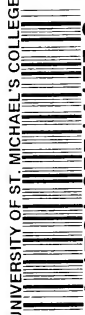


UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



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TRANS





AN

# EXPLANATION

OF THE

# Baltimore Catechism

of Christian Doctrine.

FOR THE USE OF

Sunday-School Teachers and Advanced Classes.

BY

REV. THOMAS L. KINKEAD.

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SIXTH EDITION

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"I have examined your 'Explanation of the Baltimore Catechism' on some of the most important points of doctrine and morals. I find its teachings sound, and the manner of presenting them practical. I take pleasure in commending your book to priests and teachers, and in congratulating you for having bestowed so much time on the greatest of all pastoral work, viz.: giving the children a thorough and sound knowledge of Holy Church and of her divine teachings."

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**RIGHT REV. TOBIAS MULLEN, D.D., BISHOP OF ERIE:**

"Your book appears to me a very meritorious production. In your preface you observe it has been designed for the use of Sunday-school teachers and that it 'should do good in any Catholic family.' I think you might have added that any clergyman having the care of souls, whether giving private instructions or preparing for the pulpit, would derive great benefits from its perusal."

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"The 'Explanation of the Baltimore Catechism,' plain and practical, clear and comprehensive, was a work very much needed. From a general examination, I think you have done your work well, and you deserve the thanks of all teachers of catechism and those who have charge of our schools. You have simplified the work of the teacher by putting in his hand such a ready handbook and commentary on the text he is supposed to explain. If they do what they expect their pupils to do—study the lesson—with such a help as you have furnished them, the work of the Sunday-school will be much more satisfactory. I hope the hearty appreciation of those for whom you have labored will crown your work with abundant success."

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GRAND RAPIDS:**

"The aim of your book is excellent. To judge from the portions which I have read, your labor has been successful. I recommend the book to all Catholic adults, but especially to teachers and converts, as a convenient handbook of appropriate, plain, and solid instructions on the doctrines of the Catholic Church."

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"I consider it a most useful if not necessary book, not only for Sunday-school teachers and for advanced classes, but for all who may desire to have a clear, definite knowledge of Christian doctrine."

## PREFACE.

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It must be evident to all who have had experience in the work of our Sunday-schools that much time is wasted in the classes. Many teachers do little more than mark the attendance and hear the lessons; this being done, time hangs heavily on their hands till the school is dismissed. They do not or cannot explain what they are teaching, and the children have no interest in the study.

The "EXPLANATION OF THE BALTIMORE CATECHISM" is intended for their use. The explanations are full and simple. The examples are taken from Holy Scripture, from the parables of Our Lord, from incidents in His life, and from the customs and manners of the people of His time. These are made applicable to our daily lives in reflections and exhortations.

The plan of the book makes it very simple and handy. The Catechism is complete and distinct in itself, and may be used with or without the explanations. The teacher is supposed, after hearing the lesson, to read the explanation of the new lesson as far as time will allow. It may be read just as it is, or may be learned by the teacher and given to the children in substance.

The "EXPLANATION OF THE BALTIMORE CATECHISM" will be found very useful also for the instruction of adults and converts. The priest on the mission is often called upon to instruct persons who can come to him but seldom, and only for a short time; and who, moreover, are incapable of using with profit such books as "The Faith of our Fathers,"

“Catholic Belief,” or works of controversy. They are simply able to use the Child’s Catechism when explained to them. If the “EXPLANATION OF THE BALTIMORE CATECHISM” is in their hands, they may read the explanations and study the Catechism with pleasure.

Indeed the book should do good in any Catholic family. The majority of our people are children as far as their religious knowledge goes. They may, it is true, have books on particular subjects, such as the “Duties of Parents to their Children,” “The Sure Way to a Happy Marriage,” etc.; but a book that explains to them in the simplest manner all the truths of their religion, and applies the same to their daily lives, ought to be useful.

The chief aim of the book is to be practical, and to teach Catholics what they should know, and how these truths of their Catechism are constantly coming up in the performance of their every-day duties. It is therefore neither a book of devotion nor of controversy, though it covers the ground of both. As in this book the explanations are interrupted by the questions and answers of the Catechism proper, it will, it is hoped, be read with more pleasure than a book giving solid page after page of instruction.

Wherever a fact is mentioned as being taken from Holy Scripture, it will generally be given in substance and not in the exact text; though the reference will always be given, so that those wishing may read it as it is in the Holy Scripture. The children are not supposed to memorize the explanation as they do the Catechism itself, yet the teacher, having once read it to them, should ask questions on it. The book may be used as a text-book or catechism for the more advanced classes, and the complete list of numbered questions on the explanations—given at the end—will render it very serviceable for that purpose.

As the same subject often occurs in different parts of the Catechism, explanations already given may sometimes be repeated. This is done either to show the connection between the different parts of the Catechism, or to impress the

explanation more deeply on the minds of the children, or to save the teacher the trouble of always turning back to preceding explanations. The numbering of the questions and answers throughout the Catechism, and the complete index of subjects and list of questions at the end, will, it is hoped, make these comparisons and references easy, and the book itself useful.

With the hope, then, that the "EXPLANATION OF THE BALTIMORE CATECHISM" may do all the good intended, I commend it to all who desire a fuller knowledge of their holy religion that they may practise it more faithfully.

FEAST OF ST. ALOYSIUS, 1891.



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AN EXPLANATION  
OF  
THE CATECHISM OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

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PRAYERS.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

**Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.**

**This is the most beautiful and best of all prayers, because Our Lord Himself made it (Matt. vi. 9; Luke xi. 2). One day when He was praying and explaining to His apostles the great advantages of prayer, one of them said to Him: "Lord, teach us to pray." Then Jesus taught them this prayer. It contains everything we need or could ask for. We cannot see its full meaning at once. The more we think over it, the more clearly we understand it. We could write whole pages on almost every word, and still not say all that could be said about this prayer. It is called "the Lord's," because He made it, and sometimes the "Our Father," from the first words.**

**We say "Our," to show that we are all brethren, and that God is the Father of us all, and therefore we pray not for ourselves alone but for all God's children.**

We say "**Father**," because God really is our **Father**. We do not mean here by Father the First Person of the Blessed **Trinity**, but the Blessed Trinity itself—one God. What does a father do for his children? He gives them their natural existence, provides them with food and clothing, teaches, protects, and loves them, shares with them all that he has, and when he dies leaves them his possessions. Now, in all these ways, and in a much truer sense, God is our Father. He created us and gives us all that is necessary to sustain life. He gives light, heat, and air, without any one of which we could not live. He provides for us also food and clothing, and long before we need or even think of these things God is thinking of them. Did you ever reflect upon just how much time and trouble it costs to produce for you even one potato, of which you think so little? About two years before you need that potato, God puts it into the mind of the farmer to save the seed that he may plant it the following year. In the proper season he prepares the ground with great care and plants the seed. Then God sends His sunlight and rain to make it grow, but the farmer's work is not yet ended: he must continue to keep the soil in good condition and clear away the weeds. In due time the potato is taken from the ground, brought to the market, carried to your house, cooked and placed before you. You take it without even thinking, perhaps, of all this trouble, or thanking God for His goodness. This is only one article of food, and the same may be said of all the rest. Your clothing is provided for you long before you need it. The little lamb upon whose back the wool is growing, from which your coat is some day to be made, is even now far away on some mountain, growing stronger with the food God gives it till you need its wool. The little pieces of coal, too, that you so carelessly throw upon the fire were formed deep down in the earth hundreds of years ago. God produces all you use, because He foresees and knows you will use it. Moreover He protects us from danger; He teaches us by the voice of our conscience and the ministers of His Church, our priests and bishops. He loves us too, as

we may learn from all that He does for us, and from the many times He forgives us our sins. He shares what He possesses with us. He has given us understanding and a free will resembling His own. He has given us immortality, i. e., when once He has created us, we shall exist as long as Himself—that is, forever. When Our Lord died on the cross, He left us His many possessions,—His graces and merits, the holy sacraments, and heaven itself.

It is, surely, then just and right to call God Father. Our natural fathers give us only what they, themselves, get from God. So even what they give us also comes from Him.

Before the time of Our Lord, the people in prayer did not call God Father. They feared Him more than they loved Him. When He spoke to them—as He did when He gave the commandments to Moses—it was in thunder, lightning, and smoke (Exodus xix.). They looked upon God as a great and terrible king who would destroy them for their sins. He sent the deluge on account of sin, and He destroyed the wicked city of Sodom with fire from heaven (Genesis vii.; xix.) They called Him Jehovah, and were afraid sometimes even to pronounce His name. But Our Lord taught that God, besides being a great and powerful king—the Ruler of the universe and Lord of all things—is also a kind and good Father, Who wishes His children not to offend Him because they love Him rather than because they fear Him, and therefore He taught His disciples and all Christians to call God by the sweet name of Father.

**“Who art in heaven.”** The Catechism says God is everywhere. Why then do we say, “Who art in heaven,” as if He were no place else? We say so to remind us, 1st, that heaven is our true home, and that this world is only a strange land in which we are staying for a while to do the work that God wishes us to do here, and then return to our own home; 2d, that in heaven we shall see God face to face and as He is; 3d, that heaven is the place where God will be for all eternity with the blessed.

**“Hallowed”** means made *holy* or *sacred*. Halloween is

the name given to the evening before the feast of All Hallows or All Saints.

**"Thy kingdom come."** This petition contains a great deal more than we at first see in it. In it we ask that God may reign in our hearts and in the hearts of all men by His grace in this life, and that we and all men may attain our eternal salvation, and thus be brought to reign forever with God in heaven—the kingdom of His glory. As the Church on earth is frequently called the kingdom of Christ, and as all the labors of the Church are directed to the salvation of souls, we pray also in this petition that the Church may be extended upon earth, that the true religion may be spread over the whole world, that all men may know and serve the true God and cheerfully obey His holy laws; that the devil may have no dominion over them. While saying this petition we may have it in our minds to pray even for particular ways in which the true religion can be spread; for example, by praying that the missionaries may meet with success and all the missions prosper; that priests and bishops may be ordained to preach the Gospel; that the Church may overcome all her enemies everywhere, and the true religion triumph.

**"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."** In heaven all the angels and saints obey God perfectly; they never offend Him; so we pray that it may be on earth as it is in heaven, all men doing God's will, observing His laws and the laws of His Church, and living without sin.

**"Give us this day our daily bread."** In this petition "bread" means not merely bread, but everything we need for our daily lives; such as food, clothing, light, heat, air, and the like; also food for the soul, i.e., grace. If a beggar told you that he had not tasted bread for the whole day, you would never think of asking him if he had eaten any cake, because you would understand by his word bread all kinds of food. We say "daily," to teach us not to be greedy or too careful about ourselves, and not to ask for unnecessary things, but to pray for what we need for our present wants.

**"And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who**

**trespass against us.** "Trespases" means here our sins, our offences against God. When we trespass we enter places we should not, or where we are forbidden to go. So when we sin we go where we should not go, viz., out of the path of virtue that leads to God, and into the way of vice that leads to the devil.

**"As we forgive them."** We take this to mean: we forgive others who have offended us, and for that reason, God, You should forgive us who have offended You. Our Lord told (Matt. xviii. 23) a beautiful parable, i.e., a story by way of illustration, to explain this. A very rich man had a servant who owed him a large sum of money. One day the master asked the servant for the money, and the poor servant had none to give. Now the law of the country was, that when any one could not pay his debts, all that he had could be sold and the money given to the one to whom it was due, and if that was not sufficient, he and his wife and his children could be sold as slaves. The servant, knowing this, fell on his knees and begged his master to be patient with him, and to give him time and he would pay all. Then his master was moved to pity, granted not only what he asked, but freed him from the debt altogether. Afterwards when this servant, who had just been forgiven the large sum, was going out, he found one of his fellow-servants who owed him a very small sum of money, and taking hold of him by the throat, demanded payment. Now, this poor servant, having nothing to give just then, implored his assailant to be patient with him and he would pay all. But the hard-hearted servant—though he himself had a little while before asked and obtained the very same favor from his own master—would not listen to the request or wait longer, but went and had his fellow-servant cast into prison till he should pay the debt. The other servants, seeing how unforgiving this man was who had himself been forgiven, went and told all to their master, and he, being angry at such conduct, had the unforgiving servant brought back and cast into prison.

**"And lead us not into temptation."** "Temptation" means a trial to see whether we will do a thing or not. Here it

means a trial made by some person or thing—the devil, the world, or our own flesh—to see whether we will sin or not. God does not exactly lead us into temptation; but He allows us to fall into it. He allows others to tempt us. We can overcome any temptation to sin by the help or grace that God gives us. Therefore we ask in this petition that God will always give us the grace to overcome the temptation, and that we may not consent to it. A temptation is not a sin. It becomes sin only when we are overcome by it. When we are tempted we are like soldiers fighting a battle: if the soldiers are conquered by their enemy, they are disgraced; but if they conquer their enemy, they have great glory and great rewards. So, when we overcome temptation, God gives us a new glory and reward for every victory.

**“Deliver us from evil.”** From every kind of evil, and especially the evil of being conquered by our spiritual enemies, and thus falling into sin, and offending God by becoming His enemy ourselves. It would be a sin to seek temptation, though we have a reward for resisting it when it comes.

**“Amen”** means, *be it so*. May all we have asked be granted just as we have asked it.

#### THE ANGELICAL SALUTATION.

**Hail, Mary, full of grace! the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

Next in beauty to the Lord's Prayer comes this prayer. It is made up of three parts:

**“Hail, full of grace! the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou amongst women”** was composed by the angel Gabriel, for these are the words he used when he came to tell the Blessed Virgin that she was selected to be the Mother of God (Luke i. 28). All her people knew that the Redeemer promised from the time of Eve down to the time of the Blessed Virgin was

now to be born, and many good women were anxious to be His mother, and they believed the one who would be selected the most blessed and happy of all women.

**"The Lord is with thee"** by His grace and favor, since you are the one He loves best. He is with all His creatures, but He is with you in a very special manner.

After the visit of the angel, the Blessed Virgin went a good distance to visit her cousin, St. Elizabeth, who was the mother of St. John the Baptist (Luke i. 39). When St. Elizabeth saw her, she, without being told by the Blessed Virgin what the angel had done, knew by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost what had taken place, and said to the Blessed Virgin: **"Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb."** That is, "blessed" because, of all the women that have ever lived or ever shall live, you are the one selected by God to be the mother of His Son and Our Redeemer, and blessed is that Son Himself. This is the second part of the prayer. The third part, from **"Holy Mary"** to the end, was composed by the Church.

**"Hail."** This was the word used by the people of that country in saluting one another when they met. We say when meeting any one we know, "Good-day," or "How do you do?" or some such familiar expression used by all in salutation. So these people, instead of saying, "Good-day," etc., said "Hail," i.e., I wish you health, I greet you, etc. The angel did not say **"Mary,"** because she was the only one present to address.

**"Full of grace."** When anything is full it has no room for more. God's grace and sin cannot exist in the same place. Therefore when the Blessed Virgin was full of grace, there was no room for sin. So she was without any sin and gifted with every virtue.

**"Holy Mary,"** because one full of grace must be holy.

**"Mother of God,"** because her Son was true God and true man in the one person of Christ, Our Lord.

**"Pray for us,"** because she has more power with her Son than all the other saints.

**"Sinners,"** and therefore we need forgiveness.

**“At the hour of our death”** especially, because that is the most important time for us. No matter how bad we have been during our lives, if God gives us the grace to die in His friendship, we shall be His friends forever. On the other hand, no matter how good we may have been for a part of our lives, if we become bad before death, and die in that state, we shall be separated from God forever, and be condemned to eternal punishment. It would be wrong, therefore, to live in sin, with a promise that we shall die well, for God may not give us the grace or opportunity to repent, and we may die in sin if we have lived in sin. Besides this, the devil knows how much depends upon the state in which we die, and so he perhaps will tempt us more at death than at any other time; for if we yield to him and die in sin, we shall be with him forever—it is his last chance to secure our souls.

Besides the Hail Mary there is another beautiful prayer on the same subject, called the **Angelus**. It is a little history of the Incarnation, and is said morning, noon, and evening in honor of Our Lord’s incarnation, death, and resurrection. It is made up of three parts. The first part tells what the angel did, viz.: “The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary. And she conceived of the Holy Ghost.” After saying these words, we say one Hail Mary in honor of the angel’s message. The second part tells what Mary answered, viz.: “Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to thy word.” We say another Hail Mary in honor of Mary’s consent. The third part tells how Our Lord became Man, viz.: “And the Word was made flesh. And dwelt among us.” The “Word” means here the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity; and “made flesh” means, became man. Then another Hail Mary is said in honor of Our Lord’s goodness in humbling Himself so much for our sake. After these three parts we say: “Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God! that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ;” and, finally, we say a prayer in honor of Our Lord’s Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection. This beautiful prayer is said three times a day in all seminaries, convents, and religious houses. The time for saying it is made known by the ringing of a bell,

called the "Angelus bell." In many parishes the church bell rings out the Angelus. In Catholic countries the people stop wherever they are and whatever they are doing, and bowing their heads, say the Angelus when they hear its bell. It is a beautiful practice and one most pleasing to our Blessed Lord and His holy Mother. Good Catholics should not neglect it.

I might mention here another kind of prayer often said in honor of our blessed Mother. It is the **Litany**. In this form of prayer we call Our Lady many beautiful names which we know are most dear to her, asking her after each one to pray for us. We address her first by names reminding her that she is the Mother of God and has therefore great influence with her divine Son. We say: Mother of Christ, Mother of Our Creator, Mother of Our Redeemer, etc., pray for us. Next we remind her that she is a virgin and should take pity on us who are exposed to so many temptations against holy purity. We call her virgin most pure, virgin most chaste, etc., and again ask her to pray for us. Lastly we call her all those names that could induce her to hear us. We say: health of the weak, refuge of sinners, help of Christians, pray for us.

In addition to the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, we have the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus, the Litany of the Blessed Sacrament, the Litany of the Sacred Heart, the Litany of St. Joseph, and many others—all made up in the same form. We have also the Litany of all the Saints, in which we beg the help and prayers of the different classes of saints—the apostles, martyrs, virgins, etc.

#### THE APOSTLES' CREED.

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth ; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified ; died, and was buried. He descended into hell ; the third day He arose again from the dead ; He ascended into heaven, sitteth at**

the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

A creed is a definite list or summary of all the things one believes. The "Apostles' Creed" is therefore a list or collection of all the truths the apostles believed. The "apostles" were the twelve men that Our Lord selected to be His first bishops. We know they were bishops because they could ordain priests and consecrate other bishops. They lived with Our Lord like a little family during the three and a half years of His public life; they went with Him and learned from Him wherever He preached. Besides these He had also His disciples, i.e., followers who went with Him frequently but did not live with Him. Our Lord wished His doctrine to be taught to all the people of the world, and so He told His apostles that they must go over the whole world and preach in every country. During the life of Our Lord and for a short time after His death they preached in only one country, viz., Palestine—now called the Holy Land—in which country the Jews, up to that time God's chosen people, lived. Since the apostles were to preach to all nations, the time came when they must separate, one going to one country, and another to another. In those days there were no steamboats or railroads, no post-offices, telegraph-offices, telephones, or newspapers. If the apostles wished to communicate with any one they had either to go to the place themselves or send a messenger. By walking or riding it might have taken them months or years in those days to make a journey that we can make now in a few days; and for an answer to a message which we can get now by telegraph in a few hours they might have had to wait months. The apostles knew of all these inconveniences, and before leaving the places they were in pointed out the chief truths that all should know and believe before receiving baptism, that Christian teachers who should come after them might neglect nothing—just as we use catechisms containing all the truths

of religion, for fear the teachers might forget to speak of some of them. There are "twelve articles" or parts in the Apostles' Creed, and each part is meant to refute some false doctrine taught before the time of the apostles or while they lived. Thus there were those—as the Romans—who said there were many gods; others said not God, but the devil created the earth; others taught that Our Lord was not the Son of God; and so on for the rest. All these false doctrines are denied and the truth professed when we say the Apostles' Creed.

Just as in the Lord's Prayer we do not see all its meaning at first, so in the Apostles' Creed we find many beautiful things only after thinking carefully over every word it contains.

**"I believe,"** without the slightest doubt or suspicion that I might be wrong.

**"In God"** by the grace that He gives me to believe and have full confidence in Him.

**"God,"** to show that there is only one.

**"The Father,"** because He brought everything into existence and keeps it so (see Explanation of the Lord's Prayer).

**"Almighty,"** i.e., having all might or power; because He can do whatever He wishes. He can make or destroy by merely wishing.

**"Creator."** To create means to make out of nothing. God alone can create. When a carpenter makes a table, he must have wood; when a tailor makes a coat, he must have cloth. They are only makers and not creators. God needs no material or tools. When we make anything, we make it part by part; but God makes the whole at once. He simply wills and it is made. Thus He said in the beginning of the world: "Let there be light; and light was made." For example, suppose I wanted a piano. If I could say, "Let there be a piano," and it immediately sprang up without any other effort on my part, although neither the wood, the iron, the wire, the ivory, nor anything else in it ever existed till I said, "Let there be a piano," then it could be said I created a piano. No one could do this, for God alone has such power.

**"Heaven and earth"** and everything we can see or know of.

**"Jesus Christ."** Our Lord is called by many names, but you must not be confused by them, for they all mean the same person, and are given only to remind us of some particular thing connected with Our Lord. He is called "**Jesus**," which signifies Saviour, and "**Christ**," which means anointed. He is called the "**Second Person of the Blessed Trinity**," and when we call Him "**Our Lord**," we mean the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity after He became man. He is called the "**Messias**" and the "**Son of David**" to show that He is the Redeemer promised to the Jews. Also at the end of all our litanies He is called the "**Lamb of God**," because He was so meek and humble and suffered death so patiently. In the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus we will find many other beautiful names of Our Lord, all having their special signification.

**"His only Son,"** to show that God, the First Person of the Blessed Trinity, was His real Father. We are called God's children, but we are only His created and adopted children.

**"Who was conceived,"** i.e., He began to exist by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of His Mother, the Blessed Virgin.

**"Suffered."** We shall see in the explanation of the Passion what He suffered.

**"Under"** means here, at the time a man named Pontius Pilate was governor. If any one were put to death to-day in this country, we should say he was executed *under* Governor or President so-and-so. **"Crucified,"** i.e., nailed to a cross. We say "**died**," because Our Lord is the Giver of Life, and no one could take His life away unless He allowed it. Therefore we say He died, and not that He was killed, to show that He died by His own free will and not against His will.

**"Was buried."** This we say to show that He was really dead; because if you bury a man who is not really dead he must die.

**“Hell”** here does not mean the place where the damned are, but a place called **“Limbo.”** You know that when our first parents sinned, heaven was closed against them and us, and no human being could be admitted into it till after the death of Our Lord; for He by His death would redeem us—make amends for our fall and once more open for us heaven. Now from the time Adam sinned till the time Christ died is about four thousand years. During that time there were at least some good men, like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and others, in the world, who tried to serve God as best they could—keeping all the divine laws known to them, and believing that the Messiah would some day come to redeem them. When, therefore, they died they could not go to heaven, because it was closed against them. They could not go to hell, because they were good men. Neither could they go to purgatory, because they would have to suffer there. Where could they go? God in His goodness provided a place for them—Limbo—where they could stay without suffering till Our Lord reopened heaven. Therefore, while Our Lord's body lay in the sepulchre, His soul went down into Limbo, to tell these good men that heaven was now opened for them, and that at His ascension He would take them there with Him.

**“The third day.”** Not three full days, but the parts of three days, viz., Friday afternoon, Saturday, and Sunday morning.

**“He arose”** by His own power: and this was the greatest of all Our Lord's miracles. Some others, like the prophets and apostles, have, by the power God gave them, raised the dead to life; but no dead person ever raised himself. Our Lord is the first and only one to do this, and by so doing showed they could not take away His life unless He wished to give it up; for since He could always take back His life, how could they destroy it?

**“He ascended”** forty days after His resurrection.

**“Right hand of God.”** We know God is a pure spirit having no body; and if He has no body, He can have no

hands. Why then do we say right hand? When the President of the United States invites any one to dine at his house, he makes the invited guest sit at his right hand, and thus shows his respect by giving him the place of highest honor.

When Our Lord ascended into heaven, He went up in the human body He had upon earth, and His Father placed Him as man, in His glorified body, in the place, after His [the Father's] own, the highest in heaven; but remember, only as man, because as God He is equal to His Father in all things.

**"From thence"**—that is, from the right hand of God.

**"To judge."** To examine them, to pronounce sentence upon them; to reward them in heaven or punish them in hell.

**"The living and the dead."** We may take this in a double sense. As the general judgment will come suddenly and when not expected, all will be going on in the world as usual—some attending to business, others taking their ease as they do now, or as they were doing when the deluge came upon them. Just when the judgment is about to take place, God will destroy the earth; and then all those living in the world will perish with its destruction and then be judged. The "dead" means, therefore, all those who died before the destruction of the world, and the "living" all those who were on earth when the time of its destruction came. Or the "living" may mean also those in a state of grace, and the "dead" those in mortal sin; for God will judge both classes.

**"Holy Ghost,"** i.e., the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. Ghost is an old word meaning spirit. When persons say that a ghost appeared, they mean that the spirit of some dead person appeared. These stories about ghosts are told generally to frighten children or timid persons. If those who thought they saw a ghost always examined what they saw, they would find that the supposed ghost was something very natural; probably a bush swayed by the wind, or a stray animal, or perhaps some person trying to frighten them. Ghost here does not mean the spirit of a

dead person, but the Holy Spirit, which is the proper name for the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity.

“**The communion of saints.**” There are three parts in the Church. We have, first, the **Church Militant**, i.e., the fighting Church, made up of all the faithful upon earth, who are still fighting for their salvation. The Holy Scripture tells us our life upon earth is a warfare. We have three enemies to fight. First, *the devil*, who by every means wishes to keep us out of heaven—the place he once enjoyed himself. The devil knows well the happiness of heaven, and does not wish us to have what he cannot have himself; just as you sometimes see persons who, through their own fault, have lost their situation trying to keep others out of it.

Our second enemy is *the world*. This does not mean the earth with all its beauty and riches, but the bad people in the world with their false doctrines; some telling us there is no God, heaven, or hell, others that we should pay no attention to the teaching of the Church or the laws of God, and advising us by word and example to resist our lawful superiors in Church or State and give free indulgence to our sinful passions.

The third enemy is our own *flesh*. By this we mean our concupiscence, that is, our passions, evil inclinations, and propensity to do wrong. When God first created man, the soul was always master over the body, and the body obedient to the soul. After Adam sinned, the body rebelled against the soul and tried to lead it into sin. The body is the part of our nature that makes us like the brute animals, while the soul makes us like to God and the angels.

When we sin, it is generally to satisfy the body craving for what it has not, or for that which is forbidden. Why did God leave this concupiscence in us? He left it, first, to keep us humble, by reminding us of our former sins, and, secondly, that we might overcome it and have a reward for the victory.

The second branch of the Church is called the **Church Suffering**. It is made up of all those who have gone through this world and are now in purgatory.

Some of them while on earth fought well, but not as well

as they could have done; they yielded to some temptations, fell into some small sins, received some slight wounds from their spiritual enemies, or they have not satisfied God entirely for the temporal guilt due to their great sins; therefore they are in purgatory till they can be completely purified from all their sins and admitted into heaven.

The last or third branch of the Church is called the **Church Triumphant**, and is made up of the angels and all those who have lived at one time upon earth and who are now in heaven with God, enjoying their rewards for overcoming their spiritual enemies and serving God while upon earth. They are triumphant or rejoicing because they have reached their heavenly home.

You must not think that those only are saints who have been canonized by the Church and whose names are known to us; for all in heaven are saints, as we also shall be if admitted into that happy eternity. God wishes all to be saints, for He wishes all to be saved. You know we can pray to the saints and ask their help and prayers; but how could we know that certain men or women are really in heaven? We can know it when the Church canonizes them, and thus gives proof that they were great spiritual heroes in the service of God and can be more confidently appealed to on account of their eminent sanctity and powerful intercession.

Therefore the Church by canonization tells us for certain that such and such persons are truly in heaven. But might not the Church be deceived like ourselves?

No! for Christ has promised to be always with His Church, and the Holy Ghost is ever directing her, so that she cannot err in faith or morals. If the Church made us pray to persons who are not saints, she would fall into the worst of errors, and Our Lord would have failed to keep His promise—a saying that would be blasphemous, for Christ, being God, is infinitely true and could not deceive or be deceived. To canonize, therefore, does not mean to make a saint, but to declare to the whole world that such a one was a saint while

upon earth. After death we cannot merit, so our reward in heaven will be just what we have secured up till the moment of our death; hence holiness is acquired in the Church Militant.

How does the Church canonize a saint? Let us suppose some good man dies, and all his neighbors talk about his holy life, how much he did for the poor, how he prayed, fasted, and mortified himself. All these accounts of his life are collected and sent to Rome, to the Holy Father or to the cardinals appointed by him to examine such statements. These accounts must show that the good man practised virtue in a more than ordinary manner, that he either performed some miracles while he lived, or that God granted miracles after his death through his intercession.

These accounts are not examined immediately after his death, but sometimes after a lapse of fifty years or more, so that people might not exaggerate his good works because they knew him personally.

When these accounts are examined, one is appointed to prevent, if he can, the canonization. He is sometimes called the devil's advocate, because it is his business to find fault with all the accounts and miracles, and prove them false if possible. This is done to make certain that all the accounts are true and the miracles real. If everything is found as represented, then the good man is declared venerable, later beatified, i.e., called blessed, and still later canonized, i.e., declared a saint. If he is only beatified, he can be honored publicly only in certain places or by certain persons; but if he is canonized, he can be honored throughout the whole Church by all the faithful.

Thus we understand the three branches of the one true Church—the Church Militant, i.e., all those who are on earth trying to save their souls; the Church Suffering, those in purgatory, having their souls purified for heaven; and the Church Triumphant, those already in heaven.

The "**communion of saints**" means that these three branches of the Church can help one another. We help the

souls in purgatory by our prayers and good works, and the saints in heaven pray for us. But "communion of saints" means still more. Let us take an example. Suppose there are in a family, living together, a mother and three sons. The eldest son earns a large salary, the second son enough to support himself, and the youngest very little. They give their earnings to their mother, who from the combined amounts provides for the wants of all and draws from the large salary of the eldest to supply the needs of the youngest. Thus he who has too little for his support is—through his mother—aided by the one who has more than he needs. Now, the Church is our mother, and some of her children—the great saints—were rich in good works and did more than was necessary to gain heaven, while others did not do enough. Then our mother, the Church, draws from the abundant satisfaction of her rich children to help those who are poor in merit and good works. The greatest treasure she has to draw from for that purpose is the more than abundant merits of Our Lord and the superabundant satisfaction of the Blessed Virgin and the greatest saints. Our Lord could have redeemed us all by the least suffering, and yet He suffered dreadful torments, and even shed His blood and died for us. The Blessed Virgin never sinned, yet she performed many good works and offered many prayers. Therefore "communion of saints" means, also, that we all share in the merits of Christ and in the superabundant satisfaction of the Blessed Virgin and of the saints; also in the prayers and good works of the Church and of her faithful and pious children.

**"The forgiveness of sins,"** i.e., by the Sacrament of Penance, through the power that God gave His priests; also by Baptism.

**"The resurrection of the body,"** i.e., on the last day (Matt. xxiv. 29; Luke xxi. 25). When on the last day, at the general judgment, God's angel sounds the great trumpet, all the dead will arise again and come to judgment, in the same bodies they had while living. But you will say: If their bodies are reduced to ashes and mixed with

the earth, or if parts of them are in one place and parts in another, how is this possible? Very easily, with God. If He in the beginning could make all the parts out of nothing, with how much ease can He collect them scattered here and there! When God made man He gave him a body and a soul, and wished them never to be separated. Man was to live here upon earth for a time, and then be taken up into heaven, body and soul, as Our Lord is there now. But when man sinned, in punishment God commanded that he should die; i.e., that these two dear friends, the body and the soul, should be separated for a time. Death is caused by the separation of the soul from the body. The body and soul together make a man, and neither one alone can be called a man. A dead body is only part of a man. At the resurrection every soul will come from heaven, purgatory, or hell, to seek its own body; they will then be united again as they were in life, never to be separated—to be happy together in heaven if they have been good upon earth, or miserable together in hell if they had been bad upon earth.

“**Life everlasting**”—either, as we have said, in heaven or hell. There was a time when we did not exist; but it can never be said of us again we do not exist. When once we have been created, we shall live as long as God Himself, i.e., forever. When we have lived a thousand years for every drop of water in the ocean; a thousand years for every grain of sand on the seashore; a thousand years for every blade of grass and every leaf on the earth, we shall still be existing. How short a time, therefore, is a hundred years, even if we live so long—and few do—compared with all these millions of years! And yet it depends upon the time we live here whether all these millions of years in the next world will be for us years of happiness or of misery. The whole life of a man extends through the two worlds, viz., from the moment of his creation through all eternity; and surely the little while he stays upon earth must seem very short when, after spending a million of years in the next world, he looks back to his earthly life. There is a good example to illustrate

this. If you stand on a railroad, and look away down the track for about a mile, it will seem to you that the rails come nearer and nearer, till at last they touch. It seems so on account of the distance, for where they seem to touch they are just as far apart as where you are standing. So, also, when you look back from eternity, the day of your birth and the day of your death will seem to coincide, and your life on earth appear nothing. Then, if you are among the lost souls, you will think, What a fool I was to make myself suffer all this long eternity for that silly bit of earthly pleasure, which is of no benefit to me now! And this thought will serve only to make you more miserable. But, on the other hand, if you look back from a happy eternity, you will wonder at God's goodness in giving you so much happiness for so short a service upon earth.

#### THE CONFITEOR.

**I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the saints, that I have sinned exceedingly, in thought, word, and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I beseech blessed Mary ever Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and all the saints, to pray to the Lord our God for me.**

**May the Almighty God have mercy on me, forgive me my sins, and bring me to everlasting life. Amen.**

**May the Almighty and merciful Lord grant me pardon, absolution, and remission of all my sins. Amen.**

This is another beautiful prayer. In it we can imagine that we are permitted to enter heaven. What do we see there? God, the Blessed Virgin, the thousands of angels, the apostles, all the saints, martyrs, confessors, doctors, and virgins. They cease singing God's praises, as we enter, and fix their eyes upon us. Our guardian angel conducts us before the great throne of God, and we kneel down in the presence of

the whole court of heaven, to acknowledge our sins and faults, while all listen attentively. Touched by so sublime a sight and the thought of having offended a God of so much glory, we begin our accusation of ourselves. We fix our eyes first upon God, and say : **“I confess,”** i.e., accuse myself, **“to Almighty God.”** Then we look upon the rest of the blessed, and say : **“to the blessed Mary ever Virgin,”** etc. Thus we call the whole court of heaven to be a witness of the fact that we **“have sinned,”** not lightly, but **“exceedingly,”** i.e., very greatly, and in three ways : **“in thought,”** by thinking of things sinful and forbidden ; **“in word,”** by lies, curses, slanders, etc. ; **“in deed,”** by every bad action that we have committed ; and each of us can say : I have done all this **“through my fault,”** i.e., willingly and deliberately ; and it was not a small fault, but an exceeding great fault, because God was helping me by His grace to overcome temptations and avoid bad thoughts, words, and actions, and I would not accept His help, but willingly did what was wrong. What am I to do, therefore ? Will God pardon all these offences if I alone ask Him, seeing that all the angels and saints know that I have thus offended Him ? What shall I do ? I will ask them to help me by their prayers, and to beg God’s pardon for me. He may grant their prayers, especially those of the Blessed Mother and of the saints, when He would not grant mine. **“Therefore I beseech the Blessed Mary ever Virgin,”** etc., **“to pray to the Lord our God for me.”**

When we kneel down to say the Confiteor, if we could imagine what I have just described to take place, how well we should say it ! With what attention, respect, and sorrow we should ask the prayers of the saints ! When we say the Confiteor, and indeed any prayer, we say it in the presence of God, and of the whole court of heaven, though we are not in heaven and cannot see God. The angels and saints do hear us and will pray for us. When, therefore, you are saying the Confiteor, imagine that you see all I have described, and you will never say it badly.

## AN ACT OF FAITH.

O my God! I firmly believe that Thou art one God in three divine persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; I believe that Thy divine Son became man, and died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because Thou hast revealed them, Who canst neither deceive nor be deceived.

An "act" i.e., a profession, of faith. The whole substance of the act of faith is contained in this: I believe all that God has revealed and the Catholic Church teaches. We might mention one by one all the truths God has revealed, i.e., made known to us, and all the truths the Catholic Church teaches as revealed by God. For example, we might say, I believe in the Holy Trinity, in the Incarnation of Our Lord, in the Holy Eucharist, in the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, in the infallibility of the Pope, and so on, till we write an act of faith twenty pages long, and yet it would all be contained in the words: I believe all God has revealed and the Catholic Church teaches. Hence we find in prayer-books and catechisms acts of faith differing in length and words, but they are all the same in substance and have the same meaning. The act of faith in our Catechism gives a few of the chief truths revealed, that it may be neither too short nor too long, and that all may learn the same words.

## AN ACT OF HOPE.

O my God! relying on Thy infinite goodness and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of Thy grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer.

The substance of this act is: I hope for heaven and the means to obtain it. The means by which I will obtain it are the pardon of my sins by God, and the grace which He will give me in the reception of the sacraments and in prayer; by

which grace I will be able to know Him, love Him, and serve Him, and thus come to be with Him forever. Here again we could make a long act by mentioning all the things we hope for; viz., a good death, a favorable judgment, a place in heaven, etc.

### AN ACT OF LOVE.

O my God! I love Thee above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because Thou art all-good and worthy of all love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of Thee. I forgive all who have injured me, and ask pardon of all whom I have injured.

The substance of this act is: I love God above all things for His own goodness, and my neighbor as myself for the sake of God. An act of love and an act of charity are the same thing with different names. We are accustomed to call such things as the giving of alms or help to the poor, the doing of some good work that we are not bound to do for another, charity. Surely there are many motives that may induce persons to help others in their distress; but what is the chief Christian motive; if it be not the love we bear our brotherman because he is, like ourselves, a child of God, and the desire we have to obey God, Who wishes us to help the needy? The sufferings of others excite our pity, and the more we love them the more sorry are we to see them suffer. Thanks to God for all His mercies to us; He might have made us, instead of this man, poor and in suffering, but He has spared us and afflicted him; we know not why God has done so, and therefore we help him, moved by these considerations even when we feel he is not deserving of the help, because we know his unworthiness will not prevent God from rewarding our good intention. We may be charitable to our neighbor by saying nothing hurtful about him, by never telling his faults without necessity, etc. Therefore real charity, in its widest sense, and love are just the same.

## AN ACT OF CONTRITION.

**O my God!** I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, Who art all-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life.

The substance of this act is: **O my God!** I am very sorry for all my sins, because by them I have offended Thee, and, with Thy help, I will never sin again. It is well to know what the acts contain in substance, for we can use these short forms as aspirations during the day, when we probably would not think of saying the long forms. A fuller explanation of the qualities of our contrition will be given in Lesson Eighteen.

## THE BLESSING BEFORE MEALS.

**Bless us, O Lord,** and these Thy gifts which we are to receive from Thy bounty, through Christ Our Lord. **Amen.**

## GRACE AFTER MEALS.

**We give Thee thanks for all Thy benefits, O Almighty God, Who livest and reignest forever.** And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen.**

**"Grace"** means thanks. We saw in the explanation of the Our Father how God provides us with all we need, and most frequently with food. It is the least we can do, therefore, to thank Him for it, when it is just placed before us. We should thank Him also after we have eaten it and found it good, pleasing, and refreshing. When God provides us with food He thereby makes a kind of promise that He will allow us to live awhile longer and give us strength to serve Him. How shameful it is, then, to turn God's gifts into a means of offend-

ing Him, as some do by the sin of gluttony! Again, it is very wrong to murmur and be dissatisfied with what God gives us. He does not owe us anything, and need not give unless He wishes. What would you think of a beggar of this kind? He comes to your door hungry, and you, instead of simply giving him some bread to appease his hunger, take him into your house and give him a good dinner, new clothing, and some money. Now, instead of being thankful, suppose he should complain because you did not give him a better dinner, finer clothing, and more money, and should look cross and dissatisfied; what would you think of him? Would you not be tempted to turn the ungrateful fellow out of your house, with an order never to come again, telling him he deserved to starve for his ingratitude? We are not quite as ungrateful as the beggar when we neglect grace at meals, because in saying our daily prayers we thank God for all His gifts, our food included, and hence it is not a sin to neglect grace at meals. But do we not show some ingratitude when we murmur, complain, and are dissatisfied with our food, clothing, or homes? God, even when we are ungrateful, still gives; hence His wonderful goodness and mercy to us.

#### THE MANNER IN WHICH A LAY PERSON IS TO BAPTIZE IN CASE OF NECESSITY.

**Pour common water on the head or face of the person to be baptized, and say while pouring it: "I baptize thee, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."**

**N. B.** Any person of either sex who has reached the use of reason can baptize in case of necessity.



# CATECHISM.

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Questions marked \* are not in No. 1 Catechism.

A catechism is any book made up in question and answer form, no matter what it treats of. We have catechisms of history, of geography, etc. Our Catechism is a book in the same form treating of religion. It is a little compendium of the truths of our religion, of all we must believe and do. It contains, in the simplest form, all that a priest learns during his many years of study. The theology he learns is only a deeper and fuller explanation of the Catechism. A whole book might be written on almost every question. For example, might we not write a book on each of the first three questions—the World, God, and Man? There is consequently much meaning in the Catechism, which must be made known to us by explanation. You should therefore learn the Catechism by heart now, even when you do not fully understand it; because afterwards, when you read books on religion or hear sermons, all these questions and answers will come back to your mind. Sermons will help you to understand the questions, or the questions will help you to understand the sermons.

## LESSON FIRST.

## ON THE END OF MAN.

THE end of a thing is the purpose for which it was made. The end of a watch is to keep time. The end of a pen is to write, etc. A thing is good only in proportion to the way it fulfils the end for which it was made. A watch may be very beautifully made, a very rare ornament, but if it will not keep time it is useless as a watch. The same may be said of the pen, or of anything else. Now for what purpose was man made? If we discover that, we know his end. When we look around us in the world, we see a purpose or end for everything. We see that the soil is made for the plants and trees to grow in ; because if there was no need of things growing, it would be better to have a nice clean solid rock to walk upon, and then we would be spared the trouble of making roads and paving streets. But things must grow, and so we must have soil. Again, the vegetables and plants are made for animals to feed upon ; while the animals themselves are made for man, that they may help him in his work or serve him for food. Thus it is evident everything in the world was made to serve something else. What then was man made for? Was it for anything in the world? We see that all classes of beings are created for something higher than themselves. Thus plants are higher than soil, because they have life and soil has not. Animals are higher than plants, because they not only have life, but they can feel and plants cannot. Man is higher than animals, because he not only has life and can feel, but he has also reason and intelligence, and can understand, while animals cannot. Therefore we must look for something higher than man himself ; but there is nothing higher than man in this world, and so we must look beyond it to find that for which he was made. And looking beyond

it and considering all things, we find that he was made for God—to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him both in this world and in the next. Again, we read in the Bible (Genesis i.) that at the creation of the world all things were made before man, and that he was created last. Therefore, if all these things could exist without man, we cannot say he was made for them. The world existed before him and can exist after him. The world goes along without any particular man, and the same may be said of all men. Neither was man made to stay here awhile to become rich, or learned, or powerful, because all do not become rich—some are very poor; all are not learned—some are very ignorant; all are not powerful—some are slaves. But since all men are alike and equal in this, that they have all bodies formed in the same way, and all souls that are immortal, they should all be made for the same end. For example, you could not make a pen like a watch if you want it to write. Although pens differ in size, shape, etc., they have all one general form which is essential to them. So, although men differ in many things, they are all alike in the essential thing, viz., that they are composed of body and soul, and made to the image and likeness of God. Hence, as pens are made only to write with, so all men must have only one and the same end, namely, to serve God.

**1 Q. Who made the world?**

**A. God made the world.**

The “world” here means more than the earth—more than is shown on a map of the world. It means everything that we can see—sun, moon, stars, etc.; even those things that we can see only with great telescopes. Everything, too, that we may be able to see in the future, either with our eyes alone, or aided by instruments, is included in the word “world.” We can call it the universe.

**2 Q. Who is God?**

**A. God is the Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things.**

**3 Q.** What is man?

**A.** Man is a creature composed of a body and soul, and made to the image and likeness of God.

**“Creature,”** i.e., a thing created. Man differs from anything else in creation. All things else are either entirely matter, or entirely spirit. An angel, for example, is all spirit, and a stone is all matter; but man is a combination of both spirit and matter—of soul and of body.

**\* 4 Q.** Is this likeness in the body or in the soul?<sup>1</sup>

**A.** This likeness is chiefly in the soul.

**\* 5 Q.** How is the soul like to God?

**A.** The soul is like God because it is a spirit that will never die, and has understanding and free will.

My soul is like to God in four things.

(1) It is **“a spirit.”** It really exists, but cannot be seen with the eyes of our body. Every spirit is invisible, but every invisible thing is not a spirit. We cannot see the wind. We can feel its influence, we can see its work—for example, the dust flying, trees swaying, ships sailing, etc.—but the wind itself we never see. Again, we never see electricity. We see the light or effect it produces, but we never see the electricity itself. Yet no one denies the existence of the wind or of electricity on account of their being invisible. Why then should any one say there are no spirits—no God, no angels, no souls—simply because they cannot be seen, when we have other proofs, stronger than the testimony of our sight, that they really and truly exist?

(2) My soul will **“never die,”** i.e., will never cease to exist; it is immortal. This is a very wonderful thing to think of. It will last as long as God Himself.

(3) My soul **“has understanding,”** i.e., it has the gift of reason. This gift enables man to reflect upon all his actions—the reasons why he should do certain things and why he should not do them. By reason he reflects upon the past, and judges what may happen in the future. He sees the consequences of his actions. He not only knows what he does, but why he does it. This is the gift that places man high

<sup>1</sup> Questions marked with an asterisk (\*) are not in No. 1 Catechism.

above the brute animals in the order of creation; and hence man is not merely an animal, but he is a rational animal—an animal with the gift of reason.

Brute animals have not reason, but only instinct, i. e., they follow certain impulses or feelings which God gave them at their creation. He established certain laws for each class or kind of animals, and they, without knowing it, follow these laws; and when we see them following their laws, always in the same way, we say it is their nature. Animals act at times as if they knew just why they were acting; but it is not so. It is we who reason upon their actions, and see why they do them; but they do not reason, they only follow their instinct.

If animals could reason, they ought to improve in their condition. Men become more civilized day by day. They invent many things that were unknown to their forefathers. One man can improve upon the works of another, etc. But we never see anything of this kind in the actions of animals. The same kind of birds, for instance, build the same kind of nests, generation after generation, without ever making change or improvement in them. When man teaches an animal any action, it cannot teach the same to its young. It is clear, therefore, that animals cannot reason.

Though man has the gift of reason by which he can learn a great deal, he cannot learn all through his reason; for there are many things that God Himself must teach him. When God teaches, we call the truths He makes known to us Revelation. How could man ever know about the Trinity through his reason alone, when, after God has made known to him that It exists, he cannot understand it? It is the same for all the other mysteries.

(4) My soul has "**free will.**" This is another grand gift of God, by which I am able to do or not do a thing, just as I please. I can even sin and refuse to obey God. God Himself—while He leaves me my free will—could not oblige me to do anything, unless I wished to do it; neither could the devil. I am free therefore, and I may use this great gift either to benefit or injure myself. If I were not free I would not de-

serve reward or punishment for my actions, for no one is or should be punished for doing what he cannot help. God would not punish us for sin if we were not free to commit or avoid it. I turn this freedom to my benefit if I do what God wishes when I could do the opposite; for He will be more pleased with my conduct, and grant a greater reward than He would bestow if I obeyed simply because obliged to do so. Animals have no free will. If, for example, they suffer from hunger and you place food before them, they will eat; but man can starve, if he wills to do so, with a feast before him. For the same reason man can endure more fatigue than any other animal of the same bodily strength. In travelling, for instance, animals give up when exhausted, but man may be dying as he walks, and still, by his strong will-power, force his wearied limbs to move. But you will say, did not the lions in the den into which Daniel was cast because he would not act against his conscience, obey the wicked king and offend God—as we read in Holy Scripture (Daniel vi. 16)—refrain from eating him, even when they were starving with hunger? Yes; but they did not do so of themselves, but by the power of God preventing them: and that is why the delivery of Daniel from their mouths was a miracle. It is clear, because the same lions immediately tore in pieces Daniel's enemies when they were cast into the den.

**Q. Why did God make you?**

**A.** God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him for ever in the next.

**“To know”** Him, because we must know of a thing before we can love it. A poor savage in Africa never longs to be at a game or contest going on in America, because he does not know it and therefore cannot love it. We see a person and know him; if he pleases us we love him, and if we love him we will try to serve him; we will not be satisfied with doing merely what he asks of us, but will do whatever we think might give him pleasure. It is in regard to God. We



must first know Him,—learn Who He is from our catechisms and books of instruction, but especially from the teaching of God's ministers, the Holy Father, bishops, and priests. When we know Him, we shall love Him. If we knew Him perfectly, we should love Him perfectly; so the better we know Him the more we shall love Him. And as it is our chief duty to love Him and serve Him upon earth, it becomes our strict duty to learn here whatever we can of His nature, attributes, and holy laws. The saints and angels in heaven know God so well that they must love Him, and cannot therefore offend Him.

You have all seen some person in the world, or maybe several persons, whom you have greatly admired; still you did not love them perfectly; there was always some little thing about them in looks, manners, or disposition that could be rendered more pleasing; some defect or want you would like to see supplied; some fault or imperfection you would like to see corrected. Now suppose you had the power to take all the good qualities you found in the persons you loved and unite them in one person, in whom there would be nothing displeasing, but everything perfect and beautiful. Do you not think you would love such a person very much indeed?

Moreover, suppose you knew that person loved you intensely, would it not be your greatest delight to be ever with such a friend? Well, then, all the lovable qualities and beauties you see in created beings come from God and are bestowed by Him; yet all the good qualities on earth and those of the angels and saints in heaven, and even of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, if united in one person would be nothing compared to the goodness and beauty of God. How good and how lovable, therefore, must He be! And what shall we say when we think that He loves us with a greater love than we could ever love Him, even with our most earnest efforts? Try then first to know God and you will surely love and serve Him. Do not be satisfied with the little you learn of Him in the Catechism, but afterward read good books, and above all hear sermons and instructions.

**“In this world.”** Because unless we do what is pleasing to Him in this world we cannot be with Him in the next. Our condition in the next world depends entirely upon our conduct in this. Thus we have discovered the answer to the great question, What is the end of man ; for what was he made?

**\* 7 Q.** Of which must we take more care, our soul or our body?

**A.** We must take more care of our soul than of our body.

**\* 8 Q.** Why must we take more care of our soul than of our body?

**A.** We must take more care of our soul than of our body, because in losing our soul we lose God and everlasting happiness.

Every sensible person will take most care of that which is most valuable. If a girl had a hundred dollars in a ten-cent pocket-book, you would consider her a great fool if she threw away the hundred dollars for fear of spoiling the pocket-book. Now, he is a greater fool who throws away his soul in order to save his body some little inconvenience, or gratify its wicked desires or inclinations. Wherever the soul will be, there the body will be also ; so we should, in a certain way, try to forget the body and make sure of getting the soul safely into heaven. You would not think much of the wisdom of a boy who allowed his kite to be smashed in pieces by giving his whole attention to the tail of the kite. If he took care to keep the kite itself high in air and away from every danger, the tail would follow it ; and even if the tail did get entangled, it would have a good chance of being freed while the kite was still flying. But of what use is it to save a worthless piece of rag, if the kite—the valuable thing—is lost? Just in the same way, of what use is our body if our soul is lost? And remember we have only one soul. Therefore, make sure to save the soul, and the body also will be saved—that is, the whole man will be saved ; for we can-

not save the soul and lose the body; they will both be saved or both be lost.

**9 Q.** What must we do to save our souls?

**A.** To save our souls, we must worship God by faith, hope, and charity; that is, we must believe in Him, hope in Him, and love Him with all our heart.

“**Worship**,” that is, give Him divine honor. We honor persons for their worth and excellence, and since God is the most excellent, we give Him the highest honors, differing from others not merely in degree but in kind—divine honors that belong to Him alone. And justly so, for the vilest animal upon the earth is a thousand times more nearly our equal than the most perfect creature, man or angel, is the equal of God. In speaking of worship, theologians generally distinguish three kinds, namely: *latria*, or that supreme worship due to God alone, which cannot be transferred to any creature without committing the sin of idolatry; *dulia*, or that secondary veneration we give to saints and angels as the special friends of God; *hyperdulia*, or that higher veneration which we give to the Blessed Virgin as the most exalted of all God’s creatures. It is higher than the veneration we give to the other saints, but infinitely inferior to the worship we give to God Himself. We show God our special honor by never doubting anything He reveals to us, therefore by “**faith**”; by expecting with certainty whatever He promises, therefore by “**hope**”; and finally by loving Him more than any one else in the world, therefore by “**charity**.”

But some one may say, I think I love my parents more than God. Well, let us see. Suppose your mother should command you to commit a sinful act (a thing no good mother would do) and you have therefore to choose between offending her or Almighty God. Now, although you love your mother very much, if in this instance you prefer to displease her rather than commit the sin that offends God, you show that you love God more than her. Again, many who dearly love their parents leave them that they may consecrate

their lives to the special service of God in some religious community and thus prove their greater love for Him. The love we have for God is intellectual rather than sentimental; and since it is not measured by the intensity of our feelings, how are we to know that we love Him best? By our determination never to offend Him for any person or thing in the world, however dear to us, and by our readiness to obey and serve Him before all others.

**10 Q.** How shall we know the things which we are to believe?

**A.** We shall know the things which we are to believe from the Catholic Church, through which God speaks to us.

“Catholic Church” in this answer means the Pope, councils, bishops, and priests who teach in the Church.

**11 Q.** Where shall we find the chief truths which the Catholic Church teaches?

**A.** We shall find the chief truths which the Catholic Church teaches in the Apostles’ Creed.

“Chief,” because the Apostles’ Creed does not contain in an explicit manner all the truths we must believe. For example, there is nothing in the Apostles’ Creed about the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, about the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, or the infallibility of the Pope; and yet we must believe these and other articles of faith not in the Apostles’ Creed. It contains only the “chief” and not all the truths.

**12 Q.** Say the Apostles’ Creed.

**A.** I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

“Descend” means to go down, and “ascend” to go up.

## LESSON SECOND.

### ON GOD AND HIS PERFECTIONS.

A “**perfection**” means a good quality. We say a thing is perfect when it has all the good qualities it should have.

**13 Q. What is God?**

**A. God is a spirit infinitely perfect.**

“**A spirit**” is a living, intelligent, invisible being. It really exists, though we cannot see it with the eyes of our body. It has intelligence and can therefore think, understand, etc. It is not because we cannot see it that we call it a spirit. To be invisible is only one of the qualities of a spirit. It is also indivisible, that is, it cannot be divided into parts. God is such a being. He is “**infinitely perfect**,” that is, He has every perfection in the highest degree. “**Infinite**” means to have without limit. If there were any perfection God did not have, He would not be infinite. He is unlimited in wisdom, in power, in goodness, in beauty, etc. But you will tell me persons on earth and the angels and saints in heaven have some wisdom and power and beauty, and therefore God cannot have all, since He has not the portion with which they are endowed. I still say He is infinite, because what the angels and others have belongs to God, and He only lends it to them. “**Perfect**” means to be without any defect or fault.

**14 Q. Had God a beginning?**

**A. God had no beginning; He always was and always will be.**

Was there ever a time when we could say there was no God? There was a time when we could say there was no heaven or earth, no angels, men, or animals; but there was never a time when there was no God. We may go back in

thought millions and millions of years before the creation, and God was then existing. He had no beginning and will never cease to exist. This is a mystery; and what a mystery is will be explained in the next lesson.

**15 Q. Where is God?**

**A. God is everywhere.**

**“Everywhere”**—not spread out like a great cloud, but whole and entire in every particular place: and yet there is only one God, and not as many gods as there are places. How this can be we cannot fully understand, because this also is a mystery. A simile, though it will not be perfect, may help you to understand. When we speak of God, we can never give a true and perfect example; for we cannot find anything exactly like Him to compare to Him. If I discharge a great cannon in a city, every one of the inhabitants will hear the report; not in such a way that each hearer gets his share of the sound, but each hears the whole report, just as if he were the only one to hear it. Now, how is that? There are not as many reports as there are persons listening; and yet each person hears the whole report.

**16 Q. If God is everywhere, why do we not see Him?**

**A. We do not see God, because He is a pure spirit and cannot be seen with bodily eyes.**

**“Pure spirit,”** that is, not clothed with any material body—spirit alone.

**17 Q. Does God see us?**

**A. God sees us and watches over us.**

**“Watches”** to protect, to reward or punish us. He watches continually; He not only watches, but keeps us alive. God might have created us and then paid no more attention to us; but if He had done so, we should have fallen back again into nothingness. Therefore He preserves us every moment of our lives. We cannot draw a breath without Him.

If a steam-engine be required to work ceaselessly, you cannot, after setting it in motion, leave it henceforth entirely to itself. You must keep up the supply of water and fire necessary for the generation of steam, you must oil the machinery, guard against overheating or cooling, and, in a word, keep a constant watch that nothing may interfere with its motion. So also God not only watches His creatures, but likewise provides for them. Since we depend so much upon Him, is it not great folly to sin against Him, to offend, and tempt Him as it were? There are some birds that build their nests on the sides of great rocky precipices by the sea-coast. Their eggs are very valuable, and men are let down by long ropes to take them from the nest. Now while one of these men is hanging over the fearful precipice, his life is entirely in the hands of those holding the rope above. While he is in that danger do you not think he would be very foolish to tempt and insult those on whom his life depends, when they could dash him to pieces by simply dropping the rope? While we live here upon earth we are all hanging over a great precipice, namely, eternity; God holds us up by the little thread of our lives, and if He pleased to drop it we should be hurled into eternity. If we tempt or insult Him, He might drop or cut the thread while we are in mortal sin, and then, body and soul, we go down into hell.

**18 Q. Does God know all things?**

**A. God knows all things, even our most secret thoughts, words, and actions.**

Certainly God "**knows all things.**" First, because He is infinitely wise, and if He were ignorant of anything He would not be so. Secondly, because He is everywhere and sees and hears all. Darkness does not hide from His view, nor noise prevent Him from hearing. How could we sin if we thought of this! God is just here, looking at me and listening to me. Would I do what I am going to do now if I knew my parents, relatives, and friends were watching me? Would I like them to know that I am thinking about things sinful, and preparing to do shameful acts?

No! Why then should I not feel ashamed to let God see and know of this wicked thought or action? They might know it and yet be unable to harm me, but He, all-powerful, could destroy me instantly. Nay, more: not only will God see and know this evil deed or thought; but, by His gift, the Blessed Mother, the angels and saints will know of it and be ashamed of it before God, and, most of all, my guardian angel will deplore it. Besides, this sin will be revealed to the whole world on the last day, and my friends, relatives, and neighbors will know that I was guilty of it.

**19 Q. Can God do all things?**

**A. God can do all things, and nothing is hard or impossible to Him.**

**20 Q. Is God just, holy, and merciful?**

**A. God is all just, all holy, all merciful, as He is infinitely perfect.**

“**All just**”—that is, most just. “**Just**” means to give to every one what belongs to him—to reward if it is merited or to punish if it is deserved. “**Holy**”—that is, good. “**Merciful**” means compassionate, forgiving, less exacting than severe justice demands. In a court a just judge is one who listens patiently to all the arguments for and against the prisoner, and then, comparing one with the other, gives the sentence exactly in accordance with the guilt. If he inflicts more or less punishment than the prisoner deserves, or for money or anything else gives an unfair sentence, then he is an unjust judge. The judge might be merciful in this way. The laws say that for the crime of which this prisoner is proved guilty he can be sent to prison for a term not longer than ten years and not shorter than five; that is, for anything between ten and five years. The judge could give him the full ten years that the law allows and be just. But suppose he believed that the prisoner did not know the law and did not intend to be as wicked as he was proved; or that it was his first offence, or that he heard the prisoner’s mother, who was old and infirm, pleading for him and saying he was her only

support; or other extenuating circumstances that could awaken sympathy: the judge might be merciful and sentence him for the shortest term the law allows. But if the judge dismissed every prisoner, no matter how guilty, without punishment, he would not be a merciful but an unjust judge, who would soon be forced to leave the court. In the same way, God is often merciful to sinners and punishes them less than He could in strict justice. But if He were to allow every sinner to go without any punishment whatsoever—as unbelievers say He should do, by having no hell for the wicked—then He would not be just. For as God is an Infinite Being, all His perfections must be infinite; that is, He must be as infinitely just as He is infinitely merciful, true, wise, or powerful.

Now He has promised to punish sin; and since He is infinitely true, He must keep His promise.

## LESSON THIRD.

## ON THE UNITY AND TRINITY OF GOD.

“**Unity**” means to be one, and “**Trinity**,” three in one.

21 Q. Is there but one God?

A. Yes; there is but one God.

22 Q. Why can there be but one God?

A. There can be but one God because God, being supreme and infinite, cannot have an equal.

“**Supreme**,” that is, the highest. “**Equal**,” when two are equal one has everything the other has. You could say one pen is the equal of another if it is just as nice and will write just as well; one mechanic is the equal of another if he can do the work equally well. Two boys are equal in class if they have exactly the same marks at the end of the month or year. You could not have two persons chief. For example, you could not have two chief generals in an army; two presidents in the nation, or two governors in a state, or two mayors in a city, or two principals in a school, unless they divide equally their power, and then they will be equals and neither of them chief. God cannot divide His power with anyone—so as to give it away entirely—because we say He is infinite, and that means to have all. Others have only the loan of their power from God. Therefore, all power and authority come from God; so that when we disobey our parents or superiors who are placed over us, we disobey God Himself.

23 Q. How many persons are there in God?

A. In God there are three divine persons really distinct and equal in all things—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

“Distinct,” not mingled together. We call the first and second persons Father and Son, because the second is begotten by the first person, and not to indicate that there is any difference in their age. We always see in the world that a father is older than his son, so we get the idea perhaps that it is the same in the Holy Trinity. But it is not so. God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost existed from all eternity, and one did not exist before the other. God the Son is just as old as God the Father, and this is another great mystery. Even in nature we see that two things may begin to exist at the same time, and yet one be the cause of the other. You know that fire is the cause of heat; and yet the heat and the fire begin at the same time. Though we cannot understand this mystery of the Father and Son, we must believe it on the authority of God, Who teaches it. First, second, and third person in the Blessed Trinity does not mean, therefore, that one person was before the other, or brought into existence by the other.

24 Q. Is the Father God?

A. The Father is God and the first person of the Blessed Trinity.

25 Q. Is the Son God?

A. The Son is God and the second person of the Blessed Trinity.

26 Q. Is the Holy Ghost God?

A. The Holy Ghost is God and the third person of the Blessed Trinity.

27 Q. What do you mean by the Blessed Trinity?

A. By the Blessed Trinity I mean one God in three Divine Persons.

28 Q. Are the three Divine Persons equal in all things?

A. The three Divine Persons are equal in all things.

29 Q. Are the three Divine Persons one and the same God?

**A.** The three Divine Persons are one and the same God, having one and the same divine nature and substance.

Though they are one and the same, we sometimes attribute different works to them. For example, works of creation we attribute to God the Father; works of mercy to God the Son; and works of love and sanctification to the Holy Ghost; and you will often find them thus spoken of in pious books; but all such works are done by all the Persons of the Trinity, because such works are the works of God, and there is but one God.

**\*30 Q.** Can we fully understand how the three Divine Persons are one and the same God?

**A.** We cannot fully understand how the three Divine Persons are one and the same God, because this is a mystery.

**“Fully”**—entirely. We can partly understand it. We know what one God is and we know what three persons are; but how these two things go together is the part we do not understand—the mystery.

**\*31 Q.** What is a mystery?

**A.** A mystery is a truth which we cannot fully understand.

**“A truth,”** that is, a revealed truth—one made known to us by God or His Church. It is a truth which we must believe though we cannot understand it. Let us take an example. When a boy goes to school he is taught that the earth is round like an orange and revolving in two ways, one causing day and night and the other producing the seasons: spring, summer, autumn, winter. The boy goes out into the country where he sees miles of level land and mountains thousands of feet in height. Again he goes out on the ocean where sailors tell him it is several miles in depth.

Now he may say: how can the earth be round if deep valleys, high mountains, and level plains prove to my senses the

very opposite, and the countless things at rest upon its surface tell me it is motionless. Yet he believes even against the testimony of his senses that the earth is round and moving, because his teacher could have no motive in deceiving him; knows better than he, having learned more, and besides has been taught by others who after long years of careful study and research have discovered these things and know them to be true. If therefore we have to believe things that we do not understand on the authority of men, why should we not believe other truths on the authority of God? Yes, we must believe Him. If a boy knew all his teacher knew there would be no need of his going to school; he would be the equal in knowledge of his teacher, and if we knew all that God knows we would be as great as He. As well might we try to empty the whole ocean into the tiny holes that children dig in the sand by its shore, as fully to comprehend the wisdom of God. This is the mistake unbelievers make when they wish to understand with their limited intelligence the boundless knowledge and mysterious ways of God, and when they cannot understand refuse to believe. Are they not extremely foolish? Would you not ridicule the boy who refuses to believe that the earth is round and moving because he cannot understand it? As he grows older and learns more he will comprehend it better; so we, when we leave this world and come into the presence of God, shall see clearly many things that are unintelligible now. For the present, we have only to believe them on the authority of God teaching us. Another example. We take two little black seeds that look just alike and place them in the same kind of soil; we put the same kind of water upon them; they have the same sunlight and air, and yet when they grow up one has a red flower and one a blue. Where did the red and where did the blue come from? From the black seed, or the brown soil, or the pure water, air and sunlight? We do not know. It is there, and that is all. We see it and believe it, though we do not understand it.

So if we refuse to believe everything we do not understand, we shall soon believe very little and make ourselves ridiculous.

**LESSON FOURTH.****ON CREATION.**

THIS lesson treats of God bringing everything into existence. The chief things created may be classed as follows: (1) The things that simply exist, as rocks, and minerals—gold, silver, iron, etc. (2) Things that exist, grow, and live, like plants and trees. (3) Things that grow, live, and feel, like animals. (4) Things that grow, live, feel, and understand, like men. Besides these we have the sun, moon, stars, etc.; all things too that we can see, and also heaven, purgatory, hell, and good and bad angels. All these are the works of God's creation. All these He has called into existence by merely wishing for them.

**\*32 Q. Who created heaven and earth, and all things?**

**A. God created heaven and earth, and all things.**

“**Heaven,**” where God is and will always be. It means, too, everything we see in the sky above us. “**Earth,**” the globe on which we live.

**\*33 Q. How did God create heaven and earth?**

**A. God created heaven and earth from nothing, by His word only; that is, by a single act of His all-powerful will.**

**34 Q. Which are the chief creatures of God?**

**A. The chief creatures of God are angels and men.**

**35 Q. What are angels?**

**A. Angels are pure spirits without a body, created to adore and enjoy God in heaven.**

“**Angels**” are not the same as saints. Saints are those who at one time lived upon the earth as we do, and who on ac-

count of their very good lives are now in heaven. They had bodies as we have. The angels, on the contrary, never lived visibly upon the earth. In the beginning God was alone. We take great pleasure in looking at beautiful things. God, seeing His own beauty, and knowing that others would have very great pleasure and happiness in seeing Him, determined to create some beings who could enjoy this happiness; and thus He wished to share with them the happiness which He Himself derived from seeing His own beauty. Therefore He created angels who were to be in heaven with Him, singing His praises and worshipping before His throne.

The angels are not all equal in dignity, but are divided into nine classes, or choirs, according to their rank or office, and, as theologians tell us, arranged from the lowest to the highest and named as follows: angels, archangels, virtues, powers, principalities, dominations, thrones, cherubim, and seraphim. Archangels are higher than angels and are so called because sent to do the most important works. It was the Archangel Michael who drove Lucifer from heaven and the Archangel Gabriel who announced to the Blessed Virgin that she was to be the Mother of God. The angels receive their names from the duties they perform. The word angel signifies messenger.

**\*36 Q.** Were the angels created for any other purpose ?

**A.** The angels were also created to assist before the throne of God and to minister unto Him; they have often been sent as messengers from God to man; and are also appointed our guardians.

The duties of the angels are many. Some remain always in heaven with God; some are sent to earth to be our guardians and to remain with us. Each of us has an angel to take care of us. He is with us night and day, and offers our prayers and good works to God. He prays for us, exhorts us to do good and avoid evil; and he protects us from dangers spiritual and temporal. How unfortunate then must one be to cause him to return to heaven with sad complaints to God ;

such as: "The one whom I have in charge will not obey Thy laws or use the graces Thou sendest him: with all my efforts to save him, he continues to do wrong." He will be doubly sad when he sees other angels returning with good reports and receiving new graces for those whom God has committed to their care. If you love your guardian angel, never impose on him the painful duty of bringing to God the report of your evil doings.

Now, how do we know that the angels offer our prayers and good works to God? We know it from the beautiful story of Tobias, told in the Holy Scripture (Tobias). This holy man loved and feared God. He lived at a time when his people were persecuted by a most cruel king, who wished to force them to give up the true God and worship idols, but many of these good people suffered death rather than deny God and obey the wicked king. When they were put to death their bodies were left lying on the ground, to be devoured by birds of prey or wild animals. Any one caught burying them was to be put to death by the king's servants. Tobias used to carry the dead bodies of these holy martyrs into his house and bury them at night.

One day when he returned very tired he lay down by the wall of his house to rest, and, while lying there, some dirt fell into his eyes and he became blind. This Tobias had a young son whose name was also Tobias; and as he himself was now blind and poor, he wished to send his son into a certain city, at a good distance off, to collect some money that he had formerly loaned to a friend. As the young man did not know the way, his father sent him out to look for a guide. Young Tobias went out and found a beautiful young man standing on the road near his house. Tobias asked the young man to be his guide and he consented, and he brought Tobias to the distant city. As they were on their way they sat down by the bank of a river. Tobias went into the water near the edge, and soon a great fish rushed at him. Tobias called to his guide. The guide told him to take hold of the fish and drag it out upon the shore. There they killed it, and kept part of its

flesh for food and part for medicine. Then they went on to the city, got the money and returned. The guide told young Tobias to rub the part of the fish he had taken for medicine upon his father's eyes. He did so, and immediately his father's eyes were cured and he saw. Then both the father and son were so delighted with this young guide, that they offered to give him half of all they had. He refused to take it and then told them he was the angel Raphael sent from God to be the guide of this good man's son. He told the old Tobias how he (the angel) had carried up to God his prayers and good works while he was burying the dead. When they heard he was an angel they fell down and revered him, being very much afraid. From this beautiful history we know that the angels carry our prayers and good works to God. Again we learn from the Holy Scripture (Genesis xxviii.) in the history of another good man almost the same thing. The patriarch Jacob was on a journey, and being tired, he lay down to rest with his head upon a stone. As he lay there he had a vision in which he saw a great ladder reaching up from earth to heaven. At the top he saw Almighty God standing, and on the ladder itself angels ascending and descending. Now the holy Fathers of the Church tell us this is what is really taking place; the angels are always going down and up from God to man, though not on a ladder and not visibly as they appeared to Jacob. Besides the guardian angel for each person, there are also guardian angels for each city and for each nation.

Again (Genesis xix.) angels appeared to Lot to warn him about the destruction of the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrha. Angels appeared also to the shepherds on the night Our Lord was born (Luke ii.). The catechism says angels have no bodies, how then could they appear? They took bodies made of some very light substance which would make them visible, and appeared just like beautiful young men, clad in flowing garments, as you frequently see them represented in pictures. Angels were sometimes sent to punish men for their sins, as the angel who killed in one night

185,000 men in the army of the wicked king, Sennacherib, who blasphemed God, and was endeavoring to destroy Jerusalem, God's city (4 Kings xix.).

But here is a difficulty. If God Himself watches over us and sees all things, why should the angels guard us? It is on account of God's goodness to us; though it is not necessary. He does not wish us to have any excuse for being bad, so He gives us each a special heavenly servant to watch and assist us by his prayers. If a friend received us into his house and did all he could for us himself, we should certainly be satisfied, but if he gave us a special servant, though it would not be necessary, he would show us great respect and kindness. Moreover whatever the angels do for us, we might say God Himself does, for the angels are only obeying His commands.

**\*37 Q.** Were the angels, as God created them, good and happy?

**A.** The angels as God created them were good and happy.

**\*38 Q.** Did all the angels remain good and happy?

**A.** All the angels did not remain good and happy; many of them sinned and were cast into hell; and these are called devils or bad angels.

God did not admit the angels into His presence at once. He placed them for a while on probation, as He did our first parents.

One of these angels was most beautiful, and was named Lucifer, which means light-bearer. He was so perfect that he seems to have forgotten that he received all his beauty and intelligence from God, and not content with what he had, became sinfully proud and wished to be equal to God Himself. For his sin he and all his followers were driven out of heaven, and God then created hell, in which they were to suffer for all eternity. This same Lucifer is now called Satan, and more commonly the devil, and those who accompanied him in his fall, devils, or fallen angels.

## LESSON FIFTH.

### ON OUR FIRST PARENTS AND THEIR FALL.

**39 Q.** Who were the first man and woman?

**A.** The first man and woman were Adam and Eve.

In the beginning God created all things; something particular on each of the six days of creation (Genesis i.). On the first day He made light, on the second, the firmament, or the heavens, and on the sixth day He created man and called him Adam. God wished Adam to have a companion; so one day He caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep, and then took from his side a rib, out of which He formed Eve. Now God could have made Eve as He made Adam, by forming her body out of the clay of the earth and breathing into it a soul, but He made Eve out of Adam's rib to show that they were to be husband and wife, and to impress upon their minds the nature and sacredness of the love and union that should exist between them.

**40 Q.** Were Adam and Eve innocent and holy when they came from the hand of God?

**A.** Adam and Eve were innocent and holy when they came from the hand of God.

God placed Adam and Eve in Paradise, a large, beautiful garden, and gave them power over all the other creatures. Adam gave all the animals their appropriate names and they were obedient to him. Even lions, tigers, and other animals that we now fear so much, came and played about him. Our first parents, in their state of original innocence, were the happy friends of God, without sorrow or suffering of any kind.

**\*41 Q.** Did God give any command to Adam and Eve?

**A.** To try their obedience God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat of a certain fruit which grew in the garden of Paradise.

He told them (Genesis ii.) they could take of all the fruits in the garden except the fruit of one tree, and if they disobeyed Him by eating the fruit of that tree, they should surely die. God might have pointed out any tree, because it was simply a test of their obedience. He gave them a very simple command, for if we are faithful in little things we shall surely be faithful in greater. Moreover, it is not precisely the consideration of what is forbidden, but of the authority by which it is forbidden that should deter us from violating the command and prove our fidelity. Thus disobedience to our parents and superiors, even in little things, becomes sinful. Some one might say: "Why did God not try their obedience by one of the ten commandments?" Let us examine them. "Remember the Sabbath." That one would be unnecessary: for every day was Sabbath with them; the only work was to praise and serve God. "Thou shalt not steal." They could not; everything was theirs; and so for the other commandments. Therefore, God gave them a simple command telling them: If you obey, you and all your posterity will be happy; every wish will be gratified, neither sorrow nor affliction shall come upon you and you shall never die; but if, on the contrary, you disobey, countless evils, misery and death will be your punishment. The earth, now so fruitful, shall bring forth no crops without cultivation, and after years of toil the dead bodies of yourselves and children must lie buried in its soil. So having the gift of free will they could take their choice, and either keep His command and be happy, or disobey Him and be miserable.

**\*42 Q.** Which were the chief blessings intended for Adam and Eve, had they remained faithful to God?

**A.** The chief blessings intended for Adam and Eve, had they remained faithful to God, were a constant state

of happiness in this life and everlasting glory in the next.

Our first parents and their children were not to remain in the garden of Paradise forever, but were, after spending their allotted time of trial or probation upon earth, to be taken body and soul into heaven without being obliged to die.

**43 Q.** Did Adam and Eve remain faithful to God?

**A.** Adam and Eve did not remain faithful to God, but broke His commandment by eating the forbidden fruit.

As it is told in the Bible (Genesis iii.), Eve went to the forbidden tree and was standing looking at it, when the devil came in the form of a serpent and, tempting, told her to take some of the fruit and eat. It does not appear that she went and tasted the fruit of all the other trees and finally came to this one, but rather that she went directly to the forbidden tree first. Do we not sometimes imitate Eve's conduct? As soon as we know a certain thing is forbidden we are more strongly tempted to try it.

See, then, what caused Eve's sin. She went into the dangerous occasion, and was admiring the forbidden fruit when the tempter came. She listened to him, yielded to his wicked suggestions, and sinned. So will it be with us if through curiosity we desire to see or hear things forbidden; for once in the danger the devil will soon be on hand to tempt us—not visibly indeed, for that would alarm us and defeat his purpose, but invisibly, like our guardian angels; for the devil is a fallen angel who still possesses all the characteristics of an angel except goodness. But this is not all. Eve not only took and ate the fruit herself, but induced Adam to do likewise. Most sinners imitate Eve in that respect. Not satisfied with offending God themselves, they lead others into sin.

Why should the devil tempt us? God created man to be

in heaven, but the fallen angels were jealous of man, and tempted him to sin so that he too should be kept out of heaven and might never enjoy what they lost; just as envious people do not wish others to have what they cannot have themselves.

**44 Q.** What befell Adam and Eve on account of their sin?

**A.** Adam and Eve on account of their sin lost innocence and holiness, and were doomed to sickness and death.

They were innocent and holy because they were the friends of God and in a state of grace, but by their sin they lost His grace and friendship. "**Doomed**" means sentenced or condemned. The first evil result, then, of Adam's sin was that he lost innocence and made his body a rebel against his soul. Then he was to suffer poverty, hunger, cold, sickness, death, and every kind of ill; but the worst consequence of all was that God closed heaven against him. After a few years' trial, as we said, God was to take him into heaven; but now He has closed it against Adam and his posterity. All the people in the world could never induce God to open it again; for He closed it in accordance with His promise, and man was an exile and outcast from his heavenly home.

**45 Q.** What evil befell us on account of the disobedience of our first parents?

**A.** On account of the disobedience of our first parents we all share in their sin and punishment, as we should have shared in their happiness if they had remained faithful.

Does it not seem strange that we should suffer for the sin of our first parents, when we had nothing to do with it? No. It happens every day that children suffer for the faults of their parents and we do not wonder at it. Let us suppose a man's father leaves him a large fortune—houses, land, and money—and that he and his children are happy in the enjoyment of their inheritance. The children are sent to

the best schools, have everything they desire now, and bright hopes of happiness and prosperity in the future. But alas! their hopes are vain. The father begins to drink or gamble, and soon the great fortune is squandered. House after house is sold and dollar after dollar spent, till absolute poverty comes upon the children, and the sad condition of their home tells of their distress. Do they not suffer for the sins of their father, though they had nothing to do with them? Indeed, many families in the world suffer thus through the faults of others, and most frequently of some of their members. Could you blame the grandfather for leaving the estate? Certainly not; for it was goodness on his part that made him give. Let us apply this example. What God gave Adam was to be ours also, and he squandered and misused it because he had free will, which God could not take from him without changing his nature; for it is our free will and intelligence that make us men, distinct from and superior to all other animals. They can live, grow, feel, hear, see, etc., as we can, but the want of intelligence and free-will leaves them mere brutes. Therefore, if God took away Adam's intelligence and free will, He would have made him a mere animal—though the most perfect.

When a man becomes insane or loses the use of his intelligence and free will, we place him in an asylum and take care of him as we would a tame animal, seldom allowing him to go about without being watched and guarded.

Let us take another example. Suppose I have a friend who is addicted to the excessive drinking of strong liquor, and I say to him: "If you give up that detestable habit for one year, I will make you a present of this beautiful house worth several thousand dollars. It will be yours as long as you live, and at your death you may leave it to your children. I do not owe you anything, but offer this as a free gift if you comply with my request." My friend accepts the offer on these conditions, but the very next day deliberately breaks his promise. I do not give him the house, because he did not keep his agreement: and can any one say

on that account that I am unjust or unkind to him or his children? Certainly not. Well, God acted in the same manner with Adam. He promised him heaven, a home more beautiful than any earthly palace—the place Our Lord calls His father's house (John xiv. 2) and says there are many mansions, that is, dwelling-places, in it. God promised this home to Adam on condition that he would observe one simple command. He had no right to heaven, but was to receive it, according to the promise, as a free gift from God, and therefore God, who offered it conditionally, was not obliged to give it when Adam violated his part of the agreement.

The example is not a perfect one, for there is this difference in the cases between Adam and my friend: when my friend does not get the house, he sustains a loss, it is true; but he might still be my friend as he was before, and live in my house; but when Adam lost heaven, he lost God's friendship and grace, and the loss of all grace is to be in sin. So that Adam by breaking the command was left in sin; and as all his children sustain the same loss, they too are all left in sin till they are baptized.

**\* 46 Q.** What other effects followed from the sin of our first parents?

**A.** Our nature was corrupted by the sin of our first parents, which darkened our understanding, weakened our will, and left us a strong inclination to evil.

Our "**nature was corrupted**" is what I have said of the body rebelling against the soul. Our "**understanding darkened.**" Adam knew much more without study than the most intelligent men could learn now with constant application. Before his fall he saw things clearly and understood them well, but after his sin everything had to be learned by the slow process of study. Then the "**will was weakened.**" Before he fell he could easily resist temptation, for his will was strong. You know we sin by the will, because unless we wish to do the evil we commit no sin; and if absolutely forced

by others to do wrong, we are free from the guilt as long as our will despises and protests against the action. If forced, for example, to break my neighbor's window, I have not to answer in my conscience for the unjust act, because my will did not consent. So, on every occasion on which we sin, it is the will that yields to the temptation. After Adam's sin his will became weak and less able to resist temptation; and as we are sharers in his misfortune, we find great difficulty at times in overcoming sinful inclinations. But no matter how violent the temptation or how prolonged and fierce the struggle against it, we can always be victorious if determined not to yield; for God gives us sufficient grace to resist every temptation; and if any one should excuse his fall by saying he could not help sinning, he would be guilty of falsehood.

**"A strong inclination"** to do wrong,—that is, unless always on our guard against it. Our Lord once cautioned His apostles (Matthew xxvi. 41) to watch and pray lest they fall into temptation; teaching us also by the same warning that, besides praying against our spiritual enemies, we must watch their manœuvres and be ever ready to repel their attacks.

**47 Q.** What is the sin called which we inherit from our first parents?

**A.** The sin which we inherit from our first parents is called original sin.

**\* 48 Q.** Why is this sin called original?

**A.** This sin is called original because it comes down to us from our first parents, and we are brought into the world with its guilt on our souls.

**\* 49 Q.** Does this corruption of our nature remain in us after original sin is forgiven?

**A.** This corruption of our nature and other punishments remain in us after original sin is forgiven.

It remains that we may merit by overcoming its temptations; and also that we may be kept humble by remembering our former sinful and unhappy state.

50 Q. Was any one ever preserved from original sin?

A. The Blessed Virgin Mary, through the merits of her divine Son, was preserved free from the guilt of original sin, and this privilege is called her **Immaculate Conception**.

The Blessed Virgin was to be the Mother of the Son of God. Now it would not be proper for the Mother of God to be even for one moment the servant of the devil, or under his power. If the Blessed Virgin had been in original sin, she would have been in the service of the devil. Whatever disgraces a mother disgraces also her son; so Our Lord would never permit His dear Mother to be subject to the devil, and consequently He, through His merits, saved her from original sin. She is the only one of the whole human race who enjoys this great privilege, and it is called her "**Immaculate Conception**," that is, she was conceived—brought into existence by her mother—without having any spot or stain of sin upon her soul, and hence without original sin.

Our Lord came into the world to crush the power which the devil had exercised over men from the fall of Adam. This He did by meriting grace for them and giving them this spiritual help to withstand the devil in all his attacks upon them. As the Blessed Mother was never under the devil's power, next to God she has the greatest strength against him, and she will help us to resist him if we seek her aid. The devil himself knows her power and fears her, and if he sees her coming to our assistance will quickly fly. Never fail, then, in time of temptation to call upon our Blessed Mother: she will hear and help you and pray to God for you.

## LESSON SIXTH.

## ON SIN AND ITS KINDS.

51 Q. Is original sin the only kind of sin ?

A. Original sin is not the only kind of sin ; there is another kind of sin which we commit ourselves, called actual sin.

Sin is first or chiefly divided into original and actual ; that is, into the sin we inherit from our first parents and the sin we commit ourselves. We may commit “actual” sin in two ways ; either by doing what we should not do—stealing, for example—and thus we have a sin of commission, that is, a bad act committed ; or by not doing what we should do—not hearing Mass on Sunday, for example—and thus we have a sin of omission, that is, a good act omitted. So it is not enough to simply do no harm, we must also do some good. Heaven is a reward, and we must do something to merit it. Suppose a man employed a boy to do the work of his office, and when he came in the morning found that the boy had neglected the work assigned to him, and when spoken to about it simply answered : “Sir, I did no harm ;” do you think he would be entitled to his wages ? Of course he did not and should do no harm ; but is his employer to pay him wages for that ? Certainly not. In like manner, God is not going to reward us for doing no harm ; but on the contrary, He will punish us if we do wrong, and give no reward unless we perform the work He has marked out for us. Neither would the office-boy deserve any wages if he did only what pleases himself, and not the work assigned by his master. In the same way, God will not accept any worship or religion but the one He has revealed. He tells us Himself how He wishes to be worshipped, and our own invented methods will not please Him.

Hence we see the folly of those who say that all religions are equally good, and that we can be saved by practising any of them. We can be saved only in the one religion which God Himself has instituted, and by which He wishes to be honored. Many also foolishly believe, or say they believe, that if they are honest, sober, and the like, doing no injury to any one, they shall be saved without the practice of any form of religious worship. But how about God's laws and commands? Are they to be despised, disregarded, and neglected entirely, without any fear of punishment? Surely not! And persons who thus think they are doing no harm are neglecting to serve God—the greatest harm they can do, and for which they will lose heaven. God, we are told, assigned to every one in this world a certain work to perform in a particular state of life, and this work is called "vocation." One, for instance, is to be a priest; another, a layman; one married; another single, etc. It is important for us to discover our true vocation; for if we are in the state of life to which God has called us, we shall be happy; but if we select our own work, our own state of life without consulting Him, we shall seldom be happy in it. How are we to know our vocation? Chiefly by praying to God and asking Him to make it known to us. Then if He gives us a strong inclination—constant, or nearly constant—for a certain state of life, and the ability to fulfil its duties, we may well believe that God wishes us to be in that state.

After we have begged God's assistance, we must ask our confessor's advice in the matter, and listen attentively to what the Holy Ghost inspires him to say. The signs of our vocation are, therefore, as stated: first, a strong desire, and second, an aptitude for the state to which we believe we are called. For example, a young man might be very holy, but if unable to learn, he could never be a priest. Another might be very learned and holy, but if too sickly to perform a priest's duties, he could not, or at least would not, be ordained. Another might be learned and healthy, but not virtuous, and so he could never be a priest. Aptitude, therefore,

means all the qualities necessary, whether of mind, or soul, or body. The same is true for a young girl who wishes to become a religious; and the same, indeed, for any person's vocation. We should never enter a state of life to which we are not called, simply to please parents or others. Neither should we be persuaded by them to give up a state to which we are called; for we should embrace our true vocation at any sacrifice, that in it we may serve God better, and be more certain of saving our souls. Thus, parents and guardians who prevent their children from entering the state to which they are called, may sin grievously by exposing them to eternal loss of salvation. Their sin is all the greater when they try to influence their children in this matter for selfish or worldly motives. As they may be selfish and prejudiced without knowing it, they too, should ask the advice of their confessor, and good persons of experience. Oh! how many children, sons and daughters, are made unhappy all the days of their life by parents or superiors forcing them into some state to which they were not called, or by keeping them from one to which they were called. This matter of your vocation rests with yourselves and Almighty God, and you are free to do what He directs without consideration for any one.

**52 Q. What is actual sin?**

**A. Actual sin is any wilful thought, word, deed, or omission contrary to the law of God.**

Three ways we may sin, by "**thought**,"—allowing our minds to dwell on sinful things; "**word**,"—by cursing, telling lies, etc.; "**deed**,"—by any kind of bad action. But to be sins, these thoughts, words, and deeds must be wilful; that is, we must fully know what we are doing, and be free in doing it. Then they must be "**contrary to the law of God**;" that is, violate some law He commands us to obey, whether it be a law He gave directly Himself, or through His Church. We can also violate God's law by neglecting to observe it, and thus sin, provided the neglect be wilful, and the thing neglected commanded by God or by His Church.

**53 Q.** How many kinds of actual sin are there?

**A.** There are two kinds of actual sin—mortal and venial.

**“Mortal,”** that is, the sin which kills the soul. When a man receives a very severe wound, we say he is mortally wounded; that is, he will die from the wound. As breath shows there is life in the body, so grace is the life of the soul; when all the breath is out of the body, we say the man is dead. He can perform no action to help himself or others. So when all grace is out of the soul we say it is dead, because it is reduced to the condition of a dead body. It can do no action worthy of merit, such as a soul should do; that is, it can do no action that God is bound to reward—it is dead. But you will say the soul never dies. You mean it will never cease to exist; but we call it dead when it has lost all its power to do supernatural good.

**“Venial”** sin does not drive out all the grace; it wounds the soul, it weakens it just as slight wounds weaken the body. If it falls very frequently into venial sin, it will fall very soon into mortal sin also; for the Holy Scripture says (Ecclus. xix. 1) that he that contemneth small things shall fall by little and little. A venial sin seems a little thing, but if we do not avoid it we shall by degrees fall into greater, or mortal, sin. Venial sin makes God less friendly to us and displeases Him. Now if we really love God, we will not displease Him even in the most trifling things.

**54 Q.** What is mortal sin?

**A.** Mortal sin is a grievous offence against the law of God.

**“Grievous”**—that is, very great or serious. **“Against the law.”** If we are in doubt whether anything is sinful or not, we must ask ourselves: is it forbidden by God or His Church? and if we do not know of any law forbidding it, it cannot be a sin, at least, for us.

Suppose, for example, a boy should doubt whether it is

sinful or not to fly a kite. Well, is there any law of God or of His Church saying it is sinful to fly a kite? If not, then it cannot be a sin. But it might be sinful for another reason, namely, his parents or superiors might forbid it, and there is a law of God saying you must not disobey your parents or superiors. Therefore a thing not sinful in itself, that is, not directly forbidden by God or His Church, may become sinful for some other reason well known to us.

We must not, however, doubt concerning the sinfulness or lawfulness of everything we do; for that would be foolish and lead us to be scrupulous. If we doubt at all we should have some good reason for doubting, that is, for believing that the thing we are about to do is or is not forbidden. When, therefore, we have such a doubt we must seek information from those who can enlighten us on the subject, so that we may act without the danger of sinning. It is our intention that makes the act we perform sinful or not. Let me explain. Suppose a person should mistake Friday for Thursday and should eat meat, that person would not commit a real sin, because it is not a sin to eat meat on an ordinary Thursday. He would commit what we call a material sin; that is, his action would be a sin if he really knew what he was doing. On the other hand, if the person, thinking it was Friday when it was really Thursday, ate meat, knowing it to be forbidden, that person would commit a mortal sin, because he intended to do so. Therefore, if what we do is not known to be a sin while we do it, it is no sin for us and cannot become a sin afterwards. But as soon as we know or learn that what we did was wrong, it would be a sin if we did the same thing again. In the same way, everything we do thinking it to be wrong or sinful is wrong and sinful for us, though it may not be wrong for those who know better. Again, it is sinful to judge others for doing wrong, because they may not know that what they do is sinful. It would be better for us to instruct than to blame them. The best we can do, therefore, is to learn well all God's laws and the laws of His Church as they are taught in the catechism,

so that we may know when we are violating them or when we are not, i.e., when we are sinning and when we are not.

**\* 55 Q. Why is this sin called mortal?**

**A.** This sin is called mortal because it deprives us of spiritual life, which is sanctifying grace, and brings everlasting death and damnation on the soul.

When the soul is sent to hell it is dead forever, because never again will it be able to do a single meritorious act.

**\* 56 Q. How many things are necessary to make a sin mortal?**

**A.** To make a sin mortal three things are necessary; a grievous matter, sufficient reflection, and full consent of the will.

**"Grievous matter."** To steal is a sin. Now, if you steal only a pin the act of stealing in that case could not be a mortal sin, because the "matter," namely, the stealing of an ordinary pin, is not grievous. But suppose it was a diamond pin of great value, then it would surely be "grievous matter." **"Sufficient reflection,"** that is, you must know what you are doing at the time you do it. For example, suppose while you stole the diamond pin you thought you were stealing a pin with a small piece of glass, of little value, you would not have sufficient reflection and would not commit a mortal sin till you found out that what you had stolen was a valuable diamond; if you continued to keep it after learning your mistake, you would surely commit a mortal sin. **"Full consent."** Suppose you were shooting at a target and accidentally killed a man: you would not have the sin of murder, because you did not will or wish to kill a man.

Therefore three things are necessary that your act may be a mortal sin: (1) The act you do must be bad, and sufficiently important; (2) You must reflect that you are doing it, and know that it is wrong; (3) You must do it freely, deliberately, and wilfully.

**57 Q.** What is venial sin?

**A.** Venial sin is a slight offence against the law of God in matters of less importance, or in matters of great importance it is an offence committed without sufficient reflection or full consent of the will.

“**Slight**,” that is, a small offence or fault; called “**venial**,” not because it is not a sin, but because God pardons it more willingly or easily than He does a mortal sin. “**Less importance**,” like stealing an ordinary, common pin. “**Great importance**,” like stealing a diamond pin. Without “**reflection**” or “**consent**,” when you did not know it was a diamond and did not intend to steal a diamond.

**\* 58 Q.** Which are the effects of venial sin?

**A.** The effects of venial sin are the lessening of the love of God in our heart, the making us less worthy of His help, and the weakening of the power to resist mortal sin.

“**Lessening of the love**,” because it lessens grace, and grace increases the love of God in us. It displeases God, and though we do not offend Him very greatly, we still offend Him. “**Weakening of the power to resist**.” If a man is wounded, it will be easier to kill him than if he is in perfect health. So mortal sin will more easily kill a soul already weakened by the wounds of venial sin.

**59 Q.** Which are the chief sources of sin?

**A.** The chief sources of sin are seven: **Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy, and Sloth**; and they are commonly called capital sins.

A “**source**” is that from which anything else comes. The source of a river is the little spring on the mountain side where the river first begins. This little stream runs down the mountain, and as it goes along gathers strength and size from other little streams running into it. It cuts its way through the meadows, and marks the course and is

the beginning of a great river, sweeping all things before it and carrying them off to the ocean. Now, if some one in the beginning had stopped up the little spring on the mountain—the first source of the river—there would have been no river in that particular place. It is just the same with sin. There is one sin that is the source, and as it goes along like the stream it gathers strength; other sins follow it and are united with it. Again: each of these “**capital sins**,” as they are called, is like a leader or a captain in an army, with so many others under him and following him. Now, if you take away the head, the other members of the body will perish; so if you destroy the capital sin, the other sins that follow it will disappear also. Very few persons have all the capital sins: some are guilty of one of them, some of two, some of three, but few if any are guilty of them all. The one we are guilty of, and which is the cause of all our other sins, is called our *predominant sin* or our *ruling passion*. We should try to find it out, and labor to overcome it.

Every one of these capital sins has a great many other sins following it.

“**Pride**” is an inordinate self-esteem. Pride comes under the first commandment; because by thinking too much of ourselves we neglect God, and give to ourselves the honor due to Him. Of what have we to be proud? Of our personal appearance? Disease may efface in one night every trace of beauty. Of our clothing? It is not ours; we have not produced it; most of it is taken from the lower animals—wool from the sheep, leather from the ox, feathers from the bird, etc. Are we proud of our wealth, money or property? These may be stolen or destroyed by fire. The learned may become insane, and so we have nothing to be proud of but our good works. All that we have is from God, and we can have it only as long as He wishes. We had nothing coming into the world, and we leave it with nothing but the shroud in which we are buried; and even this does not go with the soul, but remains with the body to rot in the earth.

Soon after death our bodies become so offensive that even our dearest friends hasten to place them under ground, where they become the food of worms, a mass of corruption loathsome to sight and smell. Why, then, should we be so proud of this body, and commit so much sin for it, pamper it with every delicacy, only to be the food of worms? This does not mean, however, that we are not to keep our bodies clean, and take good care of them. We are bound to do so, and could not neglect it without committing sin. The one thing to be avoided is taking too much care of them, and neglecting our soul and God on their account. The *followers of pride* are: Conceit, hypocrisy, foolish display in dress or conduct, harshness to others, waste of time on ourselves, etc. "**Covetousness**," the same as avarice, greed, etc., is an inordinate desire for worldly goods. "**Inordinate**," because it is not avarice to prudently provide for the future either for ourselves or others. Covetousness comes under the tenth commandment, and is forbidden by it. We must be content with what we have or can get honestly. The *followers of covetousness* are: Want of charity, dishonest dealing, theft, etc. "**Lust**" is the desire for sins of the flesh; for impure thoughts, words, or actions. It comes under the sixth and ninth commandments, and includes all that is forbidden by those commandments. It is the habit of always violating, or of desiring to violate, the sixth and ninth commandments. Lust and impurity mean the same thing. The *followers of lust* are, generally, neglect of prayer, neglect of the sacraments, and final loss of faith.

"**Anger**" comes under the fifth commandment. It is followed by hatred, the desire of revenge, etc.

"**Gluttony**" is the sin of eating or drinking too much. With regard to eating, it is committed by eating too often; by being too particular about what we eat, by being too extravagant in always looking for the most costly things, that we think others cannot have. With regard to drinking, it is generally committed by taking too much of intoxicating

liquors. The drunkard is a glutton and commits the sin of gluttony every time he becomes intoxicated. Gluttony, especially in drink, comes in a manner under the first commandment, because by depriving ourselves of our reason we cannot give God the honor and respect which is His due. Think of how many sins the drunkard commits. He becomes intoxicated, which in itself is a sin. He deprives himself of the use of reason, abuses God's great gift, and becomes like a brute beast. Indeed in a way he becomes worse than a beast; for beasts always follow the laws that God has given to their nature, and never drink to excess. They obey God, and man is the only one of God's creatures that does not always keep His laws. Think too of the number of insane persons confined in asylums, who would give all in this world for the use of their reason, if they could only understand their miserable condition. Yet the drunkard abuses the gift that would make these poor unfortunate lunatics happy. Again, the drunkard injures his health and thus violates the fifth commandment by committing a kind of slow suicide. He loses self-respect, makes use of sinful language; frequently neglects Mass and all his religious duties, exposes himself to the danger of death while in a state of sin, gives scandal to his family and neighbors, and by his bad example causes some to leave or remain out of the true Church. By continued intemperance, he may become insane and remain in that condition till death puts an end to his career and he goes unprepared before the judgment-seat of God. Besides all this he squanders the money he should put to a better use and turns God's gifts into a means of offending Him. If a father, he neglects the children and wife for whom he has promised to provide; leaves them cold and hungry while he commits sin with the means that would make them comfortable. Drunkenness therefore is a sin accompanied by many deplorable evils. There are three great sins you should always be on your guard against during your whole lives, namely, drunkenness, dishonesty, and impurity. If you avoid

these you will almost surely avoid all other sins; for nearly all sins can be traced back to these three. They are the most dangerous, first, because they have most followers, and, secondly, because they grow upon us almost without our knowing it. The drunkard begins perhaps as a boy by taking a little, even very little; the second time he takes a little more; the next time still more, then he begins to be fond of strong drink and can scarcely do without it; finally he becomes the slave of intemperance and sells his soul and body for it. The passions of dishonesty and impurity grow by degrees in the same manner. Therefore avoid them in the beginning and resist them while they are under your power. If you find yourself inclined to any of these sins in your youth, stop them at once.

“**Envy**” is the desire to see another meet with misfortune that we may be benefited by it. We are glad when he does not succeed in his business, we are sorry when any one speaks well of him, etc. Envy comes under the eighth commandment.

“**Sloth**” is committed when we idle our time, and are lazy; when we are indifferent about serving God; when we do anything slowly and poorly and in a way that shows we would rather not do it. They are slothful who lie in bed late in the morning and neglect their duty. Slothful people are often untidy in their personal appearance; and they are nearly always in misery and want, unless somebody else takes care of them. Sloth comes under the first commandment, because it has reference in a special manner to the way in which we serve God. How, then, shall we best destroy sin in our souls? By finding out our chief capital sin and rooting it out. If a strong oak tree is deeply rooted in the ground, how will you best destroy its life? By cutting off the branches? No. For with each returning spring new branches will grow. How then? By cutting the root, and then the great oak with all its branches will die. In the same way our capital sin is the root, and as long as we leave it in our souls other sins will grow out of it. While we are trying to destroy our sins with

out touching our capital sin—our chief sin—we are only cutting off branches that will grow again. Indeed a great many people are only cutting off branches all the time and that is why they are not benefited as much as they could be by the prayers they say, Masses they hear, sacraments they receive, and sermons they listen to. But do not imagine that because you are not becoming better, when you pray, hear Mass, and receive the sacraments, you are doing no good at all. That would be a great mistake, and just such a thing as the devil would suggest to make persons give up their devotions. What is the use, he might say, of your trying to be good? you are just as bad as you were a year ago. Do not listen to that temptation. Were it not for your prayers and your reception of the sacraments, you would become a great deal worse than you are. Suppose a man is rowing on the river against a very strong tide. He is rowing as hard as he can and yet he is not advancing one foot up the stream. Is he doing nothing therefore? Ah! he is doing a great deal: he is preventing himself from being carried with the current out into the ocean. He is keeping himself where he is till the force of the tide diminishes, and then he can advance. So they who are trying to be good are struggling against the strong tide of temptation. If they cease to struggle against it, they will be carried out into the great ocean of sin and lost forever. Some day the temptation will grow weaker and then they will be able to advance towards heaven. We feel temptations most when we are trying to resist them and lead good lives, because we are working against our evil inclinations—the strong tide of our passions. We have no trouble going with them.

## LESSON SEVENTH.

## ON THE INCARNATION AND REDEMPTION.

“**Incarnation**” means to take flesh, as a body. Here it means Our Lord’s taking flesh, that is, taking a body like ours, when He became man. “**Redemption**” means to buy back. Let us take an example. Slaves are men or women that belong entirely to their masters, just as horses, cows, or other animals do. Slaves are bought and sold, never receive any wages for their work, get their food and clothing and no more. As they never earn money for themselves, they can never purchase their own liberty. If ever they are to be free some one else must procure their liberty. Now, suppose I am in some country where slavery exists. I am free, but I want one hundred dollars; so I go to a slave owner and say: I want to sell myself for one hundred dollars. He buys me and I soon squander the one hundred dollars. Now I am his property, his slave; I shall never earn any wages and shall never be able to buy my freedom. No other slave can help me, for he is just in the same condition as I myself am. If I am to be free, a free man who has the money must pay for my liberty. This is exactly the condition in which all men were before Our Lord redeemed them. Adam sold himself and all his children to the devil by committing sin. He and they therefore became slaves. They could not earn any spiritual wages, that is, grace of God to purchase their liberty; and as all men were slaves one could not help another in this matter. Then Our Lord Himself came and purchased our freedom. He bought us back again, and the price He paid was His own life and blood given up upon the cross. In His goodness, He did more than redeem us; He gave us also the means of redeeming ourselves in case we should ever have the misfortune of falling

again into the slavery of the devil—into sin. He left us the Sacrament of Penance to which we can go as to a bank, and draw out enough of Our Lord's grace—merited for us and deposited in the power of His Church—to purchase our redemption from sin.

**60 Q.** Did God abandon man after he fell into sin?

**A.** God did not abandon man after he fell into sin, but promised him a Redeemer, who was to satisfy for man's sin and reopen to him the gates of heaven.

**"Abandon"** means to leave to one's self. Adam and his posterity were slaves, but God took pity on them. He did not leave them to themselves, but promised to help them.

**"Gates of heaven."** Heaven has no gates, because it is not built of material—of stone, or iron, or wood. It is only our way of speaking; just as we say "hand of God," although He has no hands. Heaven is the magnificent home God has prepared for us, and its gates are His power by which He keeps us out or lets us in as He pleases. Our Lord, therefore, obtained admittance for us.

**61 Q.** Who is the Redeemer?

**A.** Our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of mankind.

**62 Q.** What do you believe of Jesus Christ?

**A.** I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, true God and true man.

**"True God."** He was true God equal to His Father from all eternity. He became man when He came upon the earth about 2000 years ago, and was born on Christmas day. Now He is in heaven as God and man. Therefore, He was God always, but man only from the time of His incarnation.

**\* 63 Q.** Why is Jesus Christ true God?

**A.** Jesus Christ is true God because He is the true and only Son of God the Father.

God the Father, first Person of the Blessed Trinity, is His real Father, and St. Joseph was His foster-father, selected by the Heavenly Father to take care of Our Lord and watch over Him while on earth. A foster-father is not the same as a step-father. A step-father is a second father that one gets when his real father dies. A foster-father is one who takes a person, whether a relative or a stranger, and adopts him as his son. It was a very great honor for St. Joseph to be selected from among all men to take care of the Son of God; to carry in his arms the great One of whom the prophets spoke; the One for whom the whole world longed during so many thousand years; so that next to our Blessed Mother St. Joseph deserves our greatest honor.

**\* 64 Q. Why is Jesus Christ true man?**

**A. Jesus Christ is true man because He is the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and has a body and soul like ours.**

He has all that we have by nature, but not the things we have acquired; such as deformities, imperfections, and the like. Everything in Our Lord was perfect. Above all, He had no sin of any kind, nor even inclination to sin. He could be hungry, as He was when He fasted forty days in the desert (Matt. iv. 2). He was thirsty, as He said on the cross (John xix, 28). He could be wearied; as we read in the Holy Scripture (John iv. 6) that He sat down by a well to rest, while His disciples went into the city to buy food. All these sufferings come from our very nature. We say a thing comes from our very nature when everybody has it. Now, every one in the world may at times be hungry, thirsty, or tired; but everybody in the world need not have a toothache or headache, because such things are not common to human nature, but due to some defect in our body; and such defects Our Lord did not have, because He was a perfect man. Therefore, Our Lord had a body like ours, not as it usually is with defects, but as it should be, perfect in all things that belong to its nature, as Adam's was before he sinned.

**\* 65 Q. How many natures are there in Jesus Christ?**

**A. In Jesus Christ there are two natures; the nature of God and the nature of man.**

He was perfect God and perfect man. His human nature was under the full power of His divine nature, and could not do anything contrary to His divine will. You cannot understand how there can be two natures and two wills in one person, because it is another of the great mysteries; but you must believe it, just as you believe there are three Persons in one God, though you do not understand it. Those who learn theology and study a great deal may understand it better than you, but never fully. It will be enough, therefore, for you to remember and believe that there are two natures—the divine nature and the human nature—in the one person of Our Lord.

**\* 66 Q. Is Jesus Christ more than one person?**

**A. No, Jesus Christ is but one Divine Person.**

**“But one,”** so that the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Son of God, the Messiah, Christ, Jesus, Our Lord, Our Saviour, Our Redeemer, etc., are all names for the one person; and, besides these, there are many other names given to Our Lord in the Holy Scripture, both in the Old and the New Testament.

**\* 67 Q. Was Jesus Christ always God?**

**A. Jesus Christ was always God, as He is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, equal to His Father from all eternity.**

**\* 68 Q. Was Jesus Christ always man?**

**A. Jesus Christ was not always man, but became man at the time of His Incarnation.**

**69 Q. What do you mean by the Incarnation?**

**A. By the Incarnation I mean that the Son of God was made man.**

**70 Q. How was the Son of God made man?**

**A. The Son of God was conceived and made man by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary.**

\* 71 Q. Is the Blessed Virgin Mary truly the Mother of God?

A. The Blessed Virgin Mary is truly the Mother of God, because the same Divine Person who is the Son of God is also the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

\* 72 Q. Did the Son of God become man immediately after the sin of our first parents?

A. The Son of God did not become man immediately after the sin of our first parents, but He was promised to them as a Redeemer.

God did not say to Adam when He would send the Redeemer, and so the Redeemer did not come for about 4000 years after He was first promised. God permitted this long time to elapse in order that mankind might feel and know how great an evil sin is, and what misery it brought upon the world. During these 4000 years men were becoming gradually worse. At one time—about 1600 years after Adam's sin—they became so bad that God destroyed by a deluge, or great flood of water, all persons and living things upon the earth, except Noe, his wife, his three sons and their wives, and the animals they had in the ark with them (Genesis vi.). Let me now give you more particulars about this terrible punishment. After God determined to destroy all living things on account of the wickedness of men, He told Noe, who was a good man, to build a great ark, or ship, for himself and his family, and for some of all the living creatures upon the earth (Genesis vii.). When the ark was ready, Noe and his family went into it, and the animals that were to be saved came by God's power, and two by two were taken into the ark. Besides the two of each kind of animals, Noe was required to take with him five more of each kind of clean animals. Clean animals were certain animals which, according to God's law, could be offered in sacrifice or eaten; they were such animals as the ox, the sheep, the goat, etc. Therefore, seven of each of the clean animals, and two of each of the other kinds. Why did He have seven clean animals? Two were to be set free upon the dry earth with the other animals, and

the other five were for food or sacrifice. Noe spent a hundred years in making the ark. At that time men lived much longer than they do now. Adam lived over 900 years and Mathusala, the oldest man, lived to be 969 years old. There are many reasons why men live a shorter time now than then. When the door of the ark was closed, God sent a great rain that lasted for forty days and forty nights. All the springs of water broke forth, and all the rivers and lakes overflowed their banks. Men ran here and there to high places, while the water rose higher and higher till it covered the tops of the mountains, and all not in the ark were drowned. The big ark floated about for about a year; for although it stopped raining after forty days, just think of the quantity of water that must have fallen! Think of the rain that would fall during the whole of Lent from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday—forty days. It took a long time, therefore, for the waters to go down and finally disappear. When the waters began to go down, Noe, wishing to know if any land was as yet above the water, opened the little window, and sent out a raven or crow over the waters. The raven did not come back, because it is a bird that eats flesh, and it found plenty of dead bodies to feed upon. Then Noe sent out a dove, and the dove came back with the bough of an olive tree in its mouth. From this Noe knew that the earth was becoming dry again. After some days, the ark rested on the top of a mountain named Ararat. When all the waters had dried up, Noe and his family and all the animals passed out of the ark. He offered a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and he and his family settled once more upon the earth. For a while, the descendants of Noe were good, but when they became numerous they soon forgot the deluge and its punishments, and became very wicked. Many forgot the true God altogether, and began to worship the sun, moon, and stars. Some worshipped animals, and others idols of wood or stone. They offered up human victims and committed all kinds of sins most displeasing to God. Many were in slavery; masters were cruel; and things were becoming daily worse, till just before the coming of Our Lord the world was in a terrible condition of misery

and sin. The law-makers tried to remedy these evils by their laws, and the teachers and professors by their teaching; but all was of no avail. God Himself must save the world.

God gave many promises of the Redeemer. The first one was given in the garden to our first parents. God said (Genesis iii. 15) to the serpent: I will put enmities, that is hatred, between thee and the woman; that is, between the devil and the Blessed Virgin—whom the holy writers call the second Eve; because as the first Eve caused our fall, the second Eve helped us to rise again. I will put also a great hatred between the devil and your Redeemer. The next promise of the Redeemer was made to Abraham (Genesis xv). Another was made to Isaac, and another to Jacob; and later these promises were frequently renewed through the prophets; so that during the four thousand years God encouraged the good people, by promising from time to time the Redeemer.

Some of the prophets foretold to what family He would belong, and when He would be born, and when and what He would suffer, and how He would die. They also foretold signs or things that would come to pass just before the advent or coming of the Messias (Genesis xlix. 10); so that when the people saw these things coming to pass, they could know that the time of the Messias was at hand. Thus when Our Lord came the whole world was waiting and looking for the promised Redeemer, because the signs foretold had appeared or were taking place. But the majority did not recognize Our Lord when He came, on account of the quiet, humble, and poor way in which He came. They were expecting to see the Redeemer come as a great and powerful king, with mighty armies conquering the world; and in this they were mistaken. If they had studied the Holy Scriptures they would have learned how He was to come—poor and humble.

**\* 73 Q.** How could they be saved who lived before the Son of God became man?

**A.** They who lived before the Son of God became man could be saved by believing in the Redeemer to come, and by keeping the commandments.

We have seen that God promised the Redeemer during four thousand years. Now, those who believed these promises and kept all God's commandments, and observed all His laws as they knew them, could be saved. They could not, it is true, enter into heaven after their death, but they could wait in Limbo without suffering till Our Lord opened heaven for them. They were saved only through the merits of Our Lord. And how could this be when Our Lord was not yet born? Do you know what a promissory note is? It is this. When a man is not able to pay his debts just now but will be able afterwards, he gives those to whom he owes the money a promissory note, that is, a written promise that he will pay at a certain time. Now, those who died before Our Lord was born had the Holy Scriptures promising that Christ would pay for them and for their sins when He would come. So God saved them on account of this promise and kept them free from suffering till Our Lord came. If any died when they were little infants, their parents answered for them as godfathers and godmothers do now for infants at baptism.

**74 Q.** On what day was the Son of God conceived and made man?

**A.** The Son of God was conceived and made man on **Annunciation day**—the day on which the Angel Gabriel announced to the Blessed Virgin Mary that she was to be the Mother of God.

**"Annunciation day"** is the 25th of March. You can easily remember that feast. Everybody knows that St. Patrick's day is on the 17th of March, and therefore eight days after it comes Annunciation day. There is another feast coming in between them, the feast of St. Joseph, on the 19th of March. Therefore it is easy to remember these three feasts coming all in March and almost together. Annunciation is the name given to that day after the angel came, but it was not called so before. Annunciation means to tell or make known, and this is the day the angel made known to the Blessed Virgin that she was selected for the high office of Mother of God. The Blessed Virgin was expecting the Messias, and was probably praying for His speedy arrival, as were the rest of her

people, when suddenly the angel came and said: Hail, full of grace. (See Hail Mary Expl.)

**75 Q.** On what day was Christ born?

**A.** Christ was born on Christmas day in a stable at Bethlehem, nearly nineteen hundred years ago.

**"Christmas day"** is the 25th of December, one week before the New Year. It is called Christmas day since the time Our Lord was born, nearly nineteen hundred years ago. **"In a stable at Bethlehem."** The story of Our Lord's birth is in every way a very sad one. The Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph lived in Palestine—called also the Holy Land since Our Lord lived there. Palestine was the country where God's people, the Jews, lived, and at the time we are speaking of it was under the power of the Roman Emperor, who had his soldiers and governor there. He wished to find out how many people were there, and so he ordered a census or count of the people to be made (Luke ii.). We take the census very differently now from what they did then. We in the United States, by order of the government, send men around from house to house to write down the names; but in Palestine, when they wanted the number of the people, every one, no matter where he lived, had to go to the city or town where his forefathers had lived and there register his name with all the others who belonged to the same tribe or family. Now, the forefathers of St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin belonged to the little town of Bethlehem (Luke ii.); so they had to leave Nazareth where they were then living and go to Bethlehem. This was shortly before Christmas. When they got to Bethlehem, they found the place crowded with people who also came to enrol their names. They went to the inn or hotel to seek for lodging for the night. The hotels there were not like ours. They were simply large buildings with small rooms and no furniture; they were called caravansaries. A man was in charge of the building, and by paying him something persons were allowed the use of a room. No food was sold there, so travellers had to do their cooking at home and bring whatever they needed with them. When the Blessed Virgin

and St. Joseph went to the inn they found all the rooms occupied. Then they went up and down the streets looking for some house where they might stay. Nobody would take them in, because St. Joseph was old and poor and had no money, or little, to give. They were refused at every door, a very sad thing indeed. What were they to do? It was growing dark, and the lights most likely were being lighted here and there in the houses. The old towns were not built as ours are, with houses on the outskirts growing fewer as we advance into the country. They were surrounded by great walls to keep out their enemies. There were several large gates in these walls, through which the people entered or left the city. At night these gates were closed and guarded. Nearly all the people lived within the walls and the country was lonely and almost deserted. Only shepherds were to be found in the country, and they lived in tents, which they carried about from place to place, as soldiers do in time of war. Such was the country about Bethlehem. As St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin could not find any place to stay in the town they were forced to go into the country. They must have suffered also from fear because the country was infested with wolves and wild dogs, so fierce that they sometimes came into the towns and attacked the people in the streets. Besides, many robbers were wandering about waiting for victims. Palestine is a hilly country and there were on the sides of some of the hills large caves in which these robbers frequently took refuge or divided their spoils. Because the shepherds at times, especially in bad weather, brought their animals into these caves, they are often called stables. The Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph found, we are told, one of these cold, dark places, went into it for the night, and there Our Lord was born.

It was the month of December and must have been quite cold, so the little Infant Jesus must have suffered greatly from the cold. If it had been a stable such as we see in our days it would have been bad enough; but think of this cold, dark, miserable cave, and yet it was Our Lord, the King of heaven and earth, who was born there. There are few people so poor that they have to live in a cave. What wonderful

humility, then, on the part of Our Lord. He could have been born, if He wished, in the grandest palace man could construct and have had thousands of angels to bring Him whatever He needed, for they are His servants in heaven. But Our Lord became so humble to teach us. What impression should this make on those who are too fond of dress and too vain about their homes.

It was foretold by the prophets that Our Lord would be born in Bethlehem, and when the time was near at hand His parents were living in Nazareth; then the Roman Emperor gave the decree that the census be taken, which obliged Our Lord's parents to go to Bethlehem, and thus Our Lord was born there, and the words of the prophets fulfilled. See how God moves the whole world, if necessary, to accomplish what He desires. But how naturally He does everything. Nobody knew—not even the Roman Emperor himself—that he was giving an edict to fulfil the prophecies and the promises of God. So, at times, people do many things to carry out the designs of God, though they know it not. We should never complain therefore or do unwillingly whatever work we have to perform, because it may be something that God wishes us to do for some very special end. If you look back upon your lives, you can see that God guided and directed you upon many occasions.

**\* 76 Q. How long did Christ live on earth?**

**A. Christ lived on earth about thirty-three years, and led a most holy life in poverty and suffering.**

The life of Our Lord was spent in the following manner. At the time Our Lord was born in Bethlehem wise men or kings, called Maji, came from the East—perhaps from Persia or Arabia—to adore Him. They saw a strange star, and leaving their own country came to Palestine. When they came as far as Jerusalem, they went to King Herod and asked him where the young King was born. Herod was troubled, for he was afraid the new King would deprive him of his throne. He called together all the priests and asked them about this royal child. They told him and the Maji that, according to

the prophecies, the Saviour should be born in Bethlehem. The Wise Men saw the star once more, and followed it to Bethlehem, where it stood over the stable in which Our Lord lay. They entered, and adored the Infant Jesus, and offered Him presents. Now, Herod told them to come back after they had found the new-born King, and tell him where He was, that he too might go and adore Him. But such was not Herod's real intention. He wished not to adore but to kill Him. See, then, how the wicked pretend at times to do good, that they may deceive us and lead us astray. Be always on your guard against a person if you suspect his goodness. But Herod could not deceive God, Who, knowing his heart, warned the Wise Men not to return to Herod, but to go back to their own country by another way, which they did. We celebrate the day on which the Wise Men adored the Infant Jesus on the feast of the Epiphany (six days after New Year's day). When the Maji did not return, Herod knew that they had avoided him. He was very angry indeed, and in order to be sure of killing the poor little infant Jesus, he had all the infants or children in or near Bethlehem who were not over two years old put to death. We honor these first little martyrs who suffered for Christ on the feast of Holy Innocents—three days after Christmas.

After the departure of the Wise Men, God sent an angel to St. Joseph warning him of Herod's evil designs, and telling him to fly with Jesus and Mary into Egypt. Then St. Joseph, with the Blessed Virgin and the Infant, set out for Egypt. St. Joseph did not ask the angel how long he would have to stay there; nor did he ask to be allowed to wait till morning. He obeyed promptly; he arose in the night, and started at once. What an example of obedience for us! They must have had many hardships on the way. They must have suffered much from hunger, cold, and fear. They dare not go on the best roads, for we may well suppose that Herod had his spies out watching for any that might escape. So they went by the roughest roads and longest way. In Egypt they were among strangers, and how could a poor old carpenter like St. Joseph find enough work there! The Holy Family must at

times have suffered greatly from want. They remained in Egypt for some time. Afterwards, when Herod died, they returned to Nazareth (Matt. ii.).

At twelve years of age Our Lord went to the Temple of Jerusalem to offer sacrifice with His parents (Luke ii. 42). He afterwards returned to Nazareth, and then for eighteen years—called His hidden life—we do not hear anything of Him. Most likely He worked in the carpenter shop with His foster-father, St. Joseph.

At the age of thirty (Luke iii. 23), Our Lord began His public life ; that is, His preaching, miracles, etc. His public life lasted a little over three years, and then He was put to death on the cross.

**\* 77 Q. Why did Christ live so long on earth ?**

**A. Christ lived so long on earth to show us the way to heaven by His teaching and example.**

Christ went through all the stages of life that each might have an example. He was an infant ; then a child ; then a young man, and finally a man. He did not become an old man to set an example to the old, because if men follow His example in their youth and manhood they will be good in old age. Youth is the all-important time to learn. If you want a tree to grow straight, you must keep it straight while it is only a little twig. You cannot straighten an old oak-tree that has grown up crooked. So you must be taught to do right in your youth, that you may do the same when old. Of the hidden or private life of Our Lord we, as I have said, know nothing, except that He was obedient to His parents ; for He wished to give an example also to those holy persons who lead a life hidden from the world. Some books have given stories about what Our Lord did in school, etc., but these stories are not true. The only true things we know of Our Lord are those told in the Holy Scripture, or handed down to us by the Church in her teachings, or those certainly revealed to God's saints. Remember, then, that others are taught best by example, and be careful of the example you give.

## LESSON EIGHTH.

ON OUR LORD'S PASSION, DEATH, RESURRECTION, AND  
ASCENSION.

**THE** Passion, that is, the terrible sufferings of Our Lord, began after the Last Supper, and ended at His death. On Thursday evening Our Lord sat down for the last time with His dear Apostles. He had been talking, eating, and living with them for over three years; and now He is going to take His last meal with them before His death. He told them then how He was to suffer, and that one of them was going to betray Him. They were very much troubled; for only Judas himself knew what he was about to do.

**78 Q.** What did Jesus Christ suffer?

**A.** Jesus Christ suffered a bloody sweat, a cruel scourging, was crowned with thorns, and was crucified.

After the Supper, Our Lord went with His apostles to a little country place just outside Jerusalem, and separated from it by a small stream. He told the three Apostles, Peter, James, and John, to stay near the entrance, and to watch and pray, while He Himself went further into the Garden of Olives, or Gethsemani, as this place was called, and throwing Himself upon His face, prayed long and earnestly, but the Apostles fell asleep.

We often find persons who are in great anguish or dread covered with a cold perspiration. Now, Our Lord's agony in the garden was so intense that great drops, not of sweat, but of blood, oozed from every pore, and trickled to the ground. There are three reasons given for this dreadful agony.

(1) The clear, certain knowledge of the sufferings so soon to be endured. If we were to be put to death to-morrow and knew exactly the manner of our death and the pain it would

inflict, how great would be our fear! Our Lord, knowing all things, knew in every particular what He would have to undergo. Moreover, His sufferings were greater than ours could be, even if we suffered the same kind of death; because His body was most perfect, and therefore more susceptible of pain than ours. A wound in the eye, because the most sensitive and delicate part of the body, would cause us greater pain than a wound on the foot or hand. Thus, all the parts of Our Lord's body being so perfect and sensitive, we can scarcely imagine His dreadful torments, the very thought of which caused Him such agony.

(2) The sins, past, present, and future of all men. He knew all things, as we have said, and looking back upon the world He saw all the sins committed, of thought, word, and deed, from the time of Adam down to His own; and seeing all these offences against His Father, He was very much grieved.

(3) The third reason why He grieved. He looked forward and saw how little many persons would profit by all the sufferings He was about to endure. He saw all the sins that would be committed from the time of His death down to the end of the world. He saw us also sinning with the rest. No wonder then that He suffered so much in the garden. This suffering on that night is called "Our Lord's agony in the garden." That night Judas, who had betrayed Him to His enemies, came with a great band of soldiers and people, with swords and clubs, to make Our Lord a prisoner. He did not try to escape, but stood waiting for them, though all His apostles, who had promised to stay with Him, ran away. Then the soldiers led Our Lord to the house of the Chief Priest. Then they gathered the priests, and gave Him a kind of trial, and said He was guilty of death. But at that time the Jews had no power to put persons to death according to the law; so they had to send Our Lord to Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor, to be condemned, because they were under the power of the Romans. The Jews acted against their laws in the trial of Our Lord.

(1) They tried Him at night ; and (2) they allowed Him no witnesses in His defence, but even employed false witnesses to testify against Him, and thus acted against all law and justice. Early in the morning they led Him to Pilate, who commanded that He should be scourged. Then they stripped Our Lord of His garments, fastened His hands to a low stone pillar, and there He was "**scourged**" by the Roman soldiers. The lashes used by the Romans were made of leather, with pieces of bone, iron, or steel fastened into it, so that every stroke would lay open the flesh. It is most likely these were the lashes used upon Our Lord till every portion of His body was bruised and bleeding, and they replaced His garments upon Him. Now, you know if you put a cloth upon a fresh wound the blood will soak into it and cause it to adhere to the mangled flesh. Our Blessed Lord's garment, thus saturated with His blood, adhered to His wounded body, and when again removed caused Him unspeakable pain. Next, the soldiers, because Our Lord had said He was a king—meaning a spiritual king—led Him into a large hall and mocked Him. They made a crown of long, sharp thorns, and forced it down upon His brow with a heavy rod or reed ; every stroke driving the thorns into His head, and causing the blood to roll down His sacred face. They again took off His garments, and opened anew the painful wounds. Because kings wore purple, they put an old purple garment upon Him, and made Him a mock king, genuflecting in ridicule as they passed before Him. They struck Him in the face and spat upon Him ; and yet it seems our patient Lord said not a word in complaint. Then they put His garments upon Him, and Pilate asked the people what he should do with Him, and they cried, "Crucify Him." It was then Friday morning, and probably about ten or eleven o'clock. They made a cross of heavy beams, and laying it upon His shoulders, forced Him to carry it to Calvary—the place of execution, just outside the city ; for it was not allowed to execute any one in the city. Our Lord had not eaten anything from Thursday evening, and then with all He suffered and the loss of blood, He **must**

have been very weak at eleven o'clock on Friday morning. He was weak, and fell many times under the cross. His suffering was increased by seeing His Blessed Mother looking at Him. When He arrived at Calvary they tore off His garments and nailed Him to the cross, driving the rough nails through His hands and feet. It was then about twelve o'clock. From twelve to three in the afternoon Our Blessed Saviour was hanging on the cross, with a great multitude of His enemies about Him mocking Him and saying cruel things. Even the two thieves that were crucified with Him reviled Him, though one of them repented and was pardoned before death. Our Lord's poor Mother and His few friends stood at a little distance witnessing all that was going on. When Our Lord was thirsty His executioners gave Him gall to drink. At three o'clock He died, and there was an earthquake and darkness, and the people were sorely afraid.

But you will ask, how could these soldiers be so cruel? They were Romans; and in those days men called gladiators used to fight with swords before the Roman Emperor and all the people—just as actors play now for the amusement of their audience. People who could enjoy such scenes as men slaying one another in deadly conflict would scarcely be moved to pity by seeing a man scourged. Again, in the early ages of the Church, during the persecutions, the Emperors used to order the Christians to be thrown to wild beasts to be torn to pieces in the presence of the people—who applauded these horrible sights. They who could see so many put to death would not mind putting one to death, even in the most terrible manner.

**79 Q.** On what day did Christ die?

**A.** Christ died on Good Friday.

“Good Friday,” so called since that time.

**\* 80 Q.** Why do you call that day “good” on which Christ suffered so sorrowful a death?

**A.** We call that day good on which Christ died, because by His death He showed His great love for man, and purchased for him every blessing.

\* 81 Q. Where did Christ die?

A. Christ died on Mount Calvary.

“**Mount Calvary**,” a little hill just outside the city of Jerusalem: For every city they have a special prison or place where all their criminals are executed. Now, as the great Temple of God was in Jerusalem, the city itself was called the City of God, because in the Temple God spoke to the priests in the Holy of Holies. The Temple was divided into two parts: one part, something like the body of our churches, called the Holy, and the other part, where the Ark of the Covenant was kept, called the Holy of Holies. It had about the same relation to the Temple as our altar and sanctuary have to our churches. The Ark of the Covenant was a box about four feet long, two and a half feet high, and two and a half feet wide, made of the finest wood, and ornamented with gold in the most beautiful manner. In it were the tables of stone, on which were written the Commandments of God; also the rod that Aaron—Moses’ brother—changed into a serpent before King Pharaoh; also some of the manna with which the people were miraculously fed during their forty years’ journey in the desert when they fled out of Egypt. All these things were figures of the true religion. The Ark itself was a figure of the tabernacle, and the manna of the Holy Eucharist. The Holy of Holies was hidden from the people by a veil. Only the Chief Priest was allowed into that sacred place, and but once a year. The veil—called the veil of the Temple—hiding that Holy of Holies, though the things mentioned above were no longer in it, was torn asunder when Our Lord died on the cross (Matt. xxvii. 51); because after His death there was no need any longer of figures; for after His death we have the tabernacle itself and the real manna, the real bread from heaven, viz., the body of Our Lord. The veil was rent to show also that God would not remain any longer in the Temple, but would be for the future only in the Christian Church. On account of all these things, therefore, Jerusalem was called the Holy City, and no criminals were put to death in it, but were conducted to Calvary—which

means the place of skulls—and were there put to death. I now call your attention to one thing. If the Jews showed such great respect and reverence for the Ark containing only figures of the Blessed Sacrament, how should we behave in the presence of the tabernacle on the altar containing the Blessed Sacrament itself !

**\* 82 Q. How did Christ die ?**

**A.** Christ was nailed to a cross and died on it, between two thieves.

“**Two thieves,**” because they thought this would make His death more disgraceful—making Him equal to common criminals. One of these thieves, called the penitent thief, repented of his sins and received Our Lord’s pardon before his death. The other thief died in his sins. Holy writers tell us that one of these thieves was saved to give poor sinners hope, and to teach them that they may save their souls at the very last moment of their lives if only they are heartily sorry for their sins and implore God’s pardon for them. The other thief remained and died impenitent, that sinners may fear to put off their conversion to the hour of death, thus rashly presuming on God’s mercy. Persons who wilfully delay their conversion and put off their repentance to the last moment, living bad lives with the hope of dying well, may not accept the grace to repent at the last moment, but may, like the unfortunate, impenitent thief, die as they lived, in a state of sin.

**83 Q. Why did Christ suffer and die ?**

**A.** Christ suffered and died for our sins.

It was not necessary for Our Lord to suffer so much, but He did it to show how much He loved us and valued our souls, and how much He was willing to give for them. We, alas ! do not value our souls as Christ did ; we sometimes sell them for the merest trifle—a moment’s gratification. How sinful !

\* 84 Q. What lessons do we learn from the sufferings and death of Christ?

A. From the sufferings and death of Christ we learn the great evil of sin, the hatred God bears to it, and the necessity of satisfying for it.

We learn "the great evil of sin" also from the misery it brought into the world ; the "hatred God bears to it," from the punishment He inflicted on the wicked angels and on our first parents for it ; and lastly, the "necessity of satisfying for it," from the fact that God allowed His dear and only Son to suffer death itself for the sins even of others.

\* 85 Q. Whither did Christ's soul go after His death?

A. After Christ's death His soul descended into hell.

\* 86 Q. Did Christ's soul descend into the hell of the damned?

A. The hell into which Christ's soul descended was not the hell of the damned, but a place or state of rest called Limbo, where the souls of the just were waiting for Him.

Hell had many meanings in olden times. The grave was sometimes called hell. Jacob, when he heard that wild beasts had devoured his son Joseph, said : "I will go down with sorrow into hell." He meant the grave. Limbo is not the same as Purgatory. It does not exist now, or, if it does, is only for little children who have never committed actual sin and who have died without baptism. They will never get into heaven or see God, but they will not have to suffer pains as they who are in Purgatory or hell endure.

\* 87 Q. Why did Christ descend into Limbo?

A. Christ descended into Limbo to preach to the souls who were in prison—that is, to announce to them the joyful tidings of their redemption.

\* 88 Q. Where was Christ's body while His soul was in Limbo?

A. While Christ's soul was in Limbo His body was in the Holy Sepulchre.

"Sepulchre" is the same as tomb. It is like a little room. In it the coffin is not covered up with earth as it is in the grave, but is placed upon a stand. We call such places vaults, and you can see many of them in any cemetery or burying-ground. Sometimes they are cut in the side of elevated ground with their entrance level with the road; and sometimes they are built altogether under the ground. The one in which Our Lord was placed was cut out of the side of a rock, and had for a door a great stone against the entrance. Our Lord was not placed in a coffin, but was wrapped in a linen cloth. It was the custom of the Jewish people and of many other ancient nations to embalm the bodies of the dead, wrap them in cloths, and cover them with sweet spices (Matt. xxvii. 59). Thus it was that Mary Magdalene and other good women came early in the morning to anoint the body of Our Lord. But you will say, why did they not do it on Friday evening or night? The reason was this: The day with the Jews began at sunset—generally about six o'clock—and ended at sunset on the next evening. We count our twenty-four hours, or day, from twelve at midnight till twelve the next night. Therefore, with the Jews six o'clock on Friday evening was the beginning of Saturday. They kept Saturday, or the Sabbath, instead of Sunday as a day of worship. On that day, which they kept very strictly, it was not allowable to do work of any kind; so they could not anoint Our Lord's body till the Sabbath ended, which was about six o'clock, or sunset on Saturday evening. So, as the Holy Scripture tells us, they came very early in the morning; for Mary Magdalene and these good women were Jews, and strictly observed the Jewish law. You must know that Our Lord Himself, the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, and the apostles were Jews; and that the Jewish religion was the true religion up to the coming of Our Lord; but as it was only a figure and a promise of the Chris-

tian religion, it ceased to have any meaning or to be the true religion when the Christian religion itself was established by Our Lord.

**89 Q.** On what day did Christ rise from the dead?

**A.** Christ rose from the dead, glorious and immortal, on Easter Sunday, the third day after His death.

**"Rose"** by His own power. This is the greatest of all Our Lord's miracles, because all He taught is confirmed by it and depends upon it. A miracle is a work that can be performed only by God, or by some one to whom He has given the power. If any one performs a real miracle to prove what he says, his words must be true; for God, who is infinite truth, could not sanction a lie—could not help an impostor to deceive us. Now Our Lord said He was the Son of God; that He could forgive sins, etc.; and He performed miracles to prove what He said. Therefore He must have told the truth. So all those whom God sent to do any great work were given the power to perform miracles that the people might know they were really messengers from God. They, on the other hand, who claim—as many have done from time to time in the world—that they have been sent by God to do some great work, and can give no convincing proof of their mission, are not to be believed. Thus, when Martin Luther claimed that he was sent by God to reform the Catholic Church—which had existed nearly 1500 years before he was born—he performed no miracles, nor did he give any other proof that he had any such commission from God; and he cannot therefore be believed.

God has established all the laws of nature permanently. They will not vary or change, so that we can depend upon them. We can always be sure that the sun will rise and set; that the seasons will come; that fire will burn, etc. Now, if we see three young men in a great fiery furnace without being burned (Daniel iii.), we say it is a great miracle; because naturally the fire would burn them up if God did not prevent it. Again, water will not stand up like a high wall without

something keeping it back ; it will always run about and fill every empty spot near it. If, therefore, we see water standing up like a high wall, as it did in the Red Sea at the command of Moses, and in the river Jordan, we say it is a miracle. So in all cases where the laws of nature do not work in the ordinary manner, we say a miracle is being performed. Now Our Lord performed many such miracles—many times He suspended the laws of nature—which God alone can do, since He alone established them. Our Lord called back the soul to the body after death, thus raising the dead. He healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, cured the lame, etc., when all medicine and natural means were useless. He did all these things instantly as a rule, and without remedies. Therefore His miracles prove His divine power. Since the resurrection was a great miracle, and Our Lord performed it to prove that He was the true and only Son of God, He must have been just what He said He was.

“**Glorious.**” Our Lord rose in the same body He had before His death ; but when He rose it had new qualities—it was glorified. The qualities of a glorified body are four, viz.: brilliancy, agility, subtilty, and impassibility. (1) It has brilliancy ; that is, it shines like a light ; it gives forth light ; the soul shines through the body. You have heard of the Transfiguration of Our Lord. One day He took three of His apostles—Peter, James, and John—unto a high mountain (Matt. xvii.) ; and as He was speaking to them, suddenly His whole body began to shine like the sun. Then Moses and Elias—two great and holy men of the Old Law—came and conversed with Him. The apostles were astonished and delighted at the sight, and wished to remain there always. Our Lord's body at that time showed one of the qualities of a glorified body. The same three apostles that saw Him thus transfigured and heard the voice of the Heavenly Father saying, “This is My beloved Son,” were present in the garden during Our Lord's agony. He allowed them to see the Transfiguration, so that when they should see Him suffering as man, they would remember that they saw Him on the mountain

glorified as God. (2) Agility; that is, a glorified body can move rapidly from one place to another, like the lightning itself. After His resurrection Our Lord was in Jerusalem, and almost immediately He appeared near the village of Emmaus to two disciples going there (Luke xxiv.). They had left Jerusalem after the crucifixion, probably through fear, and were going along together talking about what had happened during the days of Our Lord's Passion. Suddenly Our Lord came and walked and talked with them, but they did not know Him. They asked Him to stay that night at their house, for it was growing dark. He did stop with them, and at supper they knew Him, and then He vanished from their sight. An ordinary person would have to get up and walk away; but He vanished, showing on this occasion the second quality of His glorified body—agility. (3) Subtility; that is, such a body can go where it pleases and cannot be resisted by material things. It can pass through closed doors or gates, and even walls cannot keep it out. It passes through everything, as light does through glass without breaking it. At one time after Our Lord's resurrection the apostles were gathered together in a room, for they were still afraid of being put to death, and the doors were tightly closed. Suddenly Our Lord stood in the midst of them and said: "Peace be to you" (John xx. 19). They did not open the door for Him; neither wood nor stone could keep Him out; and thus He showed that His body had the third quality. (4) His body had the fourth quality also—impassibility, which means that it can no longer suffer. Before His death, and at it, Our Lord suffered dreadful torments, as you know; but after His resurrection nothing could injure or hurt Him. The spear could not hurt His side, nor the nails His hands, nor the thorns His head. Shortly after His resurrection Our Lord appeared to His apostles while Thomas, one of them, was absent (John xx. 24). When Thomas returned, the other apostles told him that they had seen the Lord risen from the dead; but he would not believe them, saying: "Unless I see the holes where the nails were in His hands and feet, and

put my finger into His side, I will not believe." Now Our Lord, knowing all things, knew this also; so He came again when Thomas was present, and said to him: "Now, Thomas, put your hand into My side." Thomas cried out: "My Lord and my God!" He believed then, because he saw. Now if this body of Our Lord's had been an ordinary body, it would have caused Him pain to allow any one to put his hand into the wound; but it was impassible. It seems very strange, does it not, that Thomas would not believe what the other apostles told him? God permitted this. Why? Because, if they all believed easily, some enemies of Our Lord might say the apostles were simple men that believed everything without any proof. Now they cannot truly say so, because here was one of the apostles, Thomas, who would not believe without the very strongest kind of proof. Another person, one would think, would have been satisfied with seeing Our Lord's wounds; but Thomas would not trust even his eyes—he must also touch before he would believe: showing, therefore, that the apostles were not deceived in anything Our Lord did in their presence, for they had always the most convincing proofs.

After the resurrection, at the last day, the bodies of all those who are to be in heaven will have the qualities I have mentioned; that is, they will be glorified bodies.

Speaking of Our Lord's wounds, I might tell you what the Stigmata means, if you should ever hear or read of it. There have been some persons in the world—saints, of course—who have had upon their hands, feet, and side wounds just like those Our Lord had, and these wounds caused them great pain. For example, St. Francis of Assisi (See Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, Oct. 4th). Up to 1883—that is, only a few years ago—there lived in Belgium a young girl named Louise Lateau who had the Stigmata. We have the most positive proof of it, as you may see in the accounts of her life now published. Her wounds caused her great pain and bled every Friday for many years. She was a delicate seamstress, and lived with her mother and sisters in almost continual

poverty. She had always been remarkable for her true piety, patience in suffering, and charity to the sick. I mention this young girl because she lived in our own time, and is the latest person we know of who had the Stigmata, or wounds of Our Lord. So if you ever hear of the Stigmata of St. Francis or others, you will know that it means wounds like those of Our Lord impressed on their bodies in a miraculous manner.

**"Immortal"**—that is, never to die again, as it will be with us also after the resurrection.

**"The third day."** It was not three full days, but the parts of three days. Suppose some one should ask you on Friday evening how long from now to Sunday; you would answer: Sunday will be the third day from to-day. You would count thus: Friday one, Saturday two, and Sunday itself three. So it was with Our Lord. He died on Friday at about three in the afternoon, and remained in the sepulchre till Sunday morning.

**\* 90 Q.** How long did Christ stay on earth after His resurrection?

**A.** Christ stayed on earth forty days after His resurrection, to show that He was truly risen from the dead, and to instruct His apostles.

After Our Lord's resurrection He remained on earth forty days: but you must not think He was visible all that time. No. He did not appear to everybody, but only to certain persons, and not all the time to them either. He appeared to His apostles and others in all about nine times; at least, we know for certain that He appeared nine times, though He may have appeared oftener. He showed that **"He was truly risen,"** for He ate with His apostles and conversed with them (Luke xxiv. 42). It was after the resurrection that He breathed on them and gave them the power to forgive sins (John xx.).

**91 Q.** After Christ had remained forty days on earth, whither did He go?

**A.** After forty days Christ ascended into heaven. and

the day on which He ascended into heaven is called **Ascension-day**.

One day He was on a mountain with His apostles and disciples ; and as He was talking to them He began to rise up slowly and quietly, just as you have sometimes seen a balloon soar up into the air without noise. Higher and higher He ascended ; and as they gazed up at Him, the clouds opened to receive Him, then closed under Him : and that was the last of Our Lord's mission as man upon earth. The ascension took place forty days after the resurrection (Acts of the Apostles i.).

**\* 92 Q. Where is Christ in heaven ?**

**A.** In heaven Christ sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

**\* 93 Q. What do you mean by saying that Christ sits at the right hand of God ?**

**A.** When I say that Christ sits at the right hand of God, I mean that Christ as God is equal to His Father in all things, and that as man He is in the highest place in heaven next to God.

## LESSON NINTH.

### ON THE HOLY GHOST AND HIS DESCENT UPON THE APOSTLES.

**94 Q.** Who is the Holy Ghost?

**A.** The Holy Ghost is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity.

**\* 95 Q.** From Whom does the Holy Ghost proceed?

**A.** The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son.

**\* 96 Q.** Is the Holy Ghost equal to the Father and the Son?

**A.** The Holy Ghost is equal to the Father and the Son, being the same Lord and God as they are.

**\* 97 Q.** On what day did the Holy Ghost come down upon the apostles?

**A.** The Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles ten days after the Ascension of Our Lord; and the day on which He came down upon the apostles is called Whitsunday or Pentecost.

We have seen already that the apostles fled and were very much afraid when Our Lord was taken prisoner. Even Peter, the chief of the apostles, who said he would die rather than leave Our Lord, shamefully denied Him; and St. John, the beloved disciple, stood near the cross, but offered no resistance to Our Lord's enemies. After the crucifixion of Our Lord, the apostles, afraid of being put to death, shut themselves up in a room. Ten days after Our Lord's ascension they were praying as usual in their room, when suddenly they heard the sound as it were of a great wind, and then they saw tongues the shape of our own, but all on fire, com-

ing, and one tongue resting on the head of each apostle present (Acts of the Apostles ii.).-

This was the Holy Ghost coming to them. The Holy Ghost, being a pure spirit without a body, can take any form He pleases. He sometimes came in the form of a dove; so when you see a dove painted in a church near the altar, it is there to represent the Holy Ghost. You could not paint a spirit, so angels and God Himself are generally represented in pictures as they at some time appeared to men.

“**Whit-Sunday,**” or White-Sunday; probably so called because in the early ages of the Church converts were baptized on the day before, and after their baptism wore white robes or garments as a mark of the soul’s purity after baptism.

“**Pentecost**” means the fiftieth day, because the feast comes fifty days after the resurrection of Our Lord. After His resurrection He remained forty days upon earth, and ten days after He ascended into heaven the Holy Ghost came, thus making the fifty days.

After the Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles they were no longer timid men. They went forth boldly into the streets and preached Christ crucified; telling the people how the Son of God—the true Messias promised—had been put to death. Many who heard them believed and were baptized. The first time St. Peter preached to the people three thousand were converted (Acts of the Apostles ii. 41); so that when all the apostles preached the number of Christians increased rapidly, and the Christian religion was soon carried to distant parts of the world.

At the time Our Lord was put to death the Jews were celebrating a great feast in Jerusalem. The Jews were not like us in this respect. We have many churches, and in all of them sacrifice, that is, the Holy Mass, is offered. The Jews had only one temple where sacrifice could be offered, and that was in Jerusalem. They had synagogues or meeting-houses throughout the land in which they assembled to pray and hear the Holy Scriptures read; but they could not offer sacrifice in them. Three times a year they went to Jerusalem

to celebrate their great feasts. One of these feasts was called the Pasch, or Passover, and it was during the celebration of that feast that Our Lord was put to death; so that there were many persons from all parts of the nation present at the sad execution. I must now tell you why they celebrated the Pasch. We generally celebrate a feast to commemorate—to remind us of—some great event; and the Jews celebrated this feast to remind them of their deliverance from the slavery of the Egyptians, in which their ancestors had been suffering for about two hundred years. At the end of that time God sent Moses to deliver them. You should know, then, who Moses was and what he did to deliver his people, and you should know also something of the history of his people—the Israelites—and how they came to be in Egypt.

At the time I am now going to speak of the old patriarch Jacob, Abraham's grandson, had eleven sons—for Benjamin, the twelfth son, was born afterwards—and the youngest was called Joseph. Joseph was the favorite of his father, and his brothers were jealous of him. The brothers were shepherds, and used to take their flocks to feed at a great distance from home, and did not return for a long time. One day the father sent Joseph to his brothers to see if all were well. They hated Joseph because his father loved him best; and when they saw him coming they agreed never to let him return to his father (Genesis xxxvii.). They intended to kill him. While they were debating about how they should put him to death—he was then only sixteen years old—some merchants passed on their way to Egypt; so, instead of killing him, they sold him as a slave to the merchants. Then they took Joseph's coat and dipped it in the blood of a kid, and sent it to their poor old father, saying they had found it, and making him believe that some wild beast on the way had eaten Joseph. When the merchants arrived in Egypt, Potiphar, one of the king's officers, bought Joseph, and brought him as a slave to his own house. While there, Joseph was falsely accused of a great crime, and cast into prison. While Joseph was in prison the king had a dream (Genesis xli.). He saw in the dream seven fat cows coming up out of a

river, followed by seven lean cows ; and the lean cows ate up the fat cows. He saw also seven fat ears of corn and seven lean ears of corn ; and the seven lean ears ate up the seven fat ears. The king was very much troubled, and called together all his wise men to tell him what the dream meant, but they could not. Then the king heard of Joseph, and sent for him. Now Joseph was a very good young man, and God showed him the meaning ; so he told the king that the seven fat ears of corn and the seven fat cows meant seven years of great abundance in Egypt, and that the seven lean ears and the seven lean cows meant seven years of famine that would follow, and all the abundance of the previous seven years would be consumed. So he advised the king to build great barns during the years of plenty, and gather up all the corn everywhere to save it for the years of famine. The king was delighted at Joseph's wisdom, and made him after himself the most powerful in the kingdom, giving him charge of everything, so that Joseph himself might do what he had advised. Now it happened years after this that there was a famine in the country where Joseph's father lived, and he sent all his sons down into Egypt to buy corn (Genesis xlii.). They did not know their brother Joseph, but he knew them ; and after forgiving them for what they had done to him, he sent them home with an abundance of corn. Afterwards Joseph's father and brothers left their own country and came to live near Joseph in Egypt. The king gave them good land (Genesis xlvii.), and they lived there in peace and happiness. Learn from this beautiful history of Joseph how God protects those that love and serve Him no matter where they are or in what danger they may be placed ; and how He even turns the evil deeds of their enemies into blessings for them.

After the death of Joseph and his brothers, their descendants became very numerous, and the new king of the Egyptians began to persecute them (Exodus i.). He imposed upon them the hardest works, and treated them most cruelly. He ordered that all their male infants should, as soon as born, be thrown into the river Nile. Now about that time Moses was born (Exodus ii.). His mother did not obey the king's

order, but hid him for about three months. When she could conceal him no longer she made a little cradle of rushes, and covering it over with pitch or tar to keep out the water, placed him in it, and then laid it in the tall grass by the edge of the river, sending his little sister to watch what would become of him. Just then the king's daughter came down to bathe, and seeing the little child, ordered one of her servants to bring him to her. At that moment Moses' little sister, pretending not to know him, ran up and asked the king's daughter if she wished to procure a nurse for him. The king's daughter replied in the affirmative and permitted her to bring one; so Moses' own mother was brought and engaged to be his nurse: but he was not known as her son, but as the adopted son of the king's daughter. When Moses grew up he was an officer in the king's army; but because he took the part of his persecuted countrymen he offended the king, and had to fly from the palace. He then went into another country and became a shepherd.

During all this time the persecuted Israelites were praying to the true God to be delivered from the slavery of the Egyptians, who were idolaters. One day Moses saw a bush burning; and as he came near to look at it, he heard a voice telling him not to come too near, and bidding him take off his shoes, for he was on holy ground (Exodus iii.). It was God Who thus appeared and spoke to him, and He ordered him to take off his shoes as a mark of respect and reverence. When we want to show our respect for any person or place, we take off our hats; but the people of that country, instead of their hats, took off their shoes. It was the custom of the country and did not seem strange to them.

Then God told Moses that He was going to send him to deliver His people from the Egyptians and lead them back to their own country; and He sent Aaron, the brother of Moses, with him. Then Moses said to God, the king of Egypt will not let the people go, and what can I do? God gave Moses two signs or miracles to show the king, so that he could know that Moses was really sent by Him. He gave him power to

change a rod into a serpent, and back again into a rod; power also to bring a disease instantly upon his hand, and to heal it instantly (Exodus iv.). Do these, said Almighty God, in the presence of the king. Then Moses and Aaron went to the king and did as God commanded them; and when the rod of Aaron became a serpent, the king's magicians—that is, men who do apparently wonderful things by sleight of hand or the power of the devil—cast their rods upon the ground, and they also became serpents,—not that their rods were changed into serpents, but the devil, who was helping them, took away instantly their rods and put real serpents in their place,—but Aaron's serpent swallowed them up (Exodus vii.). After these signs the king would not let the people go with Moses; for God permitted the king's heart to be hardened, so that all the Egyptians might see the great work God was going to do for His people.

Then God sent the ten plagues upon the Egyptians, while the Israelites—God's people—suffered nothing from these plagues.

The *first plague* was blood. All the water in the land was converted into blood (Exodus vii.). The king then sent for Moses, and promised that if he would take away the plague he would allow all the people to depart. Moses prayed to God, and the plague was removed. But after it was taken away the king's heart was hardened again and he would not keep his promise. Just as people in sickness, distress, or danger sometimes promise God they will lead better lives if only He will help them, and when they are saved they do not keep their promises, so did Pharaoh; and therefore God sent another plague. The *second plague* was frogs. Great numbers of them came out of the rivers and lakes, and filled all the houses of the Egyptians, and crawled into their food, beds, etc. Again the king sent for Moses and did as before; and again Moses prayed, and all the frogs went back into the waters or died (Exodus viii.). But the king again hardened his heart and did not keep his promise. The *third plague* was sciniphs (Exodus viii.)—very small flies, that filled the

land. Imagine our country filled with mosquitoes so numerous that you could scarcely walk through them; it would be a dreadful plague. As it is, two or three might cause you considerable annoyance and pain: what then if there were millions doubly venomous, because sent to punish you? So these little flies must have greatly punished the Egyptians. The *fourth plague* was flies that filled the land and covered everything, to the great disgust of the people. The *fifth plague* was murrain—a disease that broke out among the cattle. The *sixth plague* was a disease—boils—that broke out on men and beasts, so that scarcely any one could move on account of the pains and suffering. The *seventh plague* was hail, that fell in large pieces and destroyed all their crops. The *eighth plague* was locusts. These are very destructive little animals. They look something like our grasshoppers, but are about two or three times their size. They fly and come in millions. They come to this country in large numbers—almost a plague—every fifteen or twenty-five years, and the farmers fear them very much. They eat up every green blade or leaf, and thus destroy all the crops and trees. When the locusts came upon Egypt, Moses, at the king's request, prayed, and God sent a strong wind that swept them into the sea, where they perished in the water. The *ninth plague* was a horrible darkness for three days in all the land of Egypt. The *tenth plague*, the last, was the most terrible of all—the killing of the first-born in all the land of Egypt (Exodus xii.). God instructed Moses to tell the Israelites in the land that on a certain night they were to take a lamb in each family, kill it, and sprinkle its blood on the door-posts of their houses. They were then to cook the lamb and eat it standing, with their garments ready as for a journey (Exodus xii.). The lamb was called the paschal lamb, and was, after that, to be eaten every year, at about what is with us Easter-time, in commemoration of this event. That night God sent an angel through all the land, and he killed the first-born of man and beast in all the houses of the Egyptians. That is,

he killed the eldest son in the house; and if the father was the first-born in his father's family, he was killed also; and the same for the beasts. This was a terrible punishment. In the house of every Egyptian there were some dead, but not one in the houses of the Israelites; for when the angel saw the blood of the lamb on the door-posts, he passed over and did not enter into their houses, so that this event, called Pass-over or Pasch, was kept always as a great feast by God's people. This paschal lamb was a figure of our blessed Lord, for as its blood saved the Israelites from death, so Our Lord's blood saved and still saves us from eternal death in hell.

After that dreadful night Pharaoh allowed the people to depart with Moses; but when they had gone as far as the Red Sea, he was sorry he let them go, and set out with a great army to bring them back. There the people stood, with the sea before them and Pharaoh and his army coming behind them; but God provided for them a means of escape. At God's command, Moses stretched his rod over the sea, and the waters divided and stood like great walls on either side; and all the people passed through the opening in the waters, on the dry bed of the sea (Exodus xiv.).

Pharaoh attempted to follow them, but when he and his army were on the dry bed of the sea, between the two walls of water, God allowed the waters to close over them, and they were all drowned. Then the Israelites began the great journey through the desert, in which they travelled for forty years. During all that time God fed them with manna. He Himself, as a guide, went with them in a cloud, that shaded them from the heat of the sun during the day and was a light for them at night. But you will ask: Was the desert so large that it took forty years to cross it? No, but these people, notwithstanding all God had done for them, sinned against Him in the desert; so He permitted them to wander about through it till a new generation of people grew up, who were to be led into the promised land by Josue, the successor of Moses. From this we may learn a lesson for ourselves: God will always

punish those who deserve it, even though He loves them and may often have done great things to save them; but He will wait for His own time to punish.

The Israelites then, as I have said, went from every part of the land up to the Temple in Jerusalem to celebrate the Pasch each year. It was during one of these celebrations that Our Lord was put to death, and during another feast that St. Peter preached to the people after Our Lord's death. He spoke only in one language, and yet all his hearers understood, for each heard his own language spoken (Acts of the Apostles ii. 6). This was called the gift of tongues, and was given to the Apostles when the Holy Ghost came upon them. For example, if each of you came from a different country and understood the language only of the country from which you came, and I gave the instructions only in English, then if every one thought I was speaking his language—German, French, Spanish, Italian, etc.,—and understood me, I would have what is called the gift of tongues, and it would be a great miracle, as it was when bestowed upon the apostles.

In the first ages of the Church God performed more miracles than He does now, because they are not now so necessary. These miracles were performed only to make the Church better known, and to prove that she was the true Church, with her power and authority from God. That can now be known and seen in Christian countries without miracles. These special gifts, like the gift of tongues, were given also to some of the early Christians by the Holy Ghost, when they received confirmation; but they were not a part of or necessary for confirmation, but only to show the power of the true religion. Those who heard St. Peter preach, when they went back to their own countries told what they had seen and heard, and thus their countrymen were prepared to receive the Gospel when the apostles came to preach it.

**\*98 Q.** How did the Holy Ghost come down upon the apostles?

**A.** The Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles in the form of tongues of fire.

**99 Q.** Who sent the Holy Ghost upon the apostles?

**A.** Our Lord Jesus Christ sent the Holy Ghost upon the apostles.

**100 Q.** Why did Christ send the Holy Ghost?

**A.** Christ sent the Holy Ghost to sanctify His Church, to enlighten and strengthen the apostles, and to enable them to preach the Gospel.

“**Sanctify,**” to make more holy by the grace which He would give to the members of the Church. “**To enlighten.**” The apostles did not understand very well everything Our Lord taught while He was with them; but after the Holy Ghost came upon them they understood perfectly, and remembered many things which Our Lord said to them, and understood the true meaning of all. The prophets foretold that when the Messias, Christ, would come, He would bring all the world under His power. The prophets meant in a spiritual sense; but most of the people understood that He was to be a great general, with powerful armies, who would subdue all the nations of the earth, and bring them under the authority of the Jews. We know they thought that the great kingdom He was to establish upon earth would be a temporal kingdom, from many of their sayings and actions. One day the mother of two of Our Lord’s apostles came to ask Him if, when He had established His kingdom upon the earth, He would give her sons honorable positions in it, and place them high in authority (Matt. xx. 20). Our Lord told her she did not understand what she was asking. This shows that even some of the apostles—much less the people—did not understand the full nature of Our Lord’s mission upon earth, nor of His kingdom, the Church. Often too, when He preached to the people, the apostles asked Him on His return what His sermon meant (Luke viii. 9). But after the Holy

Ghost came, they were enlightened, and understood all without difficulty. **"Strengthen."** I told you already that before the Holy Ghost came they were timid and afraid of being arrested, but that afterwards they went out boldly, and taught all they had learned from Our Lord. They were often taken prisoners and scourged, but it mattered not—they were firm in their faith, and could suffer anything for Christ after they had been enlightened and strengthened by the Holy Ghost. Finally, they were all, with the exception of St. John, put to death for their holy faith. St. Peter and St. Paul were crucified at Rome about the year 65, that is, about thirty-two years after the death of Our Lord. St. James was beheaded by order of King Herod. St. John lived the longest, and was the only one of the apostles who was not put to death, though he was cast into a large vessel of boiling oil, but was miraculously saved.

Certainly by dying for their faith the apostles showed that they were not impostors or hypocrites. They must really have believed what they taught, otherwise they would not have laid down their lives for it. They were certain of what they taught, as we saw when speaking of St. Thomas.

**\* 101 Q. Will the Holy Ghost abide with the Church forever?**

**A. The Holy Ghost will abide with the Church forever, and guide it in the way of holiness and truth.**

**"Abide"** means to stay with us.

## LESSON TENTH.

### ON THE EFFECTS OF THE REDEMPTION.

**102 Q.** Which are the chief effects of the redemption?

**A.** The chief effects of the redemption are two: the satisfaction of God's justice by Christ's sufferings and death, and the gaining of grace for men.

An effect is that which is caused by something else. If you place a danger-signal on a broken railroad track the effect will be preventing the wreck of the train, and the cause will be your placing the signal. Many effects may flow from one cause. In our example, see all the good effects that may follow your placing the signal—the cars are not broken, the passengers are not killed, the rails are not torn out of their places, etc. Thus the redemption had two effects, namely, to satisfy God for the offence offered Him by the sins of men, and to merit grace to be used for our benefit.

**103 Q.** What do you mean by grace?

**A.** By grace I mean a supernatural gift of God bestowed on us, through the merits of Jesus Christ, for our salvation.

“**Supernatural**,” that is, above nature. “**A gift**,” something, therefore, that God does not owe us. He owes us nothing, strictly speaking. Health, talents, and such things are natural gifts, and belong to our nature as men; but grace is something above our nature, given to our soul. God gives it to us on account of the love He has for His Son, Our Lord, Who merited it for us by dying for us. “**Merits**.” A merit is some excellence or goodness which entitles one to honor or reward. Grace is a help we get to do something that will be pleasing to God. When there is anything in our daily works

that we cannot do alone, we naturally look for help; for example, to lift some heavy weight is only a natural act, not a supernatural act, and the help we need for it is only natural help. But if we are going to do something above and beyond our nature, and cannot do it alone, we must not look for natural, but for supernatural, help; that is, the help must always be like the work to be done. Therefore all spiritual works need spiritual help, and spiritual help is grace.

**104 Q.** How many kinds of grace are there?

**A.** There are two kinds of grace—sanctifying grace and actual grace.

**105 Q.** What is sanctifying grace?

**A.** Sanctifying grace is that grace which makes the soul holy and pleasing to God.

“**Sanctifying,**” that is, making us holy by cleansing, purifying our souls. Sin renders the soul ugly and displeasing to God, and grace purifies it. Suppose I have something bright and beautiful given to me, and take no care of it, but let it lie around in dusty places until it becomes tarnished and soiled, loses all its beauty, and appears black and ugly. To restore its beauty I must clean and polish it. Thus the soul blackened by sin must be cleaned by God’s grace. If the soul is in mortal sin—altogether blackened—then sanctifying grace brings back its brightness and makes it pleasing to God; but if the soul is already bright, though stained or darkened a little by venial sin, then grace makes it still brighter.

**\* 106 Q.** What do you call those graces or gifts of God by which we believe in Him, hope in Him, and love Him?

**A.** Those graces or gifts of God by which we believe in Him, and hope in Him, and love Him, are called the divine virtues of faith, hope, and charity.

“**Virtues.**” Virtue is the habit of doing good. The opposite to virtue is vice, which is the habit of doing evil.

We acquire a habit bad or good when we do the same thing very frequently. We then do it easily and almost without thinking; as a man, for instance, who has the habit of cursing curses almost without knowing it, though that does not excuse him, but makes his case worse, by showing that he must have cursed very often to acquire the habit. If, however, he is striving to overcome the bad habit, and should unintentionally curse now and then, it would not be a sin, since he did not wish to curse, and was trying to overcome the vice. One act does not make a virtue or a vice. A person who gives alms only once cannot be said to have the virtue of charity. A man who curses only once a year cannot be said to have the vice of cursing. Faith, hope, and charity are infused by God into our souls, and are therefore called infused virtues, to distinguish them from the virtues we acquire.

**107 Q. What is faith?**

**A. Faith is a divine virtue by which we firmly believe the truths which God has revealed.**

“**A divine virtue**” is one that is heavenly or holy. Faith is the habit of always believing all that God has revealed and the Church teaches. “**Firmly**,” that is, without the slightest doubt. “**Revealed**,” that is, made known to us. Revelation is the collection of all the truths that God has made known to us. But why do we believe? Because we clearly see and know the truth of what is revealed? No, but because God reveals it; we believe it though we cannot see it or even understand it. If we see it plainly, then we believe it rather because we see it than because God makes it known to us. Suppose a friend should come and tell you the church is on fire. If he never told you lies, and had no reason for telling you any now, you would believe him—not because you know of the fire, but because he tells you; but afterwards, when you see the church or read of the fire in the papers, you have proof of what he told you, but you believed it just as firmly when he told you as you do afterwards. In the same way God tells us

His great truths and we believe them; because we know that since God is infinitely true He cannot deceive us or be deceived. But if afterwards by studying and thinking we find proof that God told us the truth, we do not believe with any greater faith, for we always believed without doubting, and we study chiefly that we may have arguments to prove the truth of God's revelations to others who do not believe. Suppose some person was present when your friend came and said the church is burning, and that that person would not believe your friend. What would you do? Why, convince him that what your friend said was true by showing him the account of the fire in the papers. Thus learning does not change our faith, which, as I have said, is not acquired by study, but is infused into our souls by God. The little boy who hears what God taught, and believes it firmly because God taught it, has as good a faith as his teacher who has studied all the reasons why he should believe.

**108 Q. What is hope?**

**A.** Hope is a divine virtue by which we firmly trust that God will give us eternal life and the means to obtain it.

**"Eternal"**—that is, everlasting life—life without end.  
**"Means"**—that is, His grace, because without God's grace we cannot do any supernatural thing.

**109 Q. What is charity?**

**A.** Charity is a divine virtue by which we love God above all things for His own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.

The virtue of charity makes us "**love God,**" because He is so good and beautiful, wise and powerful in Himself; therefore for His own sake and without any other consideration. "**Above all things,**" in such a way that we would rather lose anything than offend Him. But some one may say, he thinks he loves his parents more than God. Well, let us see. To repeat an example already given, suppose his parents

told him to steal, and he knew stealing to be a sin ; if he would not steal, that would show, would it not, that he loved God more than his parents, for he would rather offend his parents than God. That is the kind of love we must have for God ; not mere feeling, but the firm belief that God is the best of all, and when we have to choose between offending God and losing something, be it goods or friends, we would rather lose anything than offend God.

**“Neighbor.”** Not merely the person living near us, but all men of every kind and nation—even our enemies. The people who lived at the time of Our Lord in His country used to dispute about just what persons were to be considered their neighbors ; so one day they asked Our Lord, and He answered them by telling them the following. Said He (Luke x. 30): “A man was once going down from Jerusalem, and on the way robbers beat him, robbed him, and left him on the wayside dying. First one man came by, looked at the wounded man, and passed on ; then another came and did the same ; finally a third man came, who was of a different religion and nationality from the wounded man. But he did not consider these things. He dressed the poor man’s wounds, placed him upon his horse and brought him to an inn or hotel, and paid the innkeeper to take care of him. Now,” said Our Lord, “which of these three was neighbor to the wounded man?” And they answered rightly, “The man that helped him.” Our Lord, by this example, wished to teach them and us that everybody is our neighbor who is in distress of any kind and needs our help. Neighbor, therefore, means every human being, no matter where he lives or what his color, learning, manners, etc., for every human being in the world is a child of God and has been redeemed by Our Lord. Therefore every child of God is my neighbor, and even more—he is my brother ; for God is his father and mine also, and if he is good enough for God to love, he should be good enough for me.

**“As ourselves.”** Not with as much love, but with the same kind of love ; that is, we are to follow the rule laid down by Our Lord: “Do unto others as you would have others do

unto you." Never do to any one what you would not like to have done to yourself; and always do for another just what you would wish another to do for you, if you were in the same position. Our neighbor is our equal and gifted with all the gifts that we ourselves have. When we come into the world we are all equal. We have a body and a soul, with the power to develop them. Money, learning, wealth, fame, and all else that makes up the difference between men in the world are acquired in the world; and when men die, they go out of the world without any of these things, just as they came into it. The real difference between them in the next world will depend upon the things they have done, good or bad, while here. We should love our neighbor also on another account: namely, that he is one day to be in heaven with us; and if he is to be with us for all eternity, why should we hate him now? On the other hand, if our neighbor is to be in hell on account of his bad life, why should we hate him? We should rather pity him, for he will have enough to suffer without our hatred.

**110 Q.** What is actual grace?

**A.** Actual grace is that help of God which enlightens our mind and moves our will to shun evil and do good.

**"Actual."** Sanctifying grace continues with us, but when grace is given just so that we may do a good act or avoid a bad one, it is called actual grace. Suppose, for example, I see a poor man and am able to aid him. When my conscience tells me to give him assistance, I am just then receiving an actual grace, which moves me and helps me to do that good act; and just as soon as I give the help, the actual grace ceases, because no longer needed. It was given for that one good act, and now that the act is done, the actual grace has produced its effect. Again, a boy is going to Mass on Sunday and meets other boys who try to persuade him to remain away from Mass and go to some other place. When he hears his conscience telling him to go to Mass by all means, he is receiving just then an actual grace to avoid the mortal sin of

missing Mass, and the grace lasts just as long as the temptation. Sacramental grace is sanctifying grace—given in the sacraments—which contains for us a right to actual graces when we need them. These actual graces are given to help us to fulfil the end for which each of the sacraments was instituted. They are different for each sacrament, and are given just when we need them ; that is, just when we are tempted against the object or end for which the sacrament was instituted.

**\* 111 Q. Is grace necessary for salvation ?**

**A.** Grace is necessary for salvation, because without grace we can do nothing to merit heaven.

**\* 112 Q. Can we resist the grace of God ?**

**A.** We can and unfortunately often do resist the grace of God.

Grace is a gift, and no one is obliged to take a gift ; but if God offers a gift and we refuse to take it, we offend and insult Him. To insult God is to sin. Therefore to refuse to accept, or to make bad use of the grace God gives us, is to sin.

**\* 113 Q. What is the grace of perseverance ?**

**A.** The grace of perseverance is a particular gift of God which enables us to continue in the state of grace till death.

“**Perseverance**” here does not mean perseverance in our undertakings, but perseverance in grace—never in mortal sin, always a friend of God. Now, if God keeps us from all sin till the day of our death and takes us while we are His friends, then He gives us what we call the gift of final perseverance. We cannot, strictly speaking, merit this great grace, but only pray for it ; so any one who commits mortal sin may be taken just in that state and be lost for all eternity.

## LESSON ELEVENTH.

## ON THE CHURCH.

BEFORE speaking of the Church I wish to give you a short account of the true religion before the coming of Our Lord. When Adam was created in a state of grace, God communicated with him freely ; he knew God even better than we do now. But after their sin our first parents fell from the friendship of God. Cain—one of Adam's sons—murdered his brother Abel, and for this he and his posterity were cursed by God, and all his descendants became very wicked (Gen. iv. 11). The other children of Adam remained faithful to God as long as they kept away from the children of Cain; but just as soon as they associated and intermarried with them, they also became wicked. This should teach us to avoid evil company, for there is always more likelihood that the good will become bad than that the bad will be converted by the good. You know the old saying, that if you take a basket of good apples and place a bad one among them, in a short time they will all be spoiled.

After the deluge Noe and his family settled once more upon the land, and for a time their descendants remained faithful to God; but later they became wicked and undertook to build a great tower (Gen. xi.), which they thought would reach up to heaven. They believed, perhaps, that if ever there should be another deluge upon the earth, they could take refuge in the tower. But God was displeased with their conduct and prevented them from completing the tower by confusing their tongues or language so that they could not understand one another. Then those who spoke the same

language went to live in the same part of the country, and thus the human race was scattered over the earth, and the different nations had different languages.

After a time they were all losing the knowledge of the true God and beginning to worship idols. God did not wish that the whole human race should forget Him, so He selected Abraham to be the father and head of one chosen people who should always worship the true God. He sent Abraham from his own country into another, and promised him great things, and renewed to him the promises of the Redeemer first made to Adam and Eve. After the death of Abraham, God raised up, from time to time, prophets to tell the people His holy will, to warn them of their sins and the punishment they would receive, and to remind them of the promised Messias. Prophets are men that God inspires to tell the future. They tell what will happen often hundreds of years after their own death. They do not guess at these things, but tell them with certainty. At times, statesmen can foresee that there will be a war in a country at a certain time; but they are not prophets, because they only guess at such things, or know them by natural signs; and very often things thus foretold do not occur. True prophecy is the foretelling of something which could not be known by any means but inspiration from God.

Neither are persons who call themselves fortune-tellers prophets, but only sinful people, who for money tell lies or guess at the future. It is a great sin to go to them or listen to them, as we shall see later in another question.

At the time promised, God sent His Son—Our Lord—to redeem the world and save all men. He came to save all men, and yet He remained upon earth only thirty-three years. We can easily understand that by His death He could save all those who lived before He did; but how were they to be saved who should live after Him, down to the end of the world? How was His grace to be given to them? How were they to know of Him, or of what He taught? All this was to be accomplished by His Church.

114 Q. Which are the means instituted by Our Lord to enable men at all times to share in the fruits of the Redemption?

A. The means instituted by Our Lord to enable men at all times to share in the fruits of the Redemption are the Church and the sacraments.

Our Lord instituted the Church to carry on the work He Himself was doing upon the earth—teaching the ignorant, visiting the sick, helping the poor, forgiving sins, etc. He commanded all men to hear the Church teaching, just as they would hear Himself. But suppose some persons should establish a false Church and claim that it was the true Church of Our Lord, how could people know the true Church from false churches? When a man invents anything to be sold, what does he do that people may know the true article—say a pen? Why, he puts his trade-mark upon it. Now the trade-mark is a certain sign which shows that the article bearing it is the genuine article; and if others use the trade-mark on imitation articles, they are liable to be punished by law. Now Our Lord did the same. He gave His Church four marks or characteristics to distinguish it from all false churches. He said, “My Church will be one; it will be holy; it will be catholic; it will be apostolic; and if any church has not these four marks, you may be sure it is not My Church.” Some false church may seem to have one or two, but never all the marks; so when you find even one of the marks wanting, you will know it is not the true Church established by Christ. Therefore, all the religions that claim to be the true religion cannot be so. If one man says a thing is white and another says it is black, or if one says a thing is true and another says it is false, they cannot both be right. Only one can be right, and if we wish to know the truth we have to find out which one it is. So when one religion says a thing is true and another religion says the same thing is false, one of them must be wrong, and it is our duty to find out the one that is right. Therefore, of all the religions claiming to be the true religion of Our Lord, only one can be telling the

truth, and that one is the religion or Church that can show the four given marks. The Roman Catholic Church is the only one that can show these marks, and is, therefore, the only true Church, as we shall see in the next lesson.

“**Fruits of His redemption**”—that is, to receive the grace merited by Our Lord when He redeemed us by His death.

**115 Q. What is the Church?**

**A.** The Church is the congregation of all those who profess the faith of Christ, partake of the same sacraments, and are governed by their lawful pastors under one visible head.

“**Congregation.**” Not the building, therefore; because if Mass was offered up in an open field, with the people kneeling about, it would still be the church of that place. The buildings that we use for churches might have been used for anything else—a public hall, theatre, or school, for example; but when these buildings we call churches are blessed or consecrated, they become holy. They are holy also because the gospel is preached in them, the sacraments are administered in them, and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered in them. But they are holy especially because Our Lord dwells in them in the tabernacle, where He lives and sees and hears just as truly as He did when He was Man upon earth.

In the early ages the Christians had no churches—they met secretly in private houses. Later, when the cruel pagan emperors began to persecute and put to death the Christians, they made large tunnels under ground and in these places they heard Mass and received the sacraments. These underground churches were called the catacombs, and some of them may still be seen at Rome. In these catacombs, too, the Christians buried their dead, especially the bodies of the holy martyrs. On their tombs—generally of stone—Mass was celebrated.

In every altar the table, or flat part on which the priest celebrates Mass, should be of stone; but if the altar is made of wood, then at least the part just in front of the tabernacle

must be of stone and large enough to hold say two chalices—that is, about ten or twelve inches square. In this stone are placed some relics of the holy martyrs. A piece is cut out of the stone and the relic placed in the opening. Then the bishop puts the little piece of stone back into its place over the relic, seals the opening, blesses the stone, and gives it to the church. This is called the altar-stone. You cannot see it because it is covered with the altar-cloth; but unless it is in the altar the priest cannot say Mass. This stone reminds us of the stone tombs of the saints upon which Mass was celebrated.

The Church—that is, the Christians—was persecuted for about three hundred years after the death of Our Lord. These persecutions took place at ten different times and under different Roman emperors. Orders were given to put to death all the Christians wherever they could be found. Some were cast into prison, some exiled, some taken to the Roman Coliseum—an immense building constructed for public amusements—where they were put to death in the most terrible manner in the presence of the emperor and people assembled to witness these fearful scenes. Some were stripped of their clothing and left standing alone while savage beasts, wild with hunger, were let loose upon them. Sometimes by a miracle of God the animals would not harm them, and then the Christians were either put to death by the sword, mangled by some terrible machine, or burned. In these dreadful sufferings the Christians remained faithful and firm, though they could have saved their lives by denying Our Lord or offering sacrifice to idols. The few who through fear did deny their faith are now forgotten and unknown; while those who remained steadfast are honored as saints in heaven and upon earth; the Church sings their praises and tells every year of their holy lives and triumph over all their enemies.

Even some pagans who came to see the Christians put to death were so touched by their patience, fortitude, courage,

and constancy, that they also declared themselves anxious to become Christians, and were put to death, thus becoming martyrs baptized in their own blood. How many lessons we may learn from all this: (1) How very respectful we should be in the church, which is holy for all the reasons I have given. (2) What a shame it is for us not to hear Mass when we can do so easily. Our churches are never very far from us, and generally well lighted, ventilated, furnished with seats and every convenience, and in these respects unlike the dark, damp, underground churches of the early Christians. Moreover, we may attend our churches freely and without the least danger to our lives; while the Christians of the early ages were constantly in dread and danger of being seized and put to death. Even at the present day, in many countries where holy missionaries are trying to teach the true religion, their converts sometimes have to go great distances to hear Mass, and even then it is not celebrated in comfortable churches, but probably on the slope of a rugged mountain or in some lonely valley or wood where they may not be seen, for they fear if they are captured—as often happens—both they and their priest will be put to death. You can read in the account of foreign missions that almost every year some priests and many people are martyred for their faith. Is it not disgraceful, then, to see some Catholics giving up their holy faith and the practice of their religion so easily—sometimes for a little money, property, or gain; or even for a bad habit, or for irreligious companions and friends? What answer will they make on the day of judgment when they stand side by side with those who died for the faith?

**“All those who profess the faith,”** etc. The pope, bishops, priests, and people all taken together are the Church; and each congregation or parish is only a part of the Church.

**“Partake”**—that is, receive. **“Lawful pastors”**—that is, each priest in his own parish, each bishop in his own diocese, and the pope throughout the world. **“Visible head”**—that is, one who can be seen, for invisible means, cannot be seen.

**116 Q. Who is the invisible head of the Church?**

**A. Jesus Christ is the invisible head of the Church.**

**“Invisible head.”** If, for example, a merchant of one country wishes to establish a branch of his business in another, he remains in the new country long enough to establish the branch business, and then appointing some one to take his place, returns to his own country. He is still the head of the new establishment, but its invisible head—for the people of that country, while its visible head is the agent or representative he has placed in charge to carry on the business in his name and interest. When Our Lord wished to establish His Church He came from heaven; and when about to return to heaven appointed St. Peter to take His place upon earth and rule the Church as directed. You see, therefore, that Our Lord, though not on earth, is still the real head and owner of the Church, and whatever His agent or vicar—that is, our Holy Father, the pope—does in the Church, he does it with the authority of Our Lord Himself.

**117 Q. Who is the visible head of the Church?**

**A. Our Holy Father the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, is the vicar of Christ on earth and the visible head of the Church.**

The **“Bishop of Rome”** is always pope. If the Bishop of New York, or of Baltimore, or of Boston, became pope, he would become the Bishop of Rome and cease to be the Bishop of New York, Baltimore, or Boston, because St. Peter, the first pope, was Bishop of Rome; and therefore only the bishops of Rome are his lawful successors—the true popes—the true visible heads of the Church. The bishops of the other dioceses of the world are the lawful successors of the other apostles who taught and established churches throughout the world. The bishops of the world are subject to the Pope, just as the other apostles were subject to St. Peter, who was appointed their chief by Our Lord Himself.

**“Vicar”**—that is, one who holds another’s place and acts in his name.

**\* 118 Q.** Why is the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, the visible head of the Church?

**A.** The Pope, the Bishop of Rome, is the visible head of the Church because he is the successor of St. Peter, whom Christ made the chief of the apostles and the visible head of the Church.

**"Of Rome."** That is why we are called Roman Catholics; to show that we are united to the real successor of St. Peter, and are therefore members of the true apostolic Church.

**\* 119 Q.** Who are the successors of the other apostles?

**A.** The successors of the other apostles are the bishops of the holy Catholic Church.

We know the apostles were bishops, because they could make laws for the Church, consecrate other bishops, ordain priests, and give confirmation,—powers that belong only to bishops, and are still exercised by them.

**\* 120 Q.** Why did Christ found the Church?

**A.** Christ founded the Church to teach, govern, sanctify, and save all men.

**"Teach"** religion. **"Govern"** in things that regard salvation. **"Sanctify,"** make good. **"Save"** all who wish to be saved.

**\* 121 Q.** Are all bound to belong to the Church?

**A.** All are bound to belong to the Church, and he who knows the Church to be the true Church and remains out of it, cannot be saved.

Any one who knows the Catholic religion to be the true religion and will not embrace it cannot enter into heaven. If one not a Catholic doubts whether the church to which he belongs is the true Church, he must settle his doubt, seek the true Church, and enter it; for if he continues to live in doubt, he becomes like the one who knows the true Church and is deterred by worldly considerations from entering it.

In like manner one who, doubting, fears to examine the religion he professes lest he should discover its falsity and be convinced of the truth of the Catholic faith, cannot be saved.

Suppose, however, that there is a non-Catholic who firmly believes that the church to which he belongs is the true Church, and who has never—even in the past—had the slightest doubt of that fact,—what will become of him ?

If he was validly baptized and never committed a mortal sin, he will be saved; because, believing himself a member of the true Church, he was doing all he could to serve God according to his knowledge and the dictates of his conscience. But if ever he committed a mortal sin, his salvation would be very much more difficult. A mortal sin once committed remains on the soul till it is forgiven. Now, how could his mortal sin be forgiven? Not in the Sacrament of Penance, for the Protestant does not go to confession; and if he does, his minister—not being a true priest—has no power to forgive sins. Does he know that without confession it requires an act of truly perfect contrition to blot out sin, and can he easily make such an act? What we call contrition is generally only imperfect contrition—that is, sorrow for our sins because we fear their punishment in hell or dread the loss of heaven. If a Catholic, with all the graces he has received in the sacraments, finds it difficult to make an act of perfect contrition—that is, sorrow for sin out of pure love for God, Who is so good in Himself, how much more difficulty will the Protestant, who does not receive such graces, experience in making it? It is to be feared either he would not know of this necessary means of regaining God's friendship, or he would be unable to elicit the necessary act of perfect contrition, and thus the mortal sin would remain upon his soul and he would die an enemy of God.

If, then, we found a Protestant who never committed a mortal sin after baptism, and who never had the slightest doubt about the truth of his religion, that person would be saved; because, being baptized, he is a member of the Church, and being free from mortal sin he is a friend of God and

could not in justice be condemned to hell. Such a person belongs to what we call the soul of the Church. He would belong to the body of the Church—that is, he would attend Mass and receive the sacraments—if he knew the Catholic Church to be the only true Church.

I am giving you an example, however, that is rarely found, except in the case of infants or very small children baptized in Protestant sects. All infants rightly baptized by any one are really children of the Church, no matter what religion their parents may profess. Indeed, all persons who are baptized are children of the Church; but those among them who deny its teaching, reject its sacraments, and refuse to submit to its lawful pastors, are rebellious children known as heretics.

I said I gave you an example that can scarcely be found, namely, of a person not a Catholic, who really never doubted the truth of his religion, and who, moreover, never committed during his whole life a single mortal sin. There are so few such persons that we can practically say for all those who are not members of the body of the Catholic Church, believing its doctrines, receiving its sacraments, and being governed by its visible head, our Holy Father, the Pope, salvation is an extremely difficult matter.

I do not speak here of pagans who have never heard of Our Lord or His holy religion, but of those outside the Church who claim to be good Christians without being members of the Catholic Church.

## LESSON TWELFTH.

## ON THE ATTRIBUTES AND MARKS OF THE CHURCH.

AN attribute is any characteristic or quality that a person or thing may be said to have. All good qualities are good attributes, and all bad qualities are bad attributes. All perfections or imperfections are attributes. If I can say of you that you are good, then goodness is one of your attributes. If I can say you are beautiful, then beauty is one of your attributes. We have seen already that the Church has four marks; but besides these it has three attributes, which flow from its marks. It is easier to see the marks of the Church than its attributes. It is easier to see, for instance, that the Church is one than that it is indefectible.

\* 122 Q. Which are the attributes of the Church?

A. The attributes of the Church are three: authority, infallibility, and indefectibility.

\* 123 Q. What do you mean by the authority of the Church?

A. By the authority of the Church I mean the right and power which the Pope and the bishops, as the successors of the apostles, have to teach and govern the faithful.

Authority is the power which one person has over another, so as to be able to exact obedience. A teacher has authority over his scholars, because they must obey him; but the teacher need not obey the scholars, because they have no authority over him. God alone has authority of Himself and from Himself. All others who have authority receive it from God, either directly or through some one else. The Pope has authority from God Himself, and the priests get theirs through

their bishops. Therefore, to resist or disobey lawful authority is to resist and disobey God Himself. If one of you were placed in charge of the class in my absence, he would have lawful authority, and the rest of you should obey him—not on account of himself, but on account of the authority he has. Thus the president of the United States, the governor, the mayor, etc., are only ordinary citizens before their election; but after they have been elected and placed in office they exercise lawful authority over us, and we are bound as good citizens and as good Catholics to respect and obey them.

**\* 124 Q.** What do you mean by the infallibility of the Church?

**A.** By the infallibility of the Church I mean that the Church cannot err when it teaches a doctrine of faith or morals.

**“Infallibility.”** When we say the Church is infallible, we mean that it cannot make a mistake or err in what it teaches; that the Pope, the head of the Church, is infallible when he teaches *ex cathedra*—that is, as the successor of St. Peter, the vicar of Christ. *Cathedra* signifies a seat, *ex* stands for “out of”; therefore, *ex cathedra* means out of the chair or office of St. Peter, because chair is sometimes used for office. Thus we say the presidential chair is opposed to this or that, when we intend to say the president, or the one in that office, is opposed to it. The cathedral is the church in which the bishop usually officiates, so called on account of the bishop's *cathedra*, or throne, being in it.

**\* 125 Q.** When does the Church teach infallibly?

**A.** The Church teaches infallibly when it speaks through the Pope and bishops united in general council, or through the Pope alone when he proclaims to all the faithful a doctrine of faith or morals.

But how will we know when the Pope speaks *ex cathedra*, when he is speaking daily to people from all parts of the world? To speak *ex cathedra* or infallibly, three things are required:

(1) He must speak as the head of the whole Church, not as a private person; and in certain forms of words by which we know he is speaking *ex cathedra*.

(2) What he says must hold good for the whole Church—that is, for all the faithful, and not merely for this or that particular person or country.

(3) He must speak on matters of faith or morals—that is, when the Holy Father tells all the faithful that they are to believe a certain thing as a part of their faith; or when he tells them that certain things are sins, they must believe him and avoid what he declares to be sin. He could not make a mistake in such things. He could not say that Our Lord taught us to believe and do such and such, if Our Lord did not so teach, because Our Lord promised to be with His Church for all time, and to send the Holy Ghost, Who would teach it all truth and abide with it forever. If then the Church could make mistakes in teaching faith and morals, the Holy Ghost could not be with it, and Our Lord did not tell the truth—to say which would be blasphemy. But remember, the Pope is not infallible unless he is teaching faith or morals; that is, what we have to believe or do in order to save our souls. If the Holy Father wrote a book on astronomy, mathematics, grammar, or even theology, he could make mistakes as other men do, because the Holy Ghost has not promised to guide him in such things. Nevertheless, whatever the Pope teaches on anything you may be pretty sure is right. The Pope is nearly always a very learned man of many years' experience. He has with him at Rome learned men from every part of the world, so that we may say he has the experience of the whole world. Other rulers cannot and need not know as much as the Holy Father, because they have not to govern the world, but only their own country. Moreover, there is no government in the whole world as old as the Church, no nation that can show as many rulers without change; so we may say the Pope has also the experience of all the popes who preceded him, from St. Peter down to our

present Holy Father, Leo XIII.—two hundred and sixty-three popes. Therefore, considering all this, we should have the very greatest respect for the opinions and advice of the Holy Father on any subject. We should not set up our limited knowledge and experience against his, even if we think that we know better than he does about certain political events taking place in our country, for we are not sure that we do. The Holy Father knows the past history of nations; he knows the nature of mankind; he knows that what takes place in one nation may, and sometimes does, take place in another under the same circumstances. Thus the Holy Father has greater foresight than we have, and we should be thankful when he warns us against certain dangers in politics or other things. He does not teach politics; but as everything we do is either good or bad, every statesman or politician must consider whether what he is about to do be right or wrong, just or unjust. It is the business and duty of the Holy Father to declare against the evil or unjust actions of either individuals or nations, and for that reason he seems at times to interfere in politics when he is really teaching morals. At times, too, governments try to deprive the Church or the Holy Father of their rights; and when he defends himself against such injustice and protests against it, his enemies cry out that he is interfering with the government.

You understand now what the infallibility of the Pope implies, and that it does not mean, as the enemies of the Church say, that the Pope cannot sin, cannot be mistaken in anything. The Pope can sin just the same as any one else; he could be a very bad man if he wanted to be so, and take the punishment God would inflict for his sins. Could he not be very angry, entirely neglect prayer, or pray with wilful distraction; could he not be proud, covetous, etc.?—and these are sins. Therefore he could sin; and hence he has to go to confession and seek forgiveness just as we do. Therefore remember this: whether the Pope be a bad man or a good man in his private life, he must always tell the truth when

he speaks *ex cathedra*, because the Holy Ghost is guiding him and will not permit him to err or teach falsehood in faith or morals.

We have examples in the Bible (Numbers xxii., xxiii.) where God sometimes makes even bad men foretell the truth. Once He gave an ass the power to speak, that it might protest against the wrong-doing of its wicked and cruel rider.

We have seen how governments interfere with the rights of the Holy Father, and thus he has need of his temporal power that he may be altogether independent of any government. Now let me explain to you what is meant by the Temporal Power of the Pope. Well, then, the Holy Father should have some city or states, not belonging to any government, in which he would be the chief and only ruler. Up to the year 1870 the Holy Father did have such states: they were called the Papal States, and the power he had over them—just like that of any other ruler—was called the temporal power. Now how did he get those states and how did he lose them? He got them in the most just manner, and held possession of them for about a thousand years.

Hundreds of years ago the people of Rome and the surrounding countries elected the Pope their sole ruler. He was already their spiritual ruler, and they made him also their temporal ruler. Then the Pope protected and governed them as other rulers do. Later, kings and princes added other lands, and thus by degrees the possessions of the Pope became quite extended.

How did he lose these possessions? The Italian Government took them from him in the most unjust manner. Besides the lands, they deprived the Church of other property donated to it by its faithful children. No ruler in the world had a more just claim or better right to his possessions than the Holy Father, and a government robbed him of them as a thief might take forcibly from you whatever had been justly given to you, when he found you were unable to defend yourself against him.

**But has the Holy Father need of his temporal power?**

Yes, the Holy Father has need of some temporal power. He must be free and independent in governing the Church. He must be free to say what he wishes to all Catholics throughout the world, and free to hear whatever they have to say to him. But if the Pope is under another ruler he cannot be free. That ruler may cast him into prison, and not allow him to communicate with the bishops of the world. At least, he can say nothing about the injustice of the ruler who is over him. Therefore the Pope must have some possessions of his own, that he may not be afraid of the injustice of any ruler, and may speak out the truth boldly to the whole world, denouncing bad rulers and praising good ones as they deserve.

Mind, I do not say what possessions the Holy Father should have, but simply that he should have some, in which he would be altogether independent. In justice he should have all that was taken from him. We have a good example here in the United States to illustrate the need of the independence of the Pope. You know every State in the United States is a little government in itself, with its own governor, legislature, laws, etc. Now over all these little governments or States we have the government of the United States, with the President at its head. In the beginning the members of the United States Government assembled to transact the business of the nation sometimes in one State and sometimes in another—sometimes in New York and sometimes in Pennsylvania, etc. But they soon found that in order to be independent of every State and just to all, they must have some territory or possessions of their own not under the power of any State. So some of the States granted them Washington and the country about it for ten miles square,—now called the District of Columbia,—in which the United States Government could freely perform its duties. In a similar manner the Holy Father is over all the governments of the world in matters of religion—in matters of justice and right; and just as the United States Government has to decide between the rights of one State and the rights of another, so the Holy Father has sometimes to decide between the rights of one

government and the rights of another, and must, in order to be just with all, be free and independent of all.

Again, the temporal power of the Pope is very useful to the Church; for with the money and goods received from his possessions the Holy Father can educate priests and teachers, print books, etc., for the foreign missions. He can also support churches, schools, and institutions in poor countries, and especially where the missionaries are laboring for the conversion of the native heathens.

When the Holy Father had his own possessions he could do much that he cannot now do for the conversion of pagan nations. At present he must depend entirely upon the charitable offerings of the faithful for all good works, even for his own support. The offering we make once a year for the support of the Holy Father is called "Peter's pence," because it began by every one sending yearly a penny to the Pope, the successor of St. Peter.

**\* 126 Q.** What do you mean by the indefectibility of the Church?

**A.** By the indefectibility of the Church I mean that the Church, as Christ founded it, will last till the end of time.

Therefore indefectibility means that the Church can never change any of the doctrines that Our Lord taught, nor ever cease to exist. When we say it is infallible, we mean that it cannot teach error while it lasts; but when we say it is indefectible, we mean that it will last forever and be infallible forever, and also that it will always remain the same as Our Lord founded it. There are two things that you must clearly understand and not confound, namely, the two kinds of laws in the Church—those which Our Lord gave it and those which it made itself. The laws that Our Lord gave it it can never change. For example, the Church could not abolish one of the sacraments, leaving only six; neither could it add a new one, making eight. But when, for example, the Church declares that on a certain day we cannot eat flesh meat, it makes the law itself, and can

change it when it wishes. Our Lord left His Church free to make certain laws, just as they would be needed. It has always exercised this power, and made laws to suit the circumstances of the place or times. Even now it does away with some of its old laws that are no longer useful, and makes new ones that are more necessary. But the doctrines, the truths of faith or morals, the things we must believe and do to save our souls, it never changes and never can change: it may regulate some things in the application of the divine laws, but the laws themselves can never change in substance.

**\* 127 Q.** In whom are these attributes found in their fulness?

**A.** These attributes are found in their fulness in the Pope, the visible head of the Church, whose infallible authority to teach bishops, priests, and people in matters of faith or morals will last to the end of the world.

**128 Q.** Has the Church any marks by which it may be known?

**A.** The Church has four marks by which it may be known: it is one; it is holy; it is catholic; it is apostolic.

**\* 129 Q.** How is the Church one?

**A.** The Church is one because all its members agree in one faith, are all in one communion, and are all under one head.

The Catholic Church is “one,” first in government and second in doctrine. In *government* every pastor has a certain parish or territory in which all the people belong to his congregation—they form his flock. He has to take care only of these, to teach them, give them the sacraments, etc. He has not to be responsible for those outside his parish. Then over the pastor we have the bishop, who looks after a certain number of pastors; then comes the archbishop over a certain number of bishops; next comes the primate, who is head of all the archbishops in the country; and over all the primates of the world we have the Holy Father. Thus, when the Holy

Father speaks to the bishops, the bishops speak to the priests, and the priests to the people. The Church is therefore one in government, like a great army spread over the world. We can go up step by step from the lowest member of the Church to the highest—the Holy Father; and from him to Our Lord Himself, Who is the invisible head of all. This regular body of priests, bishops, archbishops, etc., so arranged, one superior to the other, is called the hierarchy of the Church.

The Church is one also in *doctrine*—that is, every one of the three hundred million of Catholics in the world believes exactly the same truths. If any Catholic denies only one article of faith, though he believes all the rest, he ceases to be a Catholic, and is cut off from the Church. If, for example, you would not believe matrimony or Holy Orders a sacrament, or that Our Lord is present in the Holy Eucharist, you would not be a Catholic, though you believed all the other teachings of the Church.

Therefore the Church is one both in government and teaching or doctrine. Now, has any other Church claiming to be Christ's Church that mark? No. The Protestant religions are not one either in government or belief. The Protestants of England have no authority over the Protestants of America, and those of America have nothing to say over those of Germany or France. So every country is independent, and they have no chief head. Neither are they one in belief. In the same country there are many kinds of Protestants—Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, etc., who do not believe the same thing. Even those who attend the same church and profess the same religion do not all believe the same. Every one, they say, has a right to interpret the Holy Scriptures according to his own views, so they take many different meanings out of the very same words. There must be some chief person to tell the true meaning of the Holy Scriptures when there is a dispute about it; but they have no such chief, and the result is they are never done disputing.

The United States has a constitution and laws. Now, suppose every citizen was allowed to construe the laws to suit himself, without any regard for the rights of others, what a fine state of affairs we should soon have. But the wise makers of the constitution and laws of the United States did not leave us in such danger. They appointed judges to interpret or explain the laws and give the correct meaning when disputes arise. Then in Washington there is a chief judge for the whole United States ; and when he says the words of the law mean this or that, every citizen must abide by his decision, and there is no appeal from it. Just in the same way Our Lord made laws for all men, and while He was upon earth He explained them Himself. He never left all men free to take their own meaning out of them. He appointed judges—the bishops; and a chief judge for the whole world—the Pope. The Holy Ghost guides him, as we have seen above, so that he cannot make mistakes in the meaning of Christ's laws ; and when he says, this is what the words of Our Lord in His law signify, no one who is a true Christian can refuse to believe, or can appeal from his decision.

**\* 130 Q. How is the Church holy ?**

**A.** The Church is holy because its founder, Jesus Christ, is holy ; because it teaches a holy doctrine, invites all to a holy life ; and because of the eminent holiness of so many thousands of its children.

Protestant religions have not holy doctrines if we examine them closely. They teach, for example, that faith without good works will save us, and thus take away the motives for doing good ; that marriage is not binding for life—the husband and wife may for some causes separate, or get a divorce and marry again. This would leave the children without the care of their proper parents, sometimes without a home, and nearly always without religious instruction. The same persons might separate again and marry another time, and thus there would be nothing but confusion and immorality in society. Again, some of their doctrines teach that we cannot

help sinning ; so every one could excuse himself for his sins by saying he could not help them, which you can easily see would lead to the worst of consequences. Lastly, their doctrines have never made one saint—acknowledged as such from miracles performed. Protestants are so called because, when their ancestors rebelled against the Church about three hundred years ago, the Church made certain laws and they protested against them, separated from the Church, and formed a new religion of their own.

**\* 131 Q.** How is the Church catholic or universal?

**A.** The Church is catholic or universal because it subsists in all ages, teaches all nations, and maintains all truth.

“**Subsists**” means to have existence.

“**Catholic.**” The word catholic signifies universal. The Church is universal in three ways, viz.: in time, in place, and in doctrine. It is universal in time ; for from the day Our Lord commissioned His apostles to preach to the whole world down to the present, it has existed, taught, and labored in every age. It is universal in place ; that is, it is not confined to one part of the world, but teaches throughout the entire world. It is universal in doctrine, for it teaches the same doctrines and administers the same sacraments everywhere ; and its doctrines are suited to all classes of men—to the ignorant as well as the learned, to the poor as well as the rich. It teaches by the voice of its priests and bishops, and all, civilized or uncivilized, to whom its voice reaches, can learn its doctrines, receive its sacraments, and practise its devotions.

It has converted all the pagan nations that have ever been converted, and the title catholic belongs to the Roman Catholic Church alone. All Protestant churches that claim this title do so unjustly. They are not universal in time, and cannot be called the Church of all ages, because they were established only three hundred or four hundred or less years ago. They are not catholic in place, because they are

mostly confined to particular countries. They are not universal in doctrine, because what they teach in one country they reject in another ; and even in the same country, what they teach at one time they reject at another. Wherever it is possible for civilized people to go, there you will find a priest saying Mass in just the same way you see him saying it here. It is a great consolation for one in a strange country to enter a church and hear Mass, perceiving no difference in the vestments, ceremonies, or language of the priest. A little altar-boy from the United States could serve Mass in any part of the world. See, therefore, the great advantage the Church has in using the Latin language instead of the vernacular or ordinary language of the people. If the Church used the usual language of the people, the Mass would seem different in every country; while natives would understand the words of the priest, strangers would not.

The Latin language is now what we call a dead language ; that is, it is not the common language of any country ; and because it is a dead language does not change : another reason why the Church uses it, that nothing may change in its divine service. The prayers used in the Church are exactly the same to-day as they were when they were written, many centuries ago. The living languages—that is, those in use, such as English, French, German, etc., are always changing a little—new words are being added, and the meaning of old ones changed. The Church uses the same language all over the world to show that it is not the Church of any particular country, but the true Church of all men everywhere.

Again, using only one language, the Church can hold its great councils, call together all the bishops of the world, that they may condemn errors or make wise laws. When the Holy Father addresses them in Latin they can all understand and answer him. If, therefore, the Church did not use the same language everywhere how could this be done, unless every one present understood all the languages of the world—which is a thing nearly impossible. But some one might say, if the Mass was said in English we could follow it better. You can follow

just as well in Latin, for in nearly all prayer-books you have besides the Latin said by the priest the meaning of it in English on the same page, or you have the English alone.

**\* 132 Q.** How is the Church apostolic?

**A.** The Church is apostolic because it was founded by Christ on His apostles and is governed by their lawful successors, and because it has never ceased, and never will cease, to teach their doctrine.

**“Apostolic,”** which means that the Church was founded at the time of the apostles, and has been the same ever since. Since the time of St. Peter, the first Pope, there have been two hundred and sixty-three popes. You can go back from our present Holy Father, Leo XIII., to Pius IX., who was before him, to Gregory XVI., who was before him, to Pius VIII., before him, and so on one by one till you come to St. Peter himself, who lived at the time of Our Lord. Thus the Church is apostolic in its origin or beginning.

It is also apostolic in its teaching; for all the doctrines it teaches now were taught by the apostles. The Church does not make new doctrines, but it teaches its truths more clearly and distinctly when some one denies them. For example, it would not be necessary for you to prove yourself good and honest till somebody said you were bad and dishonest. You prove your honesty when it is denied, but both you and your friends believed it always, though you did not declare it till it was denied. In just the same way the Church always believed that Our Lord is the Son of God; that there are seven sacraments; that the Pope is infallible, etc. These truths and all the others were believed by the apostles, and the Church proclaimed them in a special manner when they were denied. Then it called together in council all its bishops, and they, with the Holy Father, proclaimed these truths—not as new doctrines, but as truths always believed by the Church, and now defined because denied.

Protestants have not for their churches the mark apostolic. How could their churches be founded by the apostles, when

the apostles were dead more than fourteen hundred years before there were any Protestant churches? What is more, they have changed the teachings of the apostles; and so they have not the mark apostolic either in their origin or teaching.

But they say the Catholic Church fell into error and made mistakes, and that God wished reformers to correct these errors. How could the Church fall into error when Our Lord promised to remain always with it, and to send the Holy Ghost to guide and teach it forever? And, secondly, if God sent the Protestants to correct the mistakes of the Catholic Church, what proof do they give us that they have such power from God? When, as we have seen, God sends any one to do a special work, He always gives him power to prove his mission. When He sent Moses, He gave him signs—the plagues of Egypt. When He sent his prophets, they called down fire and rain from heaven (III. Kings xviii.). But Protestants have shown us no signs and performed no miracles; therefore we cannot believe their assertion that God sent them to correct the Catholic Church. Neither can we believe that Our Lord broke His promise to stay with the Church. We shall see the whole truth of the matter if we go back to the establishment of the Protestant religion and consider the life of Luther and the others who founded it.

Luther, then a young man, while out one day, saw his friend killed at his side by a stroke of lightning. Much affected by that sad event, Luther became a priest in the order of the Augustinians. He was a learned man and a great preacher, but very proud. The Holy Father was completing St. Peter's Church in Rome, and about that time granted an indulgence to those giving alms for the purpose: just as pastors now offer Masses for those who contribute means to build a new church, or hospital, asylum, etc.

The Holy Father sent Dominican priests to preach about this indulgence and collect this money. Then Luther, when he found that he, a great preacher, was not appointed, was probably jealous. He first began to preach against the abuses of indulgences; but pride made him go further, and

soon he began to preach against the doctrine of indulgences, and thus became a heretic. Then he was condemned by the Pope, and cut off from the Church. Being proud, he would not submit, but began to form a new religion, now called Protestant. But how did he get the people to follow him? Oh, very easily. Then, as now, there were plenty of bad and indifferent Catholics. At that time the Church was rich and had much property and lands; because when rich Catholics died they often left to the Church property for its own support and the support of its institutions. Even during their life-time kings and princes sometimes gave the Church large donations of lands and money. The Church then was supported by these gifts and the income or rents of the lands, and did not need to look for collections from the people, as it has to do now. Here, then, is how Luther got many to follow him. He told greedy princes that if they came with him they could become rich by seizing the property of all the churches, and the greedy princes, glad of an excuse, went with him. Then he told the people—the bad Catholics—that fasting was too severe; going to confession too hard; hearing Mass every Sunday too difficult; and if they renounced their faith and embraced his new religion he would do away with all these things: so they also followed him. He himself broke his solemn vows made to God, and the people easily followed his example.

Those attending the Protestant churches in our times are generally rich and refined people, but you must not think that the first Protestants of three hundred years ago were just like them. No. Many of them were from the lowest and worst—I do not say poorest—classes in society; and when they got an excuse, they went about destroying churches and institutions, burning beautiful statues, paintings, music, books, and works of art that the Church had collected and preserved for centuries. This you may read in any of the histories of the Church and times. The Protestants of the present day praise all these works of art now; but if their ancestors had had their way every beautiful work of art would have been destroyed.

Some persons say they would not be members of the Cath-

olic Church because so many poor people attend it. Then they do not want to belong to the Church of Our Lord, because His Church is the Church of both poor and rich. When St. John the Baptist sent his disciples to ask Our Lord if He were really the Messias, Our Lord did not say yes or no, but told them to relate to John what they had heard and seen

Matt. xi. 5), namely, that He (Christ) cured the blind, the lame, and the deaf, and preached to the poor. Therefore Our Lord gave preaching to the poor as a proof that He is the true Redeemer; and since Our Lord Himself had the poor in His congregation, the Church everywhere must have the poor among its members, for it must do what Our Lord did. So if you see a church to which the poor people never go, and in which they are not welcome, you have good reason to suspect it is not the Church of Our Lord—not the true Church. Again, poverty and riches belong only to this world and make a distinction only here. The one who is poorest in this world's goods may be richest in God's grace. Indeed, if most Protestants studied the early history of their religion they would not be proud, but ashamed of it. How little they would think of their ancestors who gave up God for some worldly gain, while the Catholic martyrs gave up everything, even their lives, rather than forsake God and the true religion.

**133 Q.** In which church are these attributes and marks found?

**A.** These attributes and marks are found in the Holy Roman Catholic Church alone.

We have seen that some religions may seem to have one or two of the marks; but the Catholic Church alone has them all, and is consequently the only true Church of Christ. The other religions are not one—that is, united over the world; they give no proof of holiness, never having had any great saints whom God acknowledged as such by performing miracles for them. They are not catholic, because they have not taught in all ages and nations. They are not apostolic,

because established hundreds of years after the apostles. They are not infallible, for they have now declared things to be false which they formerly declared to be true; they are not indefectible—they are not as Our Lord founded them, for He never founded them; and they are constantly making changes in their beliefs and practices.

The marks of the Church are necessary also because the Church must be a visible Church, that all men may be able to see and know it; for Our Lord said (Matt. xviii. 17). “He that will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican.” Heathens were those who worshipped false gods. Publicans were men who gathered the taxes from the Jews for the Romans; they were generally very cruel to the people, and were much hated and despised by them. Therefore Our Lord meant: if any one will not obey the Church, you should avoid him as you avoid the heathens and the publicans, whom you despise. Now no one can be blamed for not obeying a church that is invisible and unknown. Therefore the true Church must be a visible body and easily known to all who earnestly seek it as the Church of Christ. But if some shut their eyes and refuse to look at the light of truth, ignorance will not excuse them; they must be blamed and fall under the sentence of Our Lord.

**\* 134 Q.** From whom does the Church derive its undying life and infallible authority?

**A.** The Church derives its undying life and infallible authority from the Holy Ghost, the spirit of truth, Who abides with it for ever.

**\* 135 Q.** By whom is the Church made and kept one, holy, and catholic?

**A.** The Church is made and kept one, holy, and catholic by the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of love and holiness, Who unites and sanctifies its members throughout the world.

## LESSON THIRTEENTH.

## ON THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL.

THIS lesson does not speak of any sacrament in particular, but upon all the sacraments taken together. It explains what we find in all the sacraments.

136 Q. What is a sacrament ?

A. A sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.

Three things are necessary to make a sacrament. There must be (1) "**An outward,**" that is, a visible, "**sign ;**" (2) this sign must have been instituted or given by Our Lord ; (3) it must give grace. Now, a sign is that which tells us that something else exists. Smoke indicates the presence of fire. A red light on a railroad tells us there is danger at the spot. Therefore, the outward signs in the sacraments tell us that there is in the sacraments something we do not see and which they signify and impart. For example, the outward sign in Baptism is the pouring of the water on the head of the person to be baptized, and the saying of the words. Water is generally used for cleaning purposes. Water, therefore, is used in Baptism as an outward sign to show that as the water cleans the body, so the grace given in Baptism cleans the soul. It is not a mere sign, for at the very moment that the priest pours the water and says the words of Baptism, by the pouring of the water and saying of the words with the proper intention the soul is cleansed from original sin ; that is, the inward grace is given by the application of the outward sign. Again, in Confirmation the outward sign is the anointing with oil, the

Bishop's prayer, and the placing of his hands upon us. Now what inward grace is given in Confirmation? A grace which strengthens us in our faith. Oil, therefore, is used for the outward sign in this sacrament, because oil gives strength and light.

In olden times the gladiators—men who fought with swords as prize-fighters do now with their hands—used oil upon their bodies to make them strong. Oil was used also to heal wounds. Thus in Confirmation the application of this outward sign of strength gives the inward grace of light and strength. Moreover, oil easily spreads itself over anything and remains on it. A drop of water falling on paper dries up quickly; but a drop of oil soaks in and spreads over it. So oil is used to show also that the grace of Confirmation spreads out over our whole lives, and strengthens us in our faith at all times.

Again, in Penance we have the outward sign when the priest raises his hand and pronounces over us the words of absolution.

If we did not have these outward signs how could any one know just at what time the graces are given? We can know now, for at the very moment the outward sign is applied the grace is given; because it is the application of the sign that by divine institution gives the grace, and thus the two must take place together.

“**Institution by Christ**” is absolutely necessary because He gives all grace, and He alone can determine the manner in which He wishes it distributed. The Church can distribute His grace, but only in the way He wishes. Hence it cannot make new sacraments or abolish old ones.

**137 Q. How many sacraments are there?**

**A. There are seven sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.**

The life of our soul is in many ways similar to the life of our body. Our bodies must first be born, then strengthened,

then fed. When sick, we must be cured ; and when about to die, we must be taken care of. Then there must be some one to rule others, and there must be persons to be governed. In like manner, we are spiritually born into a new life by Baptism, we are strengthened by Confirmation, fed with the Holy Eucharist, and cured of the maladies of our souls by Penance. By Extreme Unction we are helped at the hour of death ; by Holy Orders our spiritual rulers are appointed by God ; and by Matrimony families, with a father at the head and children to be ruled, are established. Thus we have our spiritual life similar in many things to our physical or bodily life. .

+ 138 Q. Whence have the sacraments the power of giving grace?

A. The sacraments have the power of giving grace from the merits of Jesus Christ.

Our Lord died to merit grace for us, and appointed the sacraments as the chief means by which it was to be given.

+ \* 139 Q. What grace do the sacraments give?

A. Some of the sacraments give sanctifying grace, and others increase it in our souls.

Baptism and Penance give this sanctifying grace when there is not any of it in the soul. But the other sacraments are received while we are in a state of grace, and they therefore increase the quantity of it in our souls.

\* 140 Q. Which are the sacraments that give sanctifying grace?

A. The sacraments that give sanctifying grace are Baptism and Penance ; and they are called sacraments of the dead.

“ Of the dead.” Not of a dead person ; for when a person is dead he cannot receive any of the sacraments. It is only while we live upon earth that we are on trial, and can do good

or evil, and merit grace. At death we receive simply our reward or punishment for what we have done while living. Therefore, sacraments of the dead mean sacraments given to a dead soul, that is, to a soul in mortal sin. When grace—its life—is all out of the soul it can do nothing to merit heaven; and we say it is dead, because the dead can do nothing for themselves. If a person receives—as many do—the sacrament of penance while his soul is not in a state of mortal sin, what then? Then the soul—already living—receives an increase of sanctifying grace, that is, greater spiritual life and strength.

† \* 141 Q. Why are Baptism and Penance called sacraments of the dead?

A. Baptism and Penance are called sacraments of the dead because they take away sin, which is the death of the soul, and give grace, which is its life.

† \* 142 Q. Which are the sacraments that increase sanctifying grace in the soul?

A. The sacraments that increase sanctifying grace in the soul are: Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony; and they are called sacraments of the living.

\* 143 Q. Why are Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony called sacraments of the living?

A. Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony are called the sacraments of the living because those who receive them worthily are already living the life of grace.

\* 144 Q. What sin does he commit who receives the sacraments of the living in mortal sin?

A. He who receives the sacraments of the living in mortal sin commits a sacrilege, which is a great sin, because it is an abuse of a sacred thing.

“Sacrilege.” There are other ways besides the unworthy reception of the sacraments in which a person may commit sacrilege. You could commit it by treating any sacred thing

with great disrespect. For example, by making common use of the sacred vessels used at the altar; by stealing from the church; by turning the church into a market, etc. You could commit it also by wilfully killing or wounding persons consecrated to God, such as nuns, priests, bishops, etc. Therefore sacrilege can be committed by wilfully abusing or treating with great irreverence any sacred person, sacred place, or sacred thing.

† \* 145 Q. Besides sanctifying grace, do the sacraments give any other grace?

A. Besides sanctifying grace, the sacraments give another grace, called sacramental.

† \* 146 Q. What is sacramental grace?

A. Sacramental grace is a special help which God gives to attain the end for which He instituted each sacrament.

For example, what was the end for which Penance was instituted? To forgive sins and keep us out of sin. Therefore the sacramental grace given in Penance is a grace that will enable us to overcome temptation and avoid the sins we have been in the habit of committing. When a person is ill the doctor's medicine generally produces two effects: one is to cure the disease and the other to strengthen the person so that he may not fall back into the old condition. Well, it is just the same in the sacraments; the grace given produces two effects: one is to sanctify us and the other to prevent us from falling into the same sins. Again, Confirmation was instituted that we might become more perfect Christians, stronger in our faith. Therefore the sacramental grace of Confirmation will strengthen us to profess our faith when circumstances require it; or when we are tempted to doubt any revealed truth, it will help us to overcome the temptation. So in all the sacraments we receive the sacramental grace or special help given to attain the end for which the sacraments were separately instituted.

† 147 Q. Do the sacraments always give grace?

A. The sacraments always give grace, if we receive them with the right dispositions.

“**Right dispositions;**” that is, if we do all that God and the Church require us to do when we receive them. For instance, in Penance the right disposition is to confess all our mortal sins as we know them, to be sorry for them, and have the determination never to commit them again. The right disposition for the Holy Eucharist is to be in a state of grace, and—except in special cases of sickness—fasting from midnight.

148 Q. Can we receive the sacraments more than once?

A. We can receive the sacraments more than once, except Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.

Baptism is so important that if we do not receive it we cannot receive any other of the sacraments. Now, to administer Baptism validly, that is, properly, everything must be done exactly as Our Lord intended and the Church teaches. The proper kind of water and all the exact words must be used. Also, the water must touch the body, that is, the head, if possible. Now persons not knowing well how to baptize might neglect some of these things, and thus the person would not be baptized. The Church wishes to be certain that all its children are baptized; so when there is any doubt about the first baptism, it baptizes again conditionally, that is, the priest says in giving the baptism over again: If you are not baptized already, I baptize you now. Therefore if the person was rightly baptized the first time, the second ceremony has no effect; because the priest does not intend to give Baptism a second time. But if the first Baptism was not rightly given, then the second takes effect. In either case Baptism is given only once; for if the first was valid, the second is not given; and if the first was invalid, the second is given.

Converts to the Church are generally baptized condition-

ally, because there is doubt about the validity of the Baptism they received.

The sacraments may be given conditionally when we doubt if they were or can be validly given.

**\* 149 Q.** Why can we not receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders more than once?

**A.** We cannot receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders more than once, because they imprint a character in the soul.

**“A character.”** It is a spiritual character, and remains forever, so that whether the person is in heaven or hell this mark will be seen. It will show that those having it were Christians, who received Baptism, Confirmation, or Holy Orders. If they are in heaven, these characters will shine out to their honor, and will show how well they used the grace God gave them. If they are in hell, these characters will be to their disgrace, and show how many gifts and graces God bestowed upon them, and how shamefully they abused all.

**\* 150 Q.** What is the character which these sacraments imprint in the soul?

**A.** The character which these sacraments imprint in the soul is a spiritual mark which remains forever.

**\* 151 Q.** Does this character remain in the soul even after death?

**A.** This character remains in the soul even after death: for the honor and glory of those who are saved; for the shame and punishment of those who are lost.

## LESSON FOURTEENTH.

## ON BAPTISM.

152 Q. What is Baptism?

A. Baptism is a sacrament which cleanses us from original sin, makes us Christians, children of God, and heirs of heaven.

“**Christians,**” that is, members of the Church of Christ. “**Children of God,**” that is, adopted children. All men are children of God by their creation, but Christians are children of God, not merely by creation, but also by grace and union with Our Lord. “**Heirs of heaven.**” An heir is one who inherits property, money, or goods at the death of another. These things are left by a will or given by the laws of the State, when the person dies without making a will. A will is a written statement in which a person declares what he wishes to have done, at his death, with whatever he possesses—the charitable objects or the persons to whom he wishes to leave his goods. This will is called also the last testament. It is signed by witnesses, and after the death of the testator is committed to the care of a person—called the executor—whose business it is to see that all stated in the will or testament is carried out. There is an officer in the State to take these things in hand and settle them according to law, when the amount left is large, and there is a dispute about it. You can understand better now why we call the Bible the Old and the New Testament. When Our Lord died we were left an inheritance and spiritual property. The inheritance was heaven, which we had lost through the sin of Adam and regained by the death of Our Lord. The spiritual property was God’s grace, which He merited for us. The Old Testament contains the promise of what Our Lord would leave us at His death, and the New

Testament shows that He kept His promise and did leave what He said. The Old Testament was written before He died, and the New Testament after His death. The witnesses of these testaments were the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and evangelists, who heard God making the promises through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The Church is the executor of Christ's will, and it is its business to see that all men receive what Christ left them, namely, God's grace and heaven. It must also see that they are not cheated out of it by their enemies—the devil, the world, and the flesh.

**153 Q.** Are actual sins ever remitted by baptism?

**A.** Actual sins and all the punishment due to them are remitted by baptism, if the person baptized be guilty of any.

We know that baptism remits original sin. But suppose a person is not baptized till he is twenty-five or thirty years old; he has surely committed some sins since he was seven years of age—the time at which he received the use of reason. Now the question asks, Are all his sins, those he committed himself as well as the original sin, forgiven by baptism? The answer is, Yes. All his sins are forgiven, so that he has not to confess them. But he must be heartily sorry for them and have the firm determination of never committing them again, just as in confession. Moreover, that he may not have to confess these sins, we must be absolutely certain that he was never baptized before. Besides remitting the sins themselves, baptism remits all the temporal punishment due to them.

In the Sacrament of Penance the sinner is saved from the eternal punishment—that is, hell—and from part of the temporal punishment. But although the sins have been forgiven, the sinner must make satisfaction to God for the insult offered by his sins.

Therefore, he must suffer punishment in this world or in purgatory. We call this punishment temporal, because it will not last forever. You can make this satisfaction to God while on earth, and thus avoid much of the temporal punish-

ment by prayers, fasting, gaining indulgences, alms, and good works ; and even by bearing your sufferings, trials, and afflictions patiently, and offering them up to God in satisfaction for your sins.

In baptism both the eternal and temporal guilt are washed away; so that if a person just baptized died immediately, he would go directly to heaven, not to purgatory : because persons go to purgatory to pay off the temporal guilt. Neither could that person gain an indulgence, because indulgences are only to help us to pay the temporal debt. Neither could that person receive the Sacrament of Penance, because penance remits only sins committed after baptism, and that person had no sins to remit, because he died just after receiving baptism. See, then, the goodness of Our Lord in instituting baptism, to forgive everything and leave us as free from guilt as our first parents were when God created them.

**154 Q.** Is baptism necessary to salvation ?

**A.** Baptism is necessary to salvation, because without it we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Those who through no fault of theirs die without baptism, though they have never committed sin, cannot enter heaven—neither will they go to hell. After the last judgment there will be no purgatory. Where, then, will they go ? God in His goodness will provide a place of rest for them, where they will not suffer and will be in a state of natural peace; but they will never see God or heaven. God might have created us for a purely natural and material end, so that we would live forever upon the earth and be naturally happy with the good things God would give us. But then we would never have known of heaven or God as we do now. Such happiness on earth would be nothing compared to the delights of heaven and the presence of God; so that now, since God has given us, through His holy revelations, a knowledge of Himself and heaven, we would be miserable if left always upon the earth. Those, then, who die without baptism do not know what they have lost, and are naturally

happy; but we who know all they have lost for want of baptism know how very unfortunate they are.

Think, then, what a terrible crime it is to wilfully allow any one to die without baptism, or to deprive a little child of life before it can be baptized! Suppose all the members of a family but one little infant have been baptized; when the day of judgment comes, while all the other members of a family—father, mother, and children—may go into heaven, that little one will have to remain out; that little brother or sister will be separated from its family forever, and never, never see God or heaven. How heartless and cruel, then, must a person be who would deprive that little infant of happiness for all eternity—just that its mother or some one else might have a little less trouble or suffering here upon earth.

**155 Q. Who can administer baptism?**

**A.** The priest is the ordinary minister of baptism; but in case of necessity any one who has the use of reason may baptize.

**“Ordinary”**—that is, the one who has a right to baptize and generally does; others can baptize only in case of necessity.

**“Priest”** and all above him—bishops, and the Pope; for they have all the power the priest has, and more besides. **“Minister”** is the name given here to one who performs any of the sacred rites or ceremonies of the Church. **“Necessity.”** When the ordinary minister cannot be had and when baptism must be given; for if it is not absolutely necessary to give the baptism, then you must wait for the ordinary minister.

**“Any one.”** Even persons not Catholics or not Christians may, in case of necessity, baptize a person wishing to receive baptism, if they know how to baptize and seriously wish to do what the Church of Christ does when it baptizes. You cannot baptize a person against his will. Neither can you baptize an infant whose parents are unwilling to have the child baptized, or when the child will not be brought up in

the Catholic religion. But if the child is dying, it can and should be baptized, even without the consent of the parents.

**“Use of reason.”** Because the person must intend to do what Our Lord ordered to be done in giving baptism ; and a little child could not understand, and could not therefore baptize.

**156 Q. How is baptism given?**

**A. Whoever baptizes should pour water on the head of the person to be baptized, and say, while pouring the water: I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.**

When the priest baptizes in the church, he uses consecrated water—that is, water blessed for that purpose on Holy Saturday, and mixed with holy oil. When he or any other, in case of necessity, baptizes in a private house, he may use plain, clean water, and he baptizes without the other ceremonies used in the church. Remember, in baptism you can use ordinary clean water, warm or cold. When the priest or any one baptizes by simply pouring the water and pronouncing the words of baptism, we call it private baptism. The baptism given in church with all the ceremonies is called solemn baptism. Any person baptized privately should be brought to the church afterwards to have the rest of the ceremonies performed.

It will increase your respect for the sacrament to know what ceremonies are used in solemn baptism, and what they signify. The following things must be prepared: the holy oils, a little salt, a little pitcher or something similar to pour the water from, a vessel to receive the water when poured, some cotton, two stoles, one white and one purple, towels, a white cloth, candle, and candlestick.

All being ready, the person holding the infant takes it on the right arm, face up, and the priest, having learned the name it is to be given, begins by asking the one to be baptized, “What do you ask of the Church of God?” And the godparents answer for the child, “Faith.” If the person

receiving baptism is capable of answering for himself, he must do so. Then the priest exhorts the child to keep the commandments and love God; then he breathes three times upon it and bids the evil spirit depart. He next prays for the child and puts a little salt into its mouth, as a sign of the wisdom that Faith gives, and again prays for the child. Then he places the end of his stole over it as a sign that it is led into the Church; for baptism is given in a place called the baptistery, railed off from the church and near the door, because formerly the ceremony up to this point was performed outside the church, and at this part of the ceremony the person was led in to be baptized. Then before baptism the person says the Creed and the Our Father; for when a grown person is to be baptized he must first be instructed in all the truths of religion, and he must say the Creed to show that he believes them. Again the priest prays and places a little spittle on the ears and nose of the child, using at the same time the words used by Our Lord when He spit upon the ground, and rubbing the spittle and clay upon the eyes of the blind man, healed him (John ix. 6). The priest next asks the child if it renounces the devil and all his works and pomps—that is, vanities and empty shows; and having received the answer anoints it with holy oil on the breast and back. Then he again asks for a profession of faith, and finally baptizes it. After baptism he anoints its head with holy chrism, places a white cloth upon it to signify the purity it received in baptism, and as a sign that it must keep its soul free from sin. Then he places in its hand a lighted candle, to signify the light of faith it has received in baptism. We are baptized at the door of the church to show that without baptism we are out of the Church. We are often signed with the sign of the cross to remind us that our salvation is due to the cross and passion of Our Lord. The priest's stole is placed over us to show that the Church takes us under its protection and shields us from the power of the devil. We are anointed as a sign that we are freed from our sins and strengthened to fight for Christ. The white cloth or garment

is placed upon us to remind us of the glory of the Resurrection ; the light is placed in our hand to show that we should burn with Christian charity.

**\* 157 Q.** How many kinds of baptism are there ?

**A.** There are three kinds of baptism : baptism of water, of desire, and of blood.

**\* 158 Q.** What is baptism of water ?

**A.** Baptism of water is that which is given by pouring water on the head of the person to be baptized, and saying at the same time, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

**\* 159. Q.** What is baptism of desire ?

**A.** Baptism of desire is an ardent wish to receive baptism, and to do all that God has ordained for our salvation.

“**Ardent wish**” by one who has no opportunity of being baptized—for no one can baptize himself. He must be sorry for his sins and have the desire of receiving the baptism of water as soon as he can ; just as a person in mortal sin and without a priest to absolve him may, when in danger of death, save his soul from hell by an act of perfect contrition and the firm resolution of going to confession as soon as possible. Baptism of desire would be useful and necessary if there was no water at hand or no person to baptize ; or if the one wishing to be baptized and those about him did not know exactly how baptism was to be given—which might easily happen in pagan lands. One thing you must especially remember in giving baptism in case of necessity : namely, that it would not do for one person to pour the water and another to say the words. The same person must do both, or the baptism will not be valid. If you are called to baptize in case of necessity, be very careful to observe the following points, otherwise the baptism will not be valid : use clean water and nothing but water—no other liquid would do. Say every one of the exact words : “**I bap-**

tize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." It would not do to say, "I baptize thee in the name of God;" or, "I baptize thee in the name of the Blessed Trinity;" nor would it do to say simply, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," without saying, "I baptize thee." Say the words at the same time you pour the water, and be sure the water touches the skin. It would not do to pour the water simply on the hair. You must not sprinkle the water, but pour it upon the head.

When you have followed the above instructions carefully and are sure you have baptized properly, never under any circumstances repeat the baptism on the same person. It is a sin to try to baptize more than once when you know baptism can be given only once. The sight of the person dying and the fact that you are called for the first time may cause you to be somewhat excited; but be calm, remember the importance of the sacrament, and you will administer it as directed. Parents should not baptize their own children in case of necessity, if there is any other person present who can validly do it. Remember those who administer baptism contract a spiritual relationship with the person they baptize and with his parents. If they wished, years afterwards, to marry either the person they baptized or the parents of the person, they must make this relationship known to the priest.

Sponsors are not necessary in private baptism. A person may be sponsor for a child in baptism without being present at the baptism, provided some one else holds the child in his name and answers the questions he himself would answer if he were present. Such a sponsor is said to stand for the child by proxy, and he, and not the one who holds the child, is then the real godparent when, at the request of the parents or priest, he has consented to be sponsor.

**\* 160 Q. What is baptism of blood?**

**A. Baptism of blood is the shedding of one's blood for the faith of Christ.**

Baptism of blood, called martyrdom, is received by those who were not baptized with water, but were put to death for their Catholic faith. This takes place even nowadays in pagan countries where the missionaries are trying to convert the poor natives. These pagans have to be instructed before they are baptized. They do everything required of them, let us suppose, and are waiting for the day of baptism. Those who are being thus instructed are called Catechumens. Some day, while they are attending their instructions, the enemies of religion rush down upon them and put them to death. They do not resist, but willingly suffer death for the sake of the true religion. They are martyrs then and are baptized in their own blood; although, as we said above, blood would not do for an ordinary baptism even when we could not get water; so that if a person drew blood from his own body and asked to be baptized with it, the baptism would not be valid. Neither would they be martyrs if put to death not for religion or virtue but for some other reason—say political.

**\* 161 Q.** Is baptism of desire or blood sufficient to produce the effects of baptism of water?

**A.** Baptism of desire or of blood is sufficient to produce the effects of the baptism of water, if it is impossible to receive the baptism of water.

**\* 162 Q.** What do we promise in baptism?

**A.** In baptism we promise to renounce the devil with all his works and pomps.

**\* 163 Q.** Why is the name of a saint given in baptism?

**A.** The name of a saint is given in baptism in order that the person baptized may imitate his virtues and have him for a protector.

The saint whose name we bear is called our patron saint. This saint has a special love for us and a special care over us. People take the names of great men because they admire their good qualities or their great deeds. So we take saints' names because we admire their Christian virtues and great Christian

deeds. We should, therefore, read the life of our patron saint and try to imitate his virtues, and the day on which the Church celebrates the feast of our patron saint should be a great day for us also. The Church generally celebrates the saint's feast on the day on which he died, that is, as we believe, the day on which he entered into heaven.

**\* 164 Q.** Why are godfathers and godmothers given in baptism?

**A.** Godfathers and godmothers are given in baptism in order that they may promise in the name of the child what the child itself would promise if it had the use of reason.

**\* 165 Q.** What is the obligation of a godfather and a godmother?

**A.** The obligation of a godfather and a godmother is to instruct the child in its religious duties if the parents neglect to do so or die.

This is a very important obligation, and we should be faithful in the fulfilment of it before God. Godfathers and godmothers are also called sponsors. The following persons cannot be sponsors: (1) All persons not Catholics, because they cannot teach the child the Catholic religion if they do not know it themselves. (2) All persons who are publicly leading bad lives; for how can they give good example and teach their godchild to be good when they themselves are public sinners? (3) All persons who are ignorant of their religion should not take upon themselves the duties of godparents. Therefore parents should select as sponsors for their children only good, practical Catholics—not Catholics merely in name, but those who live up to their faith, and who will be an example for their children. To repeat what has already been said, godparents contract a spiritual relationship, and in the event of their marriage, they must make known this relationship to the priest. The godfather and the godmother do not contract a relationship between them-

selves, but only with the child and its parents; so that neither the godfather nor the godmother could marry the child or its parents without first obtaining a dispensation; that is, permission from the Church granted by the bishop or Pope. With regard to names, parents should never be induced by any motive to give their child some foolish or fancy name taken from books, places, or things. Above all, they should never select the name of any enemy of the Church or unbeliever, but the name of one of God's saints who will be a model for the child. Whatever name is taken, if it be not a saint's name, the name of some saint should be given as a middle name. If this has been omitted in baptism, it should be supplied in confirmation, at which time a new name can be added. Again, if a saint's name has been taken in baptism it should not be shortened or changed so as to mean nothing; as, for example, Mazie, Miz, etc., for Mary. When your correct name is mentioned your saint is honored, and I might say invoked, because it should remind you of him. For that reason you should not have meaningless or foolish pet names, known only to your family or your friends.

LESSON FIFTEENTH.

ON CONFIRMATION.

166 Q. What is confirmation?

A. Confirmation is a sacrament through which we receive the Holy Ghost to make us strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ.

IN baptism we are made Christians, but we are not very strong in our faith till the Holy Ghost comes in confirmation. You remember how timid the apostles were before the coming of the Holy Ghost, and how firm and determined in their faith they were afterwards; and how fearlessly they preached even to those who crucified Our Lord. “**Soldiers**,” because we must fight for our salvation against our three enemies, the devil, the world, and the flesh. Our Lord is our great leader in this warfare, and we must follow Him and fight as He directs. A soldier that fights as he pleases and not as his general commands, will surely be beaten.

167 Q. Who can administer confirmation?

A. The bishop is the ordinary minister of confirmation.

“**Ordinary**,” because in some very distant countries where on account of the small number of Christians they have as yet no bishops, the Pope allows some priest to give confirmation; but then he must use the holy oil consecrated by a bishop, and cannot consecrate oil himself.

168 Q. How does the bishop give confirmation?

A. The bishop extends his hands over those who are to be confirmed, prays that they may receive the Holy Ghost, and anoints the forehead of each with holy chrism in the form of a cross.

\* 169 Q. What is holy chrism?

A. Holy chrism is a mixture of olive oil and balm, consecrated by the bishop.

The oil signifies the strength we receive, and the balm that we should be free from the corruption of sin, and give forth the sweetness of virtue.

**170 Q.** What does the bishop say in anointing the person he confirms?

**A.** In anointing the person he confirms the bishop says: I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

**\* 171 Q.** What is meant by anointing the forehead with chrism in the form of a cross?

**A.** By anointing the forehead with chrism in the form of a cross is meant, that the Christian who is confirmed must openly profess and practise his faith, never be ashamed of it, and rather die than deny it.

“**Openly profess**”—that is, acknowledge that he is a Catholic when it is necessary to do so. He need not proclaim it in the streets. “**Practise**” it without regard for what other people think, say, or do. “**Ashamed**” of a religion so glorious as the Catholic religion? Would we not be proud to belong to a society of which kings and princes were members? Well, a few centuries ago nearly all the kings, princes, and great men of the earth were Catholics. All the saints were Catholics. All the popes were Catholics. At present over two hundred million people in the world are Catholics. This Church was founded when Christ Our Lord was on earth, and is nearly two thousand years old. All the other churches are only a few hundred years old. We ought, therefore, to be proud of our religion, for which and in which so many noble persons died. We should feel proud that we are Catholics; while Protestants should feel ashamed in our presence, for they have deserted the true standard of Christ, and followed some other leader who set up a religion of his own in opposition to the true Church of Our Lord. They will not have the cross or crucifix, the standard of Christ, in their churches or houses or about their persons, and yet they claim to be Christians redeemed by the cross. We are called

upon to defend or profess our religion when we have to do what the Church and God require us to do: for example, hear Mass on Sundays and holy-days; abstain from the use of flesh-meat on Fridays, fast-days, and the like, when we are among persons not Catholics.

\* 172 Q. Why does the bishop give the person he confirms a slight blow on the cheek?

A. The bishop gives the person he confirms a slight blow on the cheek to put him in mind that he must be ready to suffer everything, even death, for the sake of Christ.

173 Q. To receive confirmation worthily is it necessary to be in the state of grace?

A. To receive confirmation worthily it is necessary to be in the state of grace.

\* 174 Q. What special preparation should be made to receive confirmation?

A. Persons of an age to learn should know the chief mysteries of faith and the duties of a Christian, and be instructed in the nature and effects of this sacrament.

How can one be a good soldier who does not know the rules and regulations of the army nor understand the commands of his general? How can one be a good Christian who does not understand the laws of the Church and the teachings of Christ? The "**nature**"—that is, understand the sacrament itself. "**Effects**"—that is, what it does in our souls.

175 Q. Is it a sin to neglect confirmation?

A. It is a sin to neglect confirmation, especially in these evil days when faith and morals are exposed to so many and such violent temptations.

"**Temptations**"—from the sayings and writings of the enemies of religion. To neglect it when we have an opportunity of receiving it without any very great difficulty would be a sin. When persons have been unfortunate enough to grow up without confirmation, they shou<sup>d</sup> come at any time in their lives to receive it, and not be ashamed to do so on account of their age or condition in life.

## LESSON SIXTEENTH.

### ON THE GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE HOLY GHOST.

\* 176 Q. What are the effects of confirmation?

The effects of confirmation are an increase of sanctifying grace, the strengthening of our faith, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

“Increase,” because we must be in a state of grace, that is, having already sanctifying grace in our souls when we receive confirmation. “Strengthening,” so that we have no doubt about the doctrines we believe.

\* 177 Q. What are the gifts of the Holy Ghost?

A. The gifts of the Holy Ghost are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.

\* 178 Q. Why do we receive the gift of fear of the Lord?

A. We receive the gift of fear of the Lord to fill us with a dread of sin.

On account of the goodness of God and the punishment He can inflict.

\* 179 Q. Why do we receive the gift of piety?

A. We receive the gift of piety to make us love God as a Father, and obey Him because we love Him.

\* 180 Q. Why do we receive the gift of knowledge?

A. We receive the gift of knowledge to enable us to discover the will of God in all things.

**\* 181 Q.** Why do we receive the gift of fortitude?

**A.** We receive the gift of fortitude to strengthen us to do the will of God in all things.

Some know the will of God,—what they should do,—but they have not the courage to follow the dictates of their conscience. For example, a person goes with bad company: the gift of knowledge will teach him that he should give it up; but the gift of fortitude will enable him to do what his conscience shows him to be right.

**\* 182 Q.** Why do we receive the gift of counsel?

**A.** We receive the gift of counsel to warn us of the deceits of the devil, and of the dangers to salvation.

The devil is much wiser than we are, and has much more experience, being among the people of the world ever since the time of Adam—about 6000 years. He could therefore easily deceive and overcome us if God Himself by the gift of counsel did not enable us to discover his tricks and expose his plots. When at times we are tempted, our conscience warns us, and if we follow the warning we shall escape the sin. Counsel tells us when persons or places are dangerous for our salvation.

**\* 183 Q.** Why do we receive the gift of understanding?

**A.** We receive the gift of understanding to enable us to know more clearly the mysteries of faith.

“**Mysteries,**” truths we could never know by reason, but only by the teaching of God; and the gift of understanding enables us to know better what His teaching means. The apostles heard and knew what Our Lord taught, but they did not fully understand the whole meaning till the Holy Ghost had come.

\* 184 Q. Why do we receive the gift of wisdom?

A. We receive the gift of wisdom to give us a relish for the things of God and to direct our whole life and all our actions to His honor and glory.

“Relish,” a liking for, a desire for.

\* 185 Q. Which are the beatitudes?

A. The beatitudes are:

(1) Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

(2) Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.

(3) Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

(4) Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be filled.

(5) Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

(6) Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.

(7) Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

(8) Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The beatitudes are part of a sermon Our Lord once preached to the people on the Mount (Matt. v.). When Our Lord wished to preach, the Jews would not always allow Him to enter their synagogues or meeting-houses; so He preached to the people in the open air. Sometimes He stood in a boat by the seashore; sometimes on a little hill, with the people standing or sitting near Him. Did you ever think how you would have acted if you lived at that time and were present when Our Lord preached? How anxious you would have been to get near to Him? How you would have pushed your way through the crowd and listened to every word? Why, then, do you sometimes pay so little attention in church or at instructions when the words of Our Lord are repeated to you?

Our Lord instituted a Church which, as we know, is sometimes called the kingdom of heaven. In this sermon He laid down the condition for being good subjects of His kingdom; that is, He gives the virtues we should practise to be good children of the Church. He tells us what rewards we shall have for practising these virtues and leading a holy life: namely, God's grace and blessing in this world and everlasting glory in heaven.

(1) "**Poor in spirit.**" One is poor in spirit if he does not set his heart upon riches and the goods of this world in such a way that he would be willing to offend God in order to possess them, or rather than part with them. Thus one who has no money but who would do anything to get it, would be poor, but not poor in spirit, and therefore not among those Our Lord calls blessed. If we are really poor and wish to be poor in spirit also, we must be contented with our lot—with what God gives us—and never complain against Him. No matter how poor, miserable, or afflicted we may be, we could still be worse, since we can find others in a worse condition than we are. We do not endure every species of misery, but only this or that particular kind; and if the rest were added, how much worse our condition would be! The very greatest misery is to be in a state of sin. If we are poor and in sin, our condition is indeed pitiable, for we have no consolation; but if we are virtuous in poverty, bearing our trials in patience and resignation for the love of God, we have the rich treasures of His grace and every assurance of future happiness. On the other hand, if one is very rich and gives freely and plentifully to the poor and works of charity, and is willing to part with riches rather than offend God, such a one is poor in spirit and can be called blessed. It is a great mistake to risk our souls for things we must leave to others at our death. Sometimes those who leave the greatest inheritance are soonest forgotten and despised, because the money or property bequeathed gives rise to numerous law-suits, quarrels and jealousies among the relatives, and thus becomes a very curse to

that family, whose members hate one another on its account. Or it may happen that the heirs thoughtlessly enjoy and foolishly squander the wealth the man, now dead, has labored so hard to accumulate, while he, perhaps, is suffering in hell for sins committed in securing it. Again, how many children have been ruined through the wealth left them by their parents! Instead of using it for good purposes they have made it a means of sin; often lose their faith and souls on account of it; and in their ingratitude never offer a prayer or give an alms for the soul of the parent, who in his anxiety to leave all to them left nothing in charity to the Church or the poor. Surely it is the greatest folly to set our hearts upon that which can be of no value to us after death. When a person dies men ask: What wealth has he left behind? But God and the angels ask, What merits has he sent before him?

(2) "**Possess the land**"—that is, the promised or holy land, which was a figure of the Church. Therefore it means the meek shall be true members of Our Lord's Church here on earth and hereafter in heaven, and be beloved by all.

(3) "**That mourn.**" Suffering is good for us if we bear it patiently. It makes us more like our blessed Lord, Who was called the Man of Sorrows.

(4) "**Justice**"—that is, all kinds of virtue.

"**Filled**"—that is, with goodness and grace. In other words, if we ask and really wish to become virtuous, we shall become so. St. Joseph is called in Holy Scripture "a just man," to show that he practised every virtue.

(5) If we are "**merciful**" to others, God will be merciful to us.

(6) "**Clean of heart**"—that is, pure in thoughts, words, deeds, and looks.

(7) "**Peacemakers.**" If persons who try to make peace and settle disputes are called the children of God, those who, on the contrary, try to stir up dissensions should be called the children of the devil. Never tell the evil you may hear of another, especially to the one of whom it was spoken; and

never carry stories from one to another: it is contemptible, and sinful as well. If you have nothing good to say of the character of another, be silent, unless your duty compels you to speak. Never be a child of the devil by exciting jealousy, hatred, or revenge in any one; but, on the contrary, make peace wherever you can, and be one of the children of God.

(8) "**Suffer persecution.**" Therefore, when you are badly treated on account of your piety or religion, remember you are like the martyrs of your holy faith, suffering for virtue and truth, and that you will receive your reward.

\* 186 Q. Which are the twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost?

A. The twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost are charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, long-suffering, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, and chastity.

"**Fruits,**" the things that grow from the gifts of the Holy Ghost. "**Charity,**" love of God and our neighbor. "**Peace**" with God and man and ourselves. With God, because we are His friends. With man, because we deal justly with all and are kind to all. With ourselves, because we have a good conscience, that does not accuse us of sin. "**Benignity,**" disposition to do good and show kindness. "**Long-suffering**"—same as patience. "**Modesty, continency, and chastity**" refer to purity in thoughts, words, looks, and actions.

## LESSON SEVENTEENTH.

## ON THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

WHEN Our Blessed Lord redeemed us He applied the benefits of the Redemption in the sacrament of baptism. By this baptism He freed us from sin and the slavery of the devil; He restored us to God's grace; He reopened for us heaven; made us once more children of God: in a word, He placed us in the condition in which we were before our fall through the sin of our first parents. This was certainly a great kindness bestowed upon us, and one would think we would never forget it, and never more lose God's friendship by any fault of ours; especially when we had seen the great miseries brought upon the world by sin, and had learned something of hell where we would have been, and of heaven which we would have lost, if Our Lord had not redeemed us. Our Blessed Lord saw, however, that we would forget His benefits, and again, even after baptism, go freely into the slavery of the devil. How, then, could we be saved? We could not be baptized again, because baptism can be given only once. Our good Lord in His kindness instituted another sacrament, by which we could once more be freed from sin if we had the misfortune to fall into it after baptism—it is the Sacrament of Penance. It is called the plank in a shipwreck. When sailors are shipwrecked and thrown helplessly into the ocean, their only hope is some floating plank that may bear them to the shore. So when we fall after baptism we are thrown into the great ocean of sin, where we must perish if we do not rest upon the Sacrament of Penance, which will bring us once more in safety to the friendship of God. How very thankful the poor shipwrecked sailors would be to any one who would offer them a plank while they were in danger! Do you think

they would refuse to use it? In like manner how thankful we should be for the Sacrament of Penance, and how anxious we should be to use it when we are in danger of losing our souls!

The Sacrament of Penance shows the very great kindness of Our Lord. He might have said: I saved them once, and I will not trouble Myself more about them; if they want to sin again, let them perish. But no, He forgives us and saves us as often as we sincerely call on Him for help, being truly sorry for our sins. He left this power also to His apostles, saying to them: As often as any poor sinner shall come to you and show that he is truly sorry for his sins, and has the determination not to commit them again, and confesses them to you, I give you the power to pardon his sins in the Sacrament of Penance. The forgiveness of your sins is the chief though not the only blessing you receive in the reception of this sacrament, through which you derive so many and great advantages from the exhortation, instruction, or advice of your confessor.

Is it not a great benefit to have a friend to whom you can go with the trials of your mind and soul, your troubles, temptations, sins, and secrets? You have that friend—the priest in the confessional. He is willing to help you, for he consecrated his life to God to help men to save their souls. He is able to help you, for he understands your difficulties, sins, and temptations, and the means of overcoming them. He has made these things the study of his life, and derives still greater knowledge of them from hearing the sad complaints of so many relating their secret sorrows or afflictions, and begging his advice.

Then you are sure that whatever you tell him in the confessional will never be made known to others, even if the priest has to die to conceal it. You might tell your secrets to a friend, and if you afterwards offended him he would probably reveal all you told him. The priest asks no reward for the service he gives you in the confessional, but loves to help you, because he has pledged himself to God to do so, and would sin

if he did not. Some enemies of our holy religion have tried to make people believe that Catholics have to pay the priest in confession for forgiving their sins; but every Catholic, even the youngest child who has been to confession, knows this to be untrue, and a base calumny against our holy religion; even those who assert it do not believe it themselves. The good done in the confessional will never be known in this world. How many persons have been saved from sin, suicide, death, and other evils by the advice and encouragement received in confession! How many persons who have fallen into the lowest depths of sin have by the Sacrament of Penance been raised up and made to lead good, respectable lives—a blessing to themselves, their families, and society!

**187 Q. What is the Sacrament of Penance?**

**A. Penance is a sacrament in which the sins committed after baptism are forgiven.**

One who has never been baptized could not go to confession and receive absolution, nor indeed any of the sacraments.

**\* 188 Q. How does the Sacrament of Penance remit sin, and restore the soul to the friendship of God?**

**A. The Sacrament of Penance remits sin and restores the friendship of God to the soul by means of the absolution of the priest.**

“**Absolution**” means the words the priest says at the time he forgives the sins. *Absolve* means to loose or free. When ministers or ambassadors are sent by our government to represent the United States in England, France, Germany, or other countries, whatever they do there officially is done by the United States. If they make an agreement with the governments to which they are sent, the United States sanctions it, and the very moment they sign the agreement it is signed and sanctioned by the authority of our government whose representatives they are, and their official action becomes the action of the United States itself. But when their term of office expires, though they remain in the foreign

countries, they have no longer any power to sign agreements in the name and with the authority of the United States.

You see, therefore, that it is the power that is given them, and not their own, that they exercise. In like manner Our Lord commissioned His priests and gave them the power to forgive sins, and whatever they do in the Sacrament of Penance He Himself does. At the very moment the priest pronounces the words of absolution on earth his sentence is ratified in heaven and the sins of the penitent are blotted out.

It may increase your veneration for the sacrament to know the precise manner in which absolution is given. After the confession and giving of the penance, the priest first prays for the sinner, saying: "May Almighty God have mercy on you, and, your sins being forgiven, bring you to life everlasting. Amen." Then, raising his right hand over the penitent, he says: "May the Almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon, absolution, and remission of your sins. Amen." Then he continues: "May Our Lord Jesus Christ absolve you, and I, by His authority, absolve you from every bond of excommunication and interdict, as far as I have power and you stand in need. Then I absolve you from your sins. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." At these last words he makes the sign of the cross over the penitent. In conclusion he directs to God a prayer in behalf of the penitent in the following words: "May the passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the merits of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of all the saints, and whatsoever good you may have done or evil you may have suffered, be to you unto the remission of your sins, the increase of grace, and the recompense of everlasting life. Amen." Then the priest says, "God bless you," "Go in peace," or some other expression showing his delight at your reconciliation with God.

**\* 189 Q.** How do you know that the priest has the power of absolving from the sins committed after baptism?

**A.** I know that the priest has the power of absolving

from sins committed after baptism, because Jesus Christ granted that power to the priests of His Church when He said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

Every Christian knows Our Lord Himself had power to forgive sins—(1) because He was God, and (2) because He often did forgive them while on earth, and proved that He did by performing some miracle; as, for example (Mark ii.; John v.), when He cured the poor men who had been sick and suffering for many years, He said to them, "Thy sins are forgiven thee; arise, take up thy bed, and walk," and the men did so. Since Our Lord had the power Himself, He could give it to His apostles if He wished, and He did give it to them and their successors. For if He did not, how could we and all others who, after baptism, have fallen into sin be cleansed from it? This Sacrament of Penance was for all time, and so He left the power with His Church, which is to last as long as there is a living human being upon the earth. Our Lord promised to His apostles before His death this power to forgive sins (Matt. xviii. 18), and He gave it to them after His resurrection (John xx. 23), when He appeared to them and breathed on them, and said: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

**\* 190 Q.** How do the priests of the Church exercise the power of forgiving sins?

**A.** The priests of the Church exercise the power of forgiving sins by hearing the confession of sins, and granting pardon for them as ministers of God and in His name.

The power to forgive sins implies the obligation of going to confession; because, as most sins are secret, how could the apostles know what sins to forgive and what sins to retain—that is, not to forgive—unless they were told by the sinner what sins he had committed? They could not see into his

heart as God can, and know his sins; and so if the sinner wished his sins forgiven, he had to confess them to the apostles or their successors. Therefore, since we have the Sacrament of Penance, we must also have confession.

**191 Q.** What must we do to receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily?

**A.** To receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily we must do five things:

(1) We must examine our conscience.

(2) We must have sorrow for our sins.

(3) We must make a firm resolution never more to offend God.

(4) We must confess our sins to the priest.

(5) We must accept the penance which the priest gives us.

When we are about to go to confession the first thing we should do is to pray to the Holy Ghost to give us light to know and remember all our sins; to fully understand how displeasing they are to God, and to have a great sorrow for them, which includes the resolution of never committing them again. The next thing we should do is—

(1) “**Examine our conscience;**” and first of all we find out how long a time it is since our last confession, and whether we made a good confession then and received Holy Communion and performed our penance. The best method of examining is to take the Commandments and go over each one in our mind, seeing if we have broken it, and in what way; for example: *First.* “I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.” Have I honored God? Have I said my prayers morning and night; have I said them with attention and devotion? Have I thanked God for all His blessings? Have I been more anxious to please others than to please God, or offended Him for the sake of others? *Second.* “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.” Have I cursed? Have I taken God’s name in vain or spoken without reverence of holy things? *Third.* “Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath-day.” Have I neglected

to hear Mass through my own fault on Sundays and holy-days of obligation? Have I kept others from Mass? Have I been late, and at what part of the Mass did I come in? Have I been wilfully distracted at Mass or have I distracted others? Have I done servile work without necessity? *Fourth.* "Honor thy father and thy mother." Have I been disobedient to parents or others who have authority over me—to spiritual or temporal superiors, teachers, etc.? Have I slighted or been ashamed of parents because they were poor or uneducated? Have I neglected to give them what help I could when they were in need of it? Have I spoken of them with disrespect or called them names that were not proper? *Fifth.* "Thou shalt not kill." Have I done anything that might lead to killing? Have I been angry or have I tried to take revenge? Have I borne hatred or tried to injure others? Have I given scandal? *Sixth.* "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Have I indulged in any bad thoughts, looked at any bad pictures or objects, listened to any bad conversation, told or listened to bad or immodest jokes or stories, or, in general, spoken of bad things? Have I done any bad actions or desired to do any while alone or with others? *Seventh.* "Thou shalt not steal." Have I stolen anything myself or helped or advised others to steal? Have I received anything or part of anything that I knew to be stolen? Do I owe money and not pay it when I can? Have I bought anything with the intention of never paying for it or at least knowing I never could pay for it? Have I made restitution when told to do so by my confessor; or have I put it off from time to time? Have I failed to give back what belonged to another? Have I found anything and not tried to discover its owner, or have I kept it in my possession after I knew to whom it belonged? Have I cheated in business or at games? *Eighth.* "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." Have I told lies or injured any one by my talk? Have I told the faults of others without any necessity? It is not allowed to tell the faults of others—even when you tell the truth about them—unless some good comes of the telling. *Ninth.* "Thou shalt not covet

thy neighbor's wife." This can come into our examination on the Sixth Commandment. *Tenth.* "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods." This can come into our examination on the Seventh Commandment.

After examining yourself on the Commandments of God, examine yourself on the Commandments of the Church.

*First.* "To hear Mass on Sundays and holy-days of obligation." This has been considered in the examination on the Third Commandment. *Second.* "To fast and abstain on the days appointed." Have I eaten meat on Fridays or fast-days remembering that it was Friday or a fast-day, and when I had no permission from my confessor to do so on account of poor health or other reason? *Third.* "To confess at least once a year." Is it over a year, and how much over it, since I have been to confession? *Fourth.* "To receive Holy Eucharist during the Easter time." Did I go to Holy Communion between the first Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday? If not, I have committed a mortal sin. *Fifth.* "To contribute to the support of our pastors." Have I helped the church and reasonably paid my share of its expenses—given to charity and the like, or have I made others pay for the light, heat, and other things that cost money in the church, and shared in their benefits without giving according to my means? Have I kept what was given me for the church or other charity, or stolen from the church and not stated that circumstance when I confessed that I stole?

*Sixth.* "Not to marry persons who are not Catholics, or who are related to us within the fourth degree of kindred, or privately without witnesses, nor to solemnize marriage at forbidden times." Have I anything to tell on this commandment?

After examining yourself on the commandments of God and of His Church, examine yourself on the capital sins, especially on "**Pride.**" Have I been impudent and stubborn, vain about my dress, and the like? Have I despised others simply on account of poverty or something they could not help? "**Gluttony.**" Have I ever taken intoxicating drink

to excess or broken a promise not to take it? Have I knowingly caused others to be intoxicated? "**Sloth.**" Have I wasted my time wilfully and neglected to do my duty at school or elsewhere? After examining yourself on the commandments and capital sins, examine yourself on the duties of your state of life. If you are at school, how have you studied? You should study not alone to please your parents or teachers, but for the sake of learning. If you are at work, have you been faithful to your employer, and done your work well and honestly?

The above method is generally recommended as the best in the examination of conscience. But you need not follow these exact questions; you can ask yourself any questions you please: the above questions are given only as examples of what you might ask, and to show you how to question yourself. It is useless to take any list of sins in a prayer-book and examine yourself by it, confessing the sins just as they are given. If you do take such a list and find in it some questions or sins that you do not understand, do not trouble yourself about them. In asking yourself the questions, if you find you have sinned against a commandment, stop and consider how many times. There are few persons who sin against all the commandments. Some sin against one and some against another. Find out the worst sin you have and the one you have most frequently committed, and be sure of telling it.

(2) "**Have sorrow for our sins.**" After examining your conscience and finding out the sins you have committed, the next thing is to be sorry for them. The sorrow is the most essential part in the whole Sacrament of Penance. In this sacrament there are, as you know, three parts: contrition, confession, and satisfaction—and contrition is the most important part. When, therefore, we are preparing for confession, we should spend just as much time, and even more, in exciting ourselves to sorrow for our sins as in the examination of our conscience. Some persons forget this and spend all their time examining their conscience. We should pray for sorrow

if we think we have none. Remember the act of contrition made at confession is not the sorrow, but only an outward sign by which we make known to the priest that we have the sorrow in our heart, and therefore we must have the sorrow before making the confession—or at least, before receiving the absolution. Now what kind of sorrow must we have? Some one might say, I am not truly sorry because I cannot cry. If some of my friends died, I would be more sorry for that than for my sins. Do not make any such mistake. The true and necessary kind of sorrow for sin is to know that by sin you have offended God, and now feel that it was very wrong, and that you have from this moment the firm determination never to offend Him more. If God adds to this a feeling that brings tears to your eyes, it is good, but not necessary.

(3) Remember real sorrow for sin supposes and contains “a firm resolution” never to sin again. How can you say to God, “O my God, I am heartily sorry,” etc., if you are waiting only for the next opportunity to sin? How can we be sorry for the past if we are going to do the same in the future? Do you think the thief would be sorry for his past thefts if he had his mind made up to steal again as soon as he had the chance? Ah, but you will say, nearly all persons sin again after confession. I know that; but when they were making their confession they thought they never would, and really meant never to sin again; but when temptation came, they forgot the good resolution, did not use God’s help, and fell into sin again. I mean, therefore, that at the time you make the act of contrition you must really mean what you say and promise never to sin, and take every means you can to keep that promise. If you do fall afterwards, renew your promise as quickly as possible and make a greater effort than before. Be on your guard against those things that make you break your promise, and then your act of contrition will be a good one. A person may be afraid that he will fall again, but being afraid does not make his contrition worthless as long as he wishes, hopes, and intends never to sin

again. We should always be afraid of falling into sin, and we will fall into it if we depend upon ourselves alone, and not on the help which God gives us in His grace.

(4) **"Confess our sins."** Having made the necessary preparation, you will next go into the confessional; and while you are waiting for the priest to hear you, you should say the confiteor. When the priest turns to you, bless yourself and say: "Bless me, father, for I have sinned. It is a month or a week (or whatever time it may be) since my last confession, and I have since committed these sins." Then tell your sins as you found them in examining yourself. In confession you must tell only such things as are sins. You must not tell all the details and a long story with every sin. For example, if a boy should confess that he went to see a friend, and after that met another friend, and when he came home he was asked what had kept him, and he told a lie. Now, the going to see the friend and the meeting of the other friend, and all the rest, was not a sin: the sin was telling the lie, and that was all that should have been confessed. Therefore, tell only the sins. Then tell only your own sins, and be very careful not to mention any one's name—even your own—in confession. Be brief, and do not say, I broke the first commandment or the second by doing so and so: tell the sin simply as it is, and the priest himself will know what commandment you violated. Again, when you have committed a sin several times a day do not multiply that by the number of days since your last confession and say to the priest, I have told lies, for example, four hundred and forty-two times. Such things only confuse you and make you forget your sins. Simply say, I am in the habit of telling lies, about so many, three or four—or whatever number it may be—times a day. Never say "sometimes" or "often" when you are telling the number of your sins. Sometimes might mean ten or it might mean twenty times. How then can the priest know the number by that expression? Give the number as nearly as you can, and if you do not know

the whole number give the number of times a day, etc. Never say "maybe" I did so and so; because maybe you did not, and the priest cannot judge. Tell what you consider your worst sin first, then if there be any sin you are ashamed to tell or do not know how to tell, say to the priest: "Father, I have a sin I am ashamed to tell, or a sin I do not know how to tell;" and then the priest will ask you some questions and help you to tell it. But never think of going away from the confessional with some sin that you did not tell. The devil sometimes tempts people to do this, because he does not like to see them in a state of grace and friends of God. When you are committing the sin, he makes you believe it is not a great sin, and that you can tell it in confession; but after you have committed it he makes you believe that it is a most terrible sin, and that if you tell it, the priest will scold you severely. So it is concealed and the person leaves the confessional with a new sin upon his soul—that of sacrilege. When Judas was tempted to betray Our Lord, he thought thirty pieces of silver a great deal of money; and then, after he had committed the sin, he cared nothing for the money, but went and threw it away, and thought his sin so dreadful that he hanged himself, dying in despair.

It is not necessary to tell the priest the exact words you said in cursing or in bad conversation, unless he asks you; but simply say, Father, I cursed so many times. Do not speak too loud in the confessional, but loud enough for the priest to hear you. If you are deaf, do not go into the confessional while others are near, but wait till all have been heard and go in last, or ask the priest to hear you some place else.

(5) Listen attentively to hear what "**penance**" the priest gives you, and say the act of contrition when he tells you to say it; and above all, never leave the confessional till the priest closes the little door or tells you to go. If the priest does not say at what particular time you are to say your penance, say it as soon as you can. When he tells you to say **anything** more than once, he generally means that you are

to say it once a day for so many days. If, for example, he tells you to say the Litany of the Blessed Virgin three times, he intends you are to say it once a day for three days.

When you have told all your sins, you will say: "For these and all the sins of my whole life, especially any I have forgotten, I am heartily sorry, and ask pardon and penance." Listen to the priest's advice, and answer simply any question he may ask you. If you should forget a sin in confession and remember it the same day or evening, or while you are still in the church, it will not be necessary to wait and go to confession again. It is forgiven already, because it was included in your forgotten sins; but you must tell it the next time you go to confession, saying before your regular confession: In my last confession I forgot this sin. Of course if you tried to forget your sins your confession would be invalid. It is only when you examine your conscience with all reasonable care, and then after all forget some sins, that such forgotten sins are forgiven.

Never talk or quarrel for places while waiting for confession, and never cheat another out of his turn in going to confession. It is unjust, it makes the person angry, and lessens his good dispositions for confession. It creates confusion, and annoys the priest who hears the noise. If you are in a hurry, ask the others to allow you to go first; and if they will not be contented and wait, and if you cannot wait, go some other time. Spend your time while waiting in praying for pardon and for sorrow. Never keep the priest waiting for you in the confessional; pass in as soon as he is prepared to hear you.

**192 Q.** What is the examination of conscience?

**A.** The examination of conscience is an earnest effort to recall to mind all the sins we have committed since our last worthy confession.

"**Worthy confession,**" because if we made bad confessions we must tell how often we made them, and whether we re-

ceived Holy Communion after them or not, and also all the sins we told in the bad confessions, and all others committed since the good confession. If, for example, a boy made a good confession in January, and in confession in February concealed a mortal sin and went to confession after that every month to December, he would have to go back to his last good confession, and repeat all the sins committed since January, and also say that he had gone to confession once a month and made bad confessions all these times.

**\* 193 Q. How can we make a good examination of conscience?**

**A.** We can make a good examination of conscience by calling to memory the commandments of God, the precepts of the Church, the seven capital sins, and the particular duties of our state in life, to find out the sins we have committed.

**\* 194 Q. What should we do before beginning the examination of conscience?**

**A.** Before beginning the examination of conscience we should pray to God to give us light to know our sins and grace to detest them.

## LESSON EIGHTEENTH.

## ON CONTRITION.

195 Q. What is contrition or sorrow for sin?

A. Contrition or sorrow for sin is a hatred of sin and a true grief of the soul for having offended God, with a firm purpose of sinning no more.

“Offended”—that is, done something to displease Him.

\* 196 Q. What kind of sorrow should we have for our sins?

A. The sorrow we should have for our sins should be interior, supernatural, universal, and sovereign.

\* 197 Q. What do you mean by saying that our sorrow should be interior?

A. When I say that our sorrow should be interior, I mean that it should come from the heart, and not merely from the lips.

“Interior”—that is, we must really have the sorrow in our hearts. A boy, for example, might cry in the confessional and pretend to the priest to be very sorry, and the priest might be deceived and absolve him; but God, who sees into our hearts, would know that he was not really sorry, but only pretending, that his sorrow was not interior, but exterior; and God therefore would withhold His forgiveness and would not blot out the sins, and the boy would have a new sin of sacrilege upon his soul; because it is a sacrilege to allow the priest to give you absolution if you know you have not the right disposition, and you are not trying to do all that is required for a good confession. So you understand you might deceive the

priest and receive absolution, but God would not allow the absolution to take effect, and the sins would remain; for if the priest knew your dispositions as God did, or as you know them, he would not give you absolution till your dispositions changed.

\* 198 Q. What do you mean by saying that our sorrow should be supernatural?

A. When I say that our sorrow should be supernatural, I mean that it should be prompted by the grace of God, and excited by motives which spring from faith, and not by merely natural motives.

“**Supernatural**”—that is, we must be sorry for the sin on account of some reason that God has made known to us. For example, either because our sin is displeasing to God, or because we have lost heaven by it, or because we fear to be punished for it in hell or purgatory. But if we are sorry for our sin only on account of some natural motive, then our sorrow is not of the right kind. If a man was sorry for stealing only because he was caught and had to go to prison for it, his sorrow would only be natural. Or if a boy was sorry for telling lies only because he got a whipping for it, his sorrow would only be natural. Or if a man was sorry for being intoxicated because he lost his situation and injured his health, he would not have the necessary kind of sorrow. These persons must be sorry for stealing, lying, or being intoxicated because all these are sins against God—things forbidden by Him and worthy of His punishment. If we are sorry for having offended God, simply on account of His own goodness, and without any thought of what evils might befall us through sin or what benefits we might derive from serving God, our contrition is said to be *perfect*. If we are sorry for the sins because by them we are in great danger of being punished by God, or because we have lost heaven by them, and without any regard for God’s own goodness, then our contrition is said to be *imperfect*. Imperfect contrition is called attrition.