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**INSTRUCTING
THE
NON-CATHOLIC
BEFORE MARRIAGE**



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	III
Instruction One—Matrimony is of God	7
Instruction Two—The Best Marriage	12
Instruction Three—The Promises Expected From the Non-Catholic	21
Instruction Four—Removing the First Bar- riers to Conversion	31
Instruction Five—Contents of the Catechism Analyzed	43
Instruction Six—The Catholic Temple, The Mass, The Priesthood	58
What the Fully Instructed Convert Should Know	69
Answers to Inquirer's Objections	75

INTRODUCTION

According to a custom, which prevails in most dioceses of the United States, a Catholic contemplating marriage with a non-Catholic must bring the latter to his or her pastor for several instructions before a dispensation may be requested of the Chancery.

These instructions vary from four to eight according to the local requirement, and their purpose is (1) to acquaint the non-Catholic with the Catholic concept of marriage and its consequences, and (2) to dispose him more favorably toward the religion of the one whom he intends to wed for life.

Of course, it is always hoped that the Protestant party will continue instructions in order that he may make his entire submission to the Church in view of a beautiful Catholic marriage.

Most Protestants are acquainted with the demands of Rome calculated to guarantee a valid marriage between a Catholic and Protestant by eliciting the Protestant's sincere consent to an indissoluble union, and to the fulfillment of certain promises which he makes in writing.

INTRODUCTION

The Catholic, who is keeping company with a non-Catholic, should call on the pastor two or three months before the intended wedding "to talk it over". The Catholic should come *alone* for the first interview. Thereupon he or she should bring the non-Catholic friend for the series of instructions.

The priest will receive the Protestant party kindly and make him feel at ease. He should know that his own good is in the Catholic Church's mind when he is asked to come for a few instructions which relate to the Church's teaching concerning marriage. He knows that if his friend were deeply interested in anything else he would want to know all about it; that, therefore, he should want to know much about the religion of the one who is to be his life partner, the religion in which he is expected to rear whatever children may result from the marriage.

He should know that the Catholic Church performed the marriage ceremony for all Christians for fifteen centuries; and that even today her clergy witness two-thirds of all marriages performed among Christians; that, therefore, the Catholic

INTRODUCTION

Church's stand on marriage is worthy of consideration; that the prime purpose of the instructions is to explain that stand.

J. F. N.

TO BE BORNE IN MIND

Our Catholic people need instruction on the subject of marriage nearly as badly as the non-Catholic. It seems that most of them, even of the otherwise well-informed, regard marriage between a Catholic and a non-Catholic before a Justice of the Peace or minister as only *illicit*, and not invalid.

Many among them believe that any Protestant marriage is dissolved when one of the parties becomes a Catholic, and therefore that a Catholic may marry a divorcee if only he or she embraces our faith.

The Catholic attitude as represented to the Protestant by our Catholic laity is often not impressive. This is because they present the Catholic attitude as resting on a purely ecclesiastical basis—and the authority of the Catholic Church is not recognized by the Protestant.

Instruction One

MATRIMONY IS OF GOD

I

What the Catholic Church Does Not Teach

(1) She does not teach that only those marriages are valid, which are witnessed by the Catholic priest. The Church recognizes the validity even of the marriage contracted by two pagans, and therefore, she surely recognizes the marriage contracted by two Protestants. It is only when one party to the marriage is a Catholic that the Church insists on one of her representatives witnessing it.

(2) The Church does not teach that the offspring of a marriage between two Protestants, or even two pagans, are illegitimate. In fact, the Catholic Church makes no pronouncement on marriages contracted by others than her own members nor on children resulting from those marriages.

(3) The Church does not claim the power to annul all Protestant marriages, or any marriage whatsoever, if validly contracted.

II

What the Catholic Church Does Teach

(1) The Church teaches that God is the author of marriage, both as a Contract and as a Sacrament. Hence it is not the Catholic Church, but God, who determines both the character and consequences of marriage.

Most non-Catholics entertain the false notion that the teaching of the Catholic Church relating to marriage is her own teaching, that she is arbitrary in enforcing this teaching, that she takes undue advantage of the Protestant by enjoining her views and exacting unreasonable promises from him. On the contrary, the Catholic Church stretches her own laws as far as she may in favor of her children. That her "favours are to be extended" has become an axiom in Catholic practice.

Therefore the severity of the Church's attitude toward marriage is explained by the fact that she regards herself only as the representative of God in this world, and hence may not take a different position from His own. She merely enunciates what is His law, what has been His decision. No legislation of the Church, no

dispensation of the Church, can make that permissible, which God has decreed is not permissible.

(2) The Catholic Church declares with God Almighty that marriage makes of the wedded pair "two in one flesh" (Gen. 11, 24), and that it binds both "until death do them part", that "what God hath joined together, no man may put asunder" (Matt. XIX, 6). History proves that such was the almost universal concept of marriage from the beginning. Christ Himself tells us that while divorce was permitted for a brief period by Almighty God in the Old Law for a special reason, "from the beginning it was not so."

There is no record of divorce in Christian countries until the so-called Reformation, and that means for fifteen long centuries. The Church vigorously upheld the teaching of her Founder against kings and princes even at the expense of losing the allegiance of whole nations.

Does such an attitude seem severe? Not when one considers the purpose of marriage, which will be explained later. Divorce is quite a new thing in most countries. In some parts of our own country the law is opposed to it. There is no divorce per-

missible in the state of South Carolina. In the state of New York divorce is allowed only for the so-called Biblical reason of "unfaithfulness".

III

What About the Biblical Reason?

For the Biblical reason people appeal to St. Matthew, the fifth chapter, third verse, and to the nineteenth chapter, ninth verse. A careful study of these two texts will convince one that Matthew quotes Christ as authorizing *separation only*, with no privilege, even to the innocent party, of re-marrying. St. Mark (X, 9-12) and St. Luke (XVI, 18) quote our Divine Savior as of the same occasion noted by St. Matthew, but they make no reference whatsoever to any reason justifying the complete severance of the marriage bond.

Defenders of the so-called Biblical reason lift from the general context the single text which they quote from St. Matthew.

Does not Matthew, who justifies the "putting away" of a wife because of unfaithfulness, distinctly quote Christ as saying that "he that shall marry her that is put away committeth adultery"? Evidently, therefore, Matthew could have had

separation only in mind. St. Mark leaves no room for doubt for he says "*whosoever* putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery." St. Luke is equally, emphatic, for he says "*everyone*".

St. Paul clearly avers that death alone dissolves the marriage tie (1 Cor. VII, 10-11, and Rom. VII, 2-3).

The possibility of securing a divorce leads many to enter marriage without proper deliberation and care, and it is not surprising that they later regret their step. But in all countries, in which no divorce is procurable even in our day, unhappy married life is the exception. Conviction from the very beginning that the bargain is a life-time one stimulates the wedded pair to pull together in all things, and to further cultivate the affection which was cemented before the altar.

Instruction Two

THE BEST MARRIAGE

I

The Purpose of Marriage

(1) Generally speaking marriage was instituted for the purpose of propagating the human race here on earth, each member of which by his very birth becomes a candidate for Heaven. As such, marriage is the fount of the family, the basic unit of society. Our homes are built around it. It is only in the ideal home, where parents are in complete accord, where true love between husband and wife is blessed of Heaven, that children can be reared with benefit to themselves and to the social life in which they must take their part.

Through marriage a man and a woman each find a helpmate which Holy Scripture says God intended the generality of people to have (Gen. II, 18) to complete their happiness.

Marriage has as a third purpose the serving of a need which most people in our day seem to regard as its only purpose,

namely the lawful satisfying of sexual cravings.

(2) In each particular case marriage is intended to unite through life "for better or for worse" a man and woman, who sincerely trust and love each other. As such it is regarded as a vocation or state of life, in which the Heavenly Father would have the individual find the greatest measure of temporal happiness; in which husband and wife will labor together for their mutual sanctification and salvation; in which they, as parents, will become co-creators with their God and, by instruction and example, rear the children committed to them in such wise that they will be made happy both in this life and in the next.

II

The Sacramental Marriage

(1) Because of the purpose and effects of marriage it must be clear to everyone that God Himself is intensely interested in every marital union. It is because of this interest that the Almighty married the first couple created by Himself, and forbade any human power, whether it be of the spiritual or temporal order, to "put the marriage contract asunder".

It is because God's people in the Old Law had a thorough comprehension of the primary purpose of matrimony that they believed themselves to have incurred His displeasure if the marriage union was not richly blessed with children.

Until recent times marriage was regarded at least as a sacred contract, a holy contract, a divine contract, falling under the jurisdiction of religion. Hence the marriage ceremony was always performed by a clergyman, who blessed the union in the name of God.

Today in our country more people are married by a civil officer than by an ecclesiastical official, because marriage, in the popular mind, is not vested with a sacred character; and the thought of having the union blessed never enters the minds of the majority of the people.

(2) The Catholic Church holds with St. Paul that Christian "Marriage is a great Sacrament" (Eph. V, 32), which implies that in its worthy reception special graces are conveyed to the souls of the wedded pair, and special aid provided for the day of trial.

The Church holds with this same Apos-

tle that marriage represents the union of Christ with His Church. This union of Christ with His Church is a holy one, an indissoluble one, and is built on love and mutual interests. So should be the union of husband and wife.

It is because of the greater dignity He wished to confer on marriage in the New Law that Christ's first appearance, at the opening of His public ministry, was at a wedding at Cana, in Galilee. He brought His disciples to this wedding in order to impress upon them the lesson that God wishes to be present at every marriage in order to bless it and make it truly happy.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Catholic Church would have her people receive this Sacrament where it should be received, namely before the altar in God's temple. In this sacred precinct the priest, in the name of Christ, receives the marital promises of enduring fidelity, and immediately thereafter offers up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to implore God's benediction on the wedded couple. The Church even permits the interruption of the Mass at its most solemn part for the reading of a very special blessing from her official prayerbook.

III

The Mixed Marriage

(1) By a mixed marriage is commonly understood a marriage between people of different faiths, whether it be between a Jew and a Presbyterian, a Lutheran and a Methodist, or a Catholic and one of any other faith.

Jews look with great disfavor on marriages between one of their own and a Gentile of whatever faith; Lutherans are opposed to their own marrying one even of a different Protestant faith. But there is an ever greater reason for the Catholic Church to take a stand against marriages between her children and adherents of other religions.

Why is the Catholic Church more logical than others in her opposition to mixed marriages?

(a) Because she is the only Church which holds that marriage is a Sacrament in the true sense, one of seven Sacraments instituted by Christ, and committed to her keeping. St. Paul declares that it is in Christ's Church that matrimony is a sacrament. (Eph. V, 32)

(b) Because, honestly believing that

hers is the very religion which Christ founded, she must require the observance "of all things whatsoever she has been commanded" (St. Matt. XXVIII, 20). If the Old Testament religion forbade mixed marriages (Cf. Gen. XXIV, 3; XXVIII, 1; Deut. VII, 3; 3 Kings XI, 2), how much greater reason is there for the more perfect religion of the New Testament to forbid them?

The Church would not be true to her commission if she did not point out to her children the way to the happiest kind of marriage, made so by the blessing of God.

Husband and wife certainly should, if possible, try to be one in the understanding of God and His terms of salvation; they should, if possible, serve Him unitedly and not ever run a risk of rearing their children in doubt.

The average Protestant sacrifices no principle when he yields to the Catholic in this matter because he usually regards membership in a particular religious organization as a matter of preference rather than of obligation. It is not so with the Catholic, who (rightly or wrongly in the Protestant mind) believes that all present day religions other than his own, as good

as they may be in many respects, are of human origin, and therefore, not identical with the divine religion founded by Christ and first spread by His Apostles.

(2) It must be clear, from what has been said, that a mixed marriage is not an ideal marriage; it is one which may only be tolerated, because it lacks that which effects the most perfect bond, namely a union of souls; it creates "a house divided against itself"; it paves the way for future serious difficulties.

What, for instance, must most children think of parents whose beliefs and religious practices are in conflict? Whom will these children follow, their father or their mother? In childhood they may follow the one whom they are ordered to follow, but in later life they will follow neither. They will reason within themselves "if father and mother could not agree in religion, why should I bother about it at all"?

The proposal sometimes offered that the boys follow their father, and the girls follow their mother, is basically unsound should the mother be right in her belief and the father wrong. Such a practice must needs promote utter indifferentism.

There are those who believe they are

very fair when they suggest that the children be not raised in any religion, but be allowed passive minds, so that they can decide for themselves, when they reach their majority, whether they wish to embrace the Church or not. The position would be conceivably fair only if the Almighty had never imposed a definite religion for acceptance by His children, or if religion were a human thing to be adopted if it should attract and avoided if it should be repugnant.

No one would think of applying such logic to an educational policy, to an economic policy, to a health program. In other words, no parents would deprive their boy of an education because at the age of six or ten he is too young to know whether he would care for it; no parents would decline to include their boy in their last will because he is not old enough to decide whether he should like to have their fortune or not; no parents would neglect their boy's physical health on the theory that he may, when he becomes older, select from the various codes offered for advancement in health.

Just as parents assume that their boy would want an education if he could fore-

know its value; that he would want the parents' fortune if he knew the advantage of money; that he would later on thank his parents if they laid in his life the foundation for good health—so should parents assume that their children would wish to be God's children from infancy, and would want membership in the true Church if they understood the importance and benefits thereof.

Instruction Three

THE PROMISES EXACTED FROM THE NON-CATHOLIC

I

A Life-Long Bargain

(1) When the non-Catholic is unprepared to affiliate with the Catholic Church before marriage, the priest is obliged to remove all danger of an invalid marriage, by ascertaining whether the non-Catholic agrees to enter an indissoluble union, i. e., to regard the contract as binding until death. We have seen that Almighty God approves of no other, and that therefore, His Church cannot.

The Catholic party intends to bind herself for life, but the bargain should be mutual. If she were to be divorced, her conscience would compel her to remain a widow until the death of the man she married.

This does not mean that the Catholic Church would compel one of her children to live through life with one who makes her lot miserable by unfaithfulness or by excessive cruelty. In such a case the innocent party may have his or her

Church's permission to procure a legal separation and receive the support which goes with it. But neither may remarry during the life time of the other.

(2) Does not such a demand impose a great hardship on the couple? In most cases it does not, because their mutual love should continue to grow rather than wane, and with the blessing of God on their marriage it should endure and be lastingly happy. If God calls young people to the married state He surely will provide happiness for the individuals concerned, if only they will try to merit that consideration. If they so prepare themselves for marriage as to win His blessing, they will receive it.

Laws are always made for the *general* good, even though they should work a hardship in exceptional cases. The tax laws of your community except nobody, even though they work immense hardships on some. Rather than make an exception the property of the one taxed is even taken away from him. Your local education laws bind every parent to send his children to school for many years, and those who administer them will listen to no pleas from parents for exceptions. If

exceptions were lightly made the whole fiscal and educational systems would be thrown into chaos.

Alongside the hardship created for one party to the marriage weigh the hardship inflicted on the other party, if he or she be adverse to separation. Think of the hardships inflicted on the children, who are separated from either father or mother.

In our country's divorce laws no consideration is given to the rights of children. They have an inalienable right to the uninterrupted love, and protection, and support, and guidance of both parents. Our orphan asylums, our juvenile prisons are filled with children of divorcees, yet not they, but the parents, are to blame.

II

The Catholic Party Must Have Liberty

(1) The non-Catholic must promise in writing that he will allow his consort full liberty to practice her religion without interference or annoyance. This is clearly her right, and one distinctly recognized by the Constitution of the United States and by the Constitution of every state in the Union. The man who will not accord this privilege to a Catholic wife should certainly not marry her. If he

craves to marry her, he must take her as she is, religion and all.

In fact, the non-Catholic in a mixed marriage must promise to permit all children, with which the marriage is blessed, to be baptized and brought up in the Catholic faith. Certainly the Church could not reconcile her own conscience to any provision short of this.

The Catholic Church sincerely believes that she has the true faith; she sincerely believes that she is God's agent in this world primarily for the purpose of assisting people in working out their salvation; and she honestly believes that they must accomplish this by compliance with the definite provisions ordained by God Himself.

While the Church concedes that others than Catholics may be saved if they honestly believe they have the truth and live accordingly, she is absolutely convinced that she has the truth, and therefore would be very unprincipled if she acted as though she had not. Her stand is not arbitrary, her motive is not selfish. She thinks not of adding a few more souls to her membership, but of helping souls for their own eternal good.

(2) The Catholic party must also promise that she will practice her religion with the same fidelity with which she would if she married a Catholic man or remained unmarried, and that she will try by her good Christian example not only to win the favor of Heaven for herself, but for her husband as well. Many a Protestant, reared in prejudice, and therefore inimical toward the Catholic faith at the time of his marriage, has been won by the prayers and good example of his devoted Catholic wife.

United, harmonious co-operation in the things in which the Lord has the greatest interest, should be the chief consideration of newly-weds. A union of souls is more important than a union of bodies; the sameness of faith is more important than the sameness of earthly aims. When one party to a marriage seldom prays and never attends public worship, lives in a state of sin, it devolves on the other to supply the omission and to do the Lord's work for two.

Could one consider anything more scandalous to children than wrangling over religion between parents? Could anything be more disedifying to them than to see

one parent engage in prayer and the other not, or to see one parent go to a Catholic church and the other to a Protestant church, to see one parent attend divine services regularly, and the other seldom or never?

III

Corollaries

(1) A companionate, or trial marriage is no marriage at all. Those, therefore, who would enter a contract with any idea of seeking a legal separation if a better opportunity for more congenial companionship should offer itself, are not married before God, no matter whether the ceremony be witnessed by a justice of the peace, or a Protestant minister, or the Pope.

(2) They would not contract a valid union, who before or at the time of the marriage mutually agree not to have any children, because the primary purpose of marriage would be frustrated.

At this time a great deal of birth prevention propaganda is carried on, but it is not warranted by a single appealing reason except that which contends that it costs more to raise and educate several

children that it does one. Nature denounces the practice as immoral; the Bible declares the practice to be "a detestable thing"; the divorce courts register it as a domestic enemy; the American Medical Association has denounced it; statistics prove it to be a social menace; and nearly every government of Europe has warned its people against it.

Do not understand that the Catholic Church insists that parents may not limit the number of their children, but the limitation must result from mutual consent to self control. In other words, parents are not obliged to have children, but are not allowed to do wrong in order not to have children.

There is the closest relationship between birth control and divorce. Dr. Alfred, of Columbia University, recently gave the following figures to the press: 63% of all divorces are granted to couples who have no children; 26% of divorces are granted to parents of one child; 9% are granted in favor of parents of two children; only 4% to parents of three children; less than 2% to parents of four children; and less than 1½% to parents of five or more children.

From these figures only one inference may be gleaned, namely, that children are not only a binding tie between husband and wife, not only intensify their mutual love, but bring greater happiness into the home.

One needs not have refined moral taste to be shocked at the very thought of using a contraceptive appliance.

Would the mere fact of matrimony make right a practice which directly defeats its very purpose? Are not the married couple exonerated of indulgence guilt precisely because their indulgence is related to parenthood, which could eventuate in no other way? Parenthood need not be directly sought by husband and wife, but neither may it be directly opposed and frustrated, by checking the effect after placing the cause.

Who would not concede that it would be a great wrong if all married people practiced birth prevention regularly? Now by what philosophy is it right for *some* to do what it would be wrong for *all* to do?

If being on the side of nature and nature's God be wrong, then the Catholic Church is wrong.

If the defense of principles which tend

to curb the looser morality be wrong, then the Catholic Church is wrong.

If opposition to a movement which is calculated to minimize the spirituality and to exaggerate the animality in man is wrong, then the Catholic Church is wrong.

There were from six to fifteen children in the families from which sprang George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Madison, John Marshall, the great jurist, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses Grant, General Sherman, General Pershing.

There were eight in the Shakespeare family; twelve in the Walter Scott family; twelve in the Tennyson family; eleven in the Washington Irving family; eight in the Charles Dickens family; nine in the Carlyle family; eight in the Longfellow family; twelve in the Fennimore Cooper family; nine in the Phillips Brooks family.

The scoffer pretends to be shocked by the words addressed by God to Adam and Eve "increase and multiply." They understand the words to mean that people must aim to have as many children as possible. But such is not the meaning of God's words. The words of God rather contain a blessing. They mean Adam and his pos-

terity would be blessed with "other selves," the greatest of all possessions. God addressed similar words to Noah. It is due to the co-operation which mother lends to the Creator and later to the Redeemer, and still later to the everlasting beatitude of her offspring, that St. Paul says "She shall be saved through child bearing" (I Tim. II, 15).

Instruction Four

REMOVING THE FIRST BARRIERS TO CONVERSION

We have discussed the subject of marriage as the entire Christian world always regarded it until very recent times. We have seen that from the beginning of the human race marriage was held to be a sacred contract, which had Almighty God for its author; that in Christianity it was elevated to a *Sacrament* in order that it might confer heavenly blessings and graces on the wedded pair for the easier fulfillment of the obligations which it carries with it. We have seen that it always effected a life-long union, calculated to promote the love which gave it being. We have seen that peace, and security, and protection, especially to wife and children, are guaranteed only through a union which is not dissolvable.

Everyone who is serious about marriage, who will have deliberated sufficiently before taking the step, certainly wants to effect a union such as we have contemplated; and the one who is so disposed has no special reason to fear that his marriage will prove to be unhappy.

Having decided to contract marriage with a Catholic on the terms which have been expounded, the inquirer should be eager to learn what credentials the Catholic Church has to offer in support of her claim to be the true representative of Heaven in all things relating to the soul's salvation.

In order that, in a friendly chat, his observations may be more suited to the particular attitude of mind of the Protestant party, the priest will ask these questions:

(1) Do you hold membership in any religious denomination?

(2) Were your parents active members in any church? If so, in which?

(3) Were you ever baptized? If so, do you know in what manner?

(4) Were you reared in prejudice against the Catholic Church?

(5) Do you believe in the existence of God? In the immortality of the soul? In the Divinity of Christ?

If the party under instruction does not hold membership in any church, it should be clear to him, first, that church membership, together with the prayers and special worship associated with it, and

the lofty ideals for which Christianity stands, is admittedly better than non-membership, both for the party concerned and the prospective children; and secondly, that if God demands membership in a definite religious society established by Himself as a condition necessary for salvation, then no one can be indifferent about it.

I

Christian and Catholic Should Be The Same

History upholds the Catholic contention that, for fifteen centuries after Christ and the Apostles, to be a Christian was to be a Catholic. The inquirer's remote ancestors, no matter where they had their home in Europe, belonged to the Catholic Church. The breach of the Church's unity in the sixteenth century was forced by kings and other temporal rulers, who were motivated either by their ambition to control the Church in their respective realms, or to enrich themselves by the confiscation of Church property, or to nullify in their own regard certain moral demands of the Church, such as the law forbidding them to divorce their lawful wives and to re-

marry. Without this encouragement Luther and Calvin and Cranmer would not have succeeded any better than ex-priests of our own day in leading the people away from the one Church which was taken for granted, which had produced millions of martyrs and saints all through its long life, and to which the nations owed not only their past greatness, but even their respective civilizations.

The inquirer's parents were probably honest in their convictions, but one can be honest even in his adherence to error. Did not everyone sincerely believe for thousands of years that the earth was stationary and the sun moved? But were they not in error nevertheless?

Truths of the natural order, such as the one just mentioned, when definitely discovered, hold good for all time. Truths of the supernatural order, once definitely revealed by Almighty God, also hold good for all time. He who would alter them, or preach doctrines opposed to them, as Christ predicted would frequently occur during the centuries, evidently teaches error, and misleads the people. This the so-called Reformers did.

St. Augustine, a convert to the Catholic

Church in the early fifth century, declared with truth that "whatsoever the universal Church practices must necessarily be claimed as having descended from the very Apostles themselves." What the universal Church taught in the time of St. Augustine it has taught in every century since. Therefore any contrary doctrine taught by small groups, separated from the historic Church, must be wrong.

II

Present State of Protestantism

Not only was Protestantism as such born fifteen centuries after Christ, but most forms with which we are acquainted today either had a far later origin, or they are off-shoots of the religions which owe their origin to sixteenth century founders. There are in our country, for instance, according to the latest United States Government census on religious denominations, 22 bodies of the Lutheran church, 17 bodies of the Methodist church, 17 bodies of the Baptist church, 10 bodies of the Presbyterian church—each owing its existence, for the most part, to rejection of doctrines or policies having been held by other groups of the same name. Error, by its

very nature, tends to disunite, truth to unite.

The inquirer may be surprised to learn that the Catholic Church is making the greatest progress today, and is held in highest honor, in the very countries where it was practically outlawed and bitterly persecuted for three centuries; and that Protestantism has disintegrated most in the very countries where it was long upheld by law and even enforced by the civil government. In England and Germany, for instance, more Catholics attend divine services on any given Sunday than the sum total of those professing the religions which have been long encouraged, promoted, and supported by the state.

It may be of interest to you to learn that the world over there are 100,000,000 more Catholics than there are Protestants of all sects combined; that even in the United States there are nearly as many Catholics as there are members in nearly four hundred Protestant organizations. There are easily twice as many Catholics at Mass on Sunday in the United States as there are Protestants at their respective services. In other words, there are life and vigor in the Catholic religion, and so

little of it in all but a few Protestant denominations. Protestant churchmen frequently make mention of this.

III

Catholic Doctrine Not The Obstacle

Little of the prevalent hostility towards the Catholic Church is due to her beliefs and practices. It is generally admitted that Catholics believe everything which the most exacting Protestant regards as essential; that they pray more and attend religious services better than the people of any other religious organization. It is also admitted that Catholics excel all others in their service to the poor, the orphan, the aged, the delinquent, the sick. Therefore Catholics meet the requirements both of those who maintain that *Faith* is the one thing necessary, and of those who hold that *works* are the only things which matter.

Hostility toward the Catholic Church, therefore, arises principally from other sources, among which are:

(1) The prejudices which rival *protesting* organizations have aroused through their literature.

(2) The misunderstanding of many

points of Catholic teaching, such as those relating to the Infallibility of the Pope, Purgatory, Confession, the Veneration of the Saints, the Church's attitude towards the Bible, etc.

(3) The seeming exclusiveness of Catholics who, in this country, conduct their own schools, have their own cemeteries, forbid membership in certain fraternal organizations, oppose marriage with non-Catholics.

(4) The assumption that Catholics owe civil allegiance to the Pope, demand union of the state in all countries with the Church; that the Church meddles in politics, and hampers the freedom of civil governments.

The Church's Unpopularity

At the birth of Protestantism in England, Germany, Switzerland, Holland, the Catholic Church was attacked by men officially assigned to the task; abuses, real and fictitious, were exploited and exaggerated; and these abuses were represented to be the natural fruits of a religion which had become corrupt. While this literature was carefully preserved most of that con-

taining erudite defense of the Catholic Church was destroyed.

The motive behind the official attacks was the justification of the break with Rome, in order that kings and emperors might command both the religious and civil allegiance of their subjects. To this end subjects were compelled to accept the religion of the ruling power. Practically all the first Protestants were *forced* out of the Catholic Church.

The first move on the part of royal persecutors was to enrich themselves and their abettors with confiscated church property, with treasures of monasteries and convents, whose members were usually expatriated.

During the centuries since, the original charges levelled against the Catholic Church have been capitalized by enemies of all religion as much as by the devotees of the sects. The persistent reiteration of the charges in book, pamphlet, the denominational press, the pulpit, in the organs of socialism, communism, of infidels and atheists, have created the present anti-Catholic state of mind.

The best answer to the slanders is found in the declaration of their emptiness by

thousands of educated converts who carefully examined them all.

The Jewish rabbis, the Scribes and Pharisees of Christ's own country, did all in their power to create a hostile state of mind towards Him. Yet no one in our time, not even enemies of Christianity, would hold that Christ was guilty of the things with which He was charged.

Does the fact that the Apostles, and thousands of their converts, were persecuted and martyred for their Faith, prove that they were in religious error?

The Christian religion was very unpopular during the first three centuries of its existence, yet these centuries are referred to as the golden era of the Church. The persecution was not provoked by any error in Christianity, but by the many condemnations which worldly and evil-minded rulers discovered in its code of morals.

It is strange that Protestant Christians today must be reminded that the unpopularity of the Catholic Church is a mark in its favor, for did not Christ Himself declare?—

“If they have called the good man of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?” (Matt. X, 24-25)

“If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world . . . therefore the world hateth you.” (John XV, 19)

“You shall be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.” (Matt. XXIV, 9)

“If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated Me before you.” (John XV, 18)

“The world hateth Me because I testify of it that its works are evil”—a good cause for which to be hated. (John VII, 7)

“For they shall deliver you up in councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. And you shall be brought before governors, and before kings for My sake . . . And you shall be hated by all men for My sake.” (Matt. X, 17)

“Yea, the hour cometh that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth a service to God.” (John XVI, 2)

“Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice’s sake; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you *falsely*, for My sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: because your reward is very great in Heaven.” (Matt. V, 11)

The religion of Jesus Christ was to be treated in accordance with the above utterances. Surely the bitterest anti-Catholic will see their clear application to the Catholic Church. Persecution of God's Church is a mark of divinity, clearly so stated in Holy Scripture.

Instruction Five

CONTENTS OF THE CATECHISM ANALYZED

It is customary for a priest instructing a Protestant to follow the order of the little catechism, and to ask the inquirer to pray while he investigates. He is reminded that Faith is a gift of God, His very greatest gift, which is bestowed on adults usually in response to inquiry accompanied by earnest prayer. This fact furnishes the answer to a question often asked: "Why do otherwise learned people not easily find the truth if it be in possession of an institution which is so old and so widespread?"

Granting the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul, it should be clear that the Creator and Father of us all should want harmony of belief and practice among His children in this world, and that He should clearly define the terms on which eternal beatitude is to be attained.

Granting that the destiny of man is supernatural, it should be clear that supernatural means of attaining it would be placed within the reach of every one

through an institution commissioned, empowered and obligated to administer them.

We would, therefore, naturally expect the Almighty to reveal the things which every man must believe, to make known His Will in relation to the things which every man must do, and to provide the helps which must be served to the soul both for its elevation to the supernatural state and for its preservation in that state. The true religion, therefore, must teach a set of truths, enjoin a code of practice, and be in possession of special divinely instituted means for the imparting and promoting of the supernatural life.

The Catechism emphasizes these facts and treats them in the order indicated, dealing (1) with revealed truths or matters of faith; (2) with The Commandments, or Christian ethics; and (3) with the Means of Grace or the divine helps to salvation.

I

Divine Revelation

There are certain things which the most brilliant mind could learn only from revelation; for instance, the existence of God

in Three Persons; the Incarnation of the Second Person of this Trinity; His Virgin birth; the character of life after death; the terms on which eternal reward are conditioned.

Human reason can find nothing contradictory in any teaching of Faith, while it could not, without revelation, know what some of the supernatural facts are.

The Bible, or Holy Scripture, contains most of the revelation made by Almighty God, but it itself declares that His full revelation was not committed to writing. The Bible, as you are aware, was not written by any one individual to whom God revealed Himself. The greater part of it is composed of the Old Testament, which had served its principal purpose before the Christian religion was founded. It contains a record of the creation, of the fall of our first parents, of the destruction of most of the human race by the Deluge because of the apostasy of the early human race. It records the establishment of a temporary definite religion, which was to be a national religion for the Jewish people, preparing them for the coming of the divine Redeemer, Who was promised immediately after Adam's fall. This promise

was frequently reiterated to Abraham, Moses, to many teachers of that people, of whose race He was to be born.

The Jewish people, surrounded by pagans and polytheists, retained their faith in the One God, worshipped Him alone, and looked for God to become man as their Liberator and Redeemer. This Redeemer came some over nineteen hundred years ago, and established a world-wide religion, which bears His Name (Christian). Most of His teachings are recorded in the New Testament, which was written by some of His disciples. These Scriptures also furnish a brief account of His life, and narrate the spread of His Church after His return to Heaven. The purpose of the writers was not to supply the entire world for all time with inspired documents as sources of faith, but rather to instruct the people of their own time.

The Catholic Church preserved the sacred writings, and on her authority alone can they be accepted as divinely inspired.

Therefore, the Protestant is very inconsistent in denying the authority, even the infallible authority of the Catholic Church, while accepting the Bible as a rule

of faith. The Catholic Church had the Bible for fifteen hundred years before Protestantism was born; and only a believer in the Church's infallible authority can rightly assume that the Church did not incorporate uninspired writings in the canon of New Testament Scripture, or that she did not alter the writings of the Apostles, or of Mark and Luke, to suit Her own purpose. The original writings of these contemporaries of Christ are no longer in existence, and therefore, no one could prove the identity of any part of the present New Testament with the original, except through the Catholic Church.

Instead of being the enemy of the Bible, as she is accused by her enemies, the Catholic Church has been the Bible's warmest friend. She preserved it for the world at a time when copies could be produced only by transcribing them by hand from beginning to end; and today she is the only defender of the Bible in its entirety.

That the Bible was not to be a sort of textbook of religion, to be interpreted by its every reader, is clear from the fact that this practice has given birth to the hundreds of religious sects, each teaching many things contradictory of others, yet

all claiming the support of this Book, which can truly have authority only through the Church, which produced it.

Protestants are not only wrong in maintaining the "Bible only" theory, but they misrepresent the Catholic Church's attitude toward Tradition. It is very true that the Catholic Church includes Tradition with the Bible as sources of Faith, but Tradition means something quite different from what our enemies represent it to be. Tradition, for the most part, is the written record of the beliefs of Christians of practically every century as contained in the writings of successors of the Apostles, of saintly Doctors of the Church, in the decisions of the General Councils, at which the entire Christian world was represented. Tradition, therefore, is the diary of the Church from her early childhood to the present time. From this written diary the Church should be able to indicate what were the prevailing beliefs during every century since the time of her founding by Christ. These truths are embodied, in large part, in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.

II

God's Laws

The Ten Commandments, although promulgated by Almighty God to the head of the Jewish religion, are binding in the Universal religion of the New Law, because they are based on the very laws of nature. In other words, it would be wrong, even though Almighty God did not so declare it, if the creature did not worship the Creator, if he profaned His Name and perjured himself; it would be wrong for children to disobey or ill-treat their parents; it would be wrong for people to commit murder or adultery or theft; it would be wrong to lie or even to desire what is evil.

These laws are immutable. Therefore the Catholic Church has no power over them. Nor has she power over other direct ordinances of God, such as those relating to marriage, divorce, birth prevention.

The Ten Commandments as learned by Protestants are numbered differently beginning with the second. This is because the first Commandment, as it appears in the Catholic records, was divided into two.

This division was made principally to make a case against the honor which Catholics pay to saints, and to their images and relics. Catholics, as you are aware, are accused of paying divine worship to the Mother of Jesus and to other saints. As a matter of fact, every Catholic child is taught that one would be guilty of idolatry if one worshipped anyone short of God Himself.

Catholics pay higher human honor to Mary and the saints both because they deserve it, and because God Himself set us the example. God sent an angel from Heaven to honor Mary, to carry a message to Joseph. Christ eulogized St. John the Baptist, St. John the Apostle, and even Mary Magdalene after her conversion. Today these saints are with God in Heaven and the recipients of high honors at His hand. Catholics honor them merely because they are so holy and dear to God. Therefore, Catholics honor them solely on God's account, and know that they are honoring God by honoring those whom He so loves. Hence no case is made against the Catholic Church by forming two Commandments out of the first. But because this is done, our second Command-

ment is the Protestants' third, our third their fourth, and so on until the tenth is reached; then our ninth and tenth are made one, and thus the total number of Ten is written.

The Church has enacted Commandments or precepts of her own, six in number, which relate to the observance of Sundays and Holydays, to the reception of two Sacraments, to the support of religion, and to fast and abstinence. These laws the Church could alter, and one or other of them is occasionally suspended, such as the fast and abstinence law.

Catholics abstain from meat on Friday both to show their appreciation and do a little in return for the Redemption, which was wrought for mankind on the memorable Good Friday. Fasting is one of three forms of penance recommended in Holy Scripture; the other two forms are prayer and alms-giving.

Today there are many who claim that the Bible code of morality is antiquated, just as others claim that the old Creeds are antiquated. Such declarations may appeal to one's prejudices or passions, but not to one's reason. A creed is nothing more than a statement of revealed truths.

These must remain in force until they are definitely abrogated. But they cannot be abrogated even by God Himself, simply because *they are truths relating to facts* of the supernatural order and of history. Of course, creeds drafted by would-be reformers of God's Church could and should be abrogated in every point in which they differ from the original revelation.

No circumstance of time, or place, or progress can make right any practice which is forbidden either explicitly or implicitly by a Commandment of God.

The so-called "new morality" is nothing more than defiance of man's higher nature by his lower, of his reason by his inclinations, of laws of God by his decision "not to serve." But such an attitude does not invalidate the eternal code of morality by which every man's conduct will be judged.

III

The Means of Grace

God does not live in the same order in which we human beings live; therefore, if our destiny be life eternal with God in Heaven, our souls, even in this world, must be elevated to the supernatural order.

Means must always be of the same nature as the end to which they lead.

Faith teaches that to the natural life of the soul of the first human pair was superadded a supernatural life; that their souls were created "in the image and likeness of God" Himself. But this higher life, which, because a pure gift, is called "grace," was to be the inheritance of Adam's posterity only on condition that he would be faithful *officially* to one command of God, by which his loyalty would be tested.

Human nature, as a whole, existed at that time in Adam and Eve. If they sinned, that human nature, tainted, would be inherited by their descendants. The Bible tells us that they did sin in their representative capacity. Hence their every descendant, save her who was to be the mother of the Redeemer, received his soul from the Almighty bereft of supernatural life. This means that Heaven, with its supernatural glory, was closed against all mankind; that the best people could expect no more than a natural reward in the hereafter, or one in keeping with their soul's nature, for service to God in this world.

But, because the Heavenly Father wanted His children on earth to be associated with Him in everlasting bliss, yet demanded that the disloyalty of our first parents be repaired, His love and justice and mercy decreed a way to restore our lost inheritance. God promised Adam immediately after his fall, as He later promised Noah, and Abraham, and many patriarchs and prophets in the Old Law, that one of the Persons of the Blessed Trinity Itself would come into this world to become mankind's Savior, which the name "Jesus" signifies.

All know the Christmas story of His birth in this world at Bethlehem, in Palestine, of the Virgin Mary. All know the beautiful but sad story of His life, which was one of poverty, humility, obedience and persecution. All know the story of His death, by which He made an infinite atonement for the original transgression. He was the second Adam "becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross" to undo the work of the first Adam.

The Application of Christ's Merits

Now the Catholic Church teaches that the Redemption by Christ made the salva-

tion of all *possible*, but *not actual*. Man still has free will, and still has all the propensities to evil which he inherited with Original Sin. While every human creature inheriting a tainted nature from Adam is conceived and born in what is known as *Original Sin*, through the merits of Jesus, also called Christ, it is possible for every human being to become the *adopted son of God*, by coming under the sacramental influence of God's Church, and receiving the supernatural life which he would have inherited had Adam not sinned. Evidently this supernatural life must be conferred by some means instituted by the Redeemer, Who was also the founder of the Christian religion. These means are known as the *Sacraments*, or means of grace.

The Sacraments are seven in number, the first of which, namely *Baptism*, imparts the supernatural life of grace to the soul. On this account the Bible calls Baptism a *rebirth*, through "*water and the Holy Ghost*," (St. John 3:5). But even after Baptism one can sin, or violate a law of God in a serious matter, and grievous sin always destroys grace previously received.

Therefore one would expect a Sacrament to *restore* this grace after it will have been lost. Christ provided that in the Sacrament of *Penance*. He provided a Sacrament, called *Confirmation*, to render the baptized person strong against trials and temptations. He instituted a Sacrament to assist the soul at the hour when divine help is most important, namely in one's last illness. This Sacrament is known as *Extreme Unction*.

We have seen that He elevated marriage to the dignity of a Sacrament, in order that the wedded pair might receive the spiritual strength needed for the new obligations assumed. He even instituted a Sacrament in proof of His infinite love, known as the *Holy Eucharist*, whereby the soul is intimately and personally united to Him, and by which it is nourished supernaturally and sanctified. Then, as might be expected, He instituted a Sacrament, empowering accredited representatives to administer the other six sacraments. This Sacrament is known as *Holy Orders*, and through it the Apostles were ordained priests, and through it they, in turn, ordained successors.

It must be very clear to all that a re-

ligion, which has these supernatural means of salvation, must surpass a thousand times any and all religions which have them not. There is, therefore, an infinite difference between the Catholic religion and any other, no matter how close may be the outward resemblance.

We often hear it said that the Fundamentalist Protestant believes nearly everything the Catholic believes. Even if he believed *everything* which the Catholic believes, and his religion could not trace its origin directly to a divine Founder, nor prove Apostolic Succession for its clergymen (a condition necessary for a legitimate commission and valid Orders) there would be the immeasurable difference that there must be between a human and a divine religion.

Instruction Six

THE CATHOLIC TEMPLE, THE MASS, THE PRIESTHOOD

I

The Catholic Place of Worship

Every non-Catholic, who has attended divine services in a Catholic church, will have noted that the edifice has an atmosphere more sacred and serious than that which pervades the temples of other religious organizations. Nothing of a profane or worldly character may be held within its precincts.

He will have noted that as a worshipper enters the portals of the parish church he dips his finger into water and signs himself with the Sign of the Cross; that he bends his knee profoundly before he enters the pew; that he kneels a few moments in prayer before he seats himself. These are not meaningless acts, but are prompted by deep-seated convictions.

The water, with which he makes the Sign of the Cross, is blessed, and its use signifies that all worldly and distracting thoughts must be banished and the mind

purified when the sacred place is entered. The genuflection, or bending of the knee, and the prayer said in a kneeling posture, are motivated by the belief of the Catholic that the Eucharistic presence of God is an actuality within the tabernacle of the Altar. The little red light, which burns day and night within the Sanctuary railing, indicates this presence.

The non-Catholic attendant at services in a Catholic church will also have noted that the organ and the choir are located in the rear instead of the front of the temple, and that the Altar occupies the place of honor. The Altar represents Calvary, because thereon is repeated the sacrifice, which Christ offered in Person for the redemption of mankind, and which He renews through the priest for the application of the merits of that redemption to individuals, and for the perpetual glorification of the Holy Trinity.

This renewal of Christ's immolation on Calvary is known as the *Mass*, which was instituted at the Last Supper, at which time the Savior empowered and delegated the Apostles to do in His Name what He had done, by transubstantiating bread and wine into His Body and Blood, for the

twofold purpose of continuing His unbloody oblation, and of producing the Holy Eucharist— so that the faithful might receive Holy Communion from the priest's hands as the Apostles had received it from Christ's hands.

Through the Mass Christ becomes "the priest forever," as David predicted he would be (Ps. 109), and as St. Paul declared that He actually is from the day of the Last Supper, (Hebrew 5:6). Through the Mass the prophecy of Malachy is fulfilled, namely that "From the rising of the sun even to its setting, in every place a clean oblation is offered in My Name among the Gentiles" (Mal. 1:11). Through the Mass alone God is adequately honored, and reparation is made for the countless sins committed daily throughout the world. It is no wonder, then, that the Church obligates all Catholics to attend Mass on all Sundays and Holydays of Obligation (six in number) as the most fitting manner of fulfilling the Commandment, which reads "Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day."

While every prayer and movement of the priest, representing Christ at the Altar, has the deepest significance, there are

three parts of the Mass which are integral to the sacrifice, namely the Offertory, the Consecration and the Communion. At the Offertory the bread and wine are presented to Almighty God; at the Consecration they are transmuted into the living Christ, Who is thus enabled to become the priest in Person; at the Communion the consecrated elements are received by the priest and distributed to those people, who have disposed themselves for it, usually by the reception of the Sacrament of Penance, by meditation and prayer.

Before his ordination the candidate for the priesthood takes a vow of celibacy or chastity, and consecrates himself for life to the service of the Almighty, especially in the sanctuary of His temple. At the Altar he acts as an official representative both of God and the people, and the vestments he wears signify that he puts on the person of Christ, Whose instrument he is in the act of repeating the Last Supper sacrifice, which was one with that of Calvary.

II

The Priest and His Duties

It is because of his official consecration to God that Catholics have such regard for their priest even if, in many respects, he betrays much of the human in his life. Ideally he should not be of the world, because he was "called out of the world," and set apart to busy himself with divine things. Of the priest St. Paul says: "Every high priest, taken from among men is ordained for men in the things which appertain to God, that he may offer gifts and sacrifices for sins" (Hebrew V, 1). He is "ordained for men"; therefore he must have no family ties, no special attachment for any individual. All his time must be at the disposal of the people, for daily Mass, sickness, public prayer, instruction, etc. He is ordained for the people "in the things that appertain to God;" therefore he must instruct his flock in the knowledge of God and show them how to live according to the Commandments of God. He must "spend himself and be spent for the salvation of souls."

It is because religious practice must be

built on religious knowledge that the Catholic Church conducts her own schools, which are under the priest's supervision. Such importance is attached to early religious education that Catholics make great sacrifices to build and maintain a parochial school system, where secular instruction equal to the best procurable in the state public schools is combined with instruction in the things of the soul, in the things of Heaven, in the things of God.

The non-Catholic who believes in virtue and character must needs approve the principle underlying Catholic education. Those who exhibit antagonism towards private religious schools entertain wrong ideas concerning their purpose or efficiency. Their purpose is to combine knowledge of God with the knowledge of secular things, knowledge of the world to come with knowledge of this world, to train the will and conscience along with the mind and memory. Their efficiency is demonstrated in every locality by the success of their pupils in competitive tests, whether relating to spelling, composition, or oratory. It is well known here in America how much they excel in physical culture or athletics.

The course of studies leading to the priesthood is a very long one; it covers at least twelve years following a successful completion of the elementary grades. It embraces, therefore, a high-school course, a college course, and a four-year graduate course. Throughout these twelve years, the candidate for the priesthood has plenty of time to ponder over the obligations which he is expected to assume. He is deeply grounded in the spiritual life, and hence is deserving of reproach, if after his ordination, he is not all that the Church and the Catholic people expect him to be.

Since there was a Judas among the Apostles selected and instructed by Christ Himself people should not be scandalized at the very rare serious fall of a priest; but they are terribly scandalized when one of their number violates his vow or apostatizes. Even non-Catholics are much more shocked by the fall of a priest than by the fall of a Protestant minister.

Much is written in sectarian books, in anti-Catholic literature about the corruption of the Catholic clergy in the Middle Ages. Even if the accounts were not grossly exaggerated for the special purposes of the writers, there would be a

satisfying explanation. Catholic Kings and other rulers enjoyed the privilege of nominating Bishops. When they themselves were religious and well-meaning they proposed persons worthy of the office; but when they wished to control the Church within their domains they proposed the names of men who were not worthy candidates, men of worldly influence and wealth, who, in turn, ordained to the priesthood those who had neither the qualifications nor training. There were frequently conflicts between Kings and Popes on this account; the success of the so-called Reformation in different countries is explained by these abuses. But even in those days there were great saints and holy priests.

III

A Visit to the Church

The priest will be glad to take you to the parish church and explain other things, which fall under the observation of the Protestant attending Catholic services. For instance, the Confessional, whose interior should be shown to you.

There are definite times for the hearing of confessions, at each of which there are

usually large numbers to make their confession.

Ask the priest to explain the seal of confession.

Genuine supernatural sorrow as a condition for forgiveness, the absence of which would nullify the Sacrament even if the penitent made a complete confession and received absolution, is essential. Few Protestants understand that Contrition is so requisite a part of the Sacrament of Penance.

Then the devotion of the Way of the Cross might interest you. This usually fascinates the interested non-Catholic. Intense meditation on the passion and death of Christ is something wholly foreign to the average Protestant. He is impressed by representations of the different stages of Christ's passion portrayed by the fourteen Stations of the Cross.

Probably you will even need an explanation of the Church's attitude toward statues and images, which, like the Stations of the Cross, preach forcibly to the heart. The statue of the Sacred Heart, for instance, preaches the lesson of Christ's infinite love, and the notion of worshipping

it is far from the mind of the one who kneels in prayer before it. He is either thanking his Divine Lover, or is petitioning Him, in the name of His love, for some special spiritual or temporal favor either for himself or for others. In a similar manner you will recognize beautiful lessons in the statues of the Blessed Virgin, and of St. Joseph. Every parish has special Sodalitys, of which the Blessed Virgin is patroness, and whose members are encouraged to imitate her holy life. She, the Mother of Christ, is the best possible patroness of mothers. She, the purest of Virgins, is the best possible patroness of young people.

You need not be informed that nearly every man and woman belongs to some lay organization which honors far less noble patrons. For instance, there are the Knights of Pythias, the Daughters of Rebecca. There are lay organizations dedicated to animals and fowls, one knows not why, such as the Elks, the Moose, the Eagles, the Owls. If such honor be not opposed to common sense, then surely the honor paid to Mary, to St. Joseph, St. Anthony, St. Theresa, or St. Anne, is highly proper.

Do you understand the reason for burning candles during day time services, the liturgical significance of the wax candles?

You will be interested in visiting the baptistry and to learn why we baptize by infusion, and not by immersion or sprinkling; why we baptize infants, and the effect of Baptism when administered the first time to an adult. One who had been baptized in another faith has the ceremony repeated conditionally, and such an one is expected to read a form of Profession of Faith, by which he exhibits his sincerity in renouncing any teaching not in accordance with Catholic beliefs, and acknowledges his acquiescence in all Catholic teaching.

WHAT THE FULLY INSTRUCT- ED CONVERT SHOULD KNOW

Rather than have the words of the little Catechism committed to memory the priest would prefer that the convert to the Catholic faith have a thorough grasp of and be able to answer in his own way questions as follows:

I

FUNDAMENTALS

How does man differ from the most highly developed animal?

What is the nature of the human soul?

Could the soul have any but a direct divine origin?

The soul being immortal, what is its destiny?

Is it not necessary that man have certainty about the requirements of God for the soul's salvation?

Should we not expect an authorized teacher and interpreter of God's revelation?

NOTE—For supplementary reading we recommend the book "Father Smith Instructs Jackson" by Our Sunday Visitor Press.

Could there be several such commissioned teachers, each differing from the other?

Whom do Christians regard as the Founder of a universal religion, possessing both the doctrines to be believed and the means by which the soul might be sanctified?

Who was Jesus Christ?

What proofs have we of His divinity?

What did He do to redeem mankind?

Why was a Redemption necessary?

What do you understand by the Holy Trinity?

By what act or sign do Catholics profess their belief in the Holy Trinity?

By which marks or evidences can the true Church be known from the others?

To which Church do these marks correspond?

How do even the oldest Protestant denominations miss the mark of Apostolicity?

Who were the Apostles?

What commission and power did Christ confer on them?

Must successors of the Apostles have the same commission and powers?

By what ordinances are these powers conferred?

What are angels?

In what essential do they differ from man?

Were they tried as were our first parents?

Did they obey?

What is the fate of the disloyal angels?

By what name are these known since their fall?

What do we understand by a Guardian Angel?

II

THE COMMANDMENTS

How many laws or commandments did God promulgate for man's observance?

What is the import of the First Commandment?

What is forbidden by the Second Commandment?

What is demanded by the Third Commandment?

What obligations does the Fourth Commandment impose?

Can you enumerate some sins opposed to the Fifth Commandment?

What does the Sixth Commandment forbid?

What are evident sins against the Seventh Commandment?

Which sins violate the Eighth Commandment?

How do we offend against the Ninth Commandment?

What is the implication of the Tenth Commandment?

Precepts of the Church require a certain manner of Sunday observance, impose fasting and abstinence on certain days, regulate the frequency with which the Sacrament of Penance and Holy Eucharist must be received, and pronounce on the proper reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony. Do you know what the several stipulations are?

III

MEANS OF GRACE

What do you understand by sanctifying grace?

What is your impression about actual grace?

How many Sacraments are there? Name them.

Who instituted the Sacraments?

What is Baptism for?

What is Original Sin?

Was any individual preserved from it?

How necessary is Baptism?

How would you baptize?

What is the purpose of Confirmation?

Who may administer Confirmation?

What is the Holy Eucharist?

In what condition must the soul be to receive the Holy Eucharist?

Is it necessary to receive Holy Communion under both forms as the Apostles did?

Does any one receive under both forms? If so, who and why?

Where is the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist prepared?

What is your comprehension of the Mass?

What does transubstantiation mean?

What is understood by the Sacrament of Penance?

What is necessary for its effective reception?

How often should one receive this Sacrament?

What is the greatest essential for a valid confession?

What is Extreme Unction for?

To whom may Extreme Unction be given and when?

What do you understand by Holy Orders?

When was it instituted, and who were the first to receive it at Christ's hands?

What is the ideal marriage?

Is absolute divorce ever allowed after a valid marriage?

Is separation without privilege of re-marriage ever allowed?

Why does the Catholic Church oppose mixed marriages?

Is wilful birth prevention sinful?

Is it wrong only because the Catholic Church prohibits it?

Which official prayers should be committed to memory?

If you have not learned all of them, will you agree to read them from your Catechism or Prayerbook once a day until you know them?

Do you know how to say the Rosary?

Does it consist of mere repetitions of the same prayer?

Do you know the principle underlying the wearing of a scapular or medal?

Do you know the meaning of the Way of the Cross, of the Benediction service?

Answers to the Inquirer's Objections

ARE ONLY CATHOLICS SAVED?

The Catholic Church teaches neither that all Catholics are saved nor that all Protestants or infidels are lost. The Catholic sinner is more responsible before God than any other sinner, because he offends with greater knowledge. It is certain, therefore, that the Catholic who dies unrepentant after a life of grievous sin will be lost the same as any other unrepentant sinner. Of course, the Catholic Church pretends to pass no judgment on the fate of any particular individual. When we declare that a person must belong to the religion of Jesus Christ in order to attain salvation, we have in mind the one who lives outside that religion through his own fault. Not even the Almighty obligates one to fulfill a duty of which he is ignorant.

But it should be clear that only God may stipulate what is necessary for the soul's salvation. It should be equally clear that if He has established a definite religion as a way to salvation, no one may know-

ingly and wilfully ignore it and still hope to be saved.

The teaching of the Catholic Church, therefore, which reads: "Outside the Church there is no salvation" means that the ordinary way to Heaven is through the religion of Christ; that those who are saved without having held membership in that religion belonged to the soul if not to the body of the Church—by living according to the lights they had and by ever having the disposition to comply with the terms of God the moment they should become acquainted with the same.

Sincerity is not identical with truth, but when one has no means of knowing what the truth is the Almighty cannot demand more than sincerity.

ATHEISM

Atheism has not a foot to stand on. The philosophical argument of the relation between cause and effect must always lead to God. We may ride along with the extreme evolutionist as far as he can go, but there we run into God, the author of the first atom, and of the law governing the activity of the proton and electron within the atom. We may account for

this thing or that thing without God, but not for the first thing or the first law.

Nature is the atheist's God, but nature is just as cruel as the God Whom the scoffer repudiates because of alleged cruelty. The universe not only calls for a God, but it itself, in the words of Holy Scripture, narrates "the glory of God." The universe, vast as it is, is limited, and therefore is not infinite, and therefore could not be God. We could always conceive of one more star, one more planet, but we cannot conceive of any addition to infinity. The universe is material, and therefore it could not be God.

The world had few professed atheists until modern times, and the whole human race could not have been wrong all the time. The professed atheist of today is neither a philosopher nor a scientist; in other words he has not arrived at his belief either by reasoning or by experiment. God is simply in his way, and therefore must be disowned. He is prejudiced against God, Who could not endorse either his policies or his morals. Even Voltaire, the infidel, wrote: "If there had not been a God it would have been necessary to invent one."

Atheism becomes a religion for its professors. They become fanatical about it. The would-be atheist becomes more zealous in the promotion of his destructive theory than the Christian in the promotion of his consoling creed. Error is usually more aggressive than truth.

AGNOSTICISM

The Agnostic is one who claims to know nothing about God or religion, and acts on the theory that this ignorance absolves him from all obligation to concern himself about religion.

No one would think of defending such an attitude in any other relationship. The same individual would leave no stone unturned to arrive at knowledge which would be necessary or even helpful to him in any other field.

There is culpable and inculpable ignorance; but ignorance of God is culpable; it can easily be overcome. St. Paul tells us that even the pagan, who had no revelation from Heaven, could be certain both of the existence of God and of His attributes, among which are not only His goodness and mercy, but also His justice and power to punish His ungrateful creatures.

The "I do not know" of the Agnostic is in reality "I do not care to know." Is it not strange that the most important information of all is the very knowledge which he does not care to possess?

THE DOCTRINE OF HELL

The existence of hell as a place of eternal separation from God should not create any difficulty for anyone who has a proper sense of justice. Eternal association with God in glory for his faithful children may be a pleasant reality to contemplate, but it is no more reasonable than eternal separation from Him for His defiant children.

For a soul that will live forever it must be either happiness or misery, and therefore either heaven or hell. If God's goodness prompts Him to reward the good, His justice must demand that He punish the wicked. God cannot be indifferent towards sin as men are. Yet even here on earth we have thousands of prisons filled with violators of the laws of men. On the occasion of the murder of the Lindbergh baby by its kidnapers the editors of two New York papers declared that "hell would be too good for those criminals".

The cruelty of hell vanishes when we

consider that it is not God who condemns the unrepentant sinner, but himself. God did far more than we could have expected Him to do to save man from hell. As long as he lives the individual may make salvation certain; but if he positively refuses to do so, if his life be one of open rebellion and of contempt of God, he certainly cannot expect to be rewarded forever and ever for it.

Hell was not created by God simultaneously with heaven. It was created when angels who were put on trial for the acquisition of Heaven declared "I will not serve". They could not be admitted into heaven because of their rebellion; yet they were not annihilated. They still live as devils, transformed and perverted, and the place in which they live is called Hell. Since the heaven of the angels becomes the heaven of good people, so the hell of the angels becomes the hell of bad people.

PURGATORY

When we say that "it is either heaven or hell for the human soul after death", we speak of its permanent fate. A place of temporary punishment or of purgation to prepare the soul of the average good

person for Heaven is not only very reasonable but in full harmony with Holy Scripture. You would hardly believe that even your own mother is worthy of *immediate* entrance into heaven. Yet you would repel the thought that she should be separated from God forever. You would never think of dividing the people of the world into two groups, namely, the very good and the very bad. You would think of still another group constituted of those who belong to neither extreme. If heaven is for the very good and hell for the very bad, must there not be a place for those who, at the time of death, are neither worthy of immediate heaven, nor deserving of eternal hell?

Holy Scripture tells us in effect a hundred times that man will be rewarded or punished according to his works. Holy Scripture encourages prayer for the dead, which implies a middle state in the other world which we call Purgatory. St. Matthew speaks of a place in the other world from which there is no exit until one pays the last farthing. This place can be neither heaven nor hell.

The Catholic Church does not pretend to know whether any given person goes to purgatory, or how long the soul may be

compelled to remain there. Often she is represented as teaching that a certain number of Masses will release a soul. This is a charge invented by her enemies. She merely teaches that the most powerful of all prayers is the Mass, and therefore encourages Masses for the departed.

No practice of religion is so consolatory as that of remembering the dead by prayer and good works, with the conviction that they are applied to the soul for speedier purgation.

PROHIBITION

The Catholic Church is neither wet nor dry in the modern sense of those terms, but she insists more than any other institution that the middle course, namely, that of moderation be observed. Temperance actually means moderation. When you are asked to be temperate in eating, it is not meant that you should not taste food.

Of course, the Catholic Church is not opposed to total abstinence. She advocates it not because the one who drinks temperately sins, but because total abstention from alcoholic liquor may be practiced as a virtue. For the one who cannot taste of

drink without going to excess total abstinence is an obligation imposed by conscience. For such there would be no sacramental absolution without a pledge of total abstinence. But for the one who can control himself in relation to drink there is no need of imposing total abstinence either by personal resolution or by law.

The Catholic Church has made no pronouncement on prohibition as it is established by law in the United States or elsewhere. If a prelate or priest denounces prohibition he is either denouncing the philosophy on which it is based, namely, that which represents the moderate use of alcohol as sinful, or he is denouncing it because it has become a failure as a practical means of promoting temperance. Professional prohibitionists do not sufficiently distinguish between use and abuse.

RELIGION AND SCIENCE

Religion has absolutely nothing to fear from true science, and science has nothing to fear from the true religion. Some overzealous Christians have been too much inclined to assume that science could explain little without making any effort to ascertain how much it could explain. Some scientists, on the other hand, have been

inclined to repudiate religion altogether if they found any reference in Holy Scripture to statements which went counter to some definitely proved teaching of science.

When there is a seeming contradiction between the teaching of faith and the teaching of science one must apply one's mind rather than theology to discover a reconciliation. One must see whether, by granting the dogma of science, it cannot be brought in full harmony with the teaching of religion. Mr. W. H. Mallock, the English scientist, contended that if the apologist on either side would do this, he would find that both can be firm believers not only in God, but in all revealed truths of faith.

A RELIGION OF CEREMONIES

The non-Catholic, unacquainted with the truths which underlie the Catholic ceremonial, entertains the notion that the Catholic religion, in its divine services, is all exterior pomp and ceremony, and that Catholics are attracted to church principally by the ritual.

As a matter of fact, the average Catholic patronizes the service which contains the least of ritual, for instance, the Low

Mass. Of course, every ceremony is deeply significant, and is suggested by a profound truth or reality.

Protestantism made its first appeal to the people by eliminating all ceremonies from its church services, but in late years one denomination after another has copied Catholic practices although, in their case, ceremonies become what they had been wont to designate "empty." They are "empty" in the Protestant service, because the doctrine on which they are based in the Catholic ritual, is not accepted with the outward mimicry. One after another the things which were repudiated by Protestantism are being introduced—the Crucifix, statuary, windows containing figures of saints, the vested choir, processions, candles, etc. It seems to be Protestantism's last effort to attract people to the churches, knowing how well Catholics still go out to worship on Sunday.

SO MANY EXTRAVAGANT TRUTHS

Is not the Catholic teaching concerning Original Sin, the Mass, and the Holy Eucharist difficult to accept? It should not be difficult at all. Is it more difficult to believe that the sin of our First Parents

was visited on their posterity than to believe that the whole world was plunged into suffering and destitution by a single murder committed at Sarajevo, Serbia, in the year 1914? That crime occasioned the World War with all its consequences. Is it more difficult to believe what the Catholic Church teaches about Original Sin than to believe somebody's blunder in 1929 caused the industrial depression which lasted several years, accompanied by the loss of fortunes, great and small, in which everyone became a direct or indirect sufferer? No injustice was done anybody when God deprived Adam's descendents of gifts to which they had no claim whatsoever. God deprived us of nothing belonging to our nature, but only of what was *above our nature*, and whose repossession He made possible despite the sin of our First Parents.

The Mass is nothing more than a perfect form of worship dignifying a perfect religion. It was God's arrangement for providing for Himself such homage from this earth everyday and everywhere, as is worthy of Himself. Why should God have been glorified on earth on only one occasion throughout the life of the human

race? Since sin abounds at all times reparation for it should more abound.

Every religion, of whatever character, has offered sacrifice to God, because it is a form of worship which recognizes the absolute dependence of the creature on the Creator, a form of homage which may not be given to any created being. In the Old Law God Himself instituted definite sacrificial worship, established a priesthood, gave minute directions concerning services at the Altar. Sacrificial worship should therefore be expected in the New Law; and it certainly seems plausible that the Son of God, Who established a perfect religion, should also have provided it with the most exalted form of official worship.

It should not be difficult to believe in the Eucharist after believing in the Incarnation. Every genuine Protestant believes that God left Heaven, took a human body, lived in this world thirty-three years, and was finally murdered by His creatures. Though this is difficult to believe, it is an undeniable fact of history. But after believing that God so loved the human race, it is certainly not difficult to believe that He would go one step farther, and invent a means whereby He could continue to

live among men and sanctify individual souls by personal union with them. It is difficult to believe that many stars, millions of times larger than this earth are thousands of billions of miles removed from it. Yet who is there who does not accept this truth on the authority of the science of astronomy—in other words, *on faith* in the word of teachers who know?

THE CATHOLIC AND FREEDOM

The intellect of the Catholic is less enslaved than that of any other person. Is there anything more to be deplored than a doubting or unsettled state of mind? The Catholic is at peace in believing, because his faith is tantamount to certain knowledge.

Whose intellect is more enslaved, that of the one who believes twice two are four, or of the one who doubts this truth? Our government spends more money for the imparting of educational facts than for any other purpose. Does the one who takes full advantage of educational opportunity become more and more enslaved as he gathers knowledge, most of which is accepted *by faith* in the scientist, or historian, or mathematician? Christ truly

said: "The truth shall make you free"—free from the slavery of error, free from the disturbing influence of doubt and uncertainty.

THE CATHOLIC RELIGION AND PROSPERITY

The argument most used today in favor of the superiority of Protestantism is the greater material prosperity which it is claimed obtains in Protestant countries. Even if the argument were based on facts it would prove nothing, because, according to Christ, His religion was not to be of the world, and was to be preached principally to the poor and lowly. Material prosperity and spiritual prosperity do not commonly go hand in hand, yet the latter sort of prosperity is the kind which Christ's religion was founded to produce and promote.

But are Protestant countries more prosperous than Catholic? It might be asked in the first place "What is a Protestant country?" England is no longer Protestant; Germany is no longer Protestant, and the United States is not Protestant. The vast majority of people in these three countries are indifferentists,

have apostatized from all religion, and therefore the normal prosperity of these lands before the World War and since should be more logically credited *to a lack of religion* on the part of the bulk of the people. The dollar has been the god of these countries, and there was no perceptible turning to the true God or to any religion even after the "dollar god" was taken away from them during the years between 1929 and 1932.

Religion has absolutely nothing to do with the material prosperity of a nation. It is mainly created or retarded by the presence or absence of coal or ore, without which there can be no large industries.

Mexico, Central America, and the larger part of all South America, lie in the tropics, where perpetual summer checks initiative. Then the greater portion of the people in these countries are of Indian blood, are exploited, victimized, and held in practical slavery by shrewd politicians. Spain was most Catholic when England was most Protestant, yet Spain was then far more prosperous than England. Holland is Protestant and Belgium is Catholic, and who would say, that before the War, Belgian prosperity was not

superior to that of Holland? France is more Catholic than most so-called Protestant countries are Protestant, yet today her people are more generally prosperous than any other on earth. North Germany is Protestant and South Germany is Catholic, and who would say that North Germany is superior? South Germany has saved all Germany to civilization since the late war. Communism is most rife in North Germany.

The most prosperous parts of the United States are those in which Catholics have the largest representation.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND CIVILIZATION

The Catholic Church is often identified with the so-called Dark Ages, and the notion prevails that she succeeds best if she keeps her people in ignorance and darkness.

As a matter of fact, the people of Europe would have remained as dark and superstitious and ignorant as the people of Asia had it not been for the civilizing influence of the Catholic Church.

But every student of history is acquainted with what happened to Europe in the

fifth and sixth centuries. The Catholic Church had made great progress in the enlightened civilization which emanated from Rome and Athens. Her schools abounded everywhere; some of the greatest scholars and saints known to history were hard at work at that time; and even at this day they are extolled and quoted by master minds.

Every vestige of the culture which had obtained in that era was destroyed by hordes of barbarians, who invaded Europe, and then remained in the territory which they had conquered.

A century or two thereafter were naturally "dark," and a new civilizing and Christianizing process had to be undertaken, and it was successfully accomplished by the Church. In the year 1,000 not only was all of Europe Christian, but most of the kings and queens were saints, so thoroughly did the Catholic Church do her work.

If by "darkness" enemies of the Catholic Church mean that people generally, even of the later Middle Ages, did not have libraries, patronize daily newspapers, did not attend school for twelve or sixteen years as they do today, then we grant that

the Middle Ages were dark, but so was the last century. Be it remembered that the printing press was not invented until the fifteenth century, and that therefore there could have been no family libraries, no daily or even weekly newspapers or magazines. The people of our generation might, with equal truth, charge the people of the last generation with being dark, because they did not have the radio nor the motion picture by which the work of educating youths is so facilitated at the present time.

The people of the Middle Ages deserve more credit than the people of our day for their interest in the things of the mind. A large percentage of the population had libraries, but in order to acquire them it was necessary for them to copy any given book by hand from another manuscript book. Even school text books were in hand writing. We wonder if the pleasure-seeking people of our day would have done half so much for education. We forget that we are the heirs of all the good things invented and produced by those who lived during the last thousand years, and that most of the inventors and discoverers were Catholic.

Even one century ago Americans as well as Europeans were burning tallow candles to light their homes; people traveled by stage coach, and mail was transferred from writer to receiver in the same way. It is only half a century since we have had electrically-driven machinery, the gasoline motor, the telephone in common use. Even Abraham Lincoln never saw any of these things.

But there was a far more truly Christian civilization in the late Middle Ages than there is today. The youthful criminal was not so prominent; family life was a thousand times more wholesome; the evils of murder, suicide, divorce, birth prevention, swindling on a large scale, were practically unknown. The fine arts of painting, sculpture, architecture and music flourished, and their masters dedicated their works to the furtherance of religion and Christian culture. Their products are about the only things which attract the attention and admiration of all modern tourists in Europe.

Despite our boasted progress, fewer schools of high learning, fewer universities, had been founded by Protestants since the so-called Reformation, than were

founded by the Catholic Church before that movement.

If, today, there are Catholic countries, so-called, in which the state of illiteracy is high, it must be remembered that the Catholic Church being universal, is dominant in countries whose people were only recently civilized, for instance, in Mexico, Central America, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia. The population of this vast area is principally Indian and lives in mountain districts. Visit our own southwest and see how little the American government, whose wards they are, has accomplished with the Indian. Visit the southern part of our country generally, which is overwhelmingly Protestant, and note the backwardness of a very high percentage of the population. We are certain that Protestants would not have elevated the people of any given country, now Catholic, to a higher degree of culture than they have attained, after making allowance for the many difficulties in the way.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE MASONS

The Catholic Church does not charge the individual Mason with malice of any sort. She is opposed to oath-bound secret societies generally, and more so if they make a religious appeal to their members, as is too often the case. It is very common for the Mason to say that the lodge offers him sufficient religion. It has its temples, chaplains, ritual, burial services; it has its feast days, such as those of St. John the Baptist, and Ascension Thursday.

Masonry was condemned by the Church before there was any American Masonry. Therefore the condemnation was not aimed at the latter specifically. In Italy, France, Spain, and some other countries Masonry was anti-religious, and fought the Catholic Church with all its energy.

Scottish Rite Freemasonry of the United States, southern Jurisdiction, makes no secret of its hostility to the Catholic Church. It publishes the *New Age Magazine*, always anti-Christian in tone; it sponsored the *Fellowship Forum* at the beginning, a professedly anti-Catholic weekly.

Most Masons in the United States do not enter the higher degrees, and could not, if they would, speak for the Order.

An oath is a serious and sacred thing, and should not be demanded by a fraternal organization. But a blind oath imposing on people the obligation to obey orders, the character of which cannot be anticipated, is not justifiable.

Members of secret societies under the Church's ban often charge Catholic fraternal organizations, such as the Knights of Columbus, with demanding a similar oath, but the charge is not true. The Knights of Columbus take no oath at all, and have submitted their complete ritual to the court, and even to a Committee of Masons, who kindly offered to take their defense against those who circulated a "bogus" Knights of Columbus oath.

The Catholic Church well knows that the average person who affiliates with the Masons, or Knights of Pythias, or Odd Fellows, or Sons of Temperance, the four organizations banned by name, does so for fraternal, or business, or social, or insurance reasons. But according to the principle "He that is not with Me is against

Me," enunciated by Christ, human organizations no matter how perfect, may never be offered in substitution of a divine religion.

THE CHURCH AND STATE

A serious wrong is done the Catholic Church when she is accused of demanding a formal union between herself and every civil government. The very idea of expecting a Protestant State to designate the Catholic religion the religion of the State is ridiculous.

The teaching of the Catholic Church on this matter is very sane. It is that where nearly all the people of any given country are Catholics, the government should constitutionally recognize their Church. Would a government be a government "of the people, for the people and by the people," if it were actually unfriendly toward the religion professed by nearly all its people?

Catholics of the United States, and Rome itself, are highly satisfied with the policy which obtains in this country, where all religions are respected and are given perfect freedom to carry on their work. It is the right kind of separation between Church and State. But separation in

Latin countries, whose population is predominantly Catholic, does not mean the same thing. It means the domination of the Church by the State, and almost always persecution of the Church by the government, over which a secretly organized minority will have obtained control. Mexico and Spain offer clear examples of this at the present time. Italy and France offered prominent examples only a couple of decades ago.

But why the Catholic Church is singled out for opposition because she defends the theory of union of Church and State under ideal conditions is difficult to understand. There has always been a closer union between Church and State in Protestant than in Catholic countries. Even today in England there is an established Church, and the king is head of both Church and State. The same situation prevails in Norway, Sweden, Denmark. None of these is a Catholic country, yet it is assumed to be quite natural that the Protestant king should unite the temporal and spiritual order under the same head. Such intimate union between Church and State never prevailed in any Catholic country.

THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE

The stumbling-block which, more than any other, checks the interest of Protestants in the Catholic religion is the Infallibility claimed by the Church for the Pope. However, it is rather a mental than an actual hazard. People assume Infallibility to mean one of several things, which it does not mean.

There are those who are certain that the Church claims divine inspiration for the Pope, others are equally certain that the Church regards the Pope as incapable of sin, or of committing any error.

Infallibility rather means that the head of the Church, speaking in the name of the Church for all her members, in those matters which relate to faith and morals, is preserved from error in the same way which Christ promised to preserve the Church from error. Protestants claim the Bible to be Infallible, and it is. But its Infallibility in theory becomes error in practice, simply because in Protestantism the Bible has no mouth-piece or spokesman. Evidently the Bible must be protected from error in its interpretation if there is to be any guarantee of the correct meaning of disputed texts.

The Catholic teaching is a thousand times easier to believe than the teaching advocated by numerous Protestants, who hold that every sincere Bible reader is inspired, so that he may read the right meaning into Holy Scripture. If the individual is inspired he is infallible. If one can believe that, he surely can believe that the head of the great Catholic Church, nineteen centuries old, in possession of a written record of doctrinal pronouncements throughout these ages, is protected from error when he speaks officially on matters doctrinal or moral as the spokesman of a Supreme Court. Christ promised to be with His Church "all days even unto the consummation of the world." He would not be with His Church if He allowed it to fall into error. He obligated the people "to hear the Church". He could not so obligate them if He allowed the Church to teach them error. He declared that those who hear the Apostles heard Him. This should not be true if He allowed the Apostles of His day, or the successors of the Apostles of any given age, united under their chief, to whom He committed "the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven," to teach error.

1909 - Jan Hector N.

Mon July 2

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