

One of the earliest results of the Reformation was the translation and formation of the Prayer Book in English, and with it, and as part of it, the services for the ordination of the clergy – named the Ordinal. This was completed in the year 1550, in Edward VI's

reign. This Edwardine Ordinal, with very slight alteration, has been in use in the English Church from that time to the present, and the Anglican clergy have been ordained with it.

In 1896, Pope Leo XIII, issued a bull in which the Orders of the English Church are condemned as invalid, on the assumption that the Edwardine Ordinal was defective in *form* and *intention*. This supposed defect is alleged as the sole ground of condemnation.

Ordination, as a sacramental rite, has an outward and visible sign of the grace which is given for the office and work of the Christian ministry. The outward sign is the laying on of hands, accompanied by certain words which fix the true spiritual meaning of the act. These words are known as the *form*. Leo XIII asserted that the *form* of the Anglican Ordinal in use from 1550 to 1662 was defective, because no explicit mention was made at the moment of the laying on of hands, of the particular grade of the ministry which was being conferred. But this objection is crushed at once by the fact that the ordination services in question ('The form of ordering of priests,' and 'The form of consecrating of an archbishop or bishop') are quite distinct, as their titles and contents show. In each service the grade of the ministry which is being conferred is plainly indicated again and again. In the one case the matter in hand is the ordination of a priest, and nothing else: in the other case it is that of the consecration of a bishop, and nothing else.

At the last revision of the Ordinal in 1662, the words 'for the office and work of a priest,' and 'for the office and work of a bishop' were added, to be used during the laying on of hands, at the ordination of a priest or a bishop, as the case might be. This addition was made, not because it was felt that the form previously used was inadequate, but simply to meet the objections of the Presbyterians, who held that the offices of bishop and presbyter were identical. It was thought advisable to add the words in question to accentuate the distinction which the English Church had ever made between the episcopate and the priesthood.

In the service for consecrating bishops, as it stood between 1550 and 1662, during the laying on of hands, the archbishop was directed to say, 'Take the Holy Ghost, and remember that thou stir up the grace of God, which is in thee, by imposition of hands: for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and

of soberness.' These words are a quotation from St Paul's charge to St Timothy, bishop of Ephesus, (2 Tim. 1. 6, 7.) and, as was generally believed by the commentators and theologians of the sixteenth century, definitely refer to the episcopate, to which he was consecrated by St Paul. It is carefully to be noted that the corresponding *form* in the Roman Pontifical is quite vague and undeterminate: the consecrating bishops, when they lay their hands upon the bishop elect, simply say, 'Receive the Holy Ghost': nothing further is added, the purpose being fixed by the context only. Thus, in condemning the Orders of the English Church on such grounds, Leo XIII equally condemned those of the Roman Church.

Leo XIII further urged that in the Anglican Ordinal there is no intention to consecrate bishops, or to ordain priests, in the Catholic sense. He rashly asserted that the framers of the Edwardine Ordinal deliberately removed from the service of ordination whatever sets forth the dignity and office of the priesthood. This objection refers to the omission from the Anglican rite of the charge 'Receive authority to offer sacrifices to God, and to celebrate mass as well for the quick as the dead,' accompanied by the delivery of the chalice and paten to the newly ordained priest. In place of this charge, which was only added to the Roman Ordinal about the eleventh century, the Anglican service has, 'Take thou authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the holy Sacraments.' This change was made advisedly, and for good reasons. The Word and the Sacraments comprise the whole treasure of the Church, as the sphere of grace and truth. In ordaining men to be 'faithful dispensers of the Word of God, and of his holy Sacraments,' the Church commits her whole treasure to their stewardship. In 'ministering the Sacraments as the Lord hath commanded,'⁸ a priest necessarily consecrates and offers the Eucharist. It cannot be doubted that popular misconceptions of the true doctrine of the Eucharist, both as regards the real presence and the sacrifice, had their weight with the reformers in making the change we are discussing. In this case, the English Church only reverted to an earlier type of ordination service, such, for example, as is found in the primitive Roman service for the ordination of a priest in the Sacramentary of St Leo the Great. In that service there is no allusion

to the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice. And it cannot be doubted that the reforming bishops, in ordination, seriously intended to do all that our Lord proposed, and the apostles authorized, as the Church has ever done. The intention of the English Church in the matter of ordination is clearly and fully set forth in the preface to the Edwardine Ordinal. In this preface it is stated that 'it is evident to all men diligently reading the holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the apostles' time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church: bishops, priests, and deacons.' The preface goes on to say that it was the intention of the framers of the Ordinal that these orders should be 'continued, and reverently used and esteemed, in the Church of England.' It would be impossible to find words which more clearly express the deliberate intention of the English Church to continue the three orders of the Christian ministry as they had existed from the apostles' times, and as they had been perpetuated all through the long period which intervened between the first century and the sixteenth.

We will close this chapter by quoting the weighty words spoken by one of the greatest Catholic theologians and historians of the last century. At the Reunion Conference held at Bonn in 1874, Dr Döllinger, speaking of Anglican Orders, said – 'The solution of the question depends solely on an examination of historical evidence, and I must give it as the result of my investigations, that I have no manner of doubt as to the validity of the episcopal succession in the English Church.'⁹

NOTES

1. 'The principle of apostolic succession is that no man in the Church can validly exercise any ministry, except such as he has received from a source running back ultimately to the apostles, so that any ministry which a person takes upon himself to exercise, which is not covered by an apostolically received commission, is invalid.' – Gore, *The Mission of the Church*, p. 31.
2. Of these Barlow and Hodgkins had been consecrated with the old Pontifical, whilst Scory and Coverdale had been consecrated with the English Ordinal.
3. Even if there were any doubt as to archbishop Parker's consecration, the apostolic succession would have been recovered in the next century in the consecration of archbishop Laud, in whom the three lines of the Italian, Irish, and English successions met. See *The Priest's Prayer Book*, Anglican Orders, 5th Ed. p. 204.
4. Haddon, *Apostolic Succession in the Church of England*, p. 180.

5. See Lingard, *History of England*, vol. vi. Appendix D.D. p. 328.
6. See Appendix, *Apostolical Succession*, also Courayer, *The Validity of the Ordinations of the English*, 1844. pp. 328, etc.
7. *Catholic Magazine*, 1834.
8. *Anglican Ordinal*.
9. Report of the proceedings of *The Reunion Conference at Bonn* in 1874. pp. 50, 51.

CHAPTER 12

THE APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION IN THE SEE OF CANTERBURY

The following list contains the names of the archbishops of Canterbury from the conversion of the Saxons to Christianity in the year 597, to the present time. During this period of nearly fourteen hundred years, there have been 102 occupants of the chair of St Augustine, the first archbishop.

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Augustine. | 32. Eadsige. |
| 2. Laurence. | 33. Robert of Jumièges. |
| 3. Melitus. | 34. Stigand. |
| 4. Justus. | 35. Lanfranc. |
| 5. Honorius. | 36. Anselm. |
| 6. Deusdedit. | 37. Ralph of Escures. |
| 7. Theodore. | 38. William of Corbeil. |
| 8. Berchtwald. | 39. Theobald. |
| 9. Tatwine. | 40. Thomas Becket. |
| 10. Nothelm. | 41. Richard. |
| 11. Cuthbert. | 42. Baldwin. |
| 12. Bregowine. | 43. Walter. |
| 13. Lambert. | 44. Langton. |
| 14. Ethelhard. | 45. Grant. |
| 15. Wulfred. | 46. Rich. |
| 16. Theogild. | 47. Boniface of Savoy. |
| 17. Ceolnoth. | 48. Kilwardby. |
| 18. Ethelred. | 49. Peckham. |
| 19. Phlegmund. | 50. Winchelsey. |
| 20. Athelm. | 51. Reynolds. |
| 21. Wulthelin. | 52. Meopham. |
| 22. Odo. | 53. Stratford. |
| 23. Æfsige. | 54. Bradwardine. |
| 24. Beorhthelm. | 55. Islip. |
| 25. Dunstan. | 56. Langham. |
| 26. Ethelgar. | 57. Whittlesey. |
| 27. Siricius. | 58. Sudbury. |
| 28. Elfric. | 59. Courtney. |
| 29. Elphege. | 60. Arundel. |
| 30. Liring. | 61. Walden. |
| 31. Ethelnoth. | 62. Chicheley. |

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 63. Stafford. | 83. Potter. |
| 64. Kemp. | 84. Herring. |
| 65. Bourchier. | 85. Hutton. |
| 66. Morton. | 86. Secker. |
| 67. Dean. | 87. Cornwallis. |
| 68. Warham. | 88. Moore. |
| 69. Cranmer. | 89. Sutton. |
| 70. Pole. | 90. Howley. |
| 71. Parker. | 91. Sumner. |
| 72. Grindal. | 92. Longley. |
| 73. Whitgift. | 93. Tait. |
| 74. Bancroft. | 94. Benson. |
| 75. Abbot. | 95. Frederick Temple. |
| 76. Laud. | 96. Davidson. |
| 77. Juxon. | 97. Lang. |
| 78. Sheldon. | 98. William Temple. |
| 79. Sancroft. | 99. Fisher. |
| 80. Tillotson. | 100. Ramsey. |
| 81. Tenison. | 101. Coggan. |
| 82. Wake. | 102. Runcie. |

[This list is amended from earlier editions to correspond with the succession order given in *Crockford's Clerical Directory* 1980 – B.G.]

CHAPTER 13

THE ANGLICAN PRINCIPLE AS TO THE TRUTH

It is important that we should have a clear understanding of the principle of the English Church as to the truth or rule of faith, as that principle was asserted at the Reformation.

(i)

Some Protestant sects regard the Bible as the source from which every one may draw his own conclusions as to the truth. What has been held in all ages by the great teachers counts for little, if anything, in the way of authority. According to this view, every man becomes his own interpreter of the Bible, which so used may cease to be the word of God, and may become the word of man. The necessary result of such private interpretation of the Scriptures is, that an endless variety of explanations may be given as to the meaning of God's word. This is one form of error concerning the ascertaining of the truth.

Roman Catholics are bound by the decrees of the Council of Trent and the Second Vatican Council. The former Council declares that 'the truth is contained in the written books *and* in the unwritten traditions;' and that it 'receives and venerates with an equal feeling of piety and reverence in all the books of the Old and New Testaments . . . *and also* the traditions relating as well to faith as to morals, as having, either from the word of Christ himself or the dictation of the Holy Ghost, been preserved by continuous succession in the Catholic Church.' (Sess. iv.) Thus the tendency of the Roman Church is to allow that an article of faith may rest upon Church teaching alone, apart from Scripture basis. The modern Roman Church has also committed itself to a theory of development, which leaves the way open to continual additions to 'the faith once for all delivered unto the saints.' (Jude 3.) This idea of development has gained ground chiefly since the Reformation. During the last century, we have witnessed the addition of two new

Roman doctrines to the Catholic creed. We refer to the doctrines of 'the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary,' and the 'Infallibility of the Pope,' belief in which has been made necessary to salvation, or to communion in the Roman Catholic Church.

If Protestants have relied upon the private interpretation of Scripture at the expense of tradition, Roman Catholics have relied upon tradition at the expense of Scripture.

It is abundantly clear that neither the Protestant nor the Roman Catholic principle as to the truth, is that of the Church in its earliest days. They are both novelties unknown for centuries, and fraught with great dangers, as experience and history testify. They are novelties from which, we may thankfully feel, the English Church, its real principle being understood, is delivered.

(ii)

What then is the principle of the English Church as to the groundword or rule of faith? What is the Anglican standard in regard to the truth? We reply – that of the ancient and undivided Church, namely that–

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES ARE THE FINAL AUTHORITY IN QUESTIONS RELATING TO CATHOLIC TRUTH, THE CHURCH BEING THE INTERPRETER OF THOSE SCRIPTURES, AND THAT TOO IN THE SENSE IN WHICH THE FATHERS HAVE GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD THEM.

This is the groundwork of the celebrated rule of Vincent of Lerins; 'The Canon of Scripture is perfect, and most abundantly of itself sufficient for all things.'¹

This principle of the primitive Church is stated by Dr Pusey – 'What is matter of faith must be capable of being proved out of Holy Scripture; yet that, not according to the private sense of individuals, but according to the uniform teaching of the Church.'² Thus Holy Scripture and Catholic tradition are joint and mutually corrective sources of the faith. The faith was delivered to the saints, and given to the Church, before the New Testament was written; yet the whole faith so given was, by God's providence, afterwards contained in Scripture. The Church received her faith before she received her Scriptures, yet the whole of the faith so received can be proved by Scripture.³ When the Christian revelation was written

down and accepted by the Church, the Church became its interpreter, being aided by the Holy Spirit.

It will be seen that the Catholic principle, as we have stated it, is the safeguard against the results of the two erroneous methods of arriving at the truth, stated at the beginning of this chapter.

(iii)

To this Catholic principle, the English Church committed herself unreservedly at the time of the Reformation: to this principle, our great divines appealed all through Reformation times: to this principle, the Anglican Church appeals today. In the words of Dr Pusey 'The Church of England has, from the Reformation, held implicitly, in purpose of heart, all which the ancient Church ever held.'⁴ That this is the Anglican position, is abundantly evident. Amongst such evidence, we may quote the canon of Convocation which imposed subscription to the Articles upon the clergy, in Elizabeth's reign. This canon directs preachers 'to be careful that they never teach ought in a sermon, to be religiously held and believed by the people, except what is agreeable to the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, and what the Catholic fathers and ancient bishops have collected out of the same doctrine.' Together with Holy Scripture, the Church of England preserves and teaches the three Creeds – the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Creed of St Athanasius. The ground upon which she bids us accept them, is, that 'they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture.'⁵ It is a striking proof of our claim to orthodoxy, that we alone, of the whole Catholic Church, recite the Athanasian creed in the public services of the Church. This Creed commences with the assertion, that 'whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith.'

The Anglican Church also recognizes the authority of the undisputed General Councils.⁶ It was in these Councils that all the great heresies were rejected, and the main truths of the Catholic faith asserted.

If this be our principle as to the truth, it may be asked – How is it that there exists such diversity of teaching amongst us? There is no doubt a good deal of diversity on certain points, not so much

touching the main doctrines of the Creed (e.g., the doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement, or the Divinity of the Holy Spirit), as on matters of practice, and the mode of carrying out our services, and the meaning given to some of our usages. This is to some extent unavoidable, seeing that in a great body of teachers there will be variety of thought and feeling. Judging by St Paul's Epistles, we see that in the apostles' times, there was a good deal of disagreement, and this upon important points, which often greatly troubled the minds of the apostles. Much of the diversity of teaching in our midst is due to the fact, that men teach in the Church's name that which is not her doctrine. Amongst ourselves there is great unwillingness to carry authority too far, so as to crush the individual energies of earnest men. Often truth comes out the more clearly by allowing these differences to appear; and we are warned by our Lord against too great exercise of discipline, 'lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.' (Matt. 13. 29.).

'To believe the Scripture and the Creeds in the sense of the ancient Primitive Church, to receive the four great General Councils so much magnified by antiquity, to believe all points of doctrine, generally received as fundamental in the Church of Christ, as a faith in which to live and die cannot but give salvation.' Archbishop Laud, *Conference with Fisher* xxxviii. 1.

NOTES

1. *against Heresy*, chap. 11. (also see Appendix 2).
 2. *The Rule of Faith*, p. 36.
 3. 'concerning the divine and sacred mysteries of the faith, we ought not to deliver even the most casual remark without the Holy Scriptures. Do not then believe me because I tell you these things, unless you receive from the Holy Scriptures the proof of what is set forth; for this salvation, which is of our faith, is not by ingenious reasonings, but by proof from the Holy Scriptures . . . For the present, commit to memory the faith, and expect at the fitting season the proof of each of its parts from the divine Scriptures.' – St Cyril, *Cat. Lect.* iv 5, 17; v. 12.
 4. *The Rule of Faith*, p. 42.
 5. Article 8.
 6. *Homily against Peril of Idolatry*, Part 2.
- Homily of Good Works*, ii., Part 1.
1 Eliz. c. 1. § 36.

'We, Bishops of Christ's Holy Catholic Church, professing the faith of the primitive and undivided Church, as based on Scripture, defined by the first four General Councils, and re-affirmed by the Fathers of the English Reformation, . . . ' – *From the Resolutions proposed to the Lambeth Conference*, 1867.

PART THREE

THE
FAITH AND PRACTICE
OF
THE CHURCH

‘THE COURSE OF GODLINESS IS MADE UP OF THESE TWO; PIOUS DOCTRINES, AND GOOD WORKS: NEITHER ARE THE DOCTRINES WITHOUT GOOD WORKS ACCEPTABLE TO GOD; NOR ARE WORKS ALLOWABLE WORKS, DONE APART FROM PIOUS DOCTRINES.’ – *The Catechetical Lectures of St Cyril*, iv. 2.

‘NEXT TO A SOUND RULE OF FAITH, THERE IS NOTHING OF SO MUCH CONSEQUENCE AS A SOBER STANDARD OF FEELING IN MATTERS OF PRACTICAL RELIGION: AND IT IS THE PECULIAR HAPPINESS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND TO POSSESS, IN HER AUTHORIZED FORMULARIES, AN AMPLE AND SECURE PROVISION FOR BOTH.’ – *Advertisement to ‘The Christian Year,’ by the Revd John Keble.*

CHRISTIAN DUTY

In the previous part of this book, we have striven to give, in general outline, a truthful account of the English Church from its foundation by St Augustine, St Aidan, and their fellow missionaries, to its issue from the Reformation. Since that time, although there have been great movements within the Church, yet there has been no change in its constitution. We have established the position of the Anglican Church from its beginning down to the present, as a true and living portion of the Holy Catholic Church of Jesus Christ.

Having established our position, we will proceed to consider our duties as Catholic Christians. We will pass on to learn what, as members of the Church, we are bound to believe and to do.

The Church being the covenanted sphere of divine grace and truth, it is our duty to seek safety within its fold. But it need hardly be said that mere membership in the Catholic body will not avail to our salvation, unless we believe truly and act faithfully.

In Holy Baptism, we were made members of the Church of Christ, and on receiving that sacrament we made certain promises.

We promised—

To renounce the enemies of God – the world, the flesh, and the devil:

To believe all the articles of the Christian faith: and,

To keep God's holy will and commandments.

In other words, we engaged—

To avoid the evil:

To believe the truth: and,

To do the right.

The keeping of these promises forms our part in the baptismal covenant or agreement, and is the condition of salvation. For this reason it was right that these promises should be made in our name in baptism, even though we were unconscious infants at the time. The observance of the baptismal promises is summed up in the words, *Christian Duty*.

Christian Duty comprises faith and practice – what we ought to believe, and what we ought to do. We will first consider what we ought to believe, and then what we ought to do.

CHAPTER 14

THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH

1. CHRISTIAN BELIEF

It is most important that we should not only *act* aright, but also *believe* aright. The true faith is not that which every man may fancy to be true, but that which God has revealed. It is our duty humbly to accept all that God plainly declares to be true without questioning, and to accept it on his authority as the Revealer; to act otherwise, is to be guilty of great presumption. It is most important too, because our faith colours our life. We are not likely to act aright, unless we believe aright. Many a man has been ruined by investing money in an undertaking which he believed to be sound but which proved not to be so. Errors in faith lead to imperfections, and often to errors in life. St Jude bids us to 'build up ourselves on our most holy faith.' (verse 20.) But we cannot build securely upon faulty foundations.

For these great reasons it is quite wrong to say, as so many do – It does not matter what I believe, so long as I do what is right. The Holy Scriptures praise those 'who keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' (Rev. 14. 12.)

Having said this, we commence by asking – What are we bound to believe as members of the Church of Christ? The answer to this question is – WE ARE BOUND TO BELIEVE THE CATHOLIC FAITH AS IT IS SET DOWN IN THE CREEDS, which are the work of God the Holy Ghost in the Church.

The word *creed* is taken from the Latin word 'credo,' I believe. The Greek term for the Creed is 'the symbol;' this word signified the earnest-money paid to secure a contract, and also the pass-word of the soldier. Thence it came to mean the belief to which a Christian pledged himself at baptism, as a part of the Christian covenant or contract; or the formula by which a Christian could make himself known to his fellow Christians.

Another name is 'the rule of faith;' i.e., something by which teaching may be measured or tested.

The Creeds took their origin from the need of some formula by which persons, desiring admission into the Church, could profess their faith at baptism. The root and germ of the Christian Creeds is found in our Lord's words, 'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' (Matt. 28. 19.)

No one form of creed seems to have been enforced by authority at first, but, growing as they did out of the baptismal formula, they have all the same skeleton, whilst the words and the order of each varied in different Churches. The use of creeds is earlier than the writing of the first books of the New Testament. In St Paul's Epistles we find traces of the Creed in his allusion to 'the faithful saying,'¹ 'the form of sound words,'² 'the deposit.'³

2. THE THREE CREEDS

- (i) The Apostles' Creed.
- (ii) The Nicene Creed.
- (iii) The Creed of St Athanasius.

(i) THE APOSTLES' CREED

The Apostles' Creed receives its name from the fact that it is derived from the teaching of the apostles. It contains the main truths which they preached to the world, speaking only of those things which they had seen and heard, while they followed the Lord Jesus.

Although references to, and quotations from, the Creeds are met with in early Christian writers, yet a complete creed is not found in any document until late in the second century. The Apostles' Creed, as we have it, is the Roman form of the Western Creeds, and is first found in the exposition of Rufinus in the fourth century. The late appearance of the Creed in writing is accounted for by the fact, that it was regarded as a precious secret, and committed to memory, being taught to persons just before baptism. In early times candidates were long under instruction for baptism, which, as a

rule, was ministered by the bishop but twice a year – at Easter and at Whitsuntide. On the eve of baptism, the Creed was taught, accompanied by a long and solemn address, the whole ceremony being named the ‘*traditio symboli*,’ i.e., the delivery of the pass-word. Then, at baptism, on the question being put, each recited the Creed which had just been taught. This was called the ‘*redditio symboli*,’ i.e., the giving back of the pass-word, upon which they were baptized. The Apostles’ Creed is a distinct and simple declaration of faith; thus differing from the Nicene Creed, which not only states the articles of the faith, but also adds clauses which shut out opposite errors. It differs also from the Athanasian Creed, which illustrates and in some cases explains the truths; while it not only contradicts, but also condemns errors.

The English Church has given considerable prominence to the Apostles’ Creed. It is printed in the Book of Common Prayer seven times. Speaking of this Creed, Bishop Forbes writes – ‘From the days of St Paul to this, these articles have been the sum and substance of Christianity. Nothing less than that is sufficient. Nothing more than that is of absolute necessity to salvation. When a child is baptized, the Church demands no more of him, or of his sponsors, than an assent to the Apostles’ Creed.’

(ii) THE NICENE CREED

The Nicene Creed is the Eastern exposition of the faith, and was drawn up by the fathers of the first General Council held at Nicaea AD 325. This Council was summoned to resist the false teaching of Arius, who held that our Lord was a creature, and not perfect God. On referring to this Creed, it will be seen how completely it sets forth the divine nature of Jesus Christ. The latter part of the Creed likewise contains a full statement of the divine nature of the Holy Spirit, and was added at the second General Council AD 381. This Council met at Constantinople to condemn the false teaching of Macedonius, who denied the Godhead of the Holy Spirit. Hence, this Creed is sometimes spoken of as the Creed of Constantinople, though generally as the Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed comes to us with the highest possible authority. It was imposed by two General Councils, and is The Creed, *par excellence* of the Church;

it is honoured with a place in the chief service of the Church – the Holy Eucharist.

(iii) THE CREED OF ST ATHANASIUS

In the disputes with Arius and his followers, Athanasius, a chief speaker at the Council of Nicaea, was the leader of the orthodox party. Hence, those who held the doctrine of the Council of Nicaea were popularly called Athanasians, as their opponents were called Arians. Athanasius died AD 373. After his death – but at what period is uncertain – this Creed came into use; stating and illustrating the true doctrine in the manner usual to Athanasius and his followers. Hence, it was popularly called *the Athanasian Creed* or the Creed held and defended by the followers of Athanasius.

The solemn language which this Creed adopts concerning unbelievers, is not to be understood of those who have never received the faith. ‘What things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law.’ (Rom. 3. 19.) It is the Church’s warning to those who wilfully reject the truth which God has made plain.

Creed of the Saints, and Anthem of the Blest,
And calm-breathed warning of the kindest love.

Who knows but myriads owe their endless rest
To thy recalling, tempted else to rove?

J. KEBLE

Such is a brief account of the three Creeds, which come to us on the authority of the church, and which ‘may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture’ (*Article 8*).

3. THE ARTICLES OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

Of the articles of the Christian Faith we are now about to speak in detail, taking the Apostles’ Creed as the ground work.

(i) 'I believe in God the Father Almighty'

1. *The existence of God*

Holy Scripture does not begin by proving God's existence; it takes it for granted. The existence of God is not a matter for mathematical demonstration. We cannot prove his existence with the same kind of certainty that we can prove that two and two make four. We do sums with our heads, but we believe in God with our hearts. 'With the heart man believeth.' (Rom. 10. 10.) But if there is no such mathematical demonstration of God's existence, yet there are abundant proofs of another kind, which make a moral certainty that He is.

We believe that the earth revolves on its axis once in every twenty-four hours, for reasons which admit of no other conclusion. So almost everything points to God's existence: all nature speaks of a creator, and preserver. Conscience tells of him, for it points to an unseen judge. Reason induces us to believe in him, and then faith comes to our aid and confirms its conclusions. What is wanting in actual demonstration, faith supplies. Reason leads us on far in our search for God, but the final step must be taken in faith; and when that step is taken, faith is assured, and becomes a God-given certainty. 'Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.' (Heb. 11. 6.)

Faith in God involves much more than the mere assent of the mind to his existence. It implies love and devoted obedience, for loving obedience is the life of faith. To believe in God is by believing to love him, by believing to choose him, by believing to go unto him.

(a) To believe in God is an instinct.

It is more natural to believe in God than to disbelieve in him. The idea of God is born in man, and is common to all nations. The most degraded races believe in some divinity or other, however debased their idea may be. As Dr Liddon says - 'A nation of pure atheists is yet to be discovered. Man thinks of a Higher Power as naturally

as he thinks of the world around him, or of himself. That man should in all ages and everywhere thus think of him, is of itself a presumption that He really exists.⁴

The soul needs God, for it was made for him; or to use St Augustine's beautiful words – 'Thou hast made us for thyself, and our heart can find no rest until it rests in thee.' It has been added, If you would believe in God, look within; and the answer comes, My God I believe in thee, because I am a living soul.

(b) A First Cause.

When we look out upon the universe, the question arises – Whence came all this: Who made it? There is but one answer – Whatever secondary causes there may be in creation, yet behind all is the First Cause – The Cause of causes – God. The question, Which was first, the hen or the egg? admits of but one reply – Whichever was first, God made it. 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.' (Gen. 1. 1.) On a Bedouin being asked, 'How do you know there is a God?' he replied, 'In the same way that I know on looking at the sand, when a man or a beast has crossed the desert; by his footprints in the world around me.' As St Paul puts it – 'The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.' (Rom. 1. 20.)

There is in the Confessions of St Augustine a beautiful passage which tells us how nature leads up to God – 'I questioned the earth, and it said, "I am not He;" and all that is in it confessed the same. I questioned the sea and the depths, and the creeping things which have life, and they replied, "We are not thy God, seek above us." I questioned the blowing winds, and the whole air with its inhabitants replied . . . "I am not God." I questioned the heavens, sun, moon, and stars; "Neither are we," say they, "God whom you seek." And I said to all those things which stand about the doors of my flesh, "Ye have told me of my God, that ye are not He; tell me now something of him." And they cried out with a loud voice, "He made us." ' (*Confessions* x. 6.)

(c) The Revelation of God.

Again, if God is, it is reasonable to suppose that He should reveal himself to his creatures. He has done this, and that in various ways, to Conscience and in Nature, as we have seen above – in the moral and prophetic revelations recorded in the Scriptures – to the Church, and, still further and above all, by the Incarnation of his Son.

2. The Nature of God.

‘God is Spirit,’ (John 4. 24.) i.e., a Being possessing neither body nor bodily form; we cannot see God with our eyes, or touch him with our hands. Although Holy Scripture speaks of the face of God, of his eye, his ear, his arm, and so on, we are not to understand that He possesses these bodily members. Such expressions are used because we have no language in which to describe the actions of a spirit. We have no other way in which to convey any ideas of the actions of God.

3. The Perfections of God.

(a) God is Self-existent.

We are creatures, and as such we are entirely dependent upon God. He is the Creator, and is completely independent of all created life. If the whole universe were brought to nought, He would remain; once, He was without creation, and that from all eternity. The name by which He made himself known to his chosen people is Jehovah, which signifies ‘I Am that I Am,’ (Exod. 3. 14.) and denotes the Self-existence of God.

(b) God is Eternal.

He has neither beginning nor ending. With God there is neither past nor future, but an eternal present. HE IS. The circle is the emblem of eternity. In the centre of the circle of eternity is God. However far back we go, we are no nearer the beginning of the life of God, for He has no beginning. ‘Before the mountains were

brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made, thou art God from everlasting, and world without end.' (Ps. 90. 2.)

(c) God is Holy.

The nature of God is the essence of goodness. God is the Good One. 'There is none good but One, that is God.' (Matt. 19. 17.) It is because He is good, that we are able to love and obey him. The worship of the angels 'Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts,' (Isa. 6. 3.) is his right. The holiness of God is so excellent, that 'his angels He charged with folly,' (Job 4. 18.) and 'the heavens are not clean in his sight.' (Job 15. 15.)

(d) God is Almighty.

He can do whatsoever He pleases, and that without effort. His will is supreme. 'With God all things are possible.' (Mark 10, 27; Luke 1. 37.) Yet He cannot sin, otherwise He would not be perfect. Nothing, however trivial, happens independently of God; not even a sparrow falls to the ground without him. (Matt. 10. 29.) God is so powerful that He can create worlds, and though his creatures have rebelled against him, yet in the end 'all things shall be subdued unto him.' (1 Cor. 15. 28.)

(e) God is Omnipresent.

He is present everywhere, upholding, governing, and caring for all his creatures; seeing and knowing all things, past, present, and future. 'He is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.' (Heb. 4. 12. 13.)

(f) 'God is Love.' (1 John 4. 8.)

God never changes; as He is, so He has ever been. He is, and ever has been love. Love is of the very being of God. But love, without an adequate object upon which to spend itself, would exist as an unsatisfied desire. A solitary deity would be but an imperfect being.

God was never alone, He is three persons in one God from all eternity.

God is infinite love, and infinite love alone can satisfy infinite love. The love of angels and men could not satisfy the love of God, because their love is finite and imperfect. Perfect love exists, and ever has existed, in the divine society of the ever blessed Three in One. The Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father, with perfect and eternal love; and Both love the Spirit, who is the eternal bond of love between the Father and the Son. Thus the revelation that 'God is love,' prepares the mind for the revelation of the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

4. *The Mystery of the Holy Trinity.*

There is one God in three persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. These three persons are co-equal in all things. 'The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet they are not three Gods, but one God.'⁵ This is the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, taught by the Church, and proved by the Scriptures. Whilst the Holy scriptures teach that there is but one God, they speak of each of the three persons as divine, and thus imply their co-equal Godhead. The doctrine of the Trinity in Unity is a great mystery. A mystery is a truth revealed by God which we are therefore bound to believe, but which we are unable fully to understand. Though the doctrine of the Trinity is above reason, it is not contrary to it. It is reasonable that there should be mysteries in religion, and above all that there should be mystery about the Being of God. If we could grasp the doctrine of the Trinity, we should ourselves be God. The fly on the ceiling cannot understand the nature of man, because man is so much beyond a fly in the scale of creation. But there is less interval between a fly and a man, than there is between man and God; for man is a creature, and God is the infinite Creator.

Though a philosopher cannot explain the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, a child can believe it. This great truth is not one about which we are to puzzle our minds. We are simply to believe it, because God has revealed it to the Church, and the Church teaches

it. Reason becomes lost in wonder, and gives place to adoring faith.

[Yet, even on the earthly plane, we can see that Trinity in Unity is possible under perfect conditions. Imagine a threefold chord consisting of the notes C, E, and G to have been struck on the piano-forte, each note being of exactly the same volume, and struck at exactly the same moment of time. That chord, though human ears may not detect it, will go on for all eternity, three distinct notes within the one chord.

It can be proved by simple experiment that each note is doing its own particular work, though never separated from the other two, and the ear can discern each distinct note, though they can never be separated. So too, each Person of the Godhead is recognized as having His own distinctive work of Creator, Redeemer or Sanctifier as the case may be, without ever being separated from the other Persons of the Holy Trinity.

The entire Godhead is mysteriously involved in all that properly belongs to any of the Three Persons because each Person is distinct within the Unity of the Holy, Blessed and Undivided Trinity. — B.G.]

‘The Catholic Faith is this; that we WORSHIP one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity.’⁵

5. The Fatherhood of God.

God is eternally Father of his only begotten Son. That is to say, independently of his relationship to the universe and created life, God has ever been Father. There never was a time when He was not Father of the eternal Son. And this is explained by the fact that Jesus Christ, as man, had no father but God. Thus, not only in his divine nature, but in his human nature also, Jesus Christ was in a peculiar sense Son of God.

As a truth flowing out of that which we have stated, God is our Father. If God is the Father of all men, in the sense that all men are his creation, He is nevertheless, in a more excellent manner, the Father of Christians, through their union with his only-begotten, incarnate Son. ‘When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman . . . that we might receive the

adoption of sons: and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' (Gal. 4. 4-6.) The Son of God was made Son of Man, in order that the sons of men may become sons of God. (See Rom. 8. 20.) In Holy Baptism we are made members of Christ, and the children of God – children of God, because members of Christ the only-begotten Son of God.

(ii) **'Maker of Heaven and Earth.'**

1. *The Creation of the Universe.*

If we only go back far enough, we come to a time when God alone existed. He had thus existed from all eternity. For endless ages God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, was alone in eternal life, and in perfect happiness. But it was not always to be thus; God was pleased to surround himself with a beautiful creation. Almighty God only can create; for to create is to bring forth out of nothing. It is not only to make things out of existing matter, but to make the very matter itself, and then to shape it. So the vast universe, of which our world is a very small part, came into being at the will of God. 'Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.' (Heb. 11. 3.) The story of creation is given in the first chapter of Genesis, and is summed up in the oft-repeated words 'And God said,' . . . 'And it was so.' 'He spake, and it was done, He commanded, and it stood fast.' (Ps. 33. 9.)

In this work of creation the three persons of the blessed Trinity co-operated. 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.' (Gen. 1. 1, 2.) 'God created all things by Jesus Christ.' (Eph. 3. 9.) 'By the Word of the Lord,' i.e., by the Son, 'were the heavens made; and all the hosts of them by the Breath of his mouth,' i.e., by the Holy Spirit. (Ps. 33. 6.)

In the first chapter of Genesis, creation is represented as taking place in six days. We need not suppose that these were days of

twenty-four hours long. The expression 'day' in the Bible is often used of more extended periods. By the six days of creation, we may understand vast periods of creative power, in which our earth was being prepared for the habitation of man. In briefly describing the work of creation, the account appears to dwell upon the leading feature of each period. Holy Scripture sets before us creation as the work of God – an orderly work, in which less perfect types of being were succeeded by more perfect types, until the highest type was reached in man.

It was formerly thought that the world, as we now see it, was created *directly* by God. It is now certain that the highest forms and organisms, with which we are familiar, were slowly developed, during long ages, by divine power out of the lower forms and organisms which God at first made. This idea is known as 'Evolution,' and there is nothing in the account given in Genesis which is inconsistent with such a theory. Evolution represents the *method* of God's working: who alone created all things developing them by the law of growth.

Difficulties have been felt by some in reconciling the discoveries of science with the records of creation given in Genesis. Probably with the advance of knowledge these difficulties will disappear. Bishop Forbes has said – 'While the Christian starts with the determination "Let God be true, and every man a liar," he must not exact too much of the text of the Bible or fancy that everything is to be made clear to him. If the Bible were to solve every difficulty in science, man would need omniscience to understand it, and language that would suit one state of advance in learning, would be totally unintelligible to an earlier stage. . . . The devout Christian feels very certain, that God in revelation speaks the same language as God in nature.

There are three great divisions of Creation.

Beings purely spiritual.

Beings partly spiritual, and partly material.

Things purely material.

2. The Creation of the Angels.

The highest beings in the scale of creation are the angels. Their existence and work in the universe is abundantly testified by Holy Scripture, and the teaching of the Church. The angels are spiritual beings, created certainly before man, if not before matter. The word *angel* means 'messenger,' but this was not their first name, for at their creation there were none, so far as we know, to whom they could act as messengers. Their first name was 'sons of God,' and under this title they are described as wondering spectators of the creation of the world. (Job 38. 7.) In the epistle to the Hebrews, (1. 13, 14.) they are spoken of as 'ministering spirits (literally, "spirits of worship") sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.' From this passage we learn that their work consists in the worship of God, and in the service of men. The angels are moral agents, that is to say, they possess freewill, and are able to choose between good and evil.

There are intimations in Holy Scripture of various orders or ranks in the angelic hosts. These are generally supposed to be nine in number, and are thus named:—

1. SERAPHIM.	Isaiah 6. 2, 6.
2. CHERUBIM.	Gen. 3. 24. Ps. 18. 10.
3. THRONES.	Col. 1. 16.
4. DOMINIONS.	Col. 1. 16.
5. PRINCIPALITIES.	Eph. 1. 21. Col. 1. 16.
6. POWERS.	Col. 1. 16.
7. VIRTUES. ⁶	
8. ARCHANGELS.	1 Thess. 4. 16. Jude 9.
9. ANGELS.	Heb. 1. 13. 1 Pet. 3. 22.

3. The Fall of the Angels.

The angels were created in a state of sanctity, but under probation; the Church has generally held that their temptation was to pride. Under the trial, a number of the angels fell; they were thrust out of heaven, and became fallen angels or devils. These fallen spirits St Jude (verse 6.) describes as 'the angels which kept

not their first estate, but left their own habitation.' At the head of this rebel host is Satan, thought to have been one of the Cherubim, or spirits of knowledge, owning the name of Lucifer, the light-bearer. Of his fall our blessed Lord speaks in the words, 'I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.' (Luke 10. 18.) The fall of the devils was without remedy; may be, they had sinned deliberately, with full knowledge of what they were doing, and of the consequences of their sin. When the new race of mankind appeared on the earth, the fallen angels became their tempters and enemies. It seems probable that the human race was created by God to take, after due trial, the vacant place in heaven, once occupied by the fallen angels. If this be so, the root of their ill-will towards mankind is jealousy.

When the Son of God was made man, one great purpose of his coming was to free mankind from the power of the demons. 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.' (1 John 3. 8.) That the devil and his angels will in the end be cast out for ever, is the doom which the Scriptures reveal.

4. *The Creation of Man.*

In the creation of our world, we see a gradual progress from lower to higher forms of life. It was upon the sixth day that creation was crowned by the appearance of the human race. We read, 'And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.' (Gen. 1. 26, 27.)

Man was made in the image and likeness of God. We may understand this image of God to be in the threefold structure of the soul – the memory, the understanding, and the will. The image of God, which includes these three great powers of the soul, is the natural preparation for his likeness which is supernatural, or above nature. This image can never be effaced however marred; it remained stamped upon the soul after the fall. We are all born in the image of God. The likeness of God is man's correspondence with his will, and depends upon the right use of the gifts of grace. A soul in grace bears the likeness of God; the higher the state of grace, the

closer the likeness. The likeness was well nigh, if not altogether, lost at the fall.

In creating man, God formed a being capable of knowing, serving, and loving him. To do these things is the end of man. That this purpose might be intelligently fulfilled, He gave man, like the angels, moral freedom.

5. The Fall of Man.

Man was put on his trial in the garden of Eden. God forbade his eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The devil came and tempted man to disobey. He yielded, and so fell away from God. (Gen. 2 and 3) The act implies much more than at first sight appears, for it was the deliberate sin of ■ being created in a state of grace, and possessing full knowledge and clear light.

By his sin, man lost that likeness of God in which he had been created, and his whole moral being fell into disorder. The nature thus disordered he passed on to all his successors. It is true of every child born into the world – ‘Behold, I was shapen in wickedness; and in sin hath my mother conceived me.’ (Ps. 51. 5.) All people to be born in the future were ‘in Adam’ when he fell, and they too fell in him.

This is original or birth sin, the sin of our origin or birth. It is more of the nature of a serious defect than of a positive taint, and hence it is the object of God’s compassion rather than of his wrath.

The fall was the occasion of the promise of the Deliverer, ‘the Seed of the woman,’ (Gen. 3. 15.) the Incarnate God himself, who should, in due time, bruise the serpent’s head. At the cost of vast personal sacrifice, God has made recovery from the fall possible. Of this great restoration, we shall learn more when we come to speak of the Incarnation and Redemption, and of their extension in the sacraments.

There is still within each of us a bias towards evil, and sad experience teaches that in our natural state it is easier to do wrong than right, or as St Paul says – ‘When I would do good, evil is present with me.’ (Rom. 7. 21.) This is the proof that we are a fallen race. It is the work of grace to rectify our natural tendency to evil,

and by degrees to give us the love of right, and the power to do it.

6. *The Origin of Evil.*

The fall of man is connected with a dark and mysterious subject – the origin of evil. Whence came evil, and why is it permitted? These are old questions which are ever new. That evil is here in various forms, and that too by permission of God who is perfectly good and just, is an evident fact. We have experience of moral evil within our hearts, and we see its shadow in the world around. What account can we give of its presence? We will answer the question in the words of the great St Augustine – ‘Evil . . . is not any substance; for were it a substance, it would be good. . . . Thou didst make all things good, nor is there any substance that was not made by thee. . . . I enquired what iniquity was, and found it not to be substance, but a perversion of the will, bent aside from thee, O God.’⁷ St Augustine here gives the true account of the origin of evil. Evil comes from the misuse of freewill in beings who were originally created good. The perverted freedom of the will of the creature, this it was that gave evil its birth.

In creating the universe, God might have refrained from giving existence to responsible creatures. He might have made nothing higher in the scale of created life than the animals now subject to man, giving the whole universe ‘a law which shall not be broken.’ But God desired something greater than such a constrained service as this. He desired a free obedience and a willing love, which nothing thus made could have given him. In his desire to receive such an unforced obedience and generous love, He created angels and men, endowing them with a gift which He bestowed upon no other of his creatures. This gift is that of moral freedom, or freewill. Angels and men alone of all creatures can say, We need not do this or that unless we choose.

But if the will is to be really free, it must be capable of choosing evil as well as good. We could not help being good, if there was no chance of being wicked. And is it not easy to see that such goodness as this would be of no value, and be unworthy of the name of goodness? Goodness is worthless unless freely chosen in the face of

possible evil. If we realize all this, it is not difficult to see that the ability to choose God and goodness carries with it of necessity the awful power to reject both Him and it. The possession of a free will implies the possible choice of evil as well as good. Hence, as far as we can see, the possibility of doing evil is an unavoidable condition of our trial here on earth.

In the case of man, the temptation to do wrong came from without. Man was tempted by the devil, the chief of the fallen angels. Thus, as far as our earth is concerned, evil came from the devil. Bishop Forbes, in summing up the question we are considering says – ‘The Catholic Christian, enlightened by the Spirit, and overcome by a sense of his own feebleness of intellect, traces up the origin of evil to the fall of the angels, and leaves it there.’⁸ He believes evil to be no part of God’s original creation, which was pronounced by God himself to be very good. ‘And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.’ (Gen. 1. 31.) He believes that evil entered this world from without, and so will be cast out again at the last.

(iii) **‘I believe in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.’**

1. The Doctrine of the Incarnation.

We are now to consider the mystery of the Incarnation. The Nicene Creed states the doctrine of the divine nature of Jesus Christ, and his Incarnation, with a greater fulness than the Apostles’ Creed. The words are – I BELIEVE IN ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD, BEGOTTEN OF HIS FATHER BEFORE ALL WORLDS, GOD OF GOD, LIGHT OF LIGHT, VERY GOD OF VERY GOD, BEGOTTEN, NOT MADE, BEING OF ONE SUBSTANCE WITH THE FATHER; BY WHOM ALL THINGS WERE MADE, WHO FOR US MEN, AND FOR OUR SALVATION CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN, AND WAS INCARNATE BY THE HOLY GHOST OF THE VIRGIN MARY, AND WAS MADE MAN.

The word *of* in the expressions ‘God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,’ signifies ‘out of,’ or ‘from.’ It implies the eternal generation of the Son from the Father. In reciting the Nicene Creed,

a slight stress should be laid upon the word to give the proper meaning. St Hippolytus says – ‘When I say that the Son is distinct from the Father, I do not speak of two Gods, but as it were, light from light, and the stream from the fountain, and the ray from the sun.’

The word *incarnation* signifies ‘the taking of flesh,’ and gives a brief summary of the doctrine stated in the first chapter of the Gospel according to St John, ‘The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.’ (1, 14.) It is most important that the Christian should be well instructed in the doctrine of the Incarnation, for the whole scheme of redemption circles round this great foundation truth of our religion. We shall not give God the loving gratitude which is his due, nor will our hope of salvation rest secure, until we have grasped the truth concerning the person and office of the Saviour. On these accounts the Athanasian Creed, after stating the doctrine of the Trinity, declares – ‘Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation, that we also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.’

What is the right faith concerning the Incarnation? It is this – the second person of the ever blessed Trinity, God the Son, out of love to mankind, took man’s nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary of her substance. This was accomplished by a miracle, for the blessed mother was a virgin both before and after his birth. Jesus was conceived by the direct action of God the Holy Ghost, who overshadowed the blessed Virgin Mary, the agency of a human father being thus superseded.

By this amazing act of condescension, He did not cease to be perfect God, but He added a pure human nature to his divine nature. **THUS, OUR LORD POSSESSES TWO NATURES – THE NATURE OF GOD, AND THE NATURE OF MAN; AND THESE TWO NATURES ARE UNITED IN HIS ONE DIVINE PERSON, WHOLE AND WITHOUT CONFUSION, AND THAT FOR ALL ETERNITY.** The life, and the power, and the influence of the Godhead was in all that Christ said and did: his words and actions as man, being the words and actions of God, were thus effectual to the redemption of mankind.

2. The Purpose of the Incarnation.

Why was God made man? Was it simply to save fallen man from sin, and from the punishment of sin; or were there other purposes behind this? If there had been no sin, would He still have come?

We may reply, that although it has not been clearly revealed, yet there are weighty reasons for believing that God's purpose of becoming man was prior to and independent of the fall. We must admit that the Incarnation is the greatest honour and blessing our race has received, or ever can receive. Human nature was thereby taken into closest union with God, and that for all eternity. It is difficult to believe that this honour depended upon sin, so that if there had been no sin, it would not have been granted. It is difficult to believe that we are better off as sinners, than we should have been if not fallen.

Assuming that the eternal Son would have come as man if there had been no fall, what, in this view, is the purpose of the Incarnation? It is that the whole creation may be united to the Creator, God choosing man's nature for this end, since man is the representative of creation. As being partly spiritual and partly material, man is akin to the angels and also to the animals and lifeless matter. There are hints in the New Testament that this is the true view of the purpose of the Incarnation.⁹

But if this view be correct, how is it that there are so few and such remote references to it in the Bible? We reply that the Bible, with the exception of the first chapter of Genesis, is the record of the history of fallen man, and of his restoration from a fallen state, and therefore it is occupied with the remedy which the fall rendered necessary. It views things as they are, rather than as they might have been under other circumstances.

But if the Incarnation would have taken place irrespective of sin, we cannot say the same of our Lord's sufferings and death. These were the result of sin. Viewing the Incarnation apart from the fall, it is a matter for adoring gratitude that when sin entered into the world, God was not turned aside from his purpose of uniting creation to himself; even though the fall rendered his bitter death and passion a necessity to our pardon and restoration. This view exalts the Incarnation as an exhibition of a love which not even

man's sinful rebellion could quench, though involving the incarnate God in the added humiliation of suffering as the fruit of our sins.

3. *The Blessed Virgin Mary.*

In the Incarnation of the Son of God, there were two agents – the one divine, the other human. The divine agent was God the Holy Ghost: the human agent was the blessed Virgin Mary.

The blessed Virgin is said to have been the child of Jewish parents named Joachim and Anne. Of her birth and early life, Holy Scripture and history are alike silent. But we may reverently believe that, with a view to her future destiny as the mother of the Lord, she was like the prophet Jeremiah, (Jer. 1. 5.) and the Baptist, (Luke 1. 15.) specially sanctified from the womb and that she lived a life of spotless innocence. How could she otherwise have been fitted for her high and mysterious office as the mother of the incarnate God?

It was to the pure maiden of Nazareth, thus chosen and prepared by God, that the angel Gabriel came, bearing the offer from God of an honour so amazing, that compared with it every earthly honour is as nothing. The angel's message was nothing less than that Almighty God would, with her consent, take human form in her womb. 'Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. . . . Fear not, Mary: for thou has found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest.' (Luke 1. 28, etc.)

Then arose in Mary's mind the wondering question, how could she, a virgin, bear a child? Had ever maiden become mother without the agency of human father? 'Then said Mary unto the angel, 'How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?' (Luke 1. 34.) There is no doubting in her question: Mary believes that it will be as the angel said, and only enquires how it will be accomplished.

It was then that Gabriel announced to Mary that the agency of human father would be superseded, and that, through the power of God, a virgin-birth would be accomplished. He assured her that in conceiving and bringing forth her Child, her virgin-chastity

would remain, that she would still be a virgin.¹⁰ He declared that she should fulfil the mother's part, God the Holy Ghost quickening the powers of nature. 'And the angel answered and said unto her, the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' (Luke 1. 35.)

But even yet the Incarnation was not accomplished; there wanted the consent of Mary to be the agent in its fulfilment.

Let us pause to consider what this announcement involved to Mary. She must have seen, by a pure womanly instinct, that there lay before her a time of keenest trial, of suspicion and agonizing doubt. If she accepted her amazing destiny, would not the finger of reproach be pointed at her as the holy Child grew in her womb? How could she explain her condition even to those nearest and dearest to her? How terrible must the facing of all this have been to one, whose soul was as pure as the driven snow? What would Joseph, to whom she was about to be married, think of her? What he *did* think we know; for we are told that at first 'he was minded to put her away privily,' to hide her from the shame which he began to think she had brought upon herself. Only a voice from heaven reassured him, and relieved him from painful suspicion. Beyond all this, there was the thought of the strangely mysterious association with Almighty God and his deep purposes, and all it would cost her to maintain such a dignity, which must have tempted the blessed Virgin to hesitate in accepting the divine call. 'What might not she have to be, to do, to endure, to surrender, to look forward to, who in a moment learned in the depth of her obscurity that she had been chosen and was called out of all mankind to be the mother of the "Son of the Highest," the "Son of God," the "Christ."' ¹¹

It was a tremendous crisis in the history of the world. Would the purpose of the eternal Word to become incarnate for us men and for our salvation be accepted, or would his merciful design, for a time at least, be thwarted? The immediate decision, in a certain real sense, lay with the blessed Virgin Mary, as a free moral agent; and we may well thank Almighty God that she made the right decision. In the face of all that awaited her, by the grace of God, the blessed Virgin, with perfect faith (Luke 1. 45.) and complete self-surrender, accepted the wondrous call of God, and uttered the

eventful words – ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me according to thy word.’ (Luke 1. 38.) In that central moment, the everlasting Son of the Father, who took upon him to deliver man, did not abhor the Virgin’s womb. He began to take human form, and Mary became the Mother of God.¹²

Well may we make the words of one of our English bishops, the pious and affectionate Bishop Hall, our own – ‘But how gladly do we second the angel in the praise of her, which was more ours than his! How justly do we bless her, whom the angel pronounced blessed. How worthily is she honoured of men, whom the angel proclaimed beloved of God! O blessed Mary, he cannot bless thee, he cannot honour thee too much, that deifies thee not! That which the angel said of thee, thou hast prophesied of thyself: we believe the angel and thee; “All generations shall call thee blessed,” by the fruit of whose womb all generations are blessed.’

4. *The Earthly Life of our Lord.*

Of the miraculous conception of our blessed Lord, we have already spoken. In the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary the Godhead was mysteriously united to the manhood, by the operation of the Holy Ghost. The Incarnation dates from the time that the angel Gabriel announced the tidings to the blessed Virgin Mary at Nazareth. This event is known as the Annunciation, and is commemorated in the Church on 25 March, commonly called Lady-day. We have also a daily memorial of the Incarnation in the Song of the blessed Virgin Mary, ‘My soul doth magnify the Lord,’ sung at evensong. This Psalm was uttered by the blessed Virgin upon her visit to St Elizabeth, after the angel had made known to her that she should be the mother of the Lord. Nine months after the Annunciation, our Lord was born at Bethlehem, the city of David, whither the Virgin Mother had resorted with St Joseph, to be enrolled in the census ordered by the Roman emperor. Many years before, the prophet Micah had foretold that our Lord should be born in that city. (5. 2.) The Church commemorates the birth of our Lord on Christmas day.

The entrance of the Son of God into the world in human form was an event of unspeakable importance. It was an event well known

in heaven, for it is recorded that the mystery of the Incarnation was revealed to the angel-hosts for their acceptance. 'When He bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.' (Heb. i. 6.) But if well known in heaven, it was unknown on earth, save to St Mary and St Joseph, and to certain shepherds to whom the angels announced the tidings, 'for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.' (St Luke ii. 11.) The shepherds, thus warned, hastened to Bethlehem, and there found the divine child, with his mother, in a cave or stable in which, from the crowded state of the inn, they had been obliged to seek shelter.

On the eighth day after birth, our blessed Lord was circumcised, and received his name of JESUS, which means 'God the Saviour.' Thirty-two days later, He, with his blessed mother, further complied with the Jewish law. Jesus was presented in the temple, and the blessed Virgin was purified after childbirth, though the conception of her divine child by the Holy Ghost, without human father, rendered such a ceremony needless. It was on this occasion that an aged servant of God, named Simeon, took our blessed Lord in his arms, and uttered the touching 'Nunc Dimittis,' 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,' which we sing daily at evensong. These two events are celebrated in the Church on January 1, and on February 2, eight days and forty days respectively from Christmas Day.

The next recorded event in our Lord's life was the visit of certain wise men from the far East. These wise men, or Magi as they are called, were probably astrologers. Their attention was drawn to a star of unusual appearance in the heavens, and, divinely taught, they resolved to follow its course. The star led them to Bethlehem, and rested over the very house in which the holy child was. Entering in, they offered their homage to the newborn king, and opening their treasures they presented gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The object of their visit was made known to Herod the king, who, regarding our Lord as a rival come to dethrone him, determined to put him out of the way. To this end, Herod cruelly ordered all the male children of the age of two years and under in Bethlehem and the district to be put to death. The massacre of these children is regarded by the Church as martyrdom for Christ's sake,

and is commemorated yearly three days after Christmas Day – the Feast of the Holy Innocents. Herod's intention to kill our Lord was frustrated; for the angel of God warned St Joseph to flee with the holy child and his mother into Egypt, commanding him to remain there with his sacred charge until the death of Herod. When Herod was dead, the holy family returned from Egypt and dwelt at Nazareth, the home of the blessed Virgin Mary. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Hosea – 'Out of Egypt have I called my Son.' (Matt. 2. 15.)

There now follows a period of some years, during which, with the exception of one event, we have no particulars of our Lord's earthly life. Of this event we must speak. It was the custom for Jewish boys on reaching the age of twelve years to be admitted to the full privileges of the Jewish Church. At this age our blessed Lord was taken by his parents to Jerusalem. It was the occasion of the yearly Passover, and large companies of pilgrims went up to the feast. Amongst the bustle and excitement of the holy city, the divine child was lost amongst the crowd. After three days He was discovered in the temple, whither He had resorted. The Jewish doctors, or teachers of the law, held their schools in the courts of the temple, and in one of these schools Jesus was found. On the blessed mother gently chiding her son, He replied – 'Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?' (Luke 2. 49.) These words form the first recorded utterance of our incarnate Lord. From this time to the commencement of his ministry, a period of eighteen years, He lived a hidden life at Nazareth, being subject to his parents, and labouring as a carpenter under the direction of St Joseph, his foster-father. The hiddenness of our blessed Lord's life, and his patient waiting for the commencement of his public ministry, are suggestive of great lessons.

When Jesus reached the age of thirty years – the legal age at which, in the beginning, the Levites of the Jewish Church commenced their public service – He came forth from his retirement. His first step was to seek baptism at the hands of St John the Baptist, his kinsman, whose wonderful birth had taken place a few months before his own. Descending into the bed of the river Jordan, He received a baptism which was attended with miraculous circumstances. The heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit, like

a dove, lighted upon him, whilst the eternal Father proclaimed him to be his beloved Son, in whom He was well pleased; thus, the Three Persons of the blessed Trinity were manifested.¹³ By his baptism Jesus was revealed as the Christ, the anointed one – anointed by the Spirit to be the prophet, priest, and king of his people. This baptism formed our blessed Lord's inauguration to his public ministry.

Immediately following this event came the temptation of Jesus, a transaction veiled in deepest mystery. He retired to the solitude of the wilderness, where He remained without food for forty days: at the close of this period, in his weakened state, Satan drew nigh to assail him with a threefold temptation. From the personal conflict with the evil one, Jesus came forth pure and sinless; Satan being vanquished, but only to renew his attack in the dark hours of the Passion.

Our blessed Lord now began his active ministry. He announced that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and that He had come to found it. From the crowd of disciples who followed him, He selected, after a night of prayer, twelve men whom he named apostles, and whom He trained to become the first ministers of his Church. As time went on, He gave them the solemn commission and the authority to act as his witnesses and the instruments for the salvation of the world. Our Lord's ministry lasted three years, and during its course He journeyed through the land of Palestine, preaching the gospel, teaching the people, working miracles of healing, and attracting souls to himself day by day. Thus, every step of His way was marked by deeds of wondrous love and tenderest mercy. As Mr Keble so beautifully says – 'All his time, from his baptism to his crucifixion, was entirely spent in waiting on those who needed him, either for their sorrows or for their sins.' His work stirred the envy of the chief priests, the Scribes and the Pharisees, who composed the religious world of the day; and they did not rest until they had silenced him, as they thought, by the death on the cross.

Shortly before his last journey to Jerusalem, Jesus permitted Peter, James, and John, three of his apostles, to witness his transfiguration. Ascending a mountain, the divine glory burst forth from him, and Moses and Elijah, the two chiefest prophets of the old law, spake with him of his coming death and sufferings, whilst

the eternal Father again testified with audible voice – ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’

By his earthly career Jesus Christ proved that He was the incarnate Son of God, the Saviour of mankind, in fulfilling prophecies, in working miracles, and in giving in his doctrine and in his life the rule and the model of all virtues.

5. The Passion of our Lord.

‘Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried.’

The mystery of the Redemption specially demands our reverent attention. By this we understand the sufferings and the death of our blessed Lord, whereby He redeemed the world.

That the Saviour was to suffer when He came, had been foretold from the beginning. The first sin of man drew from God the merciful promise of the Deliverer, ‘the seed of the woman.’ It was promised that He should come to ‘bruise the serpent’s head,’ i.e., to destroy the power of Satan; but it was added, that in so doing the serpent should ‘bruise his heel,’ i.e., inflict suffering upon him in his humanity. (Gen. 3. 15.) As time went on, this truth was taught again and again both by word and deed – by type and prophecy. The system of the Mosaic sacrifices taught the solemn lesson that without the shedding of blood, which is the life, there is no remission of sins;¹⁴ and pointed to the shedding of the precious blood of the Lamb of God, who should take away the sins of the world. The prophets, notably Isaiah, foretold that Christ should suffer and die for his people.¹⁵

We have seen that it is probable that the Son of God would have been incarnate if there had been no sin for which to atone, but the sufferings of our Lord are clearly traceable to the sin of man. Suffering is the shadow and the penalty of sin. Thus, when we see our Lord suffering, we know that, in some mysterious way, He was in contact with sin, and suffering because of sin. He was perfectly sinless, ‘holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners;’ (Heb. 7. 26.) but, as the representative of our guilty race, He allowed himself to be accounted guilty, and in surrendering life in such agonies, He

bore the punishment due to our sins. In the striking language of St Paul, God 'made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin.' (2 Cor. 5. 21.) Thus, Jesus was the sin-bearer, bearing 'our sins in his own body on the tree.' (1 St Peter 2. 24.) The prophet Isaiah specially declared that 'the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.' (Isa. 53. 6.)

This great prophecy found its first fulfilment in our blessed Lord's agony and bloody sweat in the garden of Gethsemane, on the night in which He was betrayed. At the close of this terrible conflict, Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve apostles, betrayed his master to his enemies for thirty pieces of silver. Deserted by the apostles, Jesus was taken away, and, on the next day, was led before his judges, scourged, crowned with thorns, and, after enduring unspeakable insults and indignities, was sentenced by Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, to be nailed to a cross upon which He died. This happened upon the first Good Friday.

The crucifixion of Jesus is the most terrible crime which it is possible to conceive; for the crucified was none other than God the Son, the second person in the blessed Trinity, the Creator and the Judge of all men.

Our blessed Saviour was nailed to the cross at nine o'clock in the morning; at twelve o'clock a mysterious darkness fell upon the face of nature, which lasted until three o'clock, when He died. During the six hours He hung upon the cross, He uttered seven sayings, known as the seven words from the cross:—

1. Jesus prayed for his murderers in the words — 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.'

2. He pardoned the penitent thief who was crucified with him, saying — 'To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.'

3. He commended his blessed mother to the care of the apostle St John — 'Woman, behold thy son! . . . Behold thy mother!'

4. He uttered the awful cry — 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' from psalm 22.

5. He said — 'I thirst.'

6. He spoke of the completion of his redemptive work, saying, 'It is finished.'

7. In the moment of death, He yielded up his soul into his

Father's keeping with the words – 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.'

By his cross and passion our incarnate Lord wrought the great atonement¹⁶ – the reconciliation of man to God: He redeemed us from the power of Satan, from sin, and from the punishment of sin. He did this as God and man in one person. As man, He suffered death for us; as God, He gave an infinite value to his sufferings and death. We must not regard the Redemption as the offering of so much pain for so much sin. It is not so much the *painfulness* of our Lord's sufferings which gave them their value, as the *obedience* of which they were the evidence. As St Bernard says, 'It was not his death, but his freely dying, which was pleasing to God.' The sufferings and death of Jesus were the witness to his perfect obedience to the will of God. He satisfied to the full the righteous demands of God on the obedience of man. His obedience knew no limits, for He 'became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.' (Phil. 2. 8.) We cannot conceive of obedience going beyond such an offering.

We should always think of this perfect obedience of our incarnate Lord, as the great cause of our redemption. In this wondrous act of God's love, we should regard our Lord not merely as our *substitute*, though He was also this, but as our *representative*. As the human race fell in Adam, so it was restored in Christ, the second Adam, the son of man, the representative man. And as the human race fell from God through disobedience, so it could only be restored by obedience. This obedience to the will of God, Jesus rendered all through his life; but it reached its highest perfection in his death and passion. Our Lord revealed the habit of his life when He said – 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me,' and, 'I do always those things that please him.' (John 4. 34; 8. 29.)

The cross and passion of our Lord is the medium of a great revelation: it reveals—

- (a) *The malice and deadly impiety of sin*; shewing what all sin leads to, and what alone can expiate it – the death of Christ, the Son of God.
- (b) *God's hatred of sin*; teaching that God's attitude towards sin is

one of detestation and wrath. If He underwent such shame and pain to destroy sin, how He must hate sin!

(c) *God's love to sinners*; if He willed to die to save sinners, how He must love sinners!

'O love of God! O sin of man!
In this dread act your strength is tried;
And victory remains with love;
For He, our love, is crucified!'

F. W. FABER.

6. The Descent into Hell.

'He descended into Hell.'

At three o'clock on Good Friday our blessed Saviour died on the cross, and from this time until the morning of Easter-day, a period of some forty hours, the soul of Jesus 'descended into hell.' The word *hell* in the Creed signifies 'the underworld,' or 'the unseen world.' It does not mean the place of torment reserved for the devil and his angels, but the abode of departed spirits, of which our Lord had spoken to the penitent thief under the name of 'paradise.'

From the death of Abel until the time of our Lord's passion, great numbers of souls had passed out of this life into the unseen world. These souls were in a state of safe-keeping in what is known as 'the intermediate state,' by which we understand the state of the departed between death and the last judgment. St Peter describes some of these souls as 'the spirits in prison,' and declares that our Lord visited the realms of the dead after his passion, in order that He might announce to them the glad tidings of his victory over Satan. (1 Pet. 3. 19; 4. 6.)

Our Lord's descent into hell is a subject about which little can be said with certainty. As to what actually took place there at his coming, we do not know. We may believe that some special blessing to the departed resulted from his presence at such a time, but we have no means of knowing any details.

Connected with our Lord's descent into hell is a subject of some importance, of which we will now speak. We refer to the condition of the departed in the intermediate state.

Holy Scripture seems to imply that at death the soul goes before God for the particular judgment, and is then consigned to joy or misery in the intermediate state. This joy is not the final joy of heaven, neither is this misery that of everlasting punishment. This *particular* judgment is to be distinguished from the final or *general* judgment. The general judgment is represented as a vast assize at which all the world will be assembled, and which will not take place until after the resurrection at the end of the world; hence it is called 'the last judgment.' Our Lord himself so describes it in St Matt. 25. 31, 32 – 'When the Son of Man shall come in his glory . . . before him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.' Upon the general judgment at the end of the world, the condition of souls in eternity depends. No one, however good he has been, will receive his final degree of bliss immediately after death; and no one, however bad he has been, will then receive his final measure of rejection. All souls, good and bad alike, go at death to a state of waiting, where we believe they receive a foretaste, though not the actual realization, of their final lot in eternity. This we may conclude from the teaching of our Lord in the parable of the rich man and the beggar, which is recorded in St Luke 16, 19, etc. Our Lord is describing the state of two souls in the interval between death and the judgment. That He is not speaking of heaven or hell is evident. The Greek word translated 'hell' in the sentence, 'And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments,' is 'hades,' and is never used in Holy Scripture for the place of everlasting punishment. It is not until after these events that men will reach their final state in eternity.

As far as the souls of the saved are concerned, we may regard the intermediate state as a preparation for the life of heaven. We may believe that purification from the stains of sin committed in this life, forms a necessary part of such preparation. Dr Pusey thought that 'amid the rest and felicity of knowing that they are saved, that they cannot again have the very faintest wish to commit the very slightest sin . . . the temporary banishment from the sight of God will be intense purifying suffering.'¹⁷

No one, however good a life he may have lived on earth, is fitted at once to come into that glorious Presence. There are stains and

imperfections still clinging to the souls of the very best men, which must needs be purged and done away, before the full sight of God can be endured, and his presence be enjoyed.

In the state of waiting between death and the last judgment, the final preparation for God's presence is made. When we reflect upon what we really are, and what God is, and how much of the ways of heaven we have yet to learn, we cannot but heartily thank God that He has provided such an interval, in which the work of grace begun on earth may be continued and perfected. Speaking of the saintly John Keble, Dr Pusey wrote – 'It would be expected of such a humble soul as that of the author of *The Christian Year* that the prospect of such a preparation was an unspeakable comfort to him within a year of his death. He expressed it both to myself and others.'¹⁸

Our thoughts of the departed who in this life sought to obey God and to keep themselves pure and true, can only be those of unspeakable rest in Christ. (*See Rev. 14. 13.*) It has moreover been widely believed in the Church, that the more exalted of the faithful departed, though they have not yet attained to their perfect consummation and bliss, are even now brought into close association with our Lord in his heavenly glory and mediation.

For the many who depart this life apparently neither good enough for heaven nor bad enough for hell, we may hope that a grant of mercy is provided in the intermediate state, in which the evil will be completely purged, and the good perfectly developed. It is reasonable to suppose that when this purification is accomplished, such souls will enter into perfect peace, and advance towards that final and unending happiness which will follow the resurrection of the body and the last judgment.

'Every heresy is the intellectual vengeance of some suppressed truth.' This is so of forgetfulness of the truth of which we are thinking. Such forgetfulness has led to the gravest consequences. Unmindful of the merciful provision of a state of preparation between death and the judgment, men have come to deny the existence of hell. Instinctively feeling that so many souls leave this life unfitted for heaven, and ignorant of the truth of the intermediate state, they have naturally rebelled against the thought of such souls being eternally lost. Thus, with no other alternative before the

mind, they have been led to deny that there is any hell at all. A belief in the true doctrine of the intermediate state would have saved them from their error.

Again and again we see that the abuse of a thing is fatal to its right use. It is one of the unhappy results of exaggerated teaching that in the re-action against that which is false, that which is true is lost sight of. And such is the case in regard to the intermediate state. At the time of the Reformation, serious errors and abuses widely prevailed concerning the condition of the departed. To some of these we have already alluded in speaking of the sale of indulgences. It is against such errors and abuses that the Church of England protests in Article 22. This article is not meant to condemn the primitive doctrine of the intermediate state as we have stated it, but only 'the Romish doctrine,' which so largely obtained at the time of which we are speaking, and which could claim no support from the teaching of antiquity. The term *purgatory* simply means 'a process of cleansing or purging;' it is disused amongst us because of certain ideas which in medieval times had attached themselves to the word. Of these we have already spoken in discussing the causes of the Reformation.

7. *The Resurrection.*

'The third day He rose again from the dead.'

The lifeless body of our Saviour was taken down from the cross on the evening of Good Friday by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, two of his disciples. The first of these was a rich man who owned a garden in which he had prepared for himself a tomb, hewn out of the rock. To this unused sepulchre, the sacred body of our Lord was carried. Before being laid to rest, the lifeless form had been wound in the long linen bandages used by the Jews in burial, in the folds of which spices, to the weight of a hundred pounds, had been placed for the preservation of the body. The head of our Lord was also wrapped round with a napkin, leaving the lower part of the face and the neck uncovered. It is important to notice these arrangements, in regard to what afterwards happened.

Placing the sacred body of the Lord in the cave, the two disciples rolled a great stone to the opening, and departed.

The chief priests, with Pilate's permission, took the precaution of setting a seal, probably of clay, upon the stone, thus making it impossible for the body to be disturbed or removed, without leaving traces in the broken seal. A guard of Roman soldiers was also granted them to watch by the tomb. The reason given for this special care was, to use their own words, 'lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead.' (Matt. 27. 64.) But all such precautions were in vain. Devised by our Lord's enemies, they became, in God's providence, important evidences to the truth of the Resurrection.

Very early in the morning of the third day after the Crucifixion, unseen by mortal eyes, the Lord rose glorious from the dead.

The holy women, who had followed Jesus in the days of his ministry, came at sunrise to visit the tomb, intending to complete the embalming of the body. As they drew near, the question arose, 'Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away.' (Mark 16. 2, etc.) It had been rolled away not to permit our Lord to come forth, but to enable the holy women to see into the empty sepulchre. Instead of finding, as they expected, the lifeless form lying wrapped in the grave-clothes, they beheld an angel who said 'Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: He is risen: He is not here: behold the place where they laid him.' (Mark 16. 6.) Hurrying away in utter astonishment, the women carried the news to the apostles. St Peter and St John at once set off to see for themselves; arriving at the tomb, they looked in, and beheld the grave-clothes lying as an empty envelope, which, without being unrolled, had collapsed with the weight of the spices, after the body had been withdrawn, and the napkin in the form of an empty helmet lying a little apart, the distance from the shoulders to the lower part of the face of the dead. (*See* John 20. 3, etc.)

This was not the first time that the dead had come back to life, many cases of resurrection being recorded in the Bible; but our Lord's rising again to life differed from all such. These risings to life were in every instance brought about by the power of another, and the person thus raised died again. But Jesus Christ rose from

the dead by his own power, through his Spirit, and never to die again. His own words are – ‘I have power to lay down (my life), and I have power to take it again,’ (John 10. 18) and, ‘I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have keys of hell and of death.’ (Rev. 1. 18)

The Resurrection of our Lord is better attested than any other fact in history.¹⁹ He was seen alive eight times after He rose again by his most intimate friends, who could not be deceived – on one occasion by above five hundred persons at once. (1 Cor. 15. 6.) One of the apostles, St Thomas, refused to believe that his Master *was* risen, and was only convinced by seeing the very wound-marks on his sacred body. (See John 20. 24-30.)

The Resurrection is the central truth of Christianity. ‘If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain.’ (1 Cor. 15. 17.) Our Lord’s rising again to life is the proof of the truth of all He taught, and of his claim to be the incarnate Son of God. He himself gave this test in saying – ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. . . . He spake of the temple of his body,’ (John 2. 19, 21.) and alluded to his death and resurrection. It is on this account that we find the Resurrection of Jesus the great topic of the preaching of the apostles.

8. *The Great Forty Days.*

Jesus Christ rose from the dead on Easter day, but He did not at once go to heaven: for a period of forty days He tarried on earth. We know these days in the Church as ‘the great forty days.’ What was the purpose of this delay?

We reply, That He might give to all a thorough conviction that his rising from the dead was a real event. The Resurrection is the great proof that Jesus Christ is the Son of God made man, and that all He claimed to be and to teach is true. It is necessary for our faith that we should be perfectly sure that He really did rise to life again after his passion. He therefore made the fact quite plain by many acts and words – talking, walking, and eating with his disciples, shewing them his wounded hands, feet and side. In this way, a number of reliable witnesses were trained to go forth into the world and say – We know that He rose from the grave, for we saw him

alive as certainly as we see you alive. In the early days of the Church, one of the chief works of the apostles and disciples was to bear witness to the Resurrection of Jesus. Thus St Luke tells us that 'He shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs,' i.e., proofs about which there could be no mistake, 'being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.' (Acts 1. 3.)

He thus stayed not only to make his followers sure of the truth of his rising from the dead, but also that He might speak with them concerning 'the kingdom of God;' i.e., the Church. During the great forty days there were many matters connected with the working of the Church to be arranged. He had not given his last instructions. From the Gospels we learn much about the Church, but from the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles we learn more. The Acts of the Apostles forms the first Church history, and therein we read of things being done of which no record is found in the Gospels: for example – the first day of the week, or Sunday, is observed instead of the seventh day, or the Sabbath; the sacrament of Confirmation is ministered; the threefold ministry begins to take shape. Of these things we read in the Acts and in the Epistles, without any record of their institution by Christ. There can be little doubt that the ordering of such matters was amongst 'the things pertaining to the kingdom of God,' of which Jesus Christ spake to his disciples during the great forty days.

During this time our Lord was going in and out amongst his disciples in his risen body. His body, after the Resurrection, possessed mysterious properties which it did not possess before. As we have seen, He passed out of the grave-clothes without those clothes being unwound, or the great stone being moved from the door of the sepulchre. He appeared to Mary Magdalene, but she supposed him to be the gardener, so strangely was He altered. (John 20. 14.) He appeared to two of his disciples 'in another form' as they journeyed to Emmaus, and it was only as He vanished out of their sight that they recognized him. (Mark 16. 12.) He suddenly appeared in the room in which the apostles were sitting with barred doors, without those doors being opened. (John 20. 19.) It was on the occasion of this appearance, that Jesus gave to all the apostles the power of forgiving sins in his name, (John 20. 22, 23.) which

He had previously promised to St Peter at Caesarea Philippi. (Matt. 16. 18, 19.) He was the same, yet not the same, for He was clothed in the spiritual body of the Resurrection. Such were the signs of the marvellous properties of his risen body, in which, to crown all, at the appointed time He ascended into heaven.

9. *The Ascension.*

'He ascended into Heaven

During the great forty days our Lord manifested himself to the apostles from time to time. He did not abide with them constantly as before, but only came to them at intervals, and for brief periods. There was much uncertainty about his presence: his appearances and his disappearances were alike startling. Before his death He taught the disciples that the time would come when He would leave them in bodily presence. He had said – 'It is expedient for you that I go away.' (John 16. 7.) 'A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.' (John 16. 16) 'I leave the world, and go to the Father.' (John 16. 28)

Previous to leaving the earth in bodily presence, our Lord had met the eleven apostles upon a mountain in Galilee, and there He had delivered to them his final charge in the majestic words, 'All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.' (Matt. 28. 18, etc.) And now, on the fortieth day after his resurrection, the time came for his departure from earth to heaven. Taking the eleven disciples with him, He led them for the last time out of Jerusalem, across the brook Kedron, to the summit of Mount Olivet. 'It came to pass, while He blessed them He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven' (Luke 24. 51.) and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

Behind the cloud how wondrous must the scene have been, for the gates of heaven were lifted up, and the holy angels poured forth

to conduct their King, returning from his humiliation, to the highest place of honour at the right hand of the eternal Father! 'He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.' (Mark 16. 19.) The word 'sitteth' in the Creed, speaks of the rest, dominion, and judgship of our ascended Lord.

The Ascension is the completion of the Incarnation. The Son of God took our nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin never to put it off. Hence this article of the Creed teaches us the eternity of the Incarnation. He is still Son of Man, and will be for ever and ever. The truth of the eternal manhood of Jesus is one of supreme importance, for it has much to do with our salvation.

By his ascension our blessed Lord opened the gates of heaven, which, since the fall, had been closed to man. Our Lord was the first of the human race to enter heaven. He ascended into heaven that we might follow Him; thus, He is described as 'the forerunner,' (Heb. 6. 20) entering in for us. A forerunner is one who goes in front, that others may follow. He tells us that He went to heaven 'to prepare a place for us.' (John 14. 2.)

The great type of our ascended Lord in his work in heaven, is found in the action of the Jewish high priest on the day of atonement. After offering sacrifice for the sins of the people, he took the blood of the victim, and, passing through the Holy Place, entered alone into the Holy of Holies, the very presence-chamber of God, and there presented the blood, sprinkling it before the mercy-seat. This solemn action of the high priest on the day of atonement forms the groundwork of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The writer of that Epistle brings out most clearly the truth that our ascended Lord is the true high priest, and that He has entered into heaven itself, there to present his sacrifice, and 'to appear in the presence of God for us.' (Heb. 9. 24.)

The action of the high priesthood of our Lord in offering himself in heaven, is the second part of his sacrifice. He is represented in the Revelation of St John, as 'a Lamb as it had been slain,' (Rev. 5. 6.) i.e., with the wound-marks upon his sacred form. We know that Jesus bore the prints of the nails and spear in his risen body, and that He carried this body so marked into heaven. It is the work of our Lord as our high priest to plead continually for his Church in the presence of his Father. It would seem that He bears the scars,

the tokens of his passion, on his glorified form in heaven, for this very purpose. 'He ever liveth to make intercession for us.' (Heb. 7. 25.) As the Head of the Body, our blessed Lord is the medium through which grace descends upon us, his members. 'When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.' (Eph. 4. 8.)

Every time we pray 'through Jesus Christ our Lord,' or beg for mercy and help for his sake, we throw ourselves into the stream of the unceasing pleading of Jesus in the heavens. But beyond prayer, there is a special way in which we may share in the blessings of that heavenly pleading. Before He ascended to exercise his office as our great high priest, He ordained a great mystical service in which we, on earth, may have a real part in that which He does above. Jesus Christ is now pleading the merits of his life and death before the face of the eternal Father, and He has given us the means of doing the same on earth. This service is the Holy Eucharist. In the Holy Eucharist we shew forth Christ's life and death before God below, as He pleads the same before the Throne above. The Eucharistic Sacrifice is the earthly counterpart of the heavenly pleading, as it is also of the worship of the 'Lamb as it had been slain.' (Rev. 5. 6.) Thus the worship of heaven and earth are one.

10. *The Return to Judgment.*

'From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.'

The second coming of our Lord, which is the hope of his Church, will differ in many ways from his first coming. He came first in great humility, when He did not abhor the Virgin's womb: his second coming will be in awful majesty. His first coming was as the Saviour of the world: He will come again to be our Judge. It is in commemoration of these great events, the one in the past, the other in the future, that the Church keeps the season of Advent.

That our Lord will come again is perfectly certain, for He has said so; but the time of his coming is veiled in uncertainty. He who said, 'they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall He send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of

the earth to the uttermost part of heaven,' went on to add, 'But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.' (Mark 13. 26, 27, 32.)

The purpose of the second coming of Jesus Christ is stated in the Creed – 'He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.' By the expression 'the quick' we are to understand the living – those who shall be alive on the earth at the second coming of Jesus Christ. Of such it is written that they 'which are alive and remain shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.' (1 Thess. 4. 17.)

The day of judgment is described as 'the day when the Son of Man is revealed.' (Luke 17. 30.) By this we may understand that before pronouncing sentence, Jesus Christ will first satisfy the assembled universe of his righteous claim to be their Judge, so that friend and foe alike may be convinced of his perfect equity.

The day of judgment will be the day of justice, when all life's inequalities will be put right, and everyone will get his due. As such St John speaks of it – 'I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.' (Rev. 20. 11-13.) The Judge will be none other than our Incarnate Lord himself, 'the Son of Man.' 'The Father hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.' (John 5. 27.) We shall be judged by one who is both God and man. In the *divinity* of our Lord, we have the assurance that he will judge us fairly; for as God He knows our frailty, our temptations, and our struggles. In the *humanity* of our Lord, we have the pledge that we shall be judged tenderly; for as man He knows from experience what we are, and what we can do. We shall be judged with God's perfect justice, and with man's perfect sympathy. The result of the judgment is separation; the Judge 'shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth

his sheep from the goats,' every soul going to its own place, the place for which it has fitted itself, at the right hand or at the left hand of the Judge. 'Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,' – and again, 'Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' (Matt. 25. 31 to end.)

In speaking of this solemn subject St Basil wrote – 'Blessed is that soul, which day and night hath no other care than how, in the great day, when every creature shall stand around the Judge to give an account of their works, she shall be able to relate her life. For whosoever continually places that day and that hour before his eyes, and ever thinks of his defence at that most just tribunal, is likely to commit no sins, or at least very few.'²⁰

(iv) 'I believe in the Holy Ghost.'

The Holy Ghost is the third person of the ever blessed Trinity, proceeding from the Father and the Son, and is, with them, worthy of divine honour. We are not to think of the Holy Spirit as a mere influence or quality, but as a person. He dwells within us as the uncreated Source of grace, but the influence and qualities which his presence imparts are to be distinguished from his person, just as the perfume which a flower gives forth is to be distinguished from the flower itself. In many places in the Scriptures, that is said of the Holy Spirit which can only be said of a person. We are taught that He intercedes for us, that He teaches us, that He strives with us, that He convicts us of sin, and that He may be grieved and resisted. All such things can only be said of a person.

The Holy Spirit is not merely a person, but He is a Divine Person. 'The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.'²¹ When the angel Gabriel appeared to the blessed Virgin Mary at Nazareth, he said – 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' (Luke 1. 35.) Our blessed Lord taught the

divinity of the Holy Spirit, when He declared that 'all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.' (Matt. 12. 31.) He could not have thus spoken if the Holy Ghost is but a creature, and not God. St Peter told Ananias that he lied to the Holy Ghost, and that in so doing he had not lied unto men, but unto God. (Acts 5. 3, 4.) St Paul teaches that the Church is the temple of God, because the Spirit of God indwells her. (1 Cor. 3. 16, 17.) So again, the Nicene Creed declares the Holy Ghost to be 'the Lord,' i.e., the Lord Jehovah, 'who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified.'

This Creed also bestows upon the Holy Spirit the title of 'the Giver of Life,' i.e., the quickener, or life-giver. In the account of the creation of the world, He is described as 'moving (or brooding) upon the face of the waters.' (Gen. 1. 2.) By the vital energy of the divine Spirit, the works of creation were brought to perfection. As the Life-Giver, the Spirit overshadowed the blessed Virgin Mary, thus enabling her to conceive in her womb the incarnate Lord. (Luke 1. 34, 35.) On the day of Pentecost, the eternal Spirit descended upon the Church to fill her with divine life, and to abide with her for ever.

The Holy Spirit is said, in the Nicene Creed, to proceed from the Father and the Son. This refers not only to his coming into the world and upon the Church, but also and chiefly to his eternal relation to the Father and the Son. we believe that He is the Spirit of God and of Christ. 'The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, as from one principle of life. He is the "pure river of water of life" which proceedeth "out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."' ²²

The Holy Spirit inspired the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles and the evangelists of the New. By this we mean that He enabled them to select out of the mass of revelations such truths, and to place on record such facts of history, as possessed an abiding value and a lasting interest to mankind; both giving them the impulse to do this, and preserving them from error in fulfilling their task. The inspiration of the Holy Spirit fixed and safe-guarded revelation.

(v) **'The Holy Catholic Church.'**1. *The Holy Ghost in the Church.*

The mention of the Holy Ghost in the Creed is followed at once by that of the Holy Catholic Church. We pass quite naturally from belief in the Holy Spirit to belief in the Church, for the Church is the temple of the Holy Ghost.

It is a fact of deep significance that the Christian Church did not commence its proper work in the world during the lifetime of Jesus Christ. Before his ascension Christ founded the Church; He appointed the apostles to be the first officers of the Church, giving them authority to act for him, and instructing them how to act after his departure. But He accompanied this with the command that they were not to exercise their office until sometime in the future. His last charge was, 'Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.' (Luke 24. 49.)

It was not until ten days after Christ went up to heaven, that the great event happened which gave the Christian Church its real start in the world. That event was the descent of God the Holy Ghost upon the Church on the day of Pentecost, the first Whitsunday, recorded in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. That the Holy Ghost should thus come, had been foretold by the prophet Joel in the words, 'And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.' (Joel 2. 28.) Before Christ went up, He had chosen the first ministers of his Church. He had charged them to teach, to baptize, to absolve, and to celebrate the Holy Eucharist; yet at first they did none of these things – they waited.

For what did they wait? They waited for the fulfilment of Christ's own promise; for that power which was to come upon them from on high. They waited for the coming of the Holy Ghost, the Life-Giver. (Acts 1. 4, 8.)

All was in a state of suspense, until the promised power should be theirs which should enable them to do all that Christ had bidden them. They were as soldiers who had received their orders, but were waiting for their arms. Before Pentecost, the Church was as 'the dry bones' spoken of by Ezekiel, (Chp. 37) brought indeed together, but motionless, awaiting the breath from on high.

After the descent of the Holy Ghost all this was changed. Suspense was at an end. The apostles at once began to carry out all the instructions which Christ had given them. We read of their going forth immediately to labour in all places, teaching, baptizing, confirming, celebrating the Holy Eucharist, and ordaining others. From all this we learn that the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the Church was an event of the greatest importance.

We must not think that the Holy Spirit came only to give the Church its start in the world, and then, when this was accomplished, withdrew his presence. He came to be the Church's perpetual endowment throughout all time. Our Lord expressly promised that the Holy Spirit should come upon his Church never to leave it. He said, 'I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth.' (John 14. 16, 17.) The Holy Catholic Church is, by divine appointment, the perpetual abode and permanent home of the Holy Spirit of God.

2. The Office of the Church.

The Church, the Body of Christ, is a divine society spread throughout the world, established by Jesus Christ, and of which He is the head and the baptized are the members. The Church is subject to the authority of lawful pastors, the bishops whom Christ charges to instruct, to feed, and to govern her members. Under the bishops, as fellow-workers, are the priests and the deacons. The Church teaches to the faithful the truth which Christ delivered to the apostles, and she ministers the grace which flows from his sacred humanity, by means of the sacraments.

The first part of the Creed, and by far the larger part, concerns our belief in God. From the opening words 'I believe in God,' down to the words 'I believe in the Holy Ghost,' the subject of the Creed is God. If we look on to the end of the Creed we come to the words, 'the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.' These are matters in which man is chiefly concerned. The forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting, are the three great blessings of the Gospel, for which all men hope. In the Apostles' Creed, the expression 'the Holy

Catholic Church,' stands between the words concerning God, and those concerning man.

Now the structure of the Creed teaches that we may not go straight from belief in the three persons of the Holy Trinity, to belief in the three main blessings of the Gospel, until we have expressed our belief in the Holy Catholic Church. The position of the words 'the Holy Catholic Church,' in the Creed teaches an important truth, viz., that it is God's will to bestow the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting, *in and through* the Holy Catholic Church.

It must not be thought that God deserts all those who are outside his Church. Christ is 'the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.' (John 1. 9.) 'The Spirit breatheth where He listeth. All life is his in nature and in man. There is no being which lies outside the action of the eternal Word or his Spirit.'²³ Whilst it is true that God's grace overflows the Church, yet the fact remains that it is *pledged* to us only within that sphere. God's grace is not bound, but we are bound to seek it where He has promised it, that is, in the Church. Within the Church, definite graces are pledged and guaranteed by the divine fidelity. Within the Church, the faithful Christian lives and moves in the region of assured grace. There is no covenanted security outside the Church.

This important truth is revealed by God in the New Testament, and it is taught by the position which the phrase 'the Holy Catholic Church,' occupies in the Apostles' Creed.

3. *The Notes of the Church.*

From the Creeds we learn that the Church possesses four notes, or distinguishing marks. The Church is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic.

THE CHURCH IS ONE, for there is none other, and because the faithful who form the Church are united to one head, even Jesus Christ, by the same sacraments. They hold the same faith, and are subject to the same authority exercised by the bishops, who represent Christ. The unity of the Church is mainly an internal unity, which ought to shew itself in an external unity. Through the sin of man this external unity has been broken.

THE CHURCH IS HOLY. The source of the Church's holiness is the indwelling presence of the Holy Ghost, who sanctifies her members by uniting them to Christ the head. The Church offers to her members grace and truth as the means of sanctification, and is the home where saints are nurtured and formed.

THE CHURCH IS CATHOLIC, 'because it is throughout the world, from one end of the earth to the other; and because it teaches universally and completely one and all the doctrines which ought to come to men's knowledge, concerning things both visible and invisible, heavenly and earthly: and because it subjugates in order to godliness every class of men, governors and governed, learned and unlearned; and because it universally treats and heals every sort of sins, which are committed by soul and body, and possesses in itself every form of virtue which is named, both in deeds and words, and in every kind of spiritual gifts.'²⁴

The word *catholic* means 'universal,' whilst the word *protestant* means 'making a protest.' 'Protestant' is a negative term, and does not express positive belief of any kind. It is a mistake for a churchman to describe himself as 'a protestant,' for the term is nowhere to be found either in the Bible or in the Prayer Book, and ought not to be adopted as a designation of the Church or her members.²⁵

THE CHURCH IS APOSTOLIC, because she can trace her origin to the apostles of Christ, and is governed by their successors, and believes, preserves, and teaches the apostles' doctrine.

It is a matter of deepest regret that not one of the four notes of the Church is now, or ever has been, universally realized. Her unity is marred by grievous divisions, her whole history shews an imperfectly attained sanctity, the greater part of the world still lies outside her fold, her discipline has never been fully accepted or faithfully exercised. Yet these 'notes' form the hope of the Church, and when she attains to their full measure, she will be presented as the bride to the heavenly bridegroom 'a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.' (Eph. 5. 27.)

(vi) **'The Communion of Saints.'**

By the term *communion* in this article of the Creed, we are to understand 'fellowship.' This fellowship of saints is grounded on the truth that all saints, living and departed, are united to Jesus Christ, and form his mystical body. The saints are members one of another, because they are members of Christ's body, the Holy Catholic Church. 'So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.' (Rom. 12. 5.)

The term *saints*, or 'holy ones,' is applied in the New Testament to all the baptized living upon earth, who have not forfeited baptismal grace. The baptized are saints in the sense that they have been sanctified by baptism, and are called to lead a holy life. As fellow-members of the body of Christ, they hold the same faith, receive the same sacraments, join in the same worship, and share in common its blessings and its hopes.

But in later use, and according to modern custom, the term 'saints' is applied to the more distinguished members of the Church, and especially to such as have departed this life, and are now with Christ. The Church has thus specially honoured the blessed Virgin, the apostles, and the martyrs, and other great leaders in the army of the faithful. These may be regarded now as among 'the spirits of just men made perfect,' (Heb. 12. 23.) and certain of their number we keep in honour, and commemorate on saints' days. Such are described in the collect for All Saints' day as the 'blessed saints.' This same communion also embraces the less prominent servants of Christ, who have departed this life in his faith and fear. The article of the Creed teaches that we are in close relation to all these holy ones beyond the grave, that they remember us before God and pray for us.

The term 'saints' is also applied in the Old Testament to the holy angels, (Deut. 33. 2.) the first family of God, who minister to all below who are in Christ. The Epistle to the Hebrews (chp. 12. 22.) speaks of 'an innumerable company of angels,' to whom the redeemed race of mankind 'are come,' and who will hereafter be gathered into a closer union with us in Christ.

Thus the communion of saints embraces the whole family of God

– the glorified saints, the holy angels, the faithful departed, and the faithful still on earth.

That the saints who have gone before pray for us, has always been the belief of the Church. We believe that they join in prayer for us on earth with a power which was not theirs whilst in the flesh – the mother for her children, the priest for his flock, friend for friend. And it is lawful to ask God to grant us a share in their intercessions. In what way, or to what extent, the saints are conscious of our needs, has not been revealed to us.

The Church of England, in Article XXII condemns ‘the Romish doctrine concerning invocation of saints,’ that is to say, that system of prayer to the saints which led to their being regarded otherwise than as exalted suppliants. Before the Reformation serious abuses had arisen. It was supposed, for instance, that the saints had power with God because of their own merits, and that they were kinder, and had greater sympathy for sinners than Christ our Saviour.

Upon this subject we quote the words of Dr Pusey – ‘The exclusive address of unseen beings has an obvious tendency at once to fall into a sort of worship; it is too like the mode in which we address almighty God to be any way safe; the exclusive request of their intercessions is likely at once to constitute them intercessors in a way different from God’s servants on earth, and to interfere with the office of the Great Intercessor;’²⁶ and again, ‘For members of the English Church, who desire the prayers of the departed, it has to him ever seemed safest to express the desire for those prayers to God “of whom and through whom and to whom are all things.”’²⁷

It is quite right to pray for the departed, if we have a good hope that they died in God’s favour; and where no such hope exists, we may surely commend them to his mercy. If we remember that they are still in the state of waiting, it is natural to pray for them. The Jews regularly used such prayers in their public services, and our Lord, who attended those services, must often have joined in them. He in no way rebuked the practice. In St Paul’s words – ‘the Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day,’²⁸ we have probably an example of prayer for the departed. The context seems to shew that Onesiphorus was dead when St Paul wrote these words.

The Church has always prayed for the dead. Tertullian writes of one who had lost her husband – ‘She prays for his soul, and seeks refreshment for him in the middle place.’²⁹ St Chrysostom says – ‘Let us not then be weary in giving aid to the departed, and of offering prayers for them.’³⁰ In the writings of St Augustine we read that his mother Monica, at the close of her life, ‘gave no injunctions concerning such things as these (her burial arrangements), but desired only that a memorial of her might be made at thine altar.’ The allusion here is to prayers for the dead in union with the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

The early forms of service for the Holy Communion are called the Primitive Liturgies. There is not one of these which does not contain prayers for the dead.³¹ The early liturgies possess an authority second only to the Holy Scriptures. We append a prayer drawn up from expressions in the Primitive Liturgies, to shew the kind of petitions we may safely make to God for the faithful dead.

Remember, O Lord God, the souls of thy servants who have departed this life in thy faith and fear, whom we remember, or who are forgotten upon earth. Do thou grant unto them, and unto all who rest in Christ, a place of refreshment, of light, and of peace, in thy kingdom, in thy paradise, in the bosom of Abraham, where sorrow, pain and sighing are banished away, and where the light of thy countenance ever shineth.

With the weighty words of Dr Pusey we will bring this section to a close – ‘Unless there were, in the word of God, an absolute prohibition of prayer for the departed, how should we go on praying for those whom we love until they were out of sight, and then cease on the instant, as if ‘out of sight, out of mind’ were a Christian duty? How should we not rather follow the soul to the eternal throne, with the apostles’ prayer, “the Lord grant that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day”? The departed are included in our Eucharistic prayer, “by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we and all thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.” That we have for the time no more to do with those who loved us here,

and whom we loved, must be false, because it is so contrary to love. It belongs to the Communion of Saints, that they, in the attainment of certain salvation and incapable of a thought other than according to the mind of God and filled with his love, shall pray and long for us, who are still on the stormy sea of this world, our salvation still unsecured; and that we, on our side, should pray for such things, as God in his goodness wills to bestow upon them.³²

(vii) **'The Forgiveness of Sins.'**

The forgiveness of sins proceeds from the love and mercy of God, and the sacred merits of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As we have already seen, the structure of the Creed teaches that the forgiveness of sins is to be obtained in the Holy Catholic Church. St Augustine says that, 'sins are forgiven in the Church in three ways; in baptism, in prayer, and in the greater humiliation of penance.'³³ All sin, is washed away in baptism. By prayer, St Augustine refers to the petition in the Our Father, 'Forgive us our trespasses.' By penance, he refers to sacramental confession with a view to gaining absolution. Of each of these modes of obtaining forgiveness we are to read more fully later in this book.

(viii) **'The Resurrection of the Body, and the Life Everlasting.'**

The two last articles of the Creed concern the things which come after death.

DEATH is the separation of the soul from the body. We speak of death as 'the passing away,' for in death the soul leaves the body as a tenant quitting a house. 'Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.' (Eccles. 12. 7.) After death the body turns to dust in the grave, and there sleeps, awaiting the resurrection at the last day.

'Each time that death comes among us, it should remind us Christians, for whom Jesus Christ has overcome death, of his victory, and of the eternal kingdom to which we journey as we leave this life.'³⁴

THE RESURRECTION is the rising again of the body in which the soul was clothed on earth. At the last day the soul will return from the intermediate state, and enter the risen body. The body so raised will not be the natural body as it was in this life, (1 Cor. 15. 37.) but a new and spiritual body, possessing new powers, and existing under new conditions in a new order of being, and freed from all taint of evil and inclination to sin. The resurrection of the dead will take place through the power of Jesus Christ and of his Spirit. 'Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth;' (John 5. 28.) 'He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.' (Rom. 8. 11.)

The soul is but part of the complete man. The resurrection is necessary in order that the whole man, body and soul, may be perfected in eternity. We do good and evil with our bodies as well as with our souls, and 'we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' (2 Cor. 5. 10.)

JUDGMENT. In the hour of death the soul goes before God for his judgment. Upon this particular judgment, the condition of the soul during the period of waiting, previous to the resurrection of the body, depends.

The general judgment, in the presence of the assembled universe, will follow the resurrection of the dead. The purpose of the second judgment appears to be that all may be satisfied as to the justice of the sentence of the Judge, and that the soul's degree of eternal bliss or woe may be settled.

HELL is the penal condition 'prepared for the devil and his angels.' (Matt. 25. 41.) Hell was never intended for man, and he can only arrive there through a wilful, deliberate, and continued rejection of God and goodness. St Bernard has beautifully written, 'What doth God hate or punish except self-will? Let self-will cease, and hell will not be.' We may hold it for a certainty that none will be doomed to such an awful destiny but those of whom our most merciful Saviour must say - 'They have both seen and hated both

me and my Father,' (John 15. 24.) and in this attitude of soul have died, and remain. Hell is the condition of those who are wilfully and finally impenitent.

Faber's beautiful words concerning those outside the Church may be applied to the lost – 'I have no profession of faith to make about them, except that God is infinitely merciful to every soul, and that no one ever has been, or ever can be, lost by surprise or trapped in his ignorance; and, as to those who may be lost, I confidently believe that our heavenly Father threw his arms round each created spirit, and looked it full in the face with bright eyes of love, in the darkness of its mortal life, and that of its own deliberate will it would not have him.'³⁵

HEAVEN is the blessed condition of unending happiness in the presence of God, and his holy angels and saints. The happiness of heaven consists chiefly in the sight and possession of God – the blest will 'see the king in his beauty,' and that for ever and ever. It consists also in an endless reunion with all we have loved below, who have died in grace, and in our being perfectly good and holy for evermore. All who depart this life in a right relation to God will be in heaven at last.

To which happiness may God, of his infinite mercy, bring every reader of this book.

NOTES

1. 1 Tim. 1. 15; iv. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 11. Titus i. 9; iii 8.
2. 2 Tim. i. 13.
3. 1 Tim. vi. 20. 2 Tim. i. 12 (*R.V. margin*).
4. *Some Elements of Religion*, 3rd Edition, pp. 49, 50.
5. *Athanasian Creed*.
6. In Eph. i. 21, the Greek word translated 'might,' is in the Latin 'virtutem.'
7. *Confessions*, vii. 12. 16.
8. *Nicene Creed*, p. 30.
9. See Rom. 8. 29; Eph. 1. 10, 22; Col. 1. 15-21; 2. 10; Heb. 2. 10.
10. The Church has ever held that the mother of Jesus was a virgin both before and after the birth of Jesus. St Augustine speaks of her as 'a virgin conceiving, a virgin bringing forth, a virgin dying.' The title 'ever-virgin' is applied to her by St Athanasius. The words 'And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son' (St Matt. 1. 25), do not imply that she ceased to be a virgin after the birth of Jesus, or that there were other children born later. They are intended simply to make it quite plain that Joseph was not the father of Mary's child. They guard

Mary's virginity up to the time of the birth of her first and only son. The term 'firstborn' does not imply a second born. There were amongst the Jews certain rites performed in reference to the first son born into a family; and thus he was called 'the firstborn' whether there were other children or not (see Ex. xiii. 2; St Luke 2. 22, 23). The brethren of our Lord, alluded to in the Gospels, were not the children of the Virgin Mother. They are generally supposed either to have been children of Joseph by a previous marriage, or to have been the cousins of our Lord. When we realize that God himself took flesh in Mary's womb, it is inconceivable that other children should afterwards been born of her. See Bright, *St Leo on the Incarnation*, Note 9, pp. 136, 137.

11. Dean Church, *Human Life and its Conditions*, 2nd Edition, p. 173.
12. The expression 'Mother of God' is a translation of the Greek word *Theotocos*. The title was solemnly ascribed to the blessed Virgin Mary by the General Council of Ephesus, AD 431, to express the truth that the Son of God took our nature upon him by being born of a human mother. The Council met to condemn the heresy of Nestorius, who taught that in Christ were two persons, the person of God and the person of man; the person of God being, as he said, united some time after birth to the person of man. The Catholic faith is, that there is but one person in Christ, that of God; and that this divine person took the manhood into God in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary. Thus the title 'Mother of God,' was given to safeguard the truth of the Incarnation. As Dr Bright says - 'The Greek term (*Theotocos*), by its very form and sound, gives prominence to the Divinity of him who, as man, was born of Mary; whereas the English phrase begins, so to speak, at the other end, and lays greater stress on the supremely privileged motherhood. The doctrinal intention is the same in both cases.' (*Waymarks in Church History*, p. 180.)

In speaking of the blessed Virgin as 'Mother of God,' it is not meant that she was mother of the divine nature, but of the human nature of him who is God, and who took of her that human nature. She is mother of 'the divine Son considered as under the conditons of Incarnation.' 'Bearer of God' would be a more exact and happier translation of the Greek; and is used by some Christians.

13. Matt. 3. 13 to end.
14. Lev. 17. 11. Heb. 9. 22.
15. Luke 24. 25-27.
16. Atonement, or at-one-ment, signifies that man is made at one with God in Jesus Christ.
17. *What is of Faith as to Everlasting Punishment?* 3rd Edition, p. 119.
18. *What is of Faith*, p. 122, note.
19. 'The evidence of our Lord's life and death and resurrection may be, and often has been, shewn to be satisfactory; it is good according to the common rules for distinguishing good evidence from bad. Thousands and thousands of persons have gone through it piece by piece, as carefully as ever judge summed up upon a most important cause. I have myself done it many times over, not to persuade others but to satisfy myself. I have been used for many years to study the history of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidence of those who have written about them; and I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort to the understanding of a fair inquirer,

than the great sign which God has given us, that Christ died and rose again from the dead.' – Arnold, *Rugby Sermons* p. 14.

20. *Ep. ccxxxiii.*
21. Article 5.
22. Hutchings, *The Person and Work of the Holy Ghost*, 4th Edition, pp. 35, 36.
23. Gore, *The Mission of the Church*, p. 24.
24. St Cyril, *Cat. Lect.* xviii. 23.
25. It is true that the term 'protestant' occurs in the oath in the Coronation Service; but this oath is imposed on the sole authority of Parliament, not of the Church; and the term, as there used, is simply a popular expression excluding all Roman authority, and nothing more. The opposite of Catholic is not protestant but heretic.
26. *Letter to the Bishop of Oxford* p. 198.
27. *Letter to the Bishop of London* p. 143, and note.
28. 2 Tim. i. 18, compare with verse 16.
29. *de Monogamia*, x.
30. *Homily on 1 Cor.* 41. 8.
31. 'In every form, from the solemn liturgies which embodied the belief of the Church's profoundest thinkers and truest worshippers, to the simple words of hope and love which are traced over the graves of the poor, her voice went up without a doubt or misgiving, in prayers for the souls of the departed.' – Plumptre, *The Spirits in Prison* p. 25.
32. *Addresses to the Companions of the Love of Jesus*, pp. 126, 127.
33. *Sermon on the Creed to Catechumens*, 16.
34. *Bossuet and his Contemporaries*, 1877, p. 511.
35. *The Creator and the Creature*, 3rd ed., Book iii. chapter ii. p. 393.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

(*Exodus* 20. 3-18)

1. Thou shalt have none other gods but Me.
2. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and shew mercy unto thousands in them that love Me, and keep My commandments.
3. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh His Name in vain.
4. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it.
5. Honour thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long in the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.
6. Thou shalt do no murder.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

LORD, HAVE MERCY UPON US,
AND WRITE ALL THESE THY LAWS IN OUR HEARTS,
WE BESEECH THEE.

CHAPTER 15

THE COMMANDMENTS

God has endowed man with the great gift of freewill, by the exercise of which he is able to choose good or evil. In order to help man to a right choice, God has given to him the further gift of conscience. Conscience is the inward monitor directing man what to choose, and what to reject. Without conscience, freewill would be a most dangerous gift. Conscience, like freewill, is a natural gift, which everyone possesses. But conscience needs educating and enlightening, otherwise it may deceive us. We often see persons acting conscientiously, yet acting wrongly. It is the work of grace and truth to enlighten and direct the conscience, and to strengthen the will to follow its dictates, Truth is the light of God illuminating the conscience, and grace is the power of God bracing the will to obey the truth.

For the enlightenment of conscience, God has made known his law of right and wrong. We know the law of right and wrong as the moral law. The moral law is contained in the Ten Commandments. There is no wrong of any kind against which the Commandments do not warn us: and there is no duty, either towards God or towards man, which may not be implied from them.

The Commandments were given on two occasions by God himself, and each time from a mount. It was on Mount Sinai that He delivered the moral law to Moses to teach to the chosen people. It was in the Sermon on the Mount that Jesus Christ again laid down the divine law, giving it a fuller and wider meaning. The chosen people received the law of God written on two tables of stone. Christians have received the law of love written by the Holy Ghost in their minds and hearts (*Heb. 8. 10*).

There are two ways of regarding the Commandments. They are to be regarded as *positive* and as *negative* at the same time; that is to say, each of the commandments enjoins as well as forbids, teaching both what is to be done, and what is not to be done. By this is meant that where a virtue is commanded, the opposite vice

is condemned; and where a vice is forbidden, the opposite virtue is enjoined. It is to be observed that although the Commandments were originally given to a nation, yet each of them is addressed to individuals – ‘*Thou shalt,*’ or ‘*Thou shalt not.*’ By this we are taught that the keeping of the Commandments is a personal matter, in which each individual is concerned.

God’s law is not an arbitrary law. It could not have been other than it is, because the distinction which it points out between right and wrong is an eternal distinction, rooted in the being of God himself. The moral law is a reflection of the holy will of God. We are not required to keep the Commandments merely because He bids us, and for no other reason; but there is a just and good cause for what He enjoins, and for what He forbids. The whole law of God by which we are bound, is contained in the principle of love. ‘Love is the fulfilling of the law.’ (Rom. 13. 10.) The Commandments are laid down for our good; the highest good to which we can attain is to love God with all our hearts, and to love our neighbour as ourselves. We shew our love to God by keeping his Commandments. If we break them, we can only come to grievous harm: He has bidden us ‘to keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for **THY GOOD.**’ (Deut. 10. 13.) Our blessed Lord added – ‘If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.’ (Matt. 19. 17.) The Ten Commandments form our rule of life, they are as the hedges at the road side, to keep us in the right path of the love of God and man, and to save us from trespassing on forbidden ground.

The Ten Commandments treat of:–

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. Faith. | 6. Love. |
| 2. Worship. | 7. Purity. |
| 3. Reverence. | 8. Honesty. |
| 4. Hallowed Time. | 9. Truthfulness. |
| 5. Obedience. | 10. Contentment. |

They represent man’s duty towards God, and his duty towards his neighbour, as expressed in the Catechism.

Duty towards God.

My duty towards God is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy name and his word, and to serve him truly all the days of my life.

Duty towards man.

My duty toward my Neighbour is to love him as myself, and to do to all men, as I would they should do unto me: To love, honour, and succour my father and mother: To honour and obey the King, and all that are put in authority under him: To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters: To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters: To hurt nobody by word nor deed: To be true and just in all my dealing: To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart: To keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and slandering: To keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity: Not to covet nor desire other men's goods; but to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life, unto which it shall please God to call me.

1. SIN

Sin is of two kinds – original and actual. Of the former we have already spoken. We will now speak of actual sin. Actual sin is the breaking of the commandments of God. 'Sin,' says St John, 'is the transgression of the law.' (1 John 3. 4.) The word *transgression* signifies passing the boundary line which divides right from wrong. The sinner passes over from the side of God to that of the devil, and so becomes a traitor and a rebel.

St Augustine says – 'Sin is something said, or done, or desired in contradiction to the eternal law.' Thus, the commandments may be broken in thought, word, or deed. We should remember that sin, to be complete, need not become speech or action; ■ formed desire, deliberately assented to by the will, constitutes sin. Sin has its root

in the will. We may sin by omission as well as by commission, i.e., by not doing the right, as well as by doing the wrong.

Sin darkens the mind, pollutes the heart, weakens the will, and separates us from God. Sin, if persevered in, ends in death. 'Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.' (James 1. 15.)

Sins may be either venial or deadly. St John so teaches when he speaks of 'a sin not unto death,' and of 'a sin unto death.' (1 John 5.16) A venial sin is as the cooling of friendship, a deadly sin is as the breaking of friendship, between the soul and God. Venial sin is more of the nature of infirmity, whilst in deadly sin there is an element of wilfulness. The amount of evil-will exercised is the measure of the greatness of a sin.

Our blessed Redeemer died to win pardon for the sins of all men; but before we can receive his merciful pardon we must repent; and true repentance is godly sorrow, leading to truthful confession, and firm purpose of amendment. Of repentance for sin we shall read in the following chapter.

[Homosexual intercourse is no longer regarded as a crime against the Law; but it nevertheless remains a sinful act against the Law of God; and is to be regarded as an act of adultery, albeit perverted adultery. It contravenes the Seventh Commandment, and is denounced by St Paul in several of his epistles. (e.g. Rom. 1. 26-7) B.G.]

2. THE THREE NOTABLE DUTIES

The three notable duties are – PRAYER, FASTING and ALMSGIVING. They are so named, because they are specially enjoined by Christ our Lord, in the Sermon on the Mount.

'When thou doest thine alms, . . .'

'When thou prayest, . . .'

'When ye fast, . . .' (Matt. 6. 2, 5, 16)

Dr Pusey wrote – 'Fasting, Prayer, and Almsgiving – that is, denial of self, love of others, and devotion to God, are the three heads under which our Lord brings all Christian duties.'

In the practice of these three duties, lies our safety from the three enemies of the soul.

Prayer delivers us from the Devil.
 Fasting subdues the Flesh.
 Almsgiving loosens the hold of the World.

It is not uncommon for Christians who pray, to omit the kindred duties of fasting and almsgiving. This is clearly wrong, for our Blessed Lord has coupled them with prayer; and fasting and almsgiving are the wings of prayer. No Christian who neglects these great duties, is leading a life true to the teaching of Jesus.

(i) PRAYER.

Our Lord teaches that, 'men ought always to pray.' (Luke, 18. 1.) and the apostle adds, 'pray without ceasing.' (1 Thess. 5. 17.) St Augustine interprets these commands to continual prayer, saying – 'He prays always, who prays at fixed intervals.'

The devout layman should strive to pray thrice a day, however brief the mid-day prayer may be. The priest must pray more frequently. Bishop Andrewes wrote¹ – 'Men, as they are Christians, ought to pray three times a day, as David, "In the evening, and morning, and at noon-day will I pray, and that instantly;" (Ps. 55. 17.) but as they are prophets, and have a special charge, they must pray to God seven times a day, as the same David, "Seven times a day do I praise thee." ' (Ps. 119. 164.)

The ancient order of these seven times of prayer, termed the Canonical Hours, commemorates the sufferings of our Lord.

'At *mattins* bound, at *prime* reviled,
 Condemned to death at *terce*,
 Nailed to the Cross at *sexts*, at *nones*
 His blessed side they pierce.

They take him down at *vesper*-tide,
 In grave at *compline* lay:
 Who thenceforth bids his Church observe
 The sevenfold hours away.²

It is from *mattins* and *prime* and from *vespers* and *compline*, that

the offices of mattins and evensong in the Prayer Book are compiled.

(ii) FASTING

Fasting is literally abstinence from food and drink; but in a secondary sense it includes all forms of self-denial. The object of fasting is that the flesh may be subdued to the spirit; in other words, that the body may become an apt and willing minister of the soul. The purpose of fasting is not to distress the body,³ but to set free the soul. St Leo the Great wrote – ‘A man has true freedom when his flesh is ruled by the judgment of his mind, and his mind is directed by the government of God.’⁴

Fasting, or self-denial, aids us in resisting temptation. If we are able to deny ourselves in things lawful, we shall be better able to deny ourselves in things unlawful. St Leo again said – ‘Our fast does not consist in abstinence from food only, nor is nourishment withheld from the body to any profit unless the mind is recalled from sin, and the tongue restrained from slander.’⁵

The Bible again and again lays down the duty of fasting: the Church tells us when to practise it.

In the Prayer Book, we have a list of Fasts and Days of Abstinence. Whilst there is considerably early authority for keeping certain of the fasting days more rigorously than others, there is no English authority for making a distinction between *fasting* and *abstinence*. In the writings of our divines, the words ‘fasting’ and ‘abstinence’ are used interchangeably.

Fasting before Communion is, as we shall see later on, the ideal of the whole Church.

(iii) ALMSGIVING

Almsgiving is the giving of money, goods, or time to the special service of God. The principle upon which almsgiving rests is contained in the words of David, ‘All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.’ (1 Chron. 29. 14.) The practice of giving alms is a recognition of the sovereignty of God. By making

a definite return of our substance to him, we acknowledge that all we have is his.

It was the rule of the Jews to give one tenth of the year's produce to the service of God. Christians are bound to give alms in a systematic manner, according as God has blessed them. Almsgiving is a great safeguard against 'the love of money (which) is a root of all kinds of evil.' (1 Tim. 6. 10.)

3. THE COUNSELS OF PERFECTION

The Counsels of Perfection are three in number, viz., POVERTY, CHASTITY, and OBEDIENCE. They are termed 'counsels' as distinguished from the divine 'precepts,' the fulfilment of which is universally necessary to salvation. They are called Counsels of Perfection, because they are the means whereby the highest perfection may be obtained by those who are called to follow Christ in this way. They are of the nature of exceptional sacrifices, and so form the rule, not for the many, but for the few – for such as are 'able to receive it.' (Matt. 19. 12.)

In the Counsels of Perfection, Jesus gave the rule of the higher life, founded upon his own most perfect life. Persons may be called to—

Voluntary POVERTY, in imitation of him who 'though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor,' (2 Cor. 8. 9.) and who had 'not where to lay his head,' (Matt. 8. 20.) and was among men as 'He that serveth.' (Luke 22. 27.)

Voluntary CHASTITY, in imitation of him who was the virgin Son of a virgin Mother, and who lived a life of perfect chastity.

Voluntary OBEDIENCE, in imitation of him who 'pleased not himself,' (Rom. 15. 3.) and who said – 'I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.' (John 6. 38.)

(i) POVERTY is the giving up of worldly goods, that the person may be free from worldly cares. It is the following of our Lord's advice to the rich young nobleman – 'If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, . . . and come and follow me.' (Matt. 19. 21.) The apostles embraced this 'counsel,' as we

learn from the words, 'Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee.' (Matt. 19. 27.)

(ii) CHASTITY, is the abstaining from marriage or the continuance in holy widowhood, in the spirit of our Lord's words – 'There be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.' (Matt. 19. 12.) To this state St Paul refers in the words, 'He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord. . . . The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy in body and in spirit.' (1 Cor. 7. 32, 34.)

(iii) OBEDIENCE is the voluntary subjection of the will to authority, in humble dependence upon a religious rule recognized as the will of God. It is the closest following of him who 'took upon him the form of a servant, . . . and humbled himself, and became obedient unto death.' (Phil. 2. 7, 8.)

It is a wise plan for those whom God calls to embrace the Counsels of Perfection, to associate themselves, for greater support and encouragement, in religious communities, such as the brotherhoods or sisterhoods of the Church. The revival of such communities of devoted men and women amongst us, is a matter for deep thankfulness.

4. THE THREE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES

Of the Three Theological Virtues, St Paul speaks in 1 Cor. 13. 13, 'And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.' They are called Theological Virtues, because God is the object of these virtues. Faith has for its object the truth revealed by God: Hope has for its object the gifts bestowed on us by God: Charity has for its object God himself.

(i) FAITH is the gift of God – the virtue by which we firmly believe all that God has revealed and made known to us through the Scriptures, as they are interpreted by the Church. Faith rests upon the truthfulness of God.

(ii) HOPE is the gift of God – the virtue by which we expect that God will give us all things which are necessary to bring us to eternal

life. Hope rests on the promises, the mercy, and the power of God.

(iii) CHARITY is the gift of God – the virtue by which we love God above all things, because He is infinitely good, and for his sake our neighbour as ourselves with the unconquerable willing of the highest good for all men everywhere.

5. THE FOUR CARDINAL VIRTUES

Of the Four Cardinal Virtues – Prudence, Justice, Temperance, and Fortitude – Solomon speaks in Wisdom 8. 7.

(i) PRUDENCE is the virtue of the understanding, which teaches us what to do, and what to avoid. It chooses right ends, and the best means of attaining them.

(ii) JUSTICE is the virtue of the will, by which we render to all their dues, and so regulate all our conduct towards others.

(iii) TEMPERANCE is the virtue which enables us to control ourselves. It teaches us to make a right use of our senses and desires, and of all God's gifts and creatures.

(iv) FORTITUDE is the virtue which makes us brave in God's service, and enables us to overcome difficulties in the path of duty.

6. THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH

(After Bishop Cosin⁶)

To observe the festivals, fasts and holy days appointed.

To observe the ecclesiastical customs and ceremonies established, and that without frowardness or contradiction.

To repair unto the public service of the Church for Mattins and Evensong, with other holy offices at times appointed, unless there be a just an an unfeigned cause to the contrary.

To receive the blessed Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ with frequent devotion, and three times a year at least, of which times Easter to be always one. And for better preparation thereunto, to disburthen and quit our consciences of those sins that may grieve

us, or scruples that may trouble us, to a learned and discreet priest, and from him to receive advice, and the benefit of absolution.

To give money and service to God through His Church.

To witness for Christ Jesus before men.

NOTES

1. *Sermons*, vol. v. p. 356.
2. Neale, *Essays on Liturgiology*, p. 6.
3. This we must look to also, that we do not by an immoderate abstinence impair the strength of the body, and so make it idle and unprofitable for good works.'
– St Basil, *Constit. Monast.* 4.
4. *Serm.* 39. 2.
5. *Serm.* 42. 2.
6. *Works*, ii. p. 121; v. p. 523.

CHAPTER 16

THE SACRAMENTS

The subject of the sacraments is closely connected with that of the Incarnation and the Atonement, the sacraments being the divinely-appointed means through which the benefits of these mysteries are applied to our souls. The Incarnation is the union of God and man in the person of Jesus Christ. This union is extended in his mystical body, the Church, through the sacraments as the means of grace.

(i)

‘We must ever remember, that though Jesus Christ was in nature perfect man, He was not man in exactly the same sense in which any one of us is man. Though man, He was not, strictly speaking, in the English sense of this word, a man; He was not one out of a number. He was man because He had our human nature wholly and perfectly, but his Person is not human like ours, but divine. He who was from eternity, continued one and the same, but with an addition. His incarnation was a ‘taking of the manhood into God.’ As He had no earthly father, so has He no human personality. He is not a man made God, but God made man.’¹ Neither the Bible nor the Creeds say that the Son of God was made *a man*. The Gospel teaches us that ‘the Word was made flesh,’ and the Nicene Creed that He was ‘made man.’ The distinction is great and important. It was not *a man* but *manhood* that the Son of God united to himself in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary. It was not *a human person* but *human nature* that He assumed in the Incarnation.²

When God said – ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,’ (Gen. 1. 26.) He was speaking of the whole human race, as well as of the first man. This is clear, for He added – ‘and let *them* have dominion.’ This is taught again in Gen. 5. 2, where we read – ‘Male and female created He them, . . . and called *their name Adam*.’ It is not, ‘Let US make man, and call his name Adam.’ The creation of man was the creation of a race or series, of which the first

man then made was but the beginning. Thus the whole human family including ourselves, was in Adam from the very first.

For this reason, when Adam sinned, all mankind sinned in him. This is a great truth, and it is plainly taught by St Paul, who says – ‘By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. . . . By one man’s offence death reigned by one. . . . By the offence of one judgment came upon all men. . . . By one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.’ (Rom. 5. 12 to end.) Thus, through the fall of Adam all his posterity are prone to sin. We call this tendency ‘original sin.’

(ii)

It was to break this spell and set us free, that the Son of God became incarnate. He who created the human race at the beginning, came to rescue it from its fallen state. He called himself ‘the Son of Man,’ not ‘the son of a man,’ because, through his Virgin-birth, He had no man for his father. He came to be the second Adam, the new head of the race through him redeemed. As St Irenaeus teaches,³ Jesus Christ became the head of man’s race, that in him we might recover the likeness of God, which in Adam we had lost.

‘For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall be made alive.’ (1 Cor. 15. 22.) We die, because we are in Adam – not only because we sin as he did, but because we inherit his fallen nature. We are made alive in Christ, not only by following his example, but the rather by being brought into union with his unfallen nature. In breaking the tie which binds us to the first Adam in his fallen state, and by being placed in the ranks of the second Adam, in this lies our only hope of deliverance from the evil spell which our union with the first Adam has cast over us. We must get out of connection with ‘the first man,’ into connection with ‘the second man, the Lord from heaven.’ (1 Cor. 15. 47.) We must destroy the old relationship, and form a new one. We must transfer our allegiance from Adam to Christ. In short, we need to escape from a natural into a supernatural state – the state of grace.

How is this great change to be accomplished, and so mighty a

transfer to be wrought? The answer is – By means of the sacraments, which Christ ordained for this very purpose. Sacraments are ‘effectual signs of grace,’ they effect what they signify; by them God ‘doth work invisibly in us.’²⁴ The sacraments lift us out of our natural state, and place us in, and keep us in, a supernatural state – the state of grace. Hence, the sacraments are commonly called *the Means of Grace*. The sacraments place us in living union with Jesus Christ, from whose sacred humanity all grace flows. But to receive the sacraments savingly, the soul must approach them with faith and repentance; for they who receive unworthily, place a bar to the flow and to the reception of grace.

(iii)

In the early days of the Church, the term *sacrament* was used in a wider sense than that which we now attach to it. For example, St Augustine defines a sacrament to be ‘a sacred sign,’ and speaks of ‘the sacrament of the Creed, which they ought to believe; the sacrament of the Lord’s Prayer, how they ought to ask.’ Any holy thing of which it could be said, This possesses a hidden power or meaning, was termed a sacrament. But in later times, and by degrees, the term *sacrament* came to be restricted to seven ordinances. Some of these owe their existence to our Lord’s direct institution, as recorded in the Gospels; others to the apostles acting, we may believe under unrecorded commands of Christ (see Acts 1. 3).

The Two Greater Sacraments are named:

HOLY BAPTISM
THE HOLY EUCHARIST

The Five Lesser Sacraments are named:

CONFIRMATION
PENANCE
HOLY ORDER
HOLY MATRIMONY
HOLY UNCTION

Our Lord's authority can be traced directly for the institution of Holy Baptism, the Holy Eucharist, Penance, and Holy Order. Matrimony, instituted by God from the beginning, was raised by our Lord to a higher dignity; whilst the expression, 'in the name of the Lord,' used by St James (5. 14) of Unction, compared with St Mark 6. 13, points to his authority for this ordinance also. Although there is no record of the institution of Confirmation in the New Testament, yet we have the highest reasons for believing that it was ordered by our Lord himself before his ascension. Confirmation was practised by the apostles, and in Heb. 6. 1, 2, it is declared to be one of 'the principles of the doctrine of Christ.' Moreover, Confirmation conveys the fulness of the gift of the Holy Ghost for Christian living, which no rite of the Church's appointing could do, without divine authority.

The sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist claim special attention, for our Lord has given them a peculiar prominence. They are sometimes called the Sacraments of the Gospel, because they have their visible sign or ceremony ordained by Christ in the Gospels. On his authority, the Church has ever held them to be 'generally necessary to salvation,' i.e., for all men in general, without exception, where they can possibly be had.

The Church of England does not teach that there are two Sacraments only; but that there are 'two only, as generally (or universally) necessary to salvation.' The five lesser Sacraments she also acknowledges, but not as generally necessary to salvation. These lesser Sacraments are not on this account to be set aside as of no importance; for they are, in their degree, visible signs of invisible grace, and form part of the divine plan for our safety and perfection, according to our needs or conditions in life.

1. HOLY BAPTISM

In our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus, recorded in St John chp. 3, He declared a new birth of water and of the Spirit to be a necessity to entrance into his kingdom. Our Lord referred to the sacrament of Baptism, which had been foreshadowed in his own Baptism, and which He was about to institute before his ascension in the charge given to the apostles - 'Go ye therefore, and teach all

nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' (Matt. 28. 19.)

Holy Baptism is the act of God upon the soul, whereby it is transferred from a natural condition to a state of grace. Hence, it is called by Jesus Christ, the New Birth. He said – 'Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' (John 3.5.) The kingdom of God here named, is the kingdom of the Incarnation, the realm of grace. By Holy Baptism we are incorporated into the mystical body of Christ, for we are 'baptized into Christ.' (Gal. 3. 27.) 'Baptism doth also now save us.' (1 Peter 3. 21.) It saves us from the ill effects of our natural descent from the first Adam: it places us in a state or condition in which, if we continue, we shall finally be saved.

On this account it is reasonable to baptize infants, for they cannot too soon be transferred from a natural state to a state of grace.

The effect of Baptism is threefold:

- (a) It remits all sin, original and actual.
- (b) It bestows sanctifying grace.
- (c) It makes the recipient a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

The use of water symbolises the process of cleansing, and the word *baptism* signifies 'washing'^s St Paul describes Baptism as 'the washing of regeneration,' (Titus 3. 5.) i.e., the laver or bath of the new birth.

It is the rule of the Church that persons, on receiving baptism publicly, should make certain solemn promises or vows. The baptismal vows are—

1. To renounce the devil and all his works;
2. To believe in God; and,
3. To serve Him.

The observance of these vows forms man's part in the baptismal covenant or agreement.

In the case of infants, these promises are made in their name by sponsors, or god-parents. God-parents simply promise that the child shall fulfil its part in the baptismal covenant.

Should a baptized person depart from God by unbelief, or by ■ course of grievous sin, such an one needs conversion. He cannot be rebaptized, for the soul can only be once 'born of water and of the Spirit.'

2. THE HOLY EUCHARIST

(i) *The Institution*

As we have already pointed out, the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist⁶ possess a special dignity. Many writers in East and West have seen, in the water and the blood which flowed from our Saviour's pierced side, a symbol of these two Greater Sacraments. Both were instituted by him at the close of his life on earth. The institution of the Holy Eucharist took place on the night before He died: the commission to baptize was given immediately before his ascension. We may thus regard these two greater sacraments as, in a very sacred sense, our Lord's parting legacy to his Church.

The Holy Eucharist was instituted at the close of the Jewish Passover, which Jesus observed for the last time with his apostles in an upper room at Jerusalem. The Passover was the annual commemoration of the deliverance of God's people from Egypt. It carried the mind back to that awful night, in which the destroying angel slew the first-born in every house in Egypt, which was not marked by the blood of the Passover lamb. It was this visitation which induced the Egyptian king to set the chosen people free. The whole service was a most solemn remembrance, or commemoration before God, of a double deliverance – from death, and from bondage. It was a deliverance wrought by means of the blood of the paschal lamb, which thus became the type of the precious blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, to be shed upon the cross for the sins of the world.

As part of the ceremonial of the Passover, it was the custom for

each household to eat a lamb with unleavened cakes; a cup of wine and water being handed round at intervals. At the close of the feast which Jesus was keeping with his disciples, He took one of the unleavened cakes, and when He had given thanks, He blessed it, and, breaking it, said – ‘Take, eat; this is my body.’ And then, blessing the cup, He added – ‘Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.’ (Matt. 26. 26, etc.)

St Paul, who was not called to be an apostle until after our Lord’s ascension, was not present on the solemn occasion of which we are speaking; but our blessed Lord vouchsafed to him later a special revelation concerning the institution, which he records in these words – ‘For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till He come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.’ (1 Cor. 11. 23, etc.)

Thus, Jesus our Lord instituted the Holy Sacrament of his body and blood, commanding his apostles and their successors to consecrate bread and wine, as He had done, to be his flesh and blood, and to make a perpetual memorial of his death before the Father.

(ii) *The Eucharistic Sacrifice*

The Holy Eucharist is a feast upon a sacrifice. The body and the blood of Christ are first offered to the eternal Father, and then partaken of by the communicants. This action is termed by St Paul, ‘shewing the Lord’s death.’ (1 Cor. 11. 26.) In saying, ‘This do in remembrance of me,’ our Lord used words which signify – OFFER THIS AS MY MEMORIAL BEFORE GOD.

It has often been shewn that the word here translated ‘do,’ is

frequently used in the Greek version of the Old Testament for 'offer;' though the Greek Fathers, with the exception of Justin Martyr, treat the words 'do this' as meaning 'perform this action.'⁷

The Greek word for 'remembrance' has a distinctly sacrificial meaning. It is used but twice in the Old Testament, and but four times in the New. Three times in the New Testament, the reference is to the Holy Eucharist. In each case it is used of A REMEMBRANCE BEFORE GOD, AND NOT BEFORE MAN; and it is only reasonable therefore to suppose, that it is intended to express the same meaning which it has elsewhere in Holy Scripture, viz., that of A MEMORIAL BEFORE GOD. That this is the true idea, is supported by St Paul's words spoken of the Holy Eucharist – 'For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come.' (1 Cor. 11. 26.)

All that our Lord Jesus Christ did when He instituted the blessed Sacrament was sacrificial; it was all done in sacrificial terms, at a sacrificial time, and for a sacrificial end.⁸

In connection with this important subject, the reader is asked to refer to what was said concerning the relation which exists between the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and our Lord's pleading in heaven.

The Church of England, in the thirty-first Article, condemns certain false ideas concerning the Eucharistic Sacrifice. This condemnation needs careful explanation, for it has formed the ground of unfair charges against her teaching. The conclusion of the Article is thus worded.

'The sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits (literally, 'impostures').'

In the middle ages three false ideas had gained ground in reference to the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and it is to these that the Article refers.

(1) The Eucharistic Sacrifice had come to be regarded as a sacrifice distinct from that of our Lord upon the cross, or as a repetition of that sacrifice. This is alluded to in the Article, where

it speaks of 'the sacrifices (plural) of Masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the priest did offer Christ.'

(2) It was believed that our Lord's sacrifice upon the cross availed to obtain pardon of birth-sin only, whilst the Eucharistic Sacrifice was regarded as the means of obtaining pardon of actual sin.

(3) It was commonly believed that souls in the intermediate state were in torment, from which the offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice delivered them. Each Eucharist being regarded as a distinct act of sacrifice, possessing its own independent value, it followed that the oftener the Eucharist was offered, the sooner would such suffering come to an end. It is easy to see how this idea appealed to the feelings of survivors, and how the obtaining of masses for the dead, depending as it did upon money payments, encouraged a traffic in holy things. It is this traffic in masses for such an end, which is denounced in the Article as a dangerous deceit, or imposture. Masses thus purchased were generally offered in private, and, contrary to primitive custom, with no communicants present.

Upon this subject the writer of Tract 90 says – 'The "blasphemous fable" (referred to in the 31st Article) is the teaching that there is a sacrifice for sin other than Christ's death, and that Masses are that sacrifice. And the "pernicious imposture" ("dangerous deceit") is the turning this belief into a means of filthy lucre.'

(1) When we speak of the Holy Eucharist as a sacrifice, we do not understand any repetition of the sacrifice of the cross, or any renewal of Christ's sufferings or death. His sufferings and his death took place once for all, and can never be repeated. Neither are we to suppose that anything is wanting in his sufferings or sacrifice, which the Eucharistic Sacrifice supplies. But we mean that in the Holy Eucharist, we plead before God the One Sacrifice offered once upon the cross, even as Christ himself presents the same offering in heaven. Thus, the fathers spoke of the Holy Eucharist as 'the unbloody sacrifice.' The Eucharistic Sacrifice is not so much on a line with the sacrifice on Calvary, as with the pleading of that sacrifice in heaven.

(2) Our Lord's sacrifice upon the cross is a full, perfect, and

sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world – not only for original sin, but for all actual sin.

(3) That souls in the intermediate state are benefited by the offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, has always been believed in the Church. St Augustine speaks of ‘the Sacrifice of our Ransom’ being offered on behalf of his departed mother. Our Lord’s death upon the cross was for all men, throughout all time, and the Eucharistic pleading of that death avails for all the Church, both on earth and in the next world. As we have already said, there is not one of the primitive liturgies which does not contain prayers for the departed, in union with the shewing forth of the Lord’s death in the Eucharist. In celebrating the Eucharist, the English Church prays that ‘we and all thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of Christ’s Passion.’ The living compose but a small part of ‘all the whole Church,’ the greater part of the Church being in the intermediate state.

The Sacrifice of the Mass, or Eucharistic Sacrifice, understood in its ancient and Catholic sense as ‘the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ,’¹⁰ the English Church has never disowned. In fact she could not disown it, without forfeiting her claim to be a portion of the Holy Catholic Church of Christ.

The word *Mass*, which is of uncertain origin, was retained in the first reformed Prayer Book, published in Edward the VI’s reign. In that book the title of the Eucharistic Service ran – ‘The Supper of the Lorde, and the Holy Communion, commonly called the Masse.’ The name is ancient, being used by St Ambrose as far back as the year 385, long before the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharistic Sacrifice had been corrupted by medieval additions.

The reason why the Sacrificial aspect of the Holy Eucharist is not more fully recognized in the Book of Common Prayer is, that the idea of Communion, which was a primary purpose of our Lord in giving us the Holy Sacrament of his body and blood, had in the middle ages been suffered to fall into the background. The majority of persons in those times received but once a year; and six times a year was considered a large allowance for devoted women in the religious houses. In restoring the idea of the importance of Communion, the true balance was lost; and, in the reaction, the sacrificial aspect of this Great Service was, by force of circumstan-

ces, not so fully recognized in drawing up our Eucharistic Service as it ought to have been. But the use of the Prayer of Consecration by the priest, in which the New Testament account of our LORD'S institution is closely followed, is sufficient indication of the Church's intention in regard to this important matter. Moreover, in the Prayer of Oblation, we ask God to accept 'this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,' the old term for the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and go on to speak of the offering of 'ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice' unto God.

(iii) *The Eucharistic Feast,*
commonly called
The Holy Communion.

Our Lord Jesus Christ ordained the sacrament of the Eucharist in order that we might be able on earth to plead his sacrifice before the face of God, even as He does in heaven. But there was a further object of supreme importance, namely, that He might feed our souls with his sacred body and blood.

That we may thus be able to feed upon him, He has given to his Church authority to consecrate, by the power of his Holy Spirit, bread and wine to become his body and blood. When we receive the bread and the wine thus consecrated, we verily and indeed receive the sacred body and blood of Christ.

The certainty of this depends on the truth known as the Real Presence. The term *Real Presence* signified the presence of a reality. Our Lord's presence in the Eucharist is a spiritual presence. By a spiritual presence we are not to understand that which is unreal, or figurative; but a presence which is not merely natural, or material. A spiritual presence is a presence of a supernatural order. Our Lord is present in the blessed Sacrament in a manner which is beyond our understanding. The Real Presence is a holy mystery.

When we come to the Holy Communion, we should always remember that we are approaching the Sacramental Presence of God. As it has been said – 'Before consecration, we called them God's creatures of bread and wine, now we do so no more after consecration; for after consecration we think no more of bread and

wine, but have our thoughts taken up wholly with the body of Christ; and therefore we keep ourselves to these words only, abstaining from the other, though the bread remain there still, to the eye. And herein we follow the fathers, who after consecration would not suffer it to be called bread and wine any longer, but the body and blood of Christ.¹¹ Similarly, Bishop Overall says, 'In the sacrament of the Eucharist, or the Lord's Supper, the body and blood of Christ, and therefore the whole of Christ is verily and indeed present, and is verily partaken by us, and verily combined with the sacramental signs; so that in the bread duly given and received, the body of Christ is given and received; in the wine given and received, the blood of Christ is given and received; and thus there is a communion of the whole of Christ, in the communion of the Sacrament; yet not in any bodily, gross, earthly manner, but in a mystical, heavenly, and spiritual manner.'¹²

But the reader may learn most about the Holy Communion by referring to our Lord's words, recorded in the sixth chapter of the Gospel according to St John. The subject of this solemn discourse is 'The bread of life, the meat which endureth unto everlasting life.' Jesus Christ declares that it is his special province to give it, and that the Father has 'sealed,' or appointed him to do so (verse 27). He goes on to identify this bread of life with himself, saying, 'I am the bread of life' (verse 35). He next teaches explicitly that the bread of life is his flesh, in the words, 'the bread that I will give is my flesh' (verse 51), and declares in the plainest terms that the life of the soul depends on feeding upon him – 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you' (verse 53). This language about eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ is never again used in the New Testament except in reference to the Holy Communion. Our Lord concludes this great discourse by connecting the highest blessings with this feeding upon himself in Holy Communion – 'Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. . . . He that eateth this bread shall live for ever' (verses 54, 58).¹³

[It is said that when princess Elizabeth, who later became queen Elizabeth I, was being interrogated by inquisitors as to her belief in the 'Real Presence' she said, 'His were the hands that brake it;

His was the mouth that spake it; and what His words do make it, that I believe, and take it.' Her words state clearly the belief of the English Church, a reverent faith as to our Lord's Presence without presuming to define the manner of it. – B.G.]

(iv) *Fasting Communion*

To receive the Holy Communion before taking any other food or drink, has been the custom of the whole Church from the earliest times. It is true that our Lord instituted the Sacrament of his body and blood in the evening, at the conclusion of the Jewish Passover. But the Passover was not an ordinary meal; it was the most solemn sacrifice of the Jewish Church. Moreover, both our Lord and his apostles were fasting when they received it, in accordance with the custom which ordered that 'from the time of the evening sacrifice, nothing was to be eaten till the Paschal Supper, so that all might come to it with relish.'¹⁴ The Holy Communion is the Christian Passover, ■ feast following a sacrifice, and therefore it was fitting that it should be *instituted* at the conclusion of the last of the long series of Jewish Passovers. Whilst we are bound to copy our Lord closely in the great features of the first celebration of the Holy Eucharist (such as in the use of bread and wine) yet there are minor details in which we are not required to do so. For example, our celebrations cannot follow the Jewish Passover, or be held in an upper room at Jerusalem with none but the clergy present. And the hour at which we celebrate need not be the same.

The Jewish Passover was celebrated in the evening, for it was *during the night* that the destroying angel passed over the houses of the Israelites, thus sparing them from death. Our deliverance from death was sealed by our Lord's resurrection, which took place *early in the morning*; and it is therefore fitting that we should celebrate the Christian Passover at the time He rose.

It is true that for ■ few years after the Ascension, the Eucharist was celebrated in the evening, and in connection with a social meal named the Agape, or Love Feast; we know for certain that this was so at Corinth. But the abuses connected with these evening Communion were so grievous, that the Church soon discouraged them, insisting on the custom that the body and blood of Christ

should be received fasting. It was thought fitting that the heavenly food of the soul should be received before the earthly food of the body. The rapidity with which the change was accomplished, and its universal acceptance, lead to the conclusion that it was made on the authority of the apostles themselves. Whilst the hour of celebrating on Sundays and festivals was early in the morning, it was later on fast days, sometimes as late as 3 o'clock in the afternoon; but on every occasion, late as well as early, none but fasting communions were made.

The historical evidence for the practice of fasting Communion is so continuous and complete, that the Revd F. W. Puller, who has studied the subject very carefully, is only able to find one exception from the *general rule* of fasting Communion from the close of the first century to the Reformation – a period of nearly 1,500 years. This exception was in the case of some Egyptian Christians, who received the Sacrament after supper.

Whilst fasting Communion has thus ever been regarded as the universal rule, certain exceptions have been permitted. Persons in danger of death have always been allowed to receive Communion after taking food; and the exception it has been thought, may not unreasonably be extended to those whose bodily infirmities make fasting reception impracticable. Whilst 'necessity knows no law, yet to break lightly a custom of the Church so universal, is very wrong. Bishop Jeremy Taylor (who died AD 1667) says – 'It is a Catholic custom, that they who receive the Holy Communion should receive it fasting. This is not a duty commanded by God (i.e., a matter of divine law): but unless it be necessary to eat, he that despises this custom gives nothing but the testimony of an evil mind.'¹⁵

It is true that the Church of England does not, in the Book of Common Prayer, expressly enjoin fasting Communion. But as the rule was in full force when the Prayer Book was first put out in 1549, something surely would have been said if it had been meant that the practice should be discontinued. In an explanation of the Prayer Book, first published in 1657, by Bishop Sparrow (one of its revisers) it is expressly said – 'This Sacrament should be received fasting.' Moreover, the Church of England declares in the Preface of the Prayer Book that she has no intention of 'striking at any

laudable practice of the whole Catholic Church of Christ,' – and the custom of fasting Communion is certainly such a practice.

[However, the circumstances of life in modern society make it very difficult for some people to receive the Blessed Sacrament fasting; and the words of Bishop Samuel Wilberforce teach us how to meet such a situation. He says, 'Come to early Communion as giving the first of the day, the freshness of the spirit, the unbrokenness of the heart to that great service; but, if you cannot come in the early morning, have no scruple about taking some ordinary food before you communicate.'

A rubric of the 1928 Prayer Book states, 'It is an ancient and laudable custom of the Church to receive the Holy Sacrament fasting. Yet, for the avoidance of all scruple, it is hereby declared that such preparation may be used or not used according to every man's conscience in the sight of God.'-B.G.]

3. CONFIRMATION

Confirmation is the laying on of the bishop's hand upon those who have been baptized, in order that they may be strengthened by the Gift of the Holy Spirit. Thus, it is sometimes named, as in the Prayer Book, 'the Laying on of Hands.' Confirmation is the perfection and strength of baptism and baptismal grace.

It is the belief of the Church, that in Confirmation the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, named in Isa. 11. 2, 3, are in their fulness bestowed upon the soul which rightly approaches this sacrament.

The seven gifts of the Holy Ghost are—

- (a) WISDOM, to aid us in our search after God.
- (b) UNDERSTANDING, to lead us to a knowledge of the truth.
- (c) COUNSEL, to help us to discern the right path.
- (d) GHOSTLY STRENGTH, to confirm us in doing right.
- (e) KNOWLEDGE, to teach us the will of God.
- (f) TRUE GODLINESS, to help us to lead good lives.

(g) HOLY FEAR, to aid us in loving and obeying God as our Father.

The gifts of Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, and Knowledge, enlighten the reason, and enable us to apprehend and confess the Faith; the gifts of Ghostly Strength, True Godliness, and Holy Fear, strengthen the will, and enable us to overcome the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Thus, by the Gift of God bestowed through the Laying on of Hands, our whole moral nature is rendered capable of advance towards perfection, and we are enabled to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.¹⁶

In New Testament times, the administration of Confirmation was sometimes accompanied by the bestowal of extraordinary gifts, such as, for example the power to speak with tongues. These extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost in Confirmation, are not to be confused with his ordinary and abiding gifts in this sacrament. The extraordinary gifts were for the benefit of others, and not for the formation of holiness in those who exercised them. The Church teaches that, in the administration of the sacraments, whatever concerns the welfare of souls or the communication of grace, is ordinary and abiding. Thus, the ordinary gifts are still bestowed in the Laying on of Hands.

In the New Testament the sacrament of Confirmation is closely associated with that of Holy Baptism.

In Acts 8. 12, etc., we read a description of the first occasion on which the Church of Christ was extended beyond the gates of Jerusalem, and thus have an excellent example of how beginners in the Christian religion were then dealt with. St Philip, a deacon, taught and baptized the Samaritans, but the apostles must confirm. Two of these chief ministers, at a busy time in the Church's history, came a journey of forty or fifty miles to lay their hands upon the baptized, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. 'Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.'

In Acts 19. 1, etc., we have the record of St Paul first baptizing, and then confirming twelve persons at Ephesus. 'They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them.'

In naming the six rudiments of the doctrine of Christ, the writer

of the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of 'the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands;' (6. 1, 2.) where the two sacraments are again coupled together. We have probably a reference to a like association in Acts 2. 38, and in Tit. 3. 5. Thus, Confirmation is believed to be the completion of Baptism. For 1000 years throughout the whole Church, Confirmation immediately followed Baptism, even in the case of infants; and this is the present custom of the Eastern Church. In the West it is usual to defer Confirmation until children have arrived at years of discretion, and with us it is accompanied by a renewal of the vows of Baptism.

This renewal of vows is not Confirmation. In point of fact, this adjunct of Confirmation has only been in the Prayer Book for about 350 years. The renewal of vows is a good and edifying accompaniment to Confirmation, though no necessary part of the sacrament.

Confirmation, like Baptism, can be received but once in a lifetime, for it imprints a character or mark upon the soul, which can never be effaced.

PENANCE

(i) *Absolution*

It has been said – 'The sacrament of Penance were not needed, if we ever kept faithfully the gift in Baptism: it is but ■ second plank given to us by the mercy of God after shipwreck.'¹⁷ Baptism conveys remission of all sins previously committed, but since we can never be baptized ■ second time, the sacramental cleansing from sin after Baptism takes place in Absolution.

The ordinance we are considering is sometimes named the sacrament of Absolution, and sometimes that of Penance or Penance. The word *absolution* signifies 'loosing,' or 'release.' Absolution is the authoritative declaration of God's pardon. Penance is the necessary preparation, on man's part, for the gift of Absolution.

The sacrament of Absolution was instituted by Jesus Christ after his resurrection; we give the account in the words of the Gospel – 'Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when

the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.' (John 20. 19-24.)

By these words our Lord constituted the apostles and their successors the ministers of Absolution. 'The power of remitting sins,' says Bishop Sparrow,¹⁸ 'was not to end with the apostles, but is a part of the ministry of reconciliation, as necessary now as it was then, and therefore to continue as long as the ministry of reconciliation, that is, to the end of the world.' The bestowal of the power to 'retain,' as well as to 'remit' sins in his name, shews that our Lord intended the Church to be the judge of the sinner's penitence. Further, in order that this power may be exercised, it is needful for the sinner seeking forgiveness to open his heart by confession of sin. Such a course, with a view to receiving Absolution, is referred to in the exhortation before Communion in the Prayer Book. The words are – 'If there be any of you, who . . . cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness.'

The gift of Absolution proceeds from our Lord Jesus Christ. He 'hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him.' The Church so realizes this truth, that, in admitting men to the order of the priesthood, she dwells very specially upon it. In the English Church a priest is admitted to his sacred office by the bishop, who lays his hands upon the priest's head saying – 'Receive the Holy Ghost, for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the

imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful dispenser of the word of God, and of his holy sacraments; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.¹⁹

The Prayer Book speaks three times of the power of Absolution. In Morning and Evening Prayer there is a declaration of this power; in the Communion Service a still stronger expression of it is found; but in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick, we have the form for the actual exercise of the power of Absolution. This last is a most solemn and direct assurance of pardon, since it can only be pronounced after a full confession of sins before the priest.

The rubric directs—

Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special Confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which Confession, the Priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily desire it) after this sort.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences. And by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

‘The power of remitting sin,’ says Bishop Andrewes, ‘is originally in God, and in God alone; in Christ our Saviour, by means of the union of the Godhead and manhood into one person, by virtue whereof the Son of Man hath power to forgive sins upon earth.’²⁰ (see Mark 2. 10.)

If it be objected that it is presumptuous for the priest to say, ‘I absolve thee from all thy sins,’ the answer is — Absolution is a divinely-appointed means through which God’s forgiveness flows out to the penitent: and it cannot be presumptuous to use the power which Christ has so clearly given to his priests. The words of St Ambrose may be quoted here — ‘Why do you baptize, if it is not lawful for men to forgive sins. In baptism there is certainly

forgiveness of all sins. What difference is there between exercising the right in penitence or in baptism? The mystery is the same in both cases.²¹

We should remember, too, that the priest, in absolving, acts in the name and on the part of the Church. The power of Absolution does not belong to the priest personally, but as ministering for God on behalf of the Church. In the early centuries Absolution was given publicly to individuals in the churches. Private Absolution was introduced later, to avoid the scandal of open and public confessions of sin.

(ii) *Repentance*

Before a priest can absolve in this direct and solemn way, it is necessary that he should be assured of the sinner's repentance.

Repentance consists of three parts—

- (a) CONTRITION
- (b) CONFESSION
- (c) AMENDMENT

(a) CONTRITION

The groundwork of a true repentance is contrition. Without contrition, confession is of no avail, and there can be no lasting amendment of life. Contrition is the hatred of sin, springing from love of God. The true penitent views sin as an outrage against the love of God; he sees in the Passion and Death of Jesus the work and the result of his sin. True contrition places the soul in a state of reconciliation and peace with God. 'The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt thou not despise.' (Ps. 51. 17.)

(b) CONFESSION

Contrition leads naturally to confession, or the truthful acknowledgment of sin. Confession is self-accusation, and the acknowledgment to God of wrong doing. God demands confession as a condition of pardon. 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just

to forgive us our sins.' (1 John 1. 9.) A willingness to confess is an evidence of contrition. The most searching confession is that made privately before a priest.

'It is neither prudent nor safe always to rely upon our own judgment of ourselves, for another Eye sees more of us than is discerned by our own. In the dangers of our body we consult the physician, in the intricacies of our estate we advise with the lawyer, and in the care of our immortal souls why do we not advise with our spiritual physicians? for they are appointed by Christ himself to direct the ignorant, confirm the doubtful, and comfort the disconsolate.

'Confession to a priest is with us restored to its primitive use, for we direct all men always to confess to God, but some also to confess their faults and reveal their doubts to the priest, especially in these three cases: first, when we are disquieted with the guilt of some sin already committed; or, secondly, when we cannot conquer some lust or passion; or, thirdly, when we are afflicted with any intricate scruples; particularly whether we may now be fit to receive the blessed Sacrament or no.'²²

It is upon such private confession before a priest, that the penitent can receive the most direct assurance of pardon which Jesus Christ empowers the Church to pronounce. The form of confession commonly used in this case is as follows:

I confess to Almighty God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, before the whole company of heaven, and to you, my father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed, by my fault, my own fault, my own most grievous fault; especially I confess that I have committed these sins, (*after naming all his sins, the penitent concludes the confession with the words—*) For these and all my other sins which I cannot now remember, I am heartily sorry, I firmly purpose amendment; I most humbly ask pardon of God; and of you, my spiritual father, I beg for penance, advice, and absolution. Wherefore I pray God to have mercy upon me, and you, my father, to pray for me to the Lord our God. Amen.

The Church of England invites sinners, who cannot otherwise make their peace with God, to open their grief (i.e., to reveal the sin which causes the grief) before the priest, in order that they may secure 'the benefit of absolution.' Such confession is called by Bishop Cosin, *Sacramental Confession*, and is a blessed privilege open to all who heartily desire it. Our blessed Lord has given to his priests power and authority to absolve from all sins, and He surely means them to use this power. But before they can fully do so, it is needful that those seeking absolution should confess their sins. Thus we may be quite sure that private confession, as an outcome of real contrition, is a practice well pleasing to our Lord.²³

We must remember that, strictly speaking, to absolve is not to forgive; God alone forgives. To absolve is to unloose the bonds which sin has placed upon the soul, and to remove the bar to the receiving of grace. In raising Lazarus from the dead, our Lord pronounced the words, 'Loose him, and let him go.' (John 11. 44.) This was the part of the people towards him whom Christ raised. And so God, who pardons the penitent, bids the priest in absolution to loose him and let him go.

The Church of England, in Canon CXIII, strictly forbids the priest to divulge what has been said in confession. The words are – 'If any man confess his secret and hidden sins to the minister . . . we do straitly charge and admonish him, that he do not at any time reveal and make known to any person whatsoever any crime or offence so committed to his trust and secrecy.'

(c) AMENDMENT

Amendment is the forsaking of sin. It is described by St John the Baptist as 'the bringing forth fruits answerable to amendment of life.' (Matt. 3. 8, *margin*) Amendment is the crowning test of genuine repentance, and a sure evidence of true contrition. Amendment is the steadily-sustained resolve to sin no more, and is, in a certain sense, a compensation for past iniquity. In the case of injury done to others, the idea of restitution enters in, as a necessary part of repentance. We have a marked instance of such restitution in the case of Zacchaeus, who said to our Lord, 'If I have taken any

thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.' (Luke 19. 8.)

5. HOLY ORDER

The Sacrament of Holy Order gives power and authority to exercise the work of the Ministry in the Church of God. This power and authority proceeds from Jesus Christ, the divine head of the Church. He first gave it to the apostles, to hand on to the bishops, and, through the bishops, to the priests and deacons of the Church. The bishops only are able to bestow Holy Orders. This they do at the Ember seasons. The Church of England appoints days of fasting at these times, and calls upon her members to ask God's guidance for the bishops in selecting fit persons for the ministry of the Church, and his blessing upon such persons. Our Lord himself spent a whole night in prayer before choosing his apostles (Luke 6. 12, 13.); and before St Paul and St Barnabas were sent forth, the Church fasted and prayed. (Acts 13. 3.) There are two prayers, provided by the Church, to be said every day in the Ember weeks; one of these we give below—

Almighty God, our heavenly father, who hast purchased to thyself an universal Church, by the precious blood of thy dear Son; Mercifully look upon the same, and at this time so guide and govern the minds of thy servants the bishops and pastors of thy flock, that they may lay hands suddenly on no man, but faithfully and wisely make choice of fit persons to serve in the sacred ministry of thy Church. And to those which shall be ordained to any holy function give thy grace and heavenly benediction; that both by their life and doctrine they may set forth thy glory, and set forward the salvation of all men; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Sacrament of Holy Order, like Holy Baptism and Confirmation, imprints a mark or character upon those who receive it, which ever remains; and therefore ordination cannot be repeated. There is no such thing as reordination.

6. HOLY MATRIMONY

Holy Matrimony or Christian Marriage is the Sacrament which hallows the union of man and woman, and bestows upon them the grace to live together in godliness and love. Marriage is 'an honourable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocency,' and is described by St Paul as a 'great mystery,' and as a type of the union between Christ and his Church. (Eph. 5. 32.)

Holy Matrimony is a bond sealed by God, which nothing but death can break. In speaking of this bond, our Lord said – 'For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.' (Matt. 19. 5, 6.)

Holy Matrimony having this binding force, divorce is contrary to the divine institution. Unfortunately the State in this land, as in other countries, has placed itself at variance with the law of Christ and of his Church, both in the way in which it permits divorce, and also in sanctioning the marriage of divorced persons. It is true that a difference of opinion exists in the Church, as to the lawfulness of an innocent party marrying again after separation from a guilty partner.²⁴ But the law of the Church of England, as expressed in the Marriage Service and in Canon CVII, is that such marriage is contrary to the divine intention – death alone being regarded as the dissolver of the bond, setting the survivor free to marry again. (Rom, 7. 2, 3.)

The Introduction to the Service in the Book of Common Prayer, and in that of 1928, ably states the causes for which Matrimony was ordained.

Marriage contracted before a Registrar, lacks the benediction of the Church, which every Christian couple should seek and secure.

7. HOLY UNCTION

In speaking of the Reformation we said, that whilst the English Church came out of the movement with essentials unimpaired, yet there were certain losses which we need to repair. Of one of these

losses, and that a serious one, we must now speak. We refer to the Sacrament of Unction, or the Anointing of the sick.

Bishop Forbes wrote – ‘The Unction of the Sick is the lost pleiad²⁵ of the Anglican firmament. One must at once confess and deplore that a distinctly Scriptural practice has ceased to be commanded in the Church of England. Excuses may be made of ‘corrupt following of the apostles,’ in that it was used, contrary to the mind of St James, when all hope of the restoration of bodily health was gone, but it cannot be denied that there has been practically lost an apostolic practice, whereby, in case of grievous sickness, the faithful were anointed and prayed over, for the forgiveness of their sins, and to restore them, if God so willed, or to give them spiritual support in their maladies. “Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders 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, and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him:” ’ (James 5. 14, 15.) and the bishop adds – ‘Since however, the Visitation of the Sick is a private office, and uniformity is required only in the public offices, there is nothing to hinder the revival of the apostolic and scriptural custom of anointing the sick, whensoever any devout person may desire it.’²⁶

NOTES

1. Newman, *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, vol. vi. p. 62.
2. “‘The Word,” saith St John (i. 14) “was made flesh, and dwelt *in us*.” The evangelist useth the plural number *us* for the nature whereof we consist. It pleased not the Word of God to take to himself some one person amongst men, for then should that one have been advanced and no more. He made not this or that man his habitation, but dwelt in us. The Son of God did not assume a man’s person unto his own, but a man’s nature to his own person.’ – See Hooker, *Eccl. Polity*, v. 52. 3.
3. St Irenaeus iii. 18. 1.
4. Article 25.
5. Bede, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, described the baptism of the Northumbrians by Paulinus in the words – ‘He washed them with the water of absolution.’
6. The word, *Eucharist*, pronounced *u-ka-rist*, means ‘thanksgiving,’ and is the name given from the earliest times to the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ.
7. See Mason, *The Faith of the Gospel*, 1892, p. 328 note.
8. ‘Do this in remembrance of me;’ or ‘for the commemoration of me,’ and of my

sacrifice offered on the cross, and for the continual representation of it before God on earth, as it is perpetually pleaded before him by our great high priest in heaven.' – Bishop Wordsworth on Lev. 2. *Preliminary Note*.

9. Newman, in *Tract 90*. § 9. *Masses*.
10. *The Church Catechism*.
11. See Bp. Cosin's *Works*, vol. v. p. 121. Oxford ed.
12. Quoted in *The Doctrines of the Sacraments*, by Alexander Knox, p. 95. (See *Remains*, vol. ii. p. 163.) This testimony of Bishop Overall to the teaching of the Church of England on the subject of the Real Presence is important. The conclusion of the Catechism, which treats of the Holy Communion, should be read side by side with what he says above, for it was compiled by him.
13. The fathers have ever applied our Lord's words in St John 6. to the Holy Communion; and this is the teaching of the Church of England as expressed in the 3rd Exhortation, and in the Prayer of Humble Access, in the Communion Service.
14. Edersheim, *Temple Service*, p. 203.
15. *The Rule of Conscience*, Book iii. Chapter vi. Rule 15.
16. 'The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.' – Gal. 5. 22, 23.
17. Pusey, *Eirenicon*, iii, p. 92.
18. *Rationals upon The Book of Common Prayer*, 1684.
19. *The Ordering of Priests. 1662 and 1928*.
20. *Sermons*, vol. v. pp. 85, 90.
21. *de Pœnit.*, i. 8. 400. ed. Ben.
22. Dean Comber's *Companion to the Temple*, iii. 8. 60 – a commentary on the Prayer Book published AD 1684.
23. See Dr Pusey's Statement on Sacramental Confession, pp. 387, etc., of this work.
24. *Library of the Fathers, Tertullian*, Note O, pp. 443, etc.
25. In the cluster of stars known as the Pleiades there were formerly seven stars visible, now there are but six.
26. *Explanation of the xxxix. Article*, 3rd Ed. pp. 445, 474.

CHAPTER 17

PRAYER

Religion is the bond between the soul and God. This bond is one which may be strengthened or weakened, as every soul wills. It is weakened, and even broken, by sin; it is strengthened by prayer. Prayer braces the bond of religion from man's side, and opens us to the grace which strengthens it from God's side. God soon fades away from the mental vision of those who never pray.

Of all beings here below, man alone prays. In many ways we closely resemble the lower animals, but there is this striking difference between us and them – we can pray, and they cannot do so. It is natural to us to pray, for the soul was made for communion with God. If we look at the handle, barrel, and wards of a key, we say, This key was made to turn in a lock: if we look within ourselves, we can say – My soul was made for God, and to hold communion with him. When the soul prays, it is doing that for which it was made. The communion with God is called Prayer. St Augustine defines prayer to be, 'the turning of the heart to God.' St John Damascene says – 'Prayer is the elevation or ascent of the soul to God.' It is not only natural to pray, but God has bidden us do so. There is hardly any subject more continually brought to our notice in the Bible, both by precept and example, than that of prayer. Our Lord Jesus Christ is our Great Example, and in the Gospels we often read of him praying, many of the prayers which He said being recorded there. He taught his disciples to pray, and gave them and us the best of all prayers – the Lord's Prayer. No one can read the Scriptures without learning that prayer is a duty and a necessity, as well as a high privilege.

Prayer is the soul's converse with God. When we see a man upon his knees we can say – There is one who holds communion with his God.¹ This communion with God in prayer, involves much more than the mere asking for certain things. There are five parts of prayer, viz.:

1. Adoration
2. Thanksgiving } which concern God's glory.
3. Confession }
4. Petition } which concern our individual needs.
5. Intercession, which concerns the needs of others.

Prayer implies and teaches our dependence upon God, in whom 'we live, and move, and have our being.' (Acts 17. 28) Prayer must be offered in faith, and through the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 'What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.' (Mark 11. 24) 'If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.' (John 14. 14)

'Prayer is the action whereby we men, in all our frailty and defilement, associate ourselves with our divine Advocate on high, and realize the sublime bond which in him, the one Mediator between God and man, unites us in our utter unworthiness to the strong and all-holy God.'² By prayer it is we who are changed so as to be suitable agents for the doing of God's holy will.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

OUR FATHER, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation: But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer, as its name implies, was composed by our Lord Jesus Christ; it is the best of all prayers, and that which the Christian should most frequently use. It comes to us hallowed by great associations. It was first uttered by the lips of our incarnate Lord, as He gave it to his Church; it is written in the Gospels; it has been used by apostles, martyrs, and saints, in all languages; it is the prayer of kings and peasants, of old men and little children; it is the prayer of the whole Church of God in all countries, and in all ages. And so the Church has specially honoured the Lord's

Prayer, giving it a place in every office of the Prayer Book, and causing it to be repeated twice in the three chief services – the Holy Eucharist, Mattins, and Evensong. The Lord's Prayer contains God's own statement of the needs of man; and, in using it, we have divine authority for believing that all we ask is according to the mind of God. Nine hundred years ago, the bishops under King Canute beautifully said – 'It contains a message to God regarding every need a man may have, either for this life or for that to come.'

The 'Our Father' consists of seven petitions, which fall into two divisions, marked by the use of the words *Thy* and *us* and *our*. The Prayer places God's glory first, and our needs in the second place. The seven petitions may be summarized thus:

GOD'S GLORY

We pray for,

1. Reverence.
2. Loyalty.
3. Obedience.

MAN'S NEEDS

We pray for,

4. Food.
5. Forgiveness.
6. Guidance.
7. Deliverance.

'OUR FATHER, WHICH ART IN HEAVEN.'

The Lord's Prayer is the prayer of the baptized. It addresses God as Father, and thus can only properly be used by those who have been made his children in Holy Baptism, and so adopted into his family – the Church. In the early days of the Church, no unbaptized person was permitted to say the 'Our Father.' Persons under preparation for Holy Baptism were instructed in its meaning, as part of such preparation, and learnt it by heart the week preceding baptism; but they were not allowed to use it as a prayer, until they had received that Sacrament. Thus, we find St Augustine, in his sermon to the candidates for baptism, saying, 'For how can they say the "Our Father" who are not yet born?' He is referring to the new birth in baptism.

St Augustine speaks of the Lord's Prayer as 'the fraternal prayer.' We do not address God as '*my* Father,' but as '*our* Father.' If He is our Father, then we are brethren. The Lord's Prayer is a great

bond of unity, for we never say it without praying for the whole Church, thus making a great act of intercession.

(i) 'HALLOWED BE THY NAME.'

The word *hallow*, means 'to account sacred,' or 'to reverence.' By God's Name, we are to understand God himself, as revealed to man. His Name is so used frequently in the Holy Scriptures.³ Our Lord said, 'I have manifested thy Name unto the men which thou gavest me;' (John 17. 6) by which He meant that He had revealed God to them.

By the Name of God, we are also to understand the things which concern him, such as his house, his day, his word, his sacraments, his ministers; all of which are to be treated with reverence because they belong to him. In praying 'hallowed be thy Name,' we ask for grace to keep the third Commandment, which forbids the taking of God's Name in vain. Christians are to sanctify everything upon which God has placed his Name. The way of the world is to scoff at all sanctifying, and to treat all things as common. It is the duty of the children of God, who pray the Lord's Prayer, to redeem common things, and to restore their relation to him.

(ii) 'THY KINGDOM COME.'

In this petition we chiefly pray that God's rule may be everywhere accepted. That this happy result may be effected, we are first of all to be careful that the kingdom of God may come in our own souls. Of the true servants of God, Jesus has said – 'the kingdom of God is within you.' (Luke 17. 21) St Paul writes – 'Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body.' (Rom. 6. 12) Within the soul of every man is a throne, upon which either God or sin sits as a king. We pray that God alone may occupy the throne of the heart. When this is so, we shall be able to influence others for good, and so God's kingdom will spread in the world.

He who prays this petition should take a real interest in the Church's missions. If we cannot give alms, we can offer our prayers that God will bless and prosper the missionary work of his Church.

In this petition we pray for Christ's second coming to judgment, when all remaining enemies shall be put under his feet. Unless the kingdom has come in our hearts, we are not ready for Christ's coming at the end of the world. As we cannot alter the Prayer, we must alter our lives, and thus be getting ready for the second coming of our Lord.

(iii) 'THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.'

This is the most sacred of all the seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer, for it was the prayer of the Lord Jesus. In the Garden of Gethsemane, on the eve of his sacrifice, Jesus thrice prayed this prayer. God's will is a wise and good will, and nothing can really go well with us until we are yielding to, and fulfilling it. Our blessed Lord said – 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.' (John 4. 34) God's will represents the highest good that can happen to us, for even the evils we suffer, work together for good to them that love God, and keep his commandments. Anything which is not according to his will is under a curse.

By 'Thy will be done,' we mean that his will may be actively carried out by us. The will of God is not only to be accepted, but it is also to be fulfilled. God has given us a free will, and we pray that in all things, great and small, our wills may follow his, choosing that which He chooses, and rejecting that which He rejects. The rule of life is the same under all circumstances – to do God's will as we see it.

We pray that his will may be done in earth, as it is in heaven. In heaven it is done by the holy angels, consciously and completely, cheerfully and continually.

(iv) 'GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.'

This petition speaks of our dependence upon God; for, in it, we pray for all things needful for the welfare of soul and body.

We ask him for our food, and this day by day. We are apt to take our food as a matter of course, forgetting from whose hand it comes. We must remember too that our food would not nourish us apart from God's blessing. It is a holy practice never to take our food

without first asking God to bless it to our use, and to return thanks to him after meals.

But in this petition we pray also for the food of our souls. Our Lord taught that the food of the soul is of more importance than that of the body, when He said – ‘Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life.’ (John 6. 27) He is referring to the Sacrament of his body and blood, which He spoke of as the Bread of Life. They who do not go to Communion, are not living as they pray in this fourth petition.

(v) ‘FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE FORGIVE THEM THAT TRESPASS AGAINST US.’

Our Lord meant us to use the ‘Our Father’ daily. We learn this from the last petition, which asks for *daily* bread. We are to pray too for daily forgiveness; for, however good we are, we never pass a day without falling into some sin, however small. ‘A just man’ says Solomon, ‘falleth seven times.’ (Prov. 24. 16) It was the great Augustine who taught his hearers that the earnest use of this petition obtains pardon for such daily imperfections. We do not in this petition pray for first forgiveness, but to cover the daily sins which, even in a state of grace, by our frailty we commit. St Augustine’s words are – ‘Baptism is provided on account of all sins; prayer is provided on account of little sins, without which no one is able to live. What does the Prayer say? ‘Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.’ We are cleansed once for all in baptism, we are cleansed daily by prayer.’²⁴

We pray that God will so forgive us, as we forgive others. This is the only petition in the ‘Our Father’ conditional upon our doing something. ‘As we forgive,’ means in like manner as we forgive. The reason why Christ has thus taught us to pray is, because we are not fit to receive mercy from God until we have shown it to others. ‘Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.’ (Matt. 5. 7) It has been said, ‘He that cannot forgive others, breaks down the bridge over which he must pass himself.’

(vi) 'AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.'

The previous petition teaches that, as sinful creatures, we need pardon: this petition teaches that, as helpless and weak, we need guidance and succour. The petition means – Do not permit us to fall into temptation, or in other words, Suffer us not to be placed in positions dangerous to our spiritual safety. It is an acknowledgment that we put our whole trust in God, and have no confidence in our own ability to withstand temptation. It is no sin to be tempted: the sin begins when we consent to the temptation. As we use this petition, we ought to be careful not to put ourselves in the way of danger; and if danger comes, to be earnest and prompt in prayer for help.

(vii) 'BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.'

In this petition we ask God to save us from all manner of harm both to soul and body. It is probable that our Lord meant, Deliver us from the Evil One, i.e., our great enemy; and, if so, the words include all moral evil, which is the work of the Evil One. We are quite sure that it is God's will to save us from moral evil, or sin; for sin does the soul infinite harm. The Christian is daily subject to evils of all kinds, let him therefore pray this prayer very earnestly. It has been well said – 'When prayer leads the van, deliverance brings up the rear.' Although it is not wrong to ask God to save us from physical evil, such as pain or disease, yet it may not please him so to answer our prayer; but He often turns physical evils into real blessings, and then we should be patient, trusting that He will order all for our highest good.

'FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOR
EVER AND EVER. AMEN.'

These words form what is known as the doxology. They are sometimes omitted from the Lord's Prayer in the Prayer Book. Some doubt has been expressed as to whether they form part of the Prayer as given by our Lord. They are found in the Prayer as printed

in St Matthew's Gospel, but they are wanting in that given in St Luke's Gospel.

NOTES

1. When Dr Livingstone was found dead upon his knees in his tent in Africa, his native servant, thinking that he was engaged in prayer, exclaimed, 'The white man is holding communion with his God.'
2. Liddon, *Some Elements of Religion*, pp. 197, 198.
3. See Ps. 20. 1; 69. 37. Neh. 1. 11.
4. *Sermon to Catechumens* 15.

CHAPTER 18

THE CHRISTIAN COURSE

1. PREDESTINATION AND ELECTION

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, 'worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.' He does nothing in time, which He has not 'purposed in himself' in eternity. It has pleased God to make known to us his eternal purpose to 'gather together in one all things in Christ.' (Eph. 1. 9-11) The divine purpose of gathering together the elect into one body, and thus bringing them to eternal life in Christ, is called Predestination and Election.

Predestination does not mean that some souls are fore-ordained to eternal life, and others to eternal death, for there is no purpose of God to bring any man to eternal death. God 'will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.' (1 Tim. 2. 4)

There is a purposes in everything, both in the order of nature and in that of grace. In the order of grace, Predestination corresponds to some extent with Providence in the order of nature. An acorn is naturally predestined to produce an oak, but it may fail to realize that purpose: all acorns do not produce oaks. If it does fail, it misses its predestined end. So the soul is predestined to a life of grace and obedience here, leading to a life of glory hereafter; but it may fail, and miss the mark. If the laws which determine the germination and growth of an acorn are observed, the oak will be produced from it. In like manner if the soul obeys God, and corresponds with his grace, it will come to eternal life. God who calls and elects, also bids us 'to make our calling and election sure.' (2 Peter 1. 10)

God is 'not willing that ANY should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance.' (2 Peter 3. 9) Therefore, if any man is lost, it is of his own fault.¹

God has predestinated us 'to be conformed to the image of his Son,' (Rom. 8. 29) but no man can be conformed to the image of Christ against his own will.

Sin alone, deliberately chosen, persevered in, and unrepented of, shuts out from heaven; and no man need so sin unless he chooses.

Nothing is accounted sin by God, unless it might have been avoided. God causes no one to sin. We sin because we 'frustrate the grace of God,' (Gal. 2. 21) and 'receive the grace of God in vain.' (2 Cor. 6. 1) The very fact that the grace of God is offered to all men, proves that He does not will that anyone should either sin or be lost.

God does not elect all men to the same position in his kingdom. He gives to some ten talents, to others five, to others two; but He gives to all at least one talent, and to everyone grace to correspond to his vocation. If God bestows his grace in a way which seems to us unequal, yet to no one does He give less grace than is necessary for salvation. The lot of each soul in eternity will depend upon the use made of that grace. Everyone is called to, and is capable of salvation, but God alone knows who will 'make their calling and election sure.' (2 Peter 1. 10)

2. GRACE AND FREEWILL

The soul of man is the seat of Freewill. Freewill is that great gift of God to man, whereby he is able to choose good or evil. The possession of Freewill raises man above all the creatures around him, and makes him capable of corresponding with God's Grace. The soul would be incapable of either moral goodness or moral evil, unless it were free to choose one or the other. Without Freewill we should be mere machines, not moral agents created in the image of God. There could be no responsibility in the sight of God for our actions, unless our wills were unfettered. Nothing teaches more forcibly the exceeding blessedness and greatness of a free obedience, than the consideration that it was only possible at the risk of sin and rebellion.

By the fall of man, the faculties of the soul were seriously disordered, and the will became enfeebled, and prone to an evil choice. To remedy this defect God bestows Grace upon the soul. Grace is that thing which by nature we cannot have. Grace is a spiritual gift of God, which makes man acceptable to him, and able to serve him. Grace enlightens the mind, cleanses the heart, and strengthens the will, uniting us with all the powers of our life to God. Grace is the free gift of God, bestowed on us for the sake of

Jesus Christ, wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, to enable us to know and to do the will of God.

The Grace of God corrects the natural bias of the will in fallen man towards evil. The earth upon which we live is subject to two influences in its journey round the sun. Its swift movement through space gives rise to a strong tendency to wander from its appointed path. This catastrophe is prevented by the attraction of the sun upon the earth. If this attraction ceased, the earth would promptly fly off into space to its destruction. So wonderfully are these two influences balanced, that the earth preserves its proper course. It is thus with the movements of the will acting under Grace; only with this difference, that Grace does not constrain or force the will, for Grace may be resisted. Grace attracts, persuades, and aids the will to a right choice. As St Augustine says – ‘Not Grace alone, nor man alone, but Grace working with man, will save:’ and again ‘He who created thee without thee, will not save thee without thee.’

When we see the lid of a casket forced open, and the hinges torn away, we look upon the work of the *spoiler*; but when we see the casket gently unlocked by the key, and the contents brought out, we note the hand of the *owner*. Grace does not work by violence in opening the heart, forcing or crushing the free action of the will. This is not the method of Him who comes not as a plunderer to his prey, but as a possessor to his treasure. The will is not blinded by Grace, but it is enlightened, and the whole man is enabled to act with ‘the glorious liberty of the children of God.’ (Rom, 8. 21) Grace does not enslave the will, but enfranchises it. Grace is the help that God gives.

3. REGENERATION

There is much confusion in many minds concerning Conversion and Regeneration. This confusion arises in a great measure from a misapprehension of our Lord’s words to Nicodemus as to the necessity of the new birth, recorded in St John 3. 1-14.

Regeneration is the being born again ‘of water and of the Spirit.’ It is the act of God the Holy Ghost upon the soul in Baptism – a single definite act which can never be repeated. In Baptism, God

gives the soul the new birth, or, in other words, regenerates it. In Regeneration we pass into the supernatural order of things.

Conversion, as we shall see in the next section, consists in the conscious turning of the will to God. It is the act of man, through grace, as he accepts the mercy and the love offered by Jesus Christ.

Thus, we see that Regeneration and Conversion are quite distinct, since a converted man is not necessarily a regenerated man. From a comparison of Acts 9. 9, with Acts 22. 13, 16, we learn that St Paul was not baptized until three days after his conversion. In his case, Conversion preceded the new birth. Such too was the order in the case of St Augustine, as we learn from his Confessions.²

St John does not, in his Gospel, tell of the institution of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, but he records a very full explanation of its meaning in the words of our Lord to Nicodemus. (John 3. 1-14) In this passage our Lord declares that, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;' and He explains this statement by adding, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' Thus 'to be born of water and of the Spirit,' is the same as 'to be born again.' Now the joining together of 'water' and 'the Spirit,' can only refer to baptism.

St Paul uses an expression which confirms this interpretation. In his epistle to Titus (3. 5) he writes, 'According to his mercy He saved us, by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.' The word here used for 'washing,' means a 'bath,' which implies the use of water. So here again, Regeneration, or the new birth, is associated with the use of water – the bath of the font. The first words that the priest is directed to say after baptizing a child, and receiving it into the Church, are these – 'Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is regenerate.'³ THEREFORE, EVERY PERSON WHO HAS BEEN RIGHTLY BAPTIZED, HAS, THROUGH THE SPIRIT, BEEN BORN AGAIN.

We must not think that because a person has been born again, he will necessarily be saved. Regeneration is not final salvation, but it places the soul in such a relation to God as to make salvation possible. The new life in Christ is as a seed within the soul, which needs to be watered and tended, that it may live and grow, until sin

is destroyed, and the new life is perfected. There are thus two forces at work in the soul of the regenerate man. Good and evil meet in the baptized, and one or other must in the end prevail. The issue of the conflict depends upon the will, working with, or against grace.

4. CONVERSION

There are two words used in the New Testament, which describe the process whereby a man passes from a state of habitual sin to a state of holiness. These words are Repentance and Conversion. The first of these is most frequently used in the New Testament, but it is of the latter that we are now about to speak.

The word *conversion* means a 'turning with or towards' a person, instead of a turning away from him; hence, a change of purpose. A converted man is one who, having turned away from God, is now turned towards him and is facing him, or walking with him. We speak of such an one as a changed man, i.e., one who has changed the aim or purpose of his life; and this great change we call Conversion. Conversion consists in the conscious yielding of the heart, mind, and will to God. It is the willing acceptance of the mercy, truth, and love of God. Conversion may take place *before* baptism, leading a person to seek the new birth in that Sacrament; or it may take place *after* baptism, when one who has been born again in baptism, but has never striven to live well, may turn from evil and begin to do better. In the case of a baptized person, Conversion may be regarded as the willing acknowledgment of the baptismal vows, and the conscious acceptance of his position as the child of God by adoption and grace.

Conversion may be sudden, or it may be gradual. Sudden Conversion is the instantaneous passage 'from darkness to light,' without any intervening twilight – a violent change in the soul's history. Such conversions are rare, and we may regard them as the exception rather than the rule. The case of the penitent thief, the jailer at Philippi, and that of St Paul, fall under the head of sudden Conversion. Lacordaire, the great French preacher, in describing his own Conversion, said – 'I seem to see a man who is making his way along, as it were, by chance, and with a bandage over his eyes;

it is a little loosened – he catches a glimpse of the light – and, at the moment when the handkerchief falls, he stands face to face with the noon-day sun' . . . This touch of grace was in him so vivid that he never lost the memory of it. On his death-bed he described this *sublime moment* with just the same emotion. . . . Every Christian knows the state, more or less, but Conversion is not ordinarily produced in the way of sudden illumination, like a flash of lightning in a dark night, but rather under the form of growing daylight, like that which precedes the sunrise.⁴

The majority of earnest people find it impossible to say *when* they first consciously yielded up the heart to God. The life of such has been a succession of gentle changes and renewals, each bringing the soul nearer to him. The process of Conversion in these cases has been decidedly gradual, 'first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.' (Mark 4. 28)

Because a man is once converted, it does not follow that he is safe. A converted man may fall from his state of grace and salvation, and become a backslider, and so need converting again. St Paul was undoubtedly converted on the road to Damascus, yet he often speaks as though conscious of the possibility of falling away.⁵

Conversion, like Repentance, is not a solitary act, but a lifelong, continual process, a daily passing from death unto life, under the influence of the grace of God. For not until the will of man corresponds completely and perpetually to the will of God, will Conversion be really effectual. 'He that endureth to the end shall be saved.' (Matt. 10. 22)

5. JUSTIFICATION

The term Justification describes the state of man in this life as redeemed by Christ, and united to him, in contrast with his state by nature. By sin, original and actual, we are at enmity with God; by our union with Christ this enmity is done away, we are made God's children and treated as such, and so gradually fitted for heaven. Thus, the state of Justification is much the same as the state of grace. 'We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings.' (Article 11).

When we say that we are justified by faith and repentance, we do not mean that faith or repentance justify of themselves; but rather that they are the conditions upon which we are united to Christ and justified. Faith apprehends and appropriates the merits of Christ, and thus it is said that we are 'justified by faith.' (Rom. 5. 1.)

6. SANCTIFICATION

Sanctification is the term used to describe the work of God the Holy Ghost upon the character of those who are justified.

The grace of God is given to make us holy, and so to fit us for God's presence in eternity; for 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' (Heb. 12. 14.) In Holy Baptism we are born again into a state of justification, that we may be completely renewed. Our union with Christ – commenced in Baptism, and dependent upon the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the soul – is sustained by feeding upon him in the Holy Communion of his body and blood.

We are responsible to God for the use we make of the opportunities of Sanctification, which never fail to wait on the regenerate and justified. God's manifold dealings with us, in grace and providence, are the means by which the Holy Spirit – our wills co-operating – carries on, and perfects the work of Sanctification.

Sanctification is the consecration of the redeemed man, with all the powers of his soul and body, to the perfect and eternal service of God. 'Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.' (Eph. 5, 25, etc.)

7. FINAL PERSEVERANCE

(By the Revd T. T. Carter.)

Perseverance is the crown of all God's dealings with the soul in its earthly course. On God's part, it is the perfecting of that good work which He began in regeneration. (Phil. 1. 6) On the side of

man, it is the continuance in that state of salvation to which baptism introduces him, and the correspondence with God's grace, even unto the end. On this account it is named Final Perseverance.

The saying, 'once in grace, always in grace,' is not necessarily true, for, as we have already said, grace may be received in vain, (2 Cor. 6. 1) and even resisted. (Acts 7. 51) The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of the falling away of some 'who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift,' (Heb. 6. 4-6) and St John also speaks of those who 'went out from us.' (1 John 2. 19)

It is therefore perilous to trust to the feeling of assurance, when all must depend on a continued faithfulness to grace, and a true conformity to the will of God. Such a feeling tends to self-confidence. The most confident are the most likely to be self-deceived. The very best amongst us has need to take to himself the apostle's warning, 'Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.' (1 Cor. 10. 12) There is a 'holy fear,' which it is always needful to cherish, and he that feareth is the more likely to be kept safe to the end. There is a warning that, with all our joy in a conscious state of grace, we should rejoice with trembling.' (Ps. 2. 11) One of the saddest deceits of Satan is to encourage a spirit of presumption, and false peace. The humble and diffident soul may often be the surest of final salvation.

The only ground of an assured hope, while resting on the merits and precious blood of Christ, is in the faithful use of all the means of grace, and the diligent practice of good works – 'perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' (2 Cor. 7. 1) St Paul could say of himself, 'I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.' (2 Tim. 4, 7, 8) Although to St Paul, because of his greatness, a special grace might be vouchsafed, such as others could hardly venture to claim, yet some measure of a like grace can hardly fail to follow a real consistency of life in union with our Lord. To faithful souls living in the grace of God, and in the honest practice of the Christian virtues, there comes a peace and a trustful looking forward to the glory that shall be revealed – a hope full of immortality. To such is given an increasing sense of being in God,

as grace grows into habit, and evil is overcome. We may believe that to such faithful souls, God grants a special gift of Perseverance, as they realize the promise of our Lord concerning his sheep, 'They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.' (John 10. 28)

God calls the soul to a gradual progress of growing life. This growth when truly maintained, through the Holy Spirit's influence, under the discipline of life, is the intended result of God's manifold dealings with the soul, and such growth is the truest witness to an assured redemption. But there may be alternations of nature and grace, the one or the other prevailing for the time; and there may be fallings away, and even long periods of decline. But there is a restorative power in regenerating grace, and there is a fulness of life promised to true repentance. There may be 'repentance unto life,' (Acts 11. 18) and 'repentance to salvation not to be repented of,' (2 Cor. 7. 10) and a return to God lasting for ever, with 'hope as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.' (Heb. 6. 19) Our Lord is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.' (Heb. 7. 25) Thus, all past loss may be repaired, and, as our Lord assures us, 'he that endureth to the end shall be saved.' (Matt. 10. 22)

There is no limit to the possibilities of divine grace, in souls made willing by the Holy Spirit of God. But Final Perseverance implies a stedfast continuance in well-doing, tried and tested under the manifold changes and chances of this mortal life.

NOTES

1. '“Many are called, but few chosen.” All who are called can come, if they will: freewill is given them with that intent, nor is grace wanting to them, so that, if they come not, they have themselves only to thank for it; but if they come, it is thanks to the special impulse of God, who inspires them to make so good a use of their liberty.' – *Bossuet, and his Contemporaries*, 1877, p. 487.
2. viii. 12; ix. 6.
3. *Public Baptism of Infants*.
4. Chocarne, *Life of Lacordaire*, pp. 41, etc.
5. 1 Cor. ix. 27; x. 12. Phil. iii. 12, 14.

CHAPTER 19

THE HOLY BIBLE

Amongst the thousands of books which have been written, the Holy Bible is by far the most important, for it contains God's own account of himself, and of his dealings with mankind in this life and in that to come. In St Augustine's words, 'the Scriptures are letters from our heavenly country.' The Bible is the best and most enduring book in the world; it has been translated into all languages, and circulated by millions; it has successfully resisted all attacks made upon it; it is the book which God has caused to be written for our learning, and it is his own gift to man.

Moreover, the Bible is an *inspired book* and in this it chiefly differs from all other books.

1. THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

The word *inspiration*, signifies 'inbreathing,' or 'breathing into.' By this term we understand the action of God the Holy Spirit upon the minds of the writers of the Bible, whereby they were enabled to deliver in writing God's message to man. 'Holy men of God spake as they were moved' i.e., carried along, 'by the Holy Ghost.' (2 Pet. 1. 21.) The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Bible, filling their minds with the truths which He willed to be made known, and impelling them to write them down. In this way the Bible is not only true as a History of England might be true, but it contains much that would never have been known unless God had revealed it, and caused it to be committed to writing. The Holy Spirit also inspired the writers of the Bible in another direction. All along the ages there had been a series of revelations from God, and of providential dealings with mankind. Inspiration enabled the writers of the Bible to select out of this mass of revelation such truths, and to place on record such events of history, as possessed an abiding value and a lasting interest to mankind. In speaking of the Bible as inspired, we

claim that it is a certain and sure guide in all the principles of religion and morals.

It is true that in the composition of the Bible the mind of man worked, but the Bible was produced by man acting under the influence of God the Holy Spirit. 'In what way inspiration is compatible with that personal agency on the part of its instruments, which the composition of the Bible evidences, we know not; but if anything is certain, it is this – that as God rules the will, yet the will is free – as He rules the course of the world, yet men conduct it – so He has inspired the Bible, yet men have written it. Though the Bible be inspired, it has all such characteristics as might attach to a book uninspired – the characteristics of dialect and style, the distinct effects of times and places, youth and age, of moral and intellectual character; and I insist on this, lest I seem to forget (what I do not forget), that in spite of its human form, it has in it the spirit and the mind of God.'¹

'At first sight, and judged by an ordinary literary estimate, the Bible presents an appearance of being merely a large collection of heterogeneous writings. Historical records, ranging over many centuries, biographies, dialogues, anecdotes, catalogues of moral maxims, and accounts of social experiences, poetry, the most touchingly plaintive and the most buoyantly triumphant, predictions, exhortations, warnings, varying in style, in authorship, in date, in dialect, are thrown, as it seems, somewhat arbitrarily into a single volume. . . . But beneath the differences of style, of language, and of method, which are undeniably prominent in the Sacred Books, and which appear so entirely to absorb the attention of a merely literary observer, a deeper insight will discover in Scripture such manifest unity of drift and purpose, both moral and intellectual, as to imply the continuous action of the mind of God.'²

To this passage we may add the further words of Dr Liddon, 'In the Bible we handle the masterpiece of the Holy Spirit set forth in human speech.'³

2. THE CONTENTS OF THE BIBLE

The Bible appears to be one book, but it is in reality many books bound together in one volume. In the fourth century it was called by the Latins 'the Divine Library,' and by the Greeks 'the Books.' We often speak of it as 'the Holy Scriptures,' i.e., the holy writings. The Bible was not written at one time, by one author, and in one place; but it was written at various times, by many persons, and in various places.

There are three main divisions of the Holy Bible, namely—

- (a) THE OLD TESTAMENT
- (b) THE ECCLESIASTICAL BOOKS *or* APOCRYPHA⁴
- (c) THE NEW TESTAMENT

(a) THE OLD TESTAMENT.

The word *testament* means 'covenant,' or 'agreement.' The Old Testament contains the covenant which God made with his ancient people, the Jewish Church. Our blessed Lord spoke of the three divisions of the Old Testament under the names of 'the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms.' (Luke 24. 44.) Of these we will now speak.

(1) *The Law of Moses*. This portion of the Old Testament contains the first five books of the Bible, commonly known as the Pentateuch. The word signifies 'the five-fold volume.' The Pentateuch consisted of a single roll divided into sections, and, for a long time, formed the Canon⁵ of Jewish Scripture. The five sections of the Pentateuch are known by the names, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The word *Genesis*, means 'origin,' and in this book we learn the story of the origin of the world. The word *Exodus*, means 'going out,' for in this book we are told of the deliverance of God's people from the Egyptian bondage. The word *Leviticus*, signifies 'pertaining to the tribe of Levi,' and the book gives the details of the priestly duties, and the law of sacrifice. In the book *Numbers* we find the census of the chosen people. The word *Deuteronomy*, means 'the second law,' and in this book we find the repetition or summary of the Law of God.

The Pentateuch is followed by the Historical Books of the Old Testament, giving the history of the chosen people.

(2) *The Prophets*. The authors of this part of the Old Testament are sixteen in number, four being known as 'the greater prophets,' and twelve as 'the lesser prophets.' The four greater prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; and hence we find their writings placed before those of the lesser prophets, being greater both in length and in importance. The prophets were men sent by God, who spoke for him in teaching, warning, and encouraging his people, and in foretelling future events, specially those concerning the coming of Jesus Christ. Thus, for example, long years before He came, Isaiah foretold his Virgin-birth; (Isa. 7. 14.) Micah prophesied that He should be born in Bethlehem; (Micah 5. 2.) and Zechariah, that He should be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, and be crucified; (Zech. 11. 12; 12. 10.) whilst Daniel foretold his second coming in glory. (Dan. 7. 9-15.)

(3) *The Psalms*. The third division of the Old Testament consists of the Poetical Books and it is named the Psalms, or the Psalter, from the first of these books. The other poetical books, Job, the Lamentations of Jeremiah, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, radiate round the Psalter as planets round the sun.

The Canonical Books of the Old Testament were collected into one whole by the Jewish Church many years before the birth of our Lord. When He came, it was not to destroy the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfil them. (Matt. 5. 17.) Our Lord often quoted from the Old Testament, referring to that volume as 'the Scriptures.' Speaking of the Old Testament, He bade his followers 'Search the Scriptures, . . . they are they which testify of me,' (John 5. 39) and He added, 'the Scripture cannot be broken.' (John 10. 35.) 'For Christians it will be enough to know that our Lord Jesus Christ set the seal of His infallible sanction on the whole of the Old Testament. He found the Hebrew Canon as we have it in our hands to-day, and He treated it as an authority which was above discussion.'⁶

(b) THE ECCLESIASTICAL BOOKS.

About the year BC 300, the Hebrew Old Testament was translated into Greek at Alexandria. The translation appears to have been

made for the benefit of those foreign-born Jews and others, who were ignorant of the Hebrew language, and who would speak Greek as their native tongue. This translation is called 'the Septuagint,' a word of Latin origin meaning 'seventy.' It received this name from a tradition that it was made by seventy scholars in the Isle of Pharos, off Alexandria. It is from this Greek version that the writers of the New Testament generally quote; and thus is explained the variations which exist between similar passages of the Old and New Testaments in our Authorized Version – our English Old Testament being a translation of the Hebrew, and our New Testament of the Greek.

In this Greek version of the Old Testament are found certain writings, coming after the Prophets, which are termed the Ecclesiastical Books, or the Apocrypha. These books contain the history of the Jews during the interval which elapsed between the close of the prophecy of Malachi, and the coming of our Lord. They cover a period of 400 years, and form a most valuable and interesting link between the Old and New Testaments: but they have never been received by the whole Church as of equal authority with the Old Testament. Selections from the Ecclesiastical Books are read annually in the Anglican Church in parts of the months of October and November.

The Sixth Article thus speaks of them—

'The other books (as Hierome – i.e., St Jerome – saith) the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine.'

In purchasing copies of the Holy Bible, it is well to see that the Apocrypha is included in the volumes. No Bible is really complete which does not contain these books.

(c) THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The New Testament was not written by Jesus Christ, but by certain of his followers, some years after his ascension into heaven. Like the Old Testament, it was composed under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The New Testament is the fulfilment of the Old, forming the second volume of God's written Word. St Augustine says – 'The New Testament lies hidden in the Old; the Old Testament is made manifest in the New.'

The New Testament consists of twenty-seven portions, and is the work of eight or nine authors. Three quarters of its contents were written by St Paul, St Luke and St John. It was written quickly, in about forty years, and in this respect is a contrast to the Old Testament. It is well to remember that the books forming the New Testament were not composed in the order in which they appear in our Authorized Version. Opinions are divided as to which of the books was first written; some consider that it was one of the Gospels, others that it was St Paul's first Epistle to the Thessalonians. It is generally agreed that the Gospel according to St John was the last-written portion of the New Testament.

The contents of the New Testament are—

(1) *The Four Gospels*, written by the four Evangelists, St Matthew, St Mark, St Luke, and St John. The word *Gospel*, means 'good tidings.' An Evangelist is one who declares the good tidings. The Gospels contain the story of our Lord's incarnate life, telling who He was, and what He said and did. But very specially do they record the events connected with his passion, death and resurrection. Whilst the four Gospels agree in general outline, they vary in the details given: for each of the writers regards the life of Christ from a different point of view. What one Evangelist records, another omits; what a third omits, a fourth supplies. Thus, it is only by studying the four Gospels side by side, that we learn the whole truth about our Lord's life. There is no part of the whole Bible so precious as the Gospels, and the Church has ever honoured them above every other portion of Holy Scripture. Two selections from the Gospels are appointed by the English Church to be read daily throughout the year — at the Holy Eucharist, and at Mattins or at Evensong.

(2) *The Acts of the Apostles*, written by St Luke as the second part or continuation of his Gospel, forms the first history of the Church. In this book we have the record of the beginnings of the Christian Church on the Day of Pentecost. We read of what the apostles said and did immediately after our Lord's ascension, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Church; then of St Peter's work; then of St Paul's wonderful conversion, of his travels as a missionary apostle, and how he planted the Church wherever he went, leaving behind him in each centre clergy to carry on his work. This book

gives the account of our Lord's administration of his Church or kingdom, through the Holy Ghost.

(3) *The Epistles*. The Epistles, or 'letters,' as the word means, comprise the writings of St Paul, St James, St Peter, St John, and St Jude. Some of these letters were written to private individuals, as, for example, St Paul's Epistles to St Timothy and St Titus; others were addressed to congregations of Christians in a city or a district, such as St Paul's Epistles to the Romans and the Corinthians; whilst others again were written to the Church generally, and hence are known as the Catholic or General Epistles.

(4) *The Revelation*. This book contains the letters to the Seven Churches of Asia, and a series of visions made known to the aged apostle St John, whilst an exile in the Isle of Patmos, off the coast of Asia Minor. These visions concern the relation of the Church to the world, her struggle on earth against the powers of evil, and her final triumph in heaven.

Such is the Holy Bible. 'No other book can equally avail to prepare us for that which lies before us; for the unknown anxieties and sorrows which are sooner or later the portion of most men and women; for the gradual approach of death; for the passage into the unseen world; for the sights and sounds which then will burst upon us; for the period, be it long or short, of waiting and preparation; for the throne and the face of the eternal Judge.'⁶

3. THE BIBLE AND THE CHURCH

The Bible is the child of the Church, and it is as wrong as it is impossible to separate the one from the other. If the Scriptures contain the truth, the Church is 'the pillar and ground' (1 Tim. 3. 15.) upon which the truth rests. For—

- (1) *The Church wrote the inspired books which form the Bible.*
- (2) *The Church separated the inspired books from other writings.*
- (3) *The Church alone can rightly interpret the Bible.*

(1) *The Church wrote the inspired books which form the Bible.* The Jewish Church wrote the Old Testament, the Christian Church wrote the New Testament. The truths of Christianity were revealed to the Church some years before the New Testament existed. In those early days these truths were taught by word of mouth. In order that they might be preserved in the world, the Church was again called upon to act; God inspired certain men in the Church to commit the truths of Christianity to writing. Thus, the Christian revelation was written down in the New Testament. Thus, inspiration fixed and safeguarded revelation for the ages to come.

(2) *The Church separated the inspired books from other writings;* in other words, the Church settled what writings formed the Bible. This is true of the Jewish Church and the Old Testament, as well as of the Christian Church and the New Testament. The books which now form the Bible were not the only writings which, at one time, claimed a place in the sacred scriptures. There were, both in Jewish and Christian times, other writings greatly prized. There were also writings now placed in the Bible, which were not at first regarded as inspired. Here again the Church was called upon to act. By the light of the Holy Spirit, the Church was enabled to select from the mass of writings then existing, such books as were to form the Holy Bible. This task, known as the fixing of the Canon of Scripture, was a work of many years. It is upon the authority of the Church, and upon that alone, that we know what is Scripture and what is not. There is not sufficient internal evidence in the Bible to prove the inspiration of its parts. The Bible cannot be its own witness. The Church is the 'witness and keeper of Holy Writ.'⁷ St Augustine uttered a great truth when he wrote, 'I should not have believed the Gospel unless the authority of the Church had moved me.'

(3) *The Church alone can rightly interpret the Bible.* On the testimony of the Church we not only know what the Bible is, but also what the Bible means. As the Church first received the truths of Christianity before she committed them to writing in the New Testament, so, after that volume was written, she became its interpreter. The Bible was sent out into the world in the hand of the Church. The Church is the organ of the Holy Spirit, and as such is the divinely-appointed expositor of the Scriptures. We know the

true meaning of the Bible by the general consent of the Church, influenced by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Bible is the most difficult of all books to understand, for it contains the utterances of the Spirit of God, and treats of profound mysteries. St Augustine, whose knowledge of the Bible appears in every page of his works, confessed that there were more things in the Scriptures that he did not understand, than those which he did. No code of written law is sufficient without a court to testify to its meaning, and to give the right meaning with authority in case of dispute. As the laws of the land need an interpreter in the person of the judges, so the Bible needs the voice of the Church to expound its meaning. When St Philip asked the Ethiopian nobleman, 'Understandest thou what thou readest?' he wisely replied, 'How can I, except some man should guide me?' (Acts 8. 30, 31.)

That every man should study the Bible for himself, putting his own meaning upon its words, cannot be a right plan; for people who do this come to opposite conclusions as to main truths, such as the Divinity of Christ, the Atonement, etc. The Bible is the word of God, but when wrongly explained it ceases to be so, and becomes instead the word of man. Without an interpreter the Bible becomes a cause of angry disputes and unseemly wrangling.

Upon this subject Dr Liddon has wisely said – 'In order to make good use of the Bible, a humble and sensible man will take a guide. In this Book of books, God's righteousness standeth like the strong mountains; 'His judgments are like the great deep' (Ps. 36. 6). Wise people do not try to climb the Alps alone, or go to sea in a skiff without a compass. If the Bible were a mere human book, we might easily explore its heights and depths for ourselves; but precisely because it is superhuman, we may easily lose ourselves in the attempt to explore it. He who gives us the Bible, gives us, in the voice of that early undivided Christian Church, a guide to its meaning. In her Creeds, and in the general sense of her great teachers, we find a clue to the real unity and drift of Scripture.'⁸

If, in answer to all this, the objection be raised that the Church herself is not agreed as to the meaning of certain passages of Holy Scripture, we reply: Differences of opinion undoubtedly exist in the Church, but not in regard to that which is necessary to salvation. On minor points of interpretation there are differences, but not as

to main truths. In things essential to the salvation of the soul, the Holy Catholic Church all along the centuries has ever spoken clearly and without contradiction. The foundation truths of Christianity have been accepted in the Church *Always, Everywhere, and by All* (see page 221).

NOTES

1. Newman in *Tracts for the Times*, No. 85, p. 30, 1840.
2. Liddon, *Bampton Lectures*, ii. p. 44, 1878.
3. Advent Sermons, *The Bible a Preparation for Hereafter*, vol. i. p. 259.
4. The title 'Apocrypha' is a short form of the Greek for 'hidden' or 'secret books.' How it came to be applied to the Ecclesiastical Books is uncertain.
5. By the term 'Canon of Scripture,' we mean the collection of writings declared by the Church to be inspired.
6. Liddon, *The Worth of the Old Testament*, p. 13.
6. Liddon, *The Worth of the Old Testament*, p. 30.
7. Article 20.
8. Advent Sermons, *The Bible a Preparation for Hereafter*, vol. i. pp. 258, 259.

CHAPTER 20

WORSHIP

The word *worship*, signifies 'worth-ship,' and when applied to God, means giving to him the honour of which He is worthy. 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.' (Rev. 4. 11.)

Divine worship may be private or public. Public worship is the offering of united homage to God as a Great King by his subjects, the members of his Church. Whilst He accepts the worship of each individual or family, He loves more the public worship of his Church. 'The Lord loveth the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.' (Ps. 87. 2.)

(i)

The true idea of worship is that of an offering made by the creature to the Creator. This being so, the primary object in going to a place of worship is *to give* and not *to get*. The hearing of sermons, however useful the custom may be, is no necessary part of divine worship. It is usual to take advantage of the assembling of the people to impart to them instruction and exhortation; but worship, strictly speaking, is distinct from such exercises.

That the English Church takes a right view of the relative importance of worship and preaching, is evident from the fact that while she provides four public services – Mattins, Litany, the Holy Eucharist, and Evensong – the Sermon is only *ordered* at the Holy Eucharist.

THE CHURCH'S CHIEF ACT OF WORSHIP IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST. THIS IS THE ONE SERVICE APPOINTED BY OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. A GREAT FESTIVAL, OR LORD'S DAY, PASSED WITHOUT TAKING PART IN THIS SUPREME ACT OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP, IS NOT SPENT ACCORDING TO THE DIVINE INTENTION.

Mattins and Evensong, services appointed by the Church, are adjuncts to the Eucharistic Service, not substitutes for it. The use of the collect from the Eucharistic Service at Mattins and Evensong, connects the latter services with the former. Moreover, the richness and beauty of the Psalms, Canticles, and Prayers, used at Mattins and Evensong, can only be fully realized, by regarding these services in their true relation to the One Service of divine appointment. It is therefore evident that attendance at Mattins and Evensong cannot be accounted as a lawful substitute for participation in the Eucharistic Service.

(ii)

Worship being the offering of the creature to the Creator, it necessarily follows that it should be of the very best. The instinct of the Church from the first has recognized this principle, and thus we find that she has all along, according to opportunity, offered to God the choicest gifts of nature and of art. The Church also lays down carefully considered rules as to the ceremonies of divine worship, believing that no detail in the service of her King is too trifling to be considered.

Whilst thus ordering outward things, the Church has ever insisted on the necessity of ■ worship in which the soul bears a real and serious part. God, who ordered an elaborate ceremonial for his ancient Church, is represented by the prophet Isaiah (1. 10-16) as hating such a worship, when unaccompanied by devotion of heart and holiness of life. But we must remember that the abuse of a thing is no argument against its right use.

When heaven was opened to St John the Divine, and he had a vision of the worship above, he described, in symbolical language, a worship of which beautiful ceremonies formed an important part. No worship can possibly be more spiritual than that of heaven. We cannot therefore do wrong in making the heavenly worship thus described our model; for the worship of the Church below is offered to the same God, and, moreover, it forms our preparation for joining in the worship of heaven in eternity.

(iii)

In speaking upon this subject Dr Liddon wrote – ‘Religion, in order to meet the wants of human nature, will take account of each element in man’s nature. As man has, besides his unseen person, an outward and visible shape, so will religion herself provide sensible forms as well as supersensuous realities. She will exact outward as well as inward reverence, because in a being constituted like man, the one is really the condition of the other. There are bodily postures which absolutely forbid heavenly exercises to the soul: to lounge in an arm-chair is inconsistent with the tension of thought and will which belongs to adoration of the Most Holy.¹ Religion, like man himself, is a beautiful spirit tabernacling in a body of sense. Her divine and immutable truths are shrouded beneath the unrivalled poetry of Bible language; her treasures of grace beneath the outward and visible signs which meet us in sacraments. She proclaims the invisible by that which meets the eye; she heralds the eternal harmonies by ■ music that falls upon the ear. She certainly is not all form, for man is not ■ brute: but also she is not all spirit, for man is not an angel. Yet if she is true to man and to herself, she never allows her disciple to forget the unseen in the seen, the inward in the outward, the soul in the body. For religious purposes, the soul must always be incomparably of the highest importance, as being the very man himself; the man in the secret recesses of his being; the man at the imperishable centre of his life; the man as he lives beneath the eye, and enters into relation with the heart of his infinite Creator.’²

1. THE ORNAMENTS RUBRIC

In the Prayer Book, immediately before the Order for Morning Prayer, is found the following direction, known as *the Ornaments Rubric*:

And here is to be noted, That such Ornaments of the Church, and of the Ministers thereof at all times of their Ministration, shall be retained, and be in use, as were in

this Church of England by the authority of Parliament, in the second year of the reign of King Edward VI.

This rubric contains the directions of the English Church in many important particulars concerning the conduct of her services.

(i)

During the Commonwealth in England, the Church's directions as to ceremonial were generally disobeyed. This disorder has continued in many particulars even to our own times. Slowly, yet increasingly, the Church is recovering her lost heritage in the matter of ceremonial.

Persons are often perplexed, and naturally so, at the diversities of ceremonial prevailing in our midst. At some churches they find the Holy Eucharist celebrated by a priest in vestments, with lights on the altar, and other accessories. At other churches they find an absence of such usages. The reason for this state of things is, that in the one case the clergy are obeying the directions of the Ornaments Rubric, whilst in the other case past disuse or prevailing custom is pleaded for disregarding these directions.

(ii)

The rubric orders THE RETAINING and THE USE of 'such Ornaments of the Church, and of the Ministers thereof at all times of their Ministration, as were in this Church of England by the authority of Parliament, in the second year of the reign of King Edward VI.'

There are several sources from which we may learn what 'ornaments' are here alluded to. The chief of these sources are: (1) The First Prayer Book of Edward VI., (2) The injunctions of Edward VI., (3) The lists of ornaments which were made by the King's instructions in 1552, for the survey of the Church goods throughout the kingdom.

From a long list, the following are selected:

ORNAMENTS OF THE CHURCH

The Altar, with its Candlesticks, Cross, and Coverings.

Paten and Chalice.

Cruets for wine and water.

Font.

Pulpit.

ORNAMENTS OF THE MINISTERS

The Eucharistic Vestments, viz.:

Alb and Vestment, i.e., Chasuble, for the celebrant.

Albs and Tunicles, for the assistants.

Cope.

Surplice.

Rochet, Pastoral Staff, and Mitre, for bishops.

It will be observed that most of these 'ornaments of the church, and of the ministers,' are for use at the Holy Eucharist. This being the only service of divine appointment, it is specially honoured in the matter of ceremonial: the Church thereby bearing witness to the truths of the Real Presence and the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

2. THE LITURGICAL COLOURS

Those who follow the course of the Church's worship welcome all appropriate aids to joining in it intelligently. It would be a serious loss if the church itself should always present the same uniform appearance; and it is a corresponding help when the alternation of fast and festival is made visible to the eye. It would be unnatural, for example, if, in passing from Holy week to Easter, no difference was made in the outward appearance of the church and the vestures of the ministers. It is with a view to marking such reasonable difference, that, from remote times, the employment of various liturgical colours has been adopted. Such a custom was in use in the English Church in the second year of the reign of Edward VI.

In the middle ages, there was no such hard and fast rule about the various shades of colours as we now have. For example, when

the rubric ordered black, it was thought to be followed if violet, or purple, or even blue, was used. So with green; it was considered to be liturgically the same as yellow.

Certain colours are used for certain times; white, on the Feast of the Consecration or Dedication of a church; but the colour for the festival of the patron saint of a church is simply the colour of the Saint's day. White is the colour for the administration of Baptism and Confirmation, for Marriage, and Churching of women. Violet, for the Communion Service, and other penitential offices. Black or violet for the Burial of the dead. White may be used for the Burial of children under seven years of age.

[The pre-Reformation sequence of colours varied more or less from diocese to diocese; but there exists today an almost uniform sequence in the English Church. White is used for all the Feasts of our Lord and for the Feast of the Holy Trinity. Purple or Blue is used for the solemn season of Advent and from Septuagesima Sunday until Lent. The Lenten Array of unbleached linen, (sack cloth and ashes), is used from Ash Wednesday until Passiontide, when the colour is Blood Red. Some churches, however, use Violet for Lent, following the post-Reformation Roman sequence. Pentecostal Red is used for Whitsuntide, and Green for the ferias after Trinity Sunday. The colour for Martyrs is Red, and for Confessors and Virgins, White. — B.G.]

3. PIOUS CUSTOMS

- (a) To kneel for prayer; to stand for praise; to sit for instruction. Kneeling and standing signify humility and resolution. We sit for instruction; but an exception is made whilst the Holy Gospel at the Eucharist is read, at which we stand. At the reading of all other Scriptures in church we sit.
- (b) To bow the head as an act of reverence:
- Firstly* towards the altar on entering and on leaving a church. This is done on the recommendation of Canon VII, passed by Convocation in 1640 — 'We heartily commend it to all good and well-affected people, that they be ready to tender unto the Lord their reverence and obeisance [i.e. bow or curtsy] both at their coming in and going

out of church, according to the most ancient custom of the Primitive Church in the purest times.' From very early days the altar has been regarded as the throne of Christ, because He there vouchsafes his sacramental presence in the Holy Eucharist. We do not bow to the cross upon the altar, but towards the altar, in honour of him, whose it is.

In the House of Lords, when the sovereign is present, sitting upon the throne, subjects kneel and do homage; when the throne is vacant, they bow in passing it.

Secondly, when the name of Jesus is mentioned. This is done in carrying out the spirit of St Paul's words, 'At the name of Jesus every knee should bow.' (Phil. 2. 10.) The Church of England enjoins this practice in Canon XVIII of 1604 – 'When in time of Divine Service the Lord Jesus shall be mentioned, due and lowly reverence shall be done by all persons present.'

Thirdly, at the words, 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,' in honour of the blessed Trinity, before whose presence the angels cover their faces. (Isa. 6. 1-4)

Fourthly, at the words, 'And was incarnate,' in the Nicene Creed, in the Communion Service, in remembrance of the great humility of the Son of God in becoming man.

Fifthly, at the conclusion of the Prayer of Consecration in the Service of Holy Communion. This is done as an act of adoration of our Lord, sacramentally present in the midst of the worshipping Church. 'No man eats this Flesh, unless he first adores.'³ 'It is to be given to the people kneeling; for a sin it is not to adore when we receive this Sacrament. And the old custom was to receive it after the manner of adoration.'⁴

(c) To make the sign of the cross with the right hand from the forehead down to the breast, and from the left shoulder across to the right. This may be done as an act of faith in Jesus by those who, like the crusaders of old, are Soldiers of the Cross. In Canon XXX of 1604 the lawful use of the sign of the cross in Baptism is carefully explained. The holy sign may be made at other times also, as an act of witness. As early as AD 200, Tertullian wrote – 'At every going in and out, . . . in all the ordinary actions of daily life, we trace upon the forehead the sign of the cross.'

4. THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE LAITY

In both Jewish and Christian times there has always been a clear distinction between the clergy and the laity, in that the clergy are 'taken from among men and ordained for men in things pertaining to God.' (Heb. 5. 1.) Nevertheless, it has ever been held that the laity has a real share in the priestly work of the Church.

Thus, whilst the family of Aaron *only* had the ministerial priesthood,⁵ yet the whole people of Israel were regarded as priests. God declared, 'Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.' (Exod. 19. 6.) In the Christian Church the same principle is observed, for we find St Peter speaking of Christians in general as 'an holy priesthood,' and again as 'a royal priesthood,' (1 Peter 2. 5, 9.) and St John says that our Lord 'hath made us kings and priests unto God.' (Rev. 1. 6.)

The question has been raised as to whether the priesthood of the laity is conferred in Baptism, or in Confirmation: but the question is difficult of solution, from the fact, that, for the first thousand years of the Church's history, the two sacraments were administered together. The early Church knew nothing of Confirmation apart from Baptism.

While none but a priest may consecrate at the Holy Eucharist, yet the laity co-operates with him in the offering of this great Sacrifice.

'It is an abuse of the sacerdotal conception, if it is supposed that the priesthood exists to celebrate sacrifices and acts of worship in the place of the body of the people or as their substitute. . . . The Church is one body: the free approach to God in the Sonship and Priesthood of Christ belongs to men and women as members of 'one body,' and this one body has different organs through which the functions of its life find expression. . . . The reception, for instance, of Eucharistic grace, the approach to God in Eucharistic sacrifice, are functions of the whole body. 'We bless the cup of blessing,' 'we break the bread,' says St Paul, speaking for the community: 'we offer,' 'we present,' is the language of the liturgies. But the ministry is the organ – the necessary organ – of these functions. It is the hand which offers and distributes; it is the voice which consecrates and pleads. And the whole body can no more dispense with its services

than the natural body can grasp or speak without the instrumentality of hand and tongue.’⁶

In all the people’s part in worship generally, there is a recognition of the duties and privileges of the laity, as entitled to take part in offerings made specially by the priest. This implies and rests on the truth that the laity are ‘an holy nation,’ chosen and taken up by baptism into a sphere higher than their natural state. What Jesus was to His Apostolic band, what the priest is to the faithful laity, that the layfolk are to the world outside the Church. Their priesthood is to the world.

5. THE OBSERVANCE OF SUNDAY

Sunday is the Christians’ holy day, commemorating the Resurrection of our Lord from the dead. We cease from ordinary labour on Sunday that we may be able to join together for the worship of God our Heavenly Father, which is the chief duty of the Church. The cessation of ordinary work is not enjoined upon Christians that they may while away the time or spend it in aimless self pleasing or in something worse. A well spent Lord’s Day should always centre around the Lord’s table for the offering of ourselves, our souls and bodies, in union with His all-perfect Sacrifice. Sunday also provides time to learn more about our Holy religion. It should be a bright and happy day, that our children may regard Sundays as some of the happiest days of their childhood.

6. NOTES ON THE CHURCH OFFICES⁷

(i) THE PUBLIC BAPTISM OF INFANTS

Children of Christian parents should be brought to Holy Baptism as early as possible; but it is desirable to defer Baptism for children of non-Christians until sufficient instruction shall have been given. A Baptism ought to be public, because it is the reception of a new member into the flock of Christ; and also in order that the child may have the benefit of the prayers of the congregation, on which account, a Sunday affords the best opportunity.

Sponsors should, strictly speaking, be communicants. It is of no

use to bring, for sponsors, persons who are not confirmed, or are not Church people, or lead bad lives, or are not likely to pray for those for whom they answer at the font. By the sanction of the Convocation of Canterbury, parents are allowed to stand for their own children.

It should be understood that sponsors do not answer for themselves, but for the children. Baptism is a covenant, and both God and the children make an agreement: but, because the children cannot speak or understand, their sponsors speak for them.

Members of the Church perform a great act of charity when they undertake the sponsorial office; and if they cannot otherwise benefit their charges, they can always pray for them. 'O God, bless my God-children,' is soon said, but it may effect very much. And occasionally, if not constantly, they may be more specially brought before God by name.

(ii) THE CHURCHING OF WOMEN

Whilst in Jewish times the purification of the mother after child-birth was the prominent idea, in Christian times that of thanksgiving for preservation at a very dangerous time is specially insisted on, as the title of this office in the Prayer Book teaches.

The Prayer Book says that the woman 'shall come decently apparelled.' This does not refer to the quality of her clothing; for it does not matter how poor it is, if it be clean. But it points to the old custom of wearing a veil on this occasion, which it may not now be desirable to observe. It does however lend the sanction of the Church to the practice of wearing veils, as garments of a religious character, at Confirmations, and at other times.

'If there be a Communion, it is convenient (that is, *suitable*) that she receive the Holy Communion,' to dedicate herself to God afresh, and to seek his grace for her new duties. It is well, when possible, to be churched just before some celebration of Holy Communion; or, if not, to embrace the earliest opportunity of communicating.

It is desirable that the husband should accompany the wife to church at these times, to join in thanking God for her safety.

In placing this office immediately after the Burial Service, the

Church seems to regard a safe delivery in the light of a resurrection from the dead.

[Since the days when Vernon Staley wrote *The Catholic Religion* the Church has become faced with the legalized murder of unborn children by clinical abortion. Because a thing is permitted by Law it is not necessarily condoned or accepted by Christians. From the moment of conception the mother is 'with child'; and the 'child' is a person with a developing personality which goes on developing before birth as it continues to develop after birth. Anyone who deliberately ends the life of the unborn child is guilty of the sin of murder; and anyone who aids and abets such a 'termination of pregnancy' is likewise guilty. An abortion is only acceptable when it is necessary to save the mother's life; and even then every attempt must be made to save the life of the child also. The Holy Catholic Church condemns abortions of convenience as utterly evil. — B.G.]

(iii) HOLY MATRIMONY

There are many different kinds of marriage in the world. With them we are not immediately concerned. Holy Matrimony is Christian Marriage; and is different from all other kinds of marriage in its ideals and requirements. Holy Matrimony is the union of one man and one woman for life to live together according to the will of God. It cannot be ended by human laws relative to divorce; and that is why there can be no second service of Holy Matrimony for anyone while a previous partner is yet alive.

St Paul says that marriage should be contracted 'only in the Lord.' They who intend to marry should consider what God will approve, and what will be for the safety and benefit of their souls.

None, therefore, should make a choice which, they have reason to believe, will hinder instead of strengthening them in their religious life, and in their faithfulness to the Church of God.

In Holy Matrimony man and wife are made 'one flesh:' and to those who come rightly disposed, high grace is given through the prayers and blessings of the Church, to discharge their responsi-

bilities. This is what the Church intends us to understand when, in one of the homilies, she calls this ordinance 'the Sacrament of Matrimony.' In arranging the details of the actual marriage, the aim should be to receive the Church's blessing right religiously and well.

Care should be taken to break no rule of the Church in the time chosen for marriages. They should never take place in Holy Week, which because of its penitential character, is not a desirable season.

(iv) THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD

We come now to the Burial Office, the last office, excepting the continual remembrance of the faithful departed in prayer and at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, which our Mother Church performs on behalf of her children. It concerns them as still members of the same Body, though departed this life. May we all so live that, at our departure, it may be used for ourselves in all the confidence of a holy hope!

The idea of the Burial Office is a high one. It is framed for a Christian who has lived and died in the faith, fear, and love of Christ, and in full communion with his Church. Its general tone is therefore very joyous. It has indeed its sombre side in the psalms and in the first cry at the grave; but in every other portion it seems to say to mourner, 'Thy brother shall rise again.'

Very desirable is ■ special celebration of the Holy Eucharist for the repose of the soul of the departed, as well as for the comfort of those who survive. One of the prayers of the Burial Office, called 'the collect,' points to ■ mortuary celebration, at which it would naturally be used.

Everything connected with the subsequent state of the grave, such as the design of the headstone, etc., ought to be Christian in idea.

'Them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.'

(v) THE HOLY COMMUNION

SUGGESTIONS FOR A DEVOUT RECEPTION OF THE HOLY
COMMUNION

Never receive the Holy Communion without careful preparation.

If it be possible, always communicate early, that you may the more easily receive fasting, and also that you may 'attend upon the Lord without distraction.'

Try to be in church at least five minutes before the service at the altar begins, and if possible, earlier still, for private devotion.

When in church, remember that you are engaged in a great act of congregational worship and intercession, in which each member of the 'royal priesthood' should exercise his office intelligently and heartily.

When the time comes for communicating, hold yourself in readiness to go up to the altar.

Kneel down reverently at the sanctuary step. Say secretly again and again such words as these – 'Lord, it is good for me to be here;' or, 'Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof.'

When your own turn comes, kneel quite upright, and prepare to receive the sacrament of the Lord's body into the palm of your right hand, steadied by the left, holding your hands well up, with the fingers straight out. Keep the hands quite still. Then receive it from your palm by touching it with your tongue, taking care not to leave a particle on your hand, or to let one crumb fall to the ground.

On receiving the chalice, take hold of it firmly, by grasping its stem, in order to guide it to your lips, and to prevent accidents. On no account receive it with a jerk, or let go of it suddenly.

After returning to your place, kneel and engage in private thanksgiving and prayer.

Do not leave the church without making an act of thanksgiving.

NOTES

1. 'The reverence of the soul is best secured when the body, its companion and instrument, is reverent also. To see God is to feel it to be an imperious necessity to prostrate ourselves before him. 'O come, let us worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker' (Ps. xcv. 6), is the voice of the true reverence for all times.' – Liddon, *Easter Sermons*, xxviii. p. 158.
2. *Some Elements of Religion*, 3rd Edition, pp. 116, 117.
3. St Augustine on Psalm 98.
4. Bishop Sparrow's *Rationals upon the Book of Common Prayer*, 1684, p. 218.
5. Exod. 28. 1; Num. 3. 1-11; 2 Chron. 26. 18.
6. Gore's *Ministry of the Christian Church*, 2nd Edition, pp. 85, 86.
7. *These Notes are reproduced from the Hebden Bridge Parochial Magazine for 1881.*

PART FOUR

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1

SACRAMENTAL CONFESSION

DECLARATION OF DR PUSEY¹

To sum up what I believe and have taught on this head:

(1) 'I fully believe that any sin will be forgiven by God upon a deep and entire repentance, for the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ alone, and that those merits are the only source of all forgiveness. Surely, one cannot see the blessed lives and death-beds of persons, who, without confession to man, live in the true faith and fear and love of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, without believing that they are in the full grace and favour of God.

(2) 'I also believe that "Our Lord Jesus Christ hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him." This power I believe to be ministerial, as in Baptism, since it pleases God to employ visible instruments in conveying his mercies to the soul.

(3) 'This power, I believe to be conferred on priests in their ordination, in the solemn words, "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained," and that which is done in his name, and according to his will, He confirms in heaven, as He says: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 18. 18.)

(4) 'I believe that Absolution is not only a comfort, but is a means of grace to the soul; or rather is a comfort, because it is a means of grace to the soul; and that God, through man, pronounces forgiveness of sins upon all who truly repent and turn to him.

1. *Letter to the Bishop of London*, pp. 19, etc.

(5) 'I believe that, being a means of grace with an outward visible sign, it does, according to the teaching of our Church, in a secondary sense, come under the title of 'sacrament,' and that our Homilies in that secondary sense do so call it, as having 'the promise of forgiveness of sins' (although not exclusively), and an outward sign, imposition of hands, although the grace of forgiveness is not tied or restricted to that act.

'It is an entire perversion of the whole question that some have ventured to speak of 'priestly power,' 'spiritual independence,' 'sacerdotal rights,' etc. If a physician goes about to minister to the sick, bind up the broken, apply to the cure of diseases the medicines which God has given him the knowledge and the skill to use, no one speaks of 'assumption of power;' no one thinks it a part of 'independence' to be neglected. Why then speak of 'priestly power,' when people ask the ministers of God to impart that which God has entrusted them? Why is it undue 'power' to bind up the broken-hearted, to pour into their wounds the wine and oil of penitence, to lift them up when desponding, to loose them, in Christ's name, from the chains of their sins, and encourage them anew to the conflict? Why, but that to those who know not what the conflict is, what sin is, who have no idea of mental sickness, or anxiety, or distress, all, both sickness and remedy, must seem a dream? To minister to bodily wants is accounted a benefit; to minister to spiritual, which men know not of, is a reproach! In the world, 'they that exercise lordship over them are called benefactors:' but even an apostle had occasion to say, 'Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?'"

'Such as shall be satisfied with a general confession (are) not to be offended with them that do use to their further satisfying the auricular and secret confession to the priest; nor those also which think needful or convenient, for the quietness of their own consciences, particularly to open their sins to the priest, to be offended with them that are satisfied with their humble confession to God, and the general confession to the Church. But in all things to follow and keep the rule of charity, and every man to be satisfied with his own conscience, not judging other men's minds or consciences, whereas he hath no warrant of God's word to the same.' - *First Prayer Book of Edward VI.*

APPENDIX 2

(Reproduced from the preliminary pages in Staley's earlier editions)

'Within the Catholic Church, we hold that which hath been believed everywhere, always, and of all men: for that is truly and properly Catholic, which comprehendeth all things in general after an universal manner. And that shall we do if we follow Universality, Antiquity, Consent.

Universality shall we follow thus, if we profess that One Faith to be true, which the whole Church throughout the world acknowledgeth and confesseth.

Antiquity shall we follow, if we part not any whit from those senses which it is plain that our holy elders and fathers generally held.

Consent shall we likewise follow, if, in this very Antiquity itself, we hold the definitions and opinions of all, or at any rate almost all, the Priests and Doctors together.'

(Vincent of Lerins, *against Heresy*, Ch. ii.)

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Object

The Society exists to uphold Catholic Faith and Practice in accordance with the Principles of the Book of Common Prayer.

Liturgy

Nevertheless, the Society does not take up a fundamentalist or obscurantist position in regard to the 1662 Prayer Book. We recognize that the deeper insights in Holy Scripture, the teaching of the Fathers and the historic liturgies that are available today make liturgical reform and revision desirable; and that some of the controversies of the Reformation era are now outmoded.

Order

The Society accepts the threefold order of bishops, priests, also called presbyters, and deacons as an essential part of apostolic order and tradition.

Incarnation

The Society rejects any attempt to deny or minimize the fact that Jesus, Son of Mary, is the Incarnate Son of God, who was crucified for our salvation and redemption, rose again from the dead for our justification, and ascended into heaven where he intercedes for us as our great high priest.

Unity

The Society believes that true Christian unity can only be achieved by the acceptance of the fundamentals of the historic Creeds and the Chalcedonian definition. We reject the false ecumenism which seeks unity without the Supernatural Gospel and on the sole basis of humanism and the brotherhood of man.

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This comprehensive work, which was to go through twenty-nine editions in sixty-eight years, became a manual of instruction in Christian faith and practice for many thousands of people.

When first published in 1893, Vernon Staley acknowledged the existence of his work to the help and encouragement given him by the Revd T. T. Carter, Warden of Clewer, who provided the original Preface, also by Dr William Bright, Canon of Christchurch and Regius Professor, and by the Revd F. W. Puller of the Society of St John the Evangelist at Cowley.

Vernon Staley, educated at Rochdale Grammar School and later at Chichester Theological College, served his curacy at Hebden Bridge where the vicar was known as 'the Pusey of the North'. It was in 1888, when Staley went as chaplain to the Sisters' House of Mercy at Clewer, near Windsor, that he came under the influence of the Revd Thomas Thelusson Carter, a co-founder of the Clewer sisterhood. Later Staley became Provost of Aberdeen and Orkney, and in 1911 returned to Oxfordshire to become rector of Ickford, where in his old age, he became much venerated and almost a focus of pilgrimage. He was noted for his writings, which extended to some forty titles, and for the beautiful objects in wood and textile created in his garden workshop for local churches.

The publishers are grateful to the Revd Brian Goodchild, who for many years before his retirement served as parish priest at Isleham, Cambridgeshire. His careful revisions have made possible the preparation of this Jubilee Memorial edition to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the death of the author, the ninetieth anniversary of first publication, and the 150th anniversary of the Oxford Movement.

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