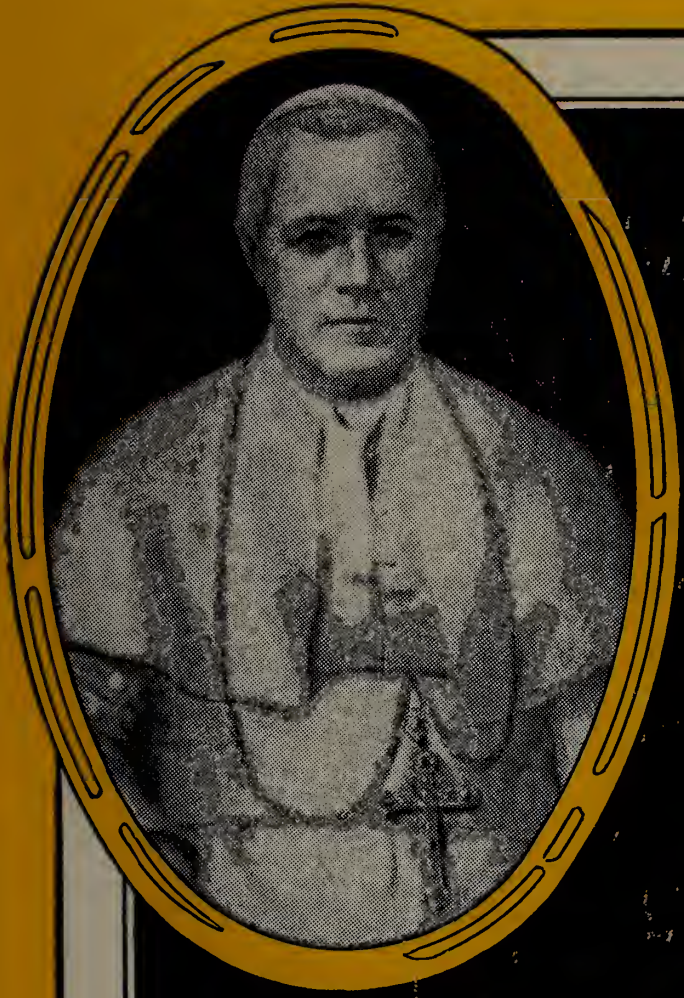


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PIUS X

by
GERALD C. TREACY, S.J.

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PIUS X

Pope of the Children

By

REV. GERALD C. TREACY, S.J.



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Deacidified

INTRODUCTION

ON the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, February 11, 1951, our Holy Father Pius XII ordered the reading and promulgation of the decrees approving the miracles wrought through the intercession of Pope Pius X. Among the many miracles offered for consideration, the two accepted by the Sacred Congregation of Rites are the cures of two nuns, one French and one Italian. The nuns are Sister Mary Francesca Deperras cured in 1928 and Sister Maria Benedetta cured in 1938.

First afflicted at 69 years of age with a bone cancer in the left thigh, which later spread to the adjacent iliac region, Sister Francesca was examined, studied and treated from September to November, 1928. Two doctors convinced of the hopelessness of the case, gave up treatment. Then a relic of Pope Pius X was applied to the patient. Prayers were offered by Sister Francesca's Community. On December 7th of that year Sister Francesca was completely healthy and all signs of the disease had disappeared. Eight years later two medical specialists, following an examination, attested to the permanence of the cure.

Sister Benedetta was afflicted with a malignant abdominal tumor in September, 1936. She refused the aid of surgery. The case had worsened considerably by February, 1938. The Sisters applied a relic of Pope Pius X to the sufferer accompanied by fervent prayers. That was on February 24, 1938. During the nights of February 26th and 27th Sister Benedetta rested comfortably. The following morning she went to chapel remaining on her knees in prayer for forty-five minutes. After that she resumed her regular duties as portress. In November, 1945 and again in 1950 a medical examination by skilled doctors confirmed the completeness of the cure. Medical consultants of the Sacred Congregation of Rites have studied the findings of the case and have concluded that the cure must be attributed to God's intervention.

In August, 1914, after striving in vain to prevent World War I, Pius X, Joseph Sarto died of a broken heart. He was 79. During his lifetime he was often spoken of as a saint. Right after his death his cause was agitated. The progress of the cause toward sainthood which often takes centuries, in his case took only years. He was declared Venerable in 1950 and on June 8th of this year he was proclaimed Blessed. Cardinal Tedeschini, Archpriest of St. Peter's uttered the words of public veneration for the first time: *Beate Pie ora pro nobis. Blessed Pius pray for us.*

The last Pope to be beatified was Pius V, in 1672. Forty years later there followed his canonization as Saint Pius V.

In his pontificate Pius X accomplished many things. We do not call him Blessed and invoke his aid for all these things he accomplished. We invoke him for what he was, a saint. Being is much more important than doing. Pius X, Joseph Sarto, the cobbler's son is on our altars today for only one reason, he led the good life in the grand manner. That is he lived Christ's teaching to an heroic degree. Numberless miracles attest this. When his Great Moment came, as come it does for all men, he quietly said: "I was born poor, I have lived poor, and I wish to die poor." Pius X was unique for he was a great saint and a great statesman. May he help us in these days when we need men of affairs who are men of God. Without them our civilization is doomed.

CHAPTER ONE

The Conclave Elects a Pope

It was July, 1903. In Rome the great doors of the Vatican were shut and an unusual quiet prevailed. Pope Leo XIII had just died. His body rested in the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament at St. Peter's Basilica. Around the catafalque burned eighteen wax tapers. Two Noble and two Palatine Guards stood at attention before the catafalque as crowds filed by in reverent silence.

When Leo XIII was elected to succeed Pius IX in 1878 he said to his fellow-Cardinals: "You are signing my death warrant. I have not the qualities the Papacy demands." Many Romans doubted that he would live long enough to be crowned. He lived to rule the Church for the following twenty-five years, and is rated by historians as a great Pope.

He was distinguished as a statesman. When he became Pope the Roman Question was unsettled. Pius IX had lost the Papal States; the House of Savoy ruled Rome and Italy. Tension had increased between The Vatican and the Quirinal during the closing years of the reign of Pius IX.

Anti-clericalism was rampant and aggressive in those days, ever invading the rights of the Church. Leo XIII never wavered in battling bravely for the rights of the Church even though anti-clerical governments were strong enough often to deprive the Church of her rights. The victories he won in the diplomatic field during his pontificate were achieved without military power or financial power. He declared at the start of his pontificate that he would strive to reconcile modern ideas with Catholicism. He believed that the doctrines of St. Thomas Aquinas would resolve the conflict that had developed between the Church and modern civilization. He did much to stimulate the intellectual life of the Church. He was the first Pope to formulate a clear-cut social doctrine that is distinctively Catholic. This is contained in his Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. In fact he bequeathed the Church not only

a social philosophy but a political philosophy, as well as a rich store of doctrinal and moral teachings.

The Conclave to name Leo's successor met on July 31st. Sixty-two Cardinals assembled. Cardinal Gibbons was the first American to take part in the election of a Pope. Only two Cardinals were absent, Cardinal Celesia of Palermo who was ill, and Cardinal Moran of Australia, whose see was too distant for him to arrive in Rome on time.

Swiss Guards escorted the Cardinals to the Pauline Chapel. After the singing of the *Veni Creator* a cross-bearer led them in procession to the Sistine Chapel; the doors were closed and the Conclave opened. Archbishop Merry del Val was secretary of the Conclave.

The Sistine Chapel had been divided into two parts by screens. Thrones had been built on either side of the altar, thirty-two on each side. They were covered with violet silk, over each was a silk baldachino or canopy, so fixed that they could be taken down as soon as a Pope was elected. Only one would remain up, that of the Pope-elect. Red was the color of the chairs with the exception of one which was green. It belonged to Cardinal Oreglia, the one Cardinal not appointed by Leo XIII. He had been named by Pius IX.

A table was put before the Papal altar, where the votes were to be placed. There was a small table at each Cardinal's place to be used for balloting purposes. Back of the Papal altar there were vestments in three sizes so that the newly-elected Pope could be vested immediately.

The first thing in the order of procedure was the reading of the rules to be observed by the members of the Conclave. Then Prince Mario Chigi, hereditary marshal of the Conclave, took the oath to carry out fully the Papal constitutions, as did all the others in the assembly. The Cardinals drew numbers for their apartments.

Cardinal Oreglia who presided, locked the doors on the inside of the Papal palace and Prince Chigi locked them on the outside. At the entrance to the chapel a little stove was placed with a chimney that could be seen by people in St. Peter's Square. When a ballot was taken and no Cardinal received two-thirds of the votes, the ballots mixed with straw were put into the stove. The heavy smoke was a sign that

no Pope had been chosen. Twice daily the balloting took place.

Next morning in St. Peter's the Blessed Sacrament was exposed and the Basilica was thronged with people. Before noon St. Peter's Square was crowded, with everyone looking for the smoke to appear. Soon a heavy cloud of smoke gave the news that the first ballot was indecisive. In the evening the same result happened.

The voting was resumed and the ballots were scattered. The first vote gave Cardinal Rampolla twenty-four, Cardinal Gotti seventeen, Cardinal Sarto five. The second vote gave Cardinal Rampolla twenty-nine, Cardinal Gotti sixteen and Cardinal Sarto ten.

The following morning before the first ballot was cast, Cardinal Puzyna, Archbishop of Cracow, Poland, at that time territory within the Austro-Hungarian empire, got up before the Conclave and said that he had brought a message from the Emperor Francis Joseph. The Cardinal wished to invoke an ancient privilege in the name of the Emperor and place a veto against Cardinal Rampolla.

The Conclave was stunned by the statement. Cardinal Oreglia, Dean of the Sacred College, was the first to protest. He said: "This message cannot be admitted to the Conclave, either officially or unofficially. Not the least notice will be taken of it."

Then Cardinal Rampolla got to his feet and endorsed the Dean's protest, adding, "Regarding myself, nothing more agreeable or welcome could happen." He deprecated Austria's attempt to intervene where it had no rights, and to endeavor to influence a Papal election. On the third day of the Conclave, Cardinal Rampolla received twenty-nine votes, Cardinal Sarto twenty-four, Cardinal Gotti three.

Cardinal Sarto grew nervous as he watched the trend of the balloting. As soon as he realized that the Conclave was fixing on his name, he got up and asked the Cardinals to give him no more votes. Then he went to the Pauline Chapel and prayed before the picture of Our Lady of Good Counsel. As he remained there some time, the Cardinals sent Cardinal Merry del Val to ask Cardinal Sarto what he intended to do. "Shall the Cardinal Dean tell the Conclave officially that you

refuse the election?" asked Cardinal Merry del Val. "Yes, let him do me that charity," was the reply.

That evening one member after another of the Sacred College approached Cardinal Sarto and urged him to accept. It is of interest to Americans to know that Cardinal Gibbons the only American Cardinal was among the group, assuring the candidate that the Church in America would be back of him. Cardinal Sarto kept declaring his unworthiness to his interviewers. This made the Cardinals more eager to elect him. Cardinal Satolli said to him: "Remember, our Lord said: 'Do not fear, I am with you!' Surely God Who has helped you guide so well the gondola of St. Mark's will help you to command Peter's bark." He had asked the Conclave to forget him. What happened? Would they take him at his word and choose another?

Next day the first vote gave Cardinal Sarto the highest number, twenty-seven, while Cardinal Rampolla had twenty-four. The following ballot gave him thirty-five and Cardinal Rampolla seventeen. Next morning on the seventh vote Cardinal Sarto had fifty votes, eight more than he needed. The Cardinal Archbishop of Paris announced that the Patriarch of Venice had been elected Pope by fifty votes. Cardinal Sarto bowed his head and wept. Looking up at the altar he murmured: "Fiat voluntas tua. Thy will be done."

Cardinal Oreglia approached the elected candidate and said to him: "Will you accept election to the Supreme Pontificate?" Cardinal Sarto paused a while and then declared himself unworthy of such a dignity. However realizing the unanimity of the choice, he considered it an expression of God's will. "If the chalice will not pass but I must accept it, then let God's will be done. I accept." When asked what name he wished, his answer was "*Pio Decimo.*"

It was necessary finally to inspect the ballots and see if Cardinal Sarto had voted for himself. This would have made the election null and void. It was found by inspection that he had voted for Cardinal Rampolla. Then the baldachinos were lowered. But one remained aloft, that of Cardinal Sarto. To this canopied chair all the Cardinals came and paid their respects to Pius X. This was the 4th of August, 1903. On Sunday, August 9th the solemn coronation took place.

As he entered the Basilica the crowds shouted and applauded. Pius X was not pleased at this. Turning to Cardinal Merry del Val who was at his side, he said: "They should not do this to the servant in the House of the Master." When he reached the altar the crowd became silent. The Pope glanced for a moment at the big statue of St. Peter, then raised his hand with the Fisherman's Ring on it, and sang: "Blessed be the name of the Lord." Thousands responded: "From now and henceforth forevermore." "Our help is in the name of the Lord," "Who created Heaven and earth," came the reply. Raising his hand he made the sign of the cross three times, turning to the four corners of the earth and saying: "May Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost bless you." The throngs answered: "Amen." The Pope had given his first blessing to the city of Rome and to the world.

Speaking of the Conclave to an old friend, Pius X said: "I could not eat or sleep when I realized they were trying to raise me to the Papal Throne. When the votes for me reached twenty-four, I could no longer be silent and my conscience obliged me to tell them that I did not have the necessary qualifications for the office, that it was their duty to give their votes to someone else. But they repeatedly insisted and at last I had to yield. I did not want it but God wished it."

It is of interest to Americans to know that one of the first audiences granted by Pius X was to a group of American pilgrims. This group had come to seek the blessing of Leo XIII, but when they arrived in Rome they found that Leo had died and Pius had been elected. Cardinal Gibbons asked Pius X to receive them. This he did saying a word to each person in the long line and often repeating "cara America." Later when alone with Cardinal Gibbons he said: "I love these Americans. They are the blooming youth of Catholicism. Tell them I gladly give my apostolic blessing to their whole country."

CHAPTER TWO

The First Days

The first days of a new Pontifical reign are taken up with varied activities. The first surprise came to the people of Italy when so many foreign diplomats came to the Vatican to

congratulate the new Pope. It was well known that there had been strained relations between the Vatican and the Italian government during Leo's pontificate. However the former Patriarch of Venice had always been friendly with the house of Savoy. Very soon after his coronation Pius X received the Duke and Duchess of Genoa and their child in private audience. The Duke was the Queen's brother and Admiral of the Italian Fleet. It was the first time since 1870 that a member of the royal house had crossed the threshold of the Vatican. Shortly after this a story was current in Rome that a veiled figure entered the Vatican by a private entrance and received an audience. The unknown visitor was said to be the Queen of Italy.

During the week of coronation Pius X received the diplomatic corps in a body. After the audience they met Archbishop Merry del Val in an anteroom. As they gathered around the Archbishop they were unusually quiet. At last the Russian Minister said to the Archbishop: "What is there in the Pope that attracts everyone so strongly?" In a moment the Portuguese Ambassador answered: "It is his sanctity." The Archbishop rejoined: "I think that is exactly it. I know for I have felt it more than once myself."

Everyone was waiting to hear what the Pope's policies would be. Would he follow closely in the path of his predecessor or would he strike out along a new trail. In a short time Pius X in his first Encyclical made clear his aim. It was—*To restore all things in Christ, instaurare omnia in Christo*. This was on October 4, 1903. The motto was from St. Paul. "Sustained by God's love, We set our hand to the work of withstanding the apostacy from God. We declare that the interests of God shall be our interests and for these We are prepared to spend all our strength and even life itself. So, should anyone ask us for a symbol and an expression of our will, We will say—to restore all things in Christ so that Christ may be all in all," he wrote.

The Encyclical stressed the Catholic doctrine of marriage, education, ownership and use of property. It called for the reconciling of all social groups in keeping with Christian tradition. The Pope spoke too of the training of priests. "The Church needs priests who have formed Christ in themselves

so that they may form Christ in others." He urged the practice of charity upon all the members of Christ's Church, and finished with a comment on the Roman Question. "All men must realize that the Church as the institution of Christ should enjoy the greatest possible liberty and not be subject to any other power. Our fight for liberty is not merely in defense of the most sacred rights of religion but also a bulwark for the common welfare and security of nations." The Encyclical showed very plainly that Pius X would rely neither on diplomacy nor politics to carry out his Pontifical plan, but on the spiritual forces within the Church.

In October Pius appointed Archbishop Merry del Val Secretary of State and in the first consistory, November 12, named him a Cardinal. At this consistory the Pope told the Cardinals plainly that he considered himself unworthy of the office they had given him. "I can only do my best," he said, "and rely on you to help me."

As the days passed Pius learned to get used to the restraint that his office imposed upon him. He was practically a prisoner. There is a story told that one day his Secretary of State found him at his desk looking wistfully at a picture of one of the canals of Venice. "If I could only go outside," he murmured, and then added: "I pray every day to have no more wishes."

The Pope's Daily Order

Pius X rose about four, went to his private chapel where he meditated and recited Prime, the morning prayer of the divine office which every priest is obliged to say daily. Then he said Mass and heard another Mass in thanksgiving. He breakfasted on a cup of black coffee and walked for a while in the garden. After that he went to his study, attended to his correspondence and gave a few private audiences. At one he dined simply, usually with several members of his household. In doing this he broke an old tradition that the Pope should eat alone. When he first asked guests to his table, he saw that his household was surprised. He asked the reason. "Because since Urban VIII set the rule, it has been customary for the Pope to dine alone," was the reply. "If Urban

VIII had the right to make such a rule Pius X has an equal right to abolish it," the Pope answered.

He did away with other rules and customs. The usual expression of filial homage, the kissing of the Pope's slipper, was discontinued. Those who came for private audiences remained seated while talking with him. Priests were often his table guests. He rarely used the *sedia* or chair of state, declaring that it made him dizzy.

During the afternoon from two to five he remained alone in his apartment. Then he gave audiences, read his breviary and walked in his garden. After a visit to the Blessed Sacrament he said the rosary with his household, and took supper at nine. From that time until eleven or later he saw more people. He closed his day with reading generally from the *Imitation of Christ*. The light in the window of his study rarely was extinguished early.

He had always worked hard and he did not slacken his pace in the Vatican. He was strong and vigorous at the age of sixty-eight. He rarely used the elevator in the Vatican. He missed above all things the contact he always had with people as priest and bishop. He longed to preach to his flock, hear confessions and give catechetical instructions. He made up his mind he would have the people come to him as he could no longer go to them. So he invited the faithful from Rome's different parishes to come to the Vatican on different Sunday afternoons.

On Sunday afternoons the court of St. Damasus was thronged with people. The Holy Father talked on the day's Gospel. They were simple talks flowing from a simple, priestly heart. Each Sunday about twenty-five hundred people assembled for these talks. In no time the numbers increased and Pius X was talking to his children from everywhere and not merely from the parishes of Rome.

There were two tasks that the Holy Father determined to undertake as soon as he could, namely the reform of the Breviary and the reform of Canon Law. Other Popes before him were anxious to correct the abuses that had crept into the Prayer of Praise as the canonical hours' prayer is called. The observance of many saints' feasts had superceded the observance of the feasts of the ecclesiastical year. Another proj-

ect was to so arrange the Psalter or Book of Psalms, that it would be said in its entirety in the space of a week. Pius X at once appointed a commission to revise the Breviary.

For a long time the code of Canon Law had needed revision and recodification. Pope Sixtus V in 1587 had formed fifteen congregations. In the passing of time they no longer carried out the tasks for which they had been established. The jurisdiction of each was not well-defined, some hardly did anything while others were overworked. So Pius X summoned Monsignor Pietro Gasparri, an expert canonist, to the Vatican and asked him if a group of canonists could recodify the Canon Law.

“Yes, it can be done. But it means hard work over a long period of years,” was the reply. Pius X rejoined: “Very well, then, let us begin to do it.”

On November 22, 1903 the Pope issued a *Motu Proprio* or decree on sacred music. Its highlights were that church music must be holy, true art and universal. For the first time a code of rules was written authoritatively for sacred music. To understand the decree it must be remembered that Pius X was a musician. The qualities that he insisted upon in church music were found in Gregorian chant. Gregorian must hold the first place in liturgical practice. This however did not mean that Gregorian maintained exclusive rights in the celebration of the Liturgy. Modern music was not banned. It was only theatrical modern music that was forbidden.

The decree forbade the employment of paid singers as well as bands and orchestras. Instruction in sacred music was to be given in all seminaries as well as in city and country parishes. The decree met with opposition. Pius X expected that it would. “Don’t be discouraged. You are young and ardent. Keep working without hate or rancor. We will see the world coming over to our side little by little,” were the Pope’s words to the founder of the Schola Cantorum in Paris, M. Charles Bordes.

The idea of Pius X was that church music must be made subordinate to prayer. As he wanted to “restore all things in Christ,” it was his aim to make devotional music Christian, a part of prayer and an aid to worship. He did not want to banish all music except Gregorian. In everything connected

with the Liturgy—music, decorations, art and architecture, every material thing that was used in expressing the love of the human heart for God, the Pope wanted purity and simplicity.

A notable liturgical service took place at St. Peter's in honor of St. Gregory the Great on the occasion of the thirteenth centenary of his death. This was in March, 1904. Pius X had invited artists and musicians from all parts of the world to attend a Congress of Liturgical Art and honor the Pope who had been its great patron. Don Perosi, the renowned choir-master, had recruited nearly fifteen hundred voices from the Roman colleges. The Holy Father had no knowledge of the rehearsals that were going on for a long while before the feast, and was surprised and deeply affected when he heard the great chorus fill St. Peter's. It was the fulfillment of his hope for the correct performance of Church music.

CHAPTER THREE

Noteworthy Encyclicals

When asked about the aim of his Pontificate, Pius X answered the inquirer by pointing to the crucifix on his desk. He set about bringing God back to human society. In his first Encyclical he declared: *The sole aim of Our Pontificate will be to restore all things to God.* In an Apostolic Letter to the Bishops of Italy two years later he explained the areas that were to be restored to Christ:

To reinstate Jesus Christ in the family, the school and society; to re-establish the principle that human authority represents that of God; to take intimately to heart the interests of the people, especially those of the working classes; to endeavor to make public laws conformable to justice, to amend and suppress those that are not so; to defend and support the rights of God in everything, and the no less sacred rights of the Church.

Pius X called upon the laity to aid him in putting all things in order under the leadership of Christ:

For it is not priests alone but all the faithful without exception who must concern themselves with the interests of God and souls, not of course according to their own views, but always under the direction and commands of the Bishops.

On April 15, 1905, the Pope issued the Encyclical *Acerbe nimis*, on the teaching of Christian Doctrine. His own experience of fifty years of catechetical teaching and his love for bringing the message of Christ to those who did not know it, went into the writing of this document. To him from his earliest priestly days the catechism had been of supreme importance. Once a very wealthy lady asked him what she could do for the Church. His reply was immediate: "Teach the catechism."

In the Encyclical Pius X spoke of the religious indifference that prevailed not only among the ignorant but among the educated classes, "whose lack is so profound and saddening to see. The intellect is a guide, but if it lacks its companion light, the knowledge of divine things, it will only be an instance of the blind leading the blind. Whereas Christian teaching not only bestows on the intellect the light by which it attains truth, but from it our will draws that ardor by which we are raised to God and joined with Him in the practice of virtue."

The remedy Pope Pius X said was catechetical instruction for all. The Encyclical stressed the point that it was the pastor of souls who had the prime responsibility for instructing the faithful in the things of God. This was to be effected by preaching to the people and teaching the young and the ignorant. "If the work of the catechist be lacking then the foundation is wanting."

Catechists should be men and women well-trained in their religion. Sermons were for the well-instructed. "It was easier to find a preacher ready to give an ornate sermon than to find a catechist capable of teaching the truths of religion." It is a

mistake to think that because people are uneducated the work of the catechist may be done in a slipshod fashion; the less educated the hearers the more diligence and zeal are necessary."

The Encyclical gave definite instructions on catechetical method: "On every Sunday and holyday without exception all parish priests shall instruct boys and girls for the space of an hour from the text of the catechism on those things they must believe and do in order to obtain salvation." This was in addition to instruction for First Holy Communion.

To aid priests in their catechetical ministry Pius X decreed that the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine should be canonically established in all parishes. The purpose of the Confraternity was to develop trained teachers of religion who would assist their priests in spreading the knowledge of divine truths. The issuance of the Encyclical gave a big impetus to the Confraternity. It had been functioning for years in different parts of the Church. The Pope now officially declared it must be undertaken everywhere. Pius X used it as an example of what could and should be done throughout the whole Church.

On June 11, 1905, Pope Pius X issued his pronouncement on Catholic Action. Its title is *Il fermo proposito*. The term Catholic Action was not new. But the Pope made its full meaning clear; it was the participation of the laity in the apostolic mission of the Church.

He explained that the need for such group action was pressing. In former times the rights of God were acknowledged by all Christian States, but now neither Church nor Pope were recognized as part of society. "In other times it was the Pope and the Bishops who intervened in behalf of their children; today it must be the children who must rise up in defense of their father, the laity in defense of the hierarchy."

His call for action would not appeal to "certain timid souls who though good Catholics, are so attached to their habitual quiet and so afraid of every innovation that they believe it is quite sufficient to pray, because God knows best how to defend the Faith." These optimists, as Pius X called them, would wait in vain for society to become Christian merely through the prayers of the good. Prayer was necessary but it was not enough. India and Japan would not have been con-

verted solely by the prayers of Francis Xavier, nor would the Apostles have won the world had they not combined action with prayer.

There were others that the Holy Father called pessimists, who seeing so much evil in the world grew discouraged fearing they could achieve nothing against such powerful forces. "We have been like rabbits, too frightened of everything and anything; we must cease fearing to give offense. To carry out this work in the right way we must have divine grace, and the apostle receives none unless he is united with Christ. Only when we have formed Jesus Christ within ourselves shall we more easily be able to give Him back to the family and to society," he declared.

The Pope wanted each Catholic to work for his neighbor's welfare according to his ability. That meant uniting to fight anti-Catholic influence; it was for Catholics to spread the truth that all authority comes from God and that every legitimate ruler represents God. All Catholics must join in the social apostolate and take an active interest in the working people, especially the factory and agricultural workers. This social apostolate means more than prayers and financial help. It means an active and sympathetic service to the workers, by helping them better their economic condition through just laws. The right of God, the Church, and her people must be defended and upheld always by the social apostle.

Pius X called upon the laity to "prepare themselves prudently and seriously for political life in case they should be called to it." This was startling especially to Italian Catholics since Catholics had been forbidden by the predecessors of Pius X to take part in national elections. The Pope believed the time had come for Catholic citizens to bring Christian principles to bear upon political life. He also urged the laity to meet in congresses from time to time. He took every means right from the start of his pontificate to stress the real role of the laity in the mission of the Church. The story is told of the Holy Father asking a group of Cardinals what they thought most necessary at the time to save society. Some advocated more schools, some more churches, some an increase of the clergy. The Holy Father answered. "No, no. What is most necessary at the present time is to have in every

parish a group of laymen who are at the same time virtuous, well-instructed, determined and really apostolic.”

On December 20, 1905, Pius X issued a decree that was to bring tremendous spiritual results. It was clear and explicit. It carried this very striking message: “Frequent and daily Communion should be open to all the faithful of whatever rank and condition of life, so that no one who is in the state of grace and who approaches the Holy Table with a right and devout intention can lawfully be hindered therefrom.” After centuries this decree gave the deathblow to Jansenism. This heresy sprang up in the Church of the seventeenth century. St. Vincent de Paul called it one of the most dangerous heresies to afflict the Church. It was based on a conviction of the utter unworthiness of man in the sight of his Creator. It looked on the Holy Eucharist as a reward for virtuous living, rather than as a remedy for human weakness which is our Lord’s plain purpose in giving men His Flesh to eat and His Blood to drink. Jansenism so frightened souls by stressing their complete unworthiness, that many stayed away even from Easter Communion.

Pius X as Supreme Teacher in Christ’s Church declared in the fullness of his teaching authority, that the Holy Eucharist was not given us by our loving Saviour as a reward for virtue. He gave this gift of gifts as a power to enable men to resist temptation, as a medicine to enable men to cleanse themselves of their daily faults. The Pope made clear the necessary dispositions for frequent Communion. The individual must be free from mortal sin and have a firm purpose of avoiding sin in the future.

Pius X made the meaning of the Eucharist clear. Holy Communion is the shortest and surest way to Paradise. “To approach the altar takes only a moment,” he said, “and he who approaches tastes truly the delights of Paradise.”

CHAPTER FOUR

France and the Holy See

On December 9, 1905, the French Government passed the laws of separation of Church and State. When Pius X heard the news he said to his Secretary of State: “Perhaps the hour

has struck for Christians in France to give our Lord more of their suffering, more of their love." The law was a climax of a whole series of hostile acts on the part of the anti-clerical, atheistic French Government, directed against the Catholic Church. The series included the reduction of priests' pensions, the withdrawal of clerical stipends. This last was plainly unjust since they had been paid in partial reparation for Church property seized by the Government during the Revolution. Moreover the administration of Church property and revenues was to be handed over to lay associations in each parish. Besides the Concordat with the Holy See was to be abrogated, and the Republic in future would recognize no form of worship. On February 11, 1906 Pius X denounced the Law of Separation in an Encyclical and repeated his denunciation a few days later in an address to the Cardinals.

The Pope's Encyclical had a good effect in France. Loyal Catholics throughout the country got behind their poverty-stricken and often homeless clergy, and gave them both material and spiritual support. The clergy with few exceptions stood by the Holy Father showing that Gallicanism, which practically put the Church under the State, was finished.

On the last day of February, Pius X consecrated fourteen French priests as Bishops. They were to replace those who had obeyed the Government rather than the Church, yielding to Caesar the things of God. St. Peter's was crowded for the event. There were sixty-seven French Bishops present and about forty thousand visitors from France.

As the Pope offered the Mass seven of the new Bishops were on either side of him at different altars, and at the appointed time each knelt before the Pope and read aloud the oath of fidelity. After receiving Communion Pius X gave Communion to the fourteen Bishops. As they were leaving the Basilica and giving their first episcopal blessings to the huge congregation, the words that they had heard when they first entered the sanctuary must have sounded in their hearts! "I have not called you here for joy but for a cross."

The last one to leave the sanctuary was Pius X borne aloft in the *sedia gestatoria*. As he passed the French flag, it was lowered. He lifted a fold and kissed it. It was a gesture of real affection, showing better than any words, that the Father of

Christendom loved the great French nation, no matter how unjust its Government had been toward the Church and the Vicar of Christ.

Next day in an audience Pius X told the newly consecrated Bishops how saddened he was by their plight and yet how happy to have them with him in Rome. He gave them no specific directions concerning the line of action they should follow, but merely reminded them that they were to act as true shepherds of their flocks. It was a sad but great moment in the glorious history of the Church in France. All the world was watching and wondering if they would meet the challenge that was hurled at them. "I wish I could go with you and share your anxieties and sorrows, to be at your side and comfort you but this cannot be. We shall meet each day at Mass before the Holy Tabernacle whence we get our strength and the sure means of victory," were his parting words.

These French Bishops returned to their native land looking on it as a mission territory to be won back for Christ. They were heartened in their task by the Holy Father's words: "France will not be separated from Him. Remember that throughout her history in spite of all efforts, she has never forsaken the true Church. Do we count as nothing all the sufferings and sacrifices that already have been made for faith and for liberty?"

The insistence by the Government that lay associations administer parish temporalities placed the Pope in a difficult position. If he refused to abide by this decree then all Church property in France would be confiscated. That meant the loss of millions of francs. It also meant that priests would have to find means of support or starve. Could these associations be formed within the Church and do no harm to the Church? The answer of Pius X was that they could not.

But he wanted to be sure, so he appointed a board of legal experts to draw up a report giving all the arguments for accepting or rejecting the Law of Separation. When the Pope finished reading the report he said: "We have decided. The law of God is all that matters. We are here not as a diplomat but with a mission to defend. There is only one simple question to be answered. Was the Church instituted by Christ or was it not?"

We all agree on that. Then there is nothing that can make us give up its constitution, its hierarchy, its liberty.”

In the meanwhile the Holy Father was visited by delegations from France. There were different groups with different ideas as to the way of dealing with the new law. One group struck the Holy Father as concerned only with temporal interests of the Church. He remarked to them: “I hear a great deal about the goods of the Church but scarcely anything is said about the good of the Church.” To another group who were arguing for compromise with the Government the Holy Father said: “Once on a high mountain two adversaries found themselves face to face. One showed the other not bags of money but all the kingdoms of the world. He said, I will give you all of this if you will bow down before me. The other refused. He still refuses. That is all.”

In August the Pope issued an Encyclical dealing with the Law of Separation. It banned the lay associations intended to handle Church temporalities; it rejected an association scheme favored by some of the Bishops, who calculated it would meet with Government approval. There would be no compromise until the property rights of the Pope and the Bishops were guaranteed. The Bishops now had to organize the faithful on the basis of the common law which guaranteed religious freedom for all.

The Government answered the Encyclical on January 21, 1907, with the second Law of Separation. It carried out in detail every threat made in the first law. As Catholics had not organized the associations demanded by the Government, properties, buildings, pensions, salaries were all confiscated. Church property hereafter would be Government property. Pius X had stood by the principle of the liberty of the Church. The material loss was very great. The spiritual gain was much greater.

CHAPTER FIVE

Pius X and Modernism

In September, 1907, Pius X issued his Encyclical *Pascendi* against Modernism. It closed a controversy that had disturbed the Church for many years. The philosophy which was back of various ideas that took the name of Modernism is supposed

to have sprung up during the French Revolution. Rousseau originated the name.

Three chief errors constituted Modernism. First it rested on an agnostic philosophy which relied on the senses only as the final basis of truth. This struck out of Catholic belief sacred mysteries which are beyond the reach of the senses. The Modernists claimed the Scriptures were a norm of faith and truth, but the Scriptures were to be interpreted according to Modernist ideas.

The second error of Modernism was that it made religion consist of an interior experience, ruled by the emotions and the psychic needs of man. Any dogma that did not find its echo in the soul was not necessary for salvation; dogmas varied with the times being expressions of religious experience. This meant no fixed norm of religious belief.

The third error was rooted in the evolutionary theory of Christian doctrine. The Modernist held that the Church with its doctrines and moral teachings was not established by Christ, but was the result of a gradual evolution of Christianity dependent on historical circumstances. As the dogmas of the Church were the result of evolution they would need progressive changes to meet scientific discoveries and historical changes. If this theory were true there would be nothing left of dogma except a vague unsupported certainty about the unknowable. This would spell the end of the Catholic religion and in fact of all religion.

Pius X had followed the writings of Modernists for a long time, so that when he became Pope he was fully prepared to meet the issue. He issued his Encyclical against Modernism on September 8, 1907. The document explained and condemned the whole theory. It was a heresy that was the synthesis of all heresies for it really included them all. The Pope condemned Modernism's interpretation of the Scriptures, of the personality and divinity of Christ and His teachings as well as the modernistic explanation of the sacraments. The Encyclical made it plain that the entire modernistic movement was an error and no Catholic could accept it and still remain a Catholic.

The Holy Father reminded Catholic Modernists that they did not realize how wrong the system was, how it contradicted the essentials of the Catholic Religion. Its arguments sounded

well on first hearing; it used theological terms that Catholics used, but with entirely different meanings. It showed its power by attracting many brilliant and good men, men who would most surely influence others and lead them astray. Modernists claimed to be defenders of scientific truth, and to many their writings appeared to show a healthy reaction against materialism. "Excited and confused by the clamor of praise and abuse", Pius X declared, "young men, some afraid of being considered ignorant, others ambitious to be classed among the learned, and both egged on by curiosity and pride, often succumb to temptation and join the Modernist movement."

Continuing, the Holy Father touched on the cause of the modernistic heresy. "The proximate cause is doubtless an error of the mind. The remoter causes are curiosity and pride. Pride sits in Modernism as in its own house, finding sustenance everywhere in its doctrines and an occasion to flaunt itself in all its aspects. The Modernists are puffed up with vain glory which makes them boast they are not as the rest of men. It is pride which urges them to reform others before reforming themselves. If we seek for the intellectual causes of Modernism the first and strongest is ignorance. Yes, these men who speak so highly of modern philosophy and so disparagingly of Scholasticism, have been attracted by the glamour of the modern theories because of their ignorance of Scholasticism; this ignorance has left them helpless to meet the sophistries of the moderns. The whole Modernist system is built upon an alliance between faith and false philosophy."

Pius X closed his Encyclical by proposing the remedies for Modernism. These were the study of Scholastic philosophy in seminaries and other institutions for clerics, constant watchfulness on the part of the Bishops of the Church, and an oath obligatory on clerics and professors, binding them to reject the errors pointed out in the Encyclical. "The security of the Church is at stake. To keep silent any longer would be a crime," said the Holy Father.

The reaction to the Encyclical was varied. The majority of Catholics stood with the Holy Father. The Modernists and their sympathizers bitterly attacked the Pope. He was a fanatic, ignorant and a hypocrite. Did Pius X mean to suppress all independent thinking? Could he really stop a movement which

had the allegiance of some of the best minds in many countries?

One of the best answers given to the Modernist attack on the Holy Father was that of Cardinal Mercier, who said: "You must answer yes or no, do you believe in the divine authority of the Church?" Then he added: "If in the days of Luther and Calvin the Church had possessed a Pope like Pius X, would Protestantism have succeeded in getting a third of Europe to break loose from Rome?"

The cry of course was raised that the Pope was hostile to science. His answer was to found in Rome an institute for the advancement of science and other branches of knowledge. "Religion has nothing to fear from science. Christianity does not tremble before discussions but before ignorance," said Pius X.

There is no doubt that the Encyclical caused many brilliant minds to abandon their Catholic Faith. In the course of time many repented and came back to the Father's House. Others never did. In about a year the backbone of the movement had been broken. Loisy, one of the outstanding Modernist leaders admitted that the movement was crushed and would not survive. Today it is a mere memory in the century-old history of the Church of Christ in its battle with the forces of error and evil.

Revision of Canon Law

The work of the revision of the Canon Law had begun soon after the election of Pius X. One of the first things he had done as Pope was to appoint a commission to carry through the revision. Cardinal Gasparri was head of the commission. Yet Pius X did not stand aside and wait for reports. He was as active in the work as any member of the commission. The members of the commission declared that he "was the best canonist of us all." In a manner he was the author of the code that was taking shape through the years. For it was he who stood behind each worker on the project, encouraging, guiding, stimulating.

In June, 1908, Pius X issued an apostolic letter on the reorganization of the Curia and the revision of Canon Law. In this letter he first gave a brief history of Church government. Until the tenth century there had been no system of

organizations or congregations. It had been the Pope assisted by the Roman clergy. But as the Church grew, its business had to be delegated to a number of committees of Cardinals. That is how the modern Congregations had originated and developed.

In his letter Pius X said: "The result is that today the jurisdiction or competence of each is not quite clear, nor is it well apportioned. For these reasons many Bishops and thoughtful men both with Leo XIII and with Ourselves frequently urged that suitable remedies should be provided for the above mentioned inconveniences. But now there is also the question of codification of the ecclesiastical law, and it seems highly fitting that a beginning should be made with the Roman Curia, so that once this is suitably organized it may be in a better position to carry out its work for the Pope and the Church."

The commission appointed began a complete redistribution of the duties of the Congregations. Some new Congregations were formed to deal with current problems. When the task was completed there were eleven Congregations, three Tribunals and six offices of the Roman Curia. Now that each Congregation had clearly defined duties and there was no longer overlapping of functions, there would be fewer delays, and hence greater satisfaction for all concerned.

CHAPTER SIX

Outstanding Events

Pius X celebrated the golden jubilee of his priesthood in September 1908. He declared that the best gift his clergy could give him would be a renewal of charity and zeal in their priesthood, "the most beautiful gift of all." From the laity he asked prayers and Holy Communions offered for his intention. If material gifts were offered, he asked that they be of such a kind that he could apply them to needy parishes.

Four hundred bishops and fifty thousand people attended the jubilee Mass which he celebrated, not as Pope but as the priest he had become a half-century earlier. He walked slowly up St. Peter's great aisle without any papal ceremonial. Palestrina's Mass of Pope Marcellus was sung. This was most appropriate as Pope Marcellus was a great music lover and had been Palestrina's patron. He had determined on many re-

forms in church music but did not live to carry them through. As a tribute to the Pope's intentions, Palestrina had written the Mass that was now being sung.

To commemorate his jubilee Pius X sent a special letter to the clergy throughout the world. In former letters he had reminded the clergy that in order to have Christ formed in the faithful, He must first be formed in the priest. The priest must be able to win souls by his kindness and charity. "Such an example will have greater power to move hearts and gain them than words or dissertations however sublime."

In his jubilee letter, He urged his fellow-priests to be true to their calling, to fulfill their ministry in deed as well as word. "Preach to the people true sermons and not mere rhetoric, for the growth of disbelief in the world is largely due to ignorance of the teachings of Christ." Priests must develop and safeguard their own interior life, for piety and holiness are the all-important things. Prayer, meditation and other spiritual exercises must occupy an important place in the priest's day.

Pius X in August 1910, issued the decree on the early Communion of children. Children should make their First Communion as soon as they reached the age of reason, about the seventh year. However, circumstances might warrant children receiving earlier or later. Many good people felt that a child of seven was too young to understand the reverence due the Holy Eucharist. This really was an evidence of how Jansenism had affected Catholic thinking. Some believed children should be eleven or twelve before making their First Communion. Others claimed that a delayed Communion saved a child from evil. Pius X gave his decision in the words of St. Thomas Aquinas: "When children begin to have some use of reason, such as enables them to form sentiments of devotion toward the Sacrament of the Eucharist, then it can be administered to them." The actual age was not of concern to the Pope of the Eucharist. He declared; "The age of discretion is reached when a child knows the difference between the Bread which is the Eucharist and ordinary material bread; not full reason of course but incipient reason suffices."

An incident that occurred about the time the Pope had called for the early Communion of children, makes his teaching very clear. Once a father brought his four-year-old son to meet

the Pope in private audience. The child was perfectly at ease with the Holy Father, running up to greet him smilingly. "How old is he," asked the Pope. "Four years old, Your Holiness, and I hope he will make his First Communion in a few years," was the reply.

"Well let us see what he knows. Whom do you receive in Holy Communion, my child?"

"Jesus Christ," the boy replied quickly.

"And who is Jesus Christ?"

"He is God," came the answer with assurance.

The Pope turned to the father: "Bring him to my Mass tomorrow morning and I will give him Holy Communion myself."

Pius X was glad of the title *Pope of the Children* which some Romans gave him. He enjoyed audiences with them. And they gave him respite from the heavy burden of his office. This burden became hard and tiring as persecution flared up in Mexico and Portugal, so-called Catholic countries. France had been the first traitor child. The eldest daughter of the Church had turned upon her mother, tied her hands by restrictive laws, banished her Religious Orders into exile.

Soon came Mexico not with penalties, restrictions, and exile but with fire and sword. A diplomatic break occurred in Spain; anti-clericalism flared up, churches were destroyed, priests murdered. In 1911, Portugal was in revolution. As anti-Catholic governments gained control, church property was confiscated. Bishops were driven from their sees, Religious Orders were exiled. Laws of Separation were passed more extreme than those in France. The Prime Minister of Portugal had declared "religious sentiment is a lie and every kind of church a farce."

The Holy Father was unable to help his suffering children in a material way, but he could and did protest strongly against the injustice of the terror prevailing in Portugal, Spain and Mexico. He prayed and called on all his children to pray for peace in the lands where the torch of persecution was flaming against the Altar and the Church. Pius X began to show the strain of the evil days that were upon the children of God. To those like his Secretary of State, who were close to him, the Pope appeared worried and depressed. With all

the forces of evil raging around him, he feared worse things to come. "All this is nothing to what will happen in a few years time when war breaks out; I fear that in two years it will be upon us," said Pius X.

Cardinal Merry del Val always welcomed a chance to divert the Holy Father and take his mind off the sufferings of his children which he could not alleviate. One day he brought two American priests to see Pius X about a project they had in mind. Father Thomas Price was a missionary in the southland, and Father James Walsh came from Massachusetts. They wanted to found an American mission society especially for the mission apostolate in the Far East. It was to be called the Maryknoll Mission Society. When the Pope had read their plan he gave it his approval at once. The two priests presented a picture of the Pope which Pius X autographed giving his blessing and approval to America's first Missionary Society. At this time the United States was still a mission country, and the Holy Father marvelled that the Church in America was anxious to go forth into pagan lands. "But, of course, such sacrifice will react favorably on the work of the Church in the United States," Pius X declared.

During the closing years of his pontificate, the great holiness of Pius X was the reason why healing powers were credited to him. It was a usual thing at audiences for the people to ask for cures for themselves or others. One instance was that of a young girl suffering from a running sore that would not heal. She pilgrimaged to Rome that the shadow of Peter's successor might fall upon her. She was one of an audience of forty and as the Pope passed by and spoke to her, she whispered to her mother, "I am cured." When they returned to their hotel and the bandages were removed it was plainly evident that a complete cure had been wrought.

Two nuns ill with an incurable disease came to Rome as pilgrims. Because of their condition they were granted a private audience. Pius X looked at them and said: "Why do you want to be cured?" "To work for the glory of God a little while longer," was the answer. The Pope placed his hand on their heads and said: "Have confidence, you will be well." Before leaving the Pope's presence they were cured.

The Holy Father asked them to say nothing about their

cure. However, others were in the outer hall and they had seen two very sick nuns drag themselves into the audience chamber, and two vigorously well women came out from interviewing the Holy Father. It was impossible to keep such an incident secret. Moreover the cab-driver who had brought them to the Vatican could not believe his eyes when he saw his two critically sick fares approaching his cab with no sign of illness about them. He was not inclined to remain silent about such a striking event.

At one public audience, a father brought his little son who had been paralyzed from babyhood. The Holy Father took the child and held him in his arms while he talked to the other pilgrims. The child suddenly began to move in the Holy Father's arms, then jumped to the floor and began running about the room. There was no doubting the cure.

It was not only in the Pope's presence that cures took place but there were instances of the curing power of the Holy Father's prayers. Pius X made light of these happenings, and would dismiss them from conversation rapidly. If a cure were reported, the Pope would say: "I have nothing to do with it. It is the power of the Keys not mine."

CHAPTER SEVEN

Gathering Shadows

In the spring of 1913, Pius X was stricken with influenza. This was followed by an attack of bronchitis which weakened him very much. However, he made a complete recovery and resumed audiences though his doctors kept urging him to rest. "You are only trying to make me waste time that belongs to the Church," he remarked. "Think of our responsibility before the world," his physicians said. "Think of mine before God, if I fail to take care of His Church," the Pope replied. Before he had completely recovered, persecution flared up in Mexico again. This was not easy for Pius X to bear as he suffered from his inability to aid his suffering children. He could only pray and hope as the shadows lengthened over his seventy-nine years.

"I pity my successor," the Pope said to his Secretary of State, "for a great conflict is coming nearer and nearer. I shall

not see it." It was the spring of 1914. In the consistory held in May, he told the Cardinals; "The tragedy which is coming is one which I am powerless to help men escape, and which I shall not be able to halt. I have the highest ministry of peace and if I cannot protect the safety of so many young lives, who can and will?"

In the May consistory, Pius X created thirteen new Cardinals, four of them Americans. For the first time in over five hundred years the Italians did not form a majority. They constituted half of the Sacred College, the other half was made up of different nationalities. In his talk, Pius X spoke of the approaching disaster. He hoped men of good will throughout the world would secure peace. But he feared it was too late.

As the Pope entered the summer of his eightieth year he was heartened by a few pleasant events. He had some success in bringing about peace between Church and State in Mexico, and he was pleased because war between the United States and Mexico had been averted. Preparations were under way for a Eucharistic Congress at Lourdes. This would be in July. Nearly every country in the world was sending delegates.

The Pope's last pontifical brief dealt with the Congress. He wrote: "Never has Mary ceased to show that motherly love which until her last breath she poured forth so fully. It might indeed be said that her sole work was to lead all human beings to the love of Jesus and to zeal in His service. May the divine Author and Preserver of the Church look upon those of His flock who are afflicted today with so many calamities. May He pour out the fire of His love and revive the half dead faith of those who now hardly retain the name of Christian."

Three weeks before the Congress began, the Austrian Archduke and his wife were assassinated at Sarajevo. The Papal Nuncios all over the world were directed to bend all their efforts to preventing war. But Pius X probably realized that these efforts would prove futile. "In bygone times, the Pope with a word might have stopped the slaughter, but now I am powerless," were his words. When war came in August, Pius X declared: "I would have given my life to prevent it." When he was asked to bless the armies of Germany and Austria the Pope answered: "No. I bless peace and not war. But I shall bestow a blessing on all my sons alike in this

forced march to suffering and death." As the seminarians began to leave Rome, called to the colors by their governments, the Pope said to his Secretary of State; "It is hard to see my own children who yesterday worked here with me abandon the cassock for the soldier's uniform. Although they worked here in sympathetic companionship in different fields, they are now arrayed against one another ready to take each other's lives."

Those close to the Holy Father noticed him tiring as summer wore on and war raged. He sent a brief message to his children throughout the world:

"At this very moment when nearly the whole of Europe is being dragged into the vortex of a most terrible war, with its present dangers and misery and the consequences to follow, the very thought of which must strike everyone with grief and sorrow, We whose care is the life and welfare of so many citizens and peoples, cannot but be deeply moved and Our heart wrung with the bitterest sorrow.

"In the midst of this universal confusion and peril, We feel and know that both fatherly love and Our apostolic ministry demand that We should with all earnestness turn the thoughts of Christendom thither whence cometh all help—the Christ the Prince of Peace, the most powerful mediator between God and man. We charge then the Catholics of the whole world to approach the throne of grace and mercy, each and all of them, so that the merciful God may, as it were grow wearied with the prayers of His children and speedily remove the evil causes of war, inspire the rulers of the nations with thoughts of peace and not of war."

On the Feast of the Assumption, the Pope said Mass and held audiences, the last to a group of Americans. It was fitting as the first audience of his pontificate had been given to his "dear Americans." Two days later he was in great pain and soon was prostrated. He realized that his condition was serious. "May God's will be done; I think it is the end. Perhaps in His goodness He wishes to spare me the horrors Europe will undergo," he said. Pneumonia now set in. Surrounded by a few Cardinals and members of his family, Pius X received the Last Sacraments. Cardinal Merry del Val gave him absolution and Viaticum. The bystanders heard him say: "I am in the hands of God. I resign myself completely." He answered the

prayers for the dying, his voice growing weaker and weaker.

Now the great bell of St. Peter's boomed, notifying Rome that Pius X was dying. The churches of Rome began to fill with people raising their voices in prayer. People gathered in the court of St. Damasus; they crowded St. Peter's where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed. All Rome was praying with the great White Shepherd who was leaving his flock, the flock he loved so dearly. On the morning of August 20th he died. It was a quiet, peaceful passing, a weary traveler slipping into sleep. His last words were: "Together in one—all things in Christ."

Among the thousands of expressions of sympathy that were telegraphed to the Vatican from all over the world, one read: "He died of a broken heart, one of the first victims of the war and its most illustrious." The words expressed the general conviction of all Christendom, grief over a world tragedy that he was helpless to avert brought death to the sorrowing heart of Pius X.

On the morning of August 22, the Pontiff's will was read. It began: "I was born poor, I lived poor, I die poor." It made a few simple bequests. A sum of money recently given him was to be divided between an income for his sisters and support for four hundred Messina children whom he had cared for since the earthquake. All this, of course, if his successor approved. He expressed the wish not be embalmed and the desire to be buried in the crypt of St. Peter's.

In the evening of that day the body of Pius X was buried in the crypt of St. Peter's as he had wished. The ceremonies were simple at the request of the family. A few tapers gave a little light to the great church. There was some faint candle light at the Shrine of the Apostles. The procession started at the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament and was met by Cardinal Merry del Val. As it made its way through the basilica the Sistine choir sang Palestrina's *Miserere*. When it reached the tomb, the coffin was enclosed within a coffin of lead, on which the Pope's name was placed and the dates of his birth and death. This was enclosed within an oaken coffin to which Cardinal Merry del Val affixed the seal of state, kissed the coffin, and chanted the AMEN to the *Miserere*. Silently through the gathering shadows everyone withdrew.

Epilogue

He whom we now invoke as Blessed Pius was born Joseph Sarto on June 2, 1835 at Riese in the diocese of Treviso. His father was poor and had to work hard to support his family. Joseph was the eldest of eight surviving children, two of his brothers died when babies. After the usual schooling, Joseph Sarto won a scholarship to the seminary at Padua which he entered in November 1850. He distinguished himself during his seminary career for scholarship and piety. He was outstanding in his knowledge and love for ecclesiastical music and for catechetics. He was ordained to the priesthood on September 18, 1858 at the Cathedral of Castelfranco.

Father Sarto's first assignment was to a parish of 1,500 souls at Tombolo. Here he served for eight years. On July 14, 1867 when he was thirty-two years old he was named Archpriest of Salzano, an important parish in the diocese of Treviso. On November 28, 1875, he was named Canon of the Cathedral of Treviso and Chancellor of the Diocese. He was also appointed spiritual director of the seminary. During all this time he was ever the teacher, gladly taking catechism classes, and giving instructions in Church music.

On November 10, 1884, Pope Leo XIII named Canon Sarto, Bishop of Mantua. He took over his See on April 18 of the following year. The state of the diocese was not good. Bishop Sarto at once began to remedy conditions. His seminary was his first concern. He taught theology, Canon Law and Church music, and gave special attention to the spiritual training of the seminarians. He effected a spiritual transformation of the diocese by spoken word, apostolic letter and personal zeal. He revived catechetical instruction not for children but for adults, using the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine as his principal means. He urged its establishment in every parish as well as the founding of permanent catechetical schools. He required his priests to explain a section of the catechism each Sunday to the people. He said to his people: "Rather miss a devotion than a sermon. What will devotions profit you if you fail to understand their meaning. How can you understand sermons if you are ignorant of primary and most necessary truths? By the catechism the soil is prepared for the seed of God."

After nine years as Bishop of Mantua, Joseph Sarto was made a Cardinal by Leo XIII on June 12, 1893, and three days later named Patriarch of Venice. The Pope said to him: "We congratulate you, Our beloved son, who has so worthily guided the Church of Mantua, truly a good shepherd of the people." The Cardinal visited Riese his boyhood home, and rode over the road from Castelfranco where fifty-five years before he had trudged to school with a crust of bread in his pocket and his shoes thrown over his shoulder.

For ten years he labored as Patriarch of Venice, as he had as a priest and Bishop. The Venetians loved him for he was ever their father, friend and servant. He was as usual most concerned for his clergy and seminary, was engaged constantly in teaching old and young, and was solicitous for the social and economic welfare of his people. On July 20, 1903, Leo XIII died and a few days later Cardinal Sarto left Venice for the Papal Conclave, with a return ticket in his pocket. It was never used.

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