

The
CHURCH OF CHRIST
AN APOLOGETIC AND DOGMATIC TREATISE

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FOREWORD

The present volume, being the outgrowth of lectures delivered in the class-room, was originally written in Latin with the intention of supplying a text-book suited to the needs of those beginning the study of theology in our seminaries. But upon the advice of friends,—professors of theology as well as priests engaged in parochial duties,—the matter has been completely recast into English. It is believed that in this form the work will be of wider utility than in Latin. It is designed to serve as a work of reference for students and also, for busy pastors who have not the time, and perhaps not even the inclination, to delve into more ponderous Latin tomes. It is also hoped that the detailed explanations and the simplicity of language will render the work intelligible and useful to a large portion of the laity. With the exception of the Sacraments, there is, perhaps, no subject of more practical interest to clergy and laity alike than that of the Church, yet there are few, if any, works in English treating the subject in full. The author trusts that he has made some little beginning in this matter by giving a connected and rather detailed account of the origin, constitution, and powers of the Church, from the dogmatic as well as from the apologetical point of view. Many questions not found in ordinary Latin treatises on the Church

have been introduced, not only because of the interest that attaches to these questions themselves, but also because they help to make the true nature of the Church better understood.

There is no claim to originality, except, perhaps, in the order and method of treatment. Much time and labor have been expended to put the subject into logical order and to state clearly and distinctly the precise doctrine to be proved in every instance. Proofs are useless unless there is some definite clear-cut proposition to be proved. To prove, for instance, that the Church is holy, without knowing exactly what is meant by holiness, and in what manner the Church is said to be holy, is simply to confuse the issue. For this reason much space is given to explanations; every question is resolved into its component parts and each proved separately from reason, Scripture, and Tradition. Moreover, a doctrine can scarcely be accepted as definitively established unless the arguments brought against it can be satisfactorily answered. On this account considerable attention has been given to objections, many of which have been taken directly from non-Catholic authors.

The scholastic method has been employed to a certain extent by setting forth the doctrine in the form of theses, followed by explanations, proofs, corollaries, and objections. This may seem a little formal to those not accustomed to it, but there is no method better adapted to beget order, clearness, and precision. It will also make the work more convenient for the use of

theological students trained to the scholastic method. Practically all quotations have been taken directly from the authors quoted, and a special effort has been made to preserve the sense as well as the words of the original. The quotations from the Fathers of the Church and from other ecclesiastical writers are from Migne's Latin and Greek Patrologies, designated P. L. and P. G. respectively in the references, where the first number indicates the volume, the others the columns in which the words quoted may be found. All passages marked by an asterisk in the footnotes are quoted according to the English translations of the Fathers prepared by non-Catholic scholars and published by Scribner.¹ Decrees and acts of councils are quoted from Denzinger-Bannwart's *Enchiridion Symbolorum et Definitionum*,²—a work easily accessible to all students. Decrees not found there are taken directly from the collections of councils by Mansi or Labbe-Cossart.

The humble efforts of the author will be amply rewarded if they but serve to arouse greater appreciation and deeper love for the Church, to whose infallible authority he unreservedly submits every statement of doctrine contained in the following pages.

THE AUTHOR.

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¹ Roberts-Donaldson, "Ante-Nicene Fathers"; Schaff-Wace, "Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers"; Schaff, "Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers."

² Latest edition prepared by Fr. Umberg, S. J., Herder, 1922.

PREFACE

Divine Revelation was given to the world by Jesus Christ the Son of God made man for all men of all time. The sublime teaching spoken by the Savior by lake shore and on mountain side was meant to be a guide for all mankind. It was to be known and accepted by all men. It was stamped with the hall mark of eternal Truth. It was true twenty centuries ago: it is true today. He who gave it to the world was none other than the God of Truth.

In order that divine Truth might be brought home to all men Jesus Christ established a Church, a teaching organization, to speak to the world in His name and with His own authority. To that Church He gave a very clear and unequivocal mission. It was to teach men whatsoever He had taught—nothing more, nothing less. On all men Christ placed the obligation of hearing His Church as they would hear Himself. He promised to remain with His teaching Church. He sent down the Holy Ghost on its first teacher selected by Himself in order that they and their successors might be illumined and assisted in the work of continuing the teaching and sanctifying mission of God's own Divine Son.

The Church established by Jesus Christ is the Church known to the world as the Catholic Church.

Its centre of authority to the world is designated by the word Roman, but that word in no way changes the connotation of the "Ecclesia Catholica." The Church founded by the God of all must necessarily be Catholic or Universal in time, place and doctrine. The Catholic Church is the true Church. No other Church received its mission from Christ. No other Church is Catholic. No other Church can trace its authority to Him who said, "Going therefore teach all nations." Every other so-called Church must, and in fact does, trace its origin to some mere man or woman. All of the protesting bodies are in rebellion against Christ's authority as exercised by the Church He Himself founded. Daily they are becoming more and more confused, a babel of contradictory voices, unable to agree on any point of faith, unable to lead men to Christ by any sure path. Thinking men outside the Catholic Church are growing tired of the hydra-headed Protestantism all around them.

Protestantism after its four centuries of revolt is absolutely bankrupt as a moral force. In America, as everywhere else, it is distinctly Erastian. It flies to the State for protection. It seeks strength in the secular arm to enforce morality. It depends on man-made laws to keep the people's feet on the pathway of virtue.

Jesus Christ was not a God of confusion. He did not breathe hot and cold in the same breath. The sixteenth century revolt was begotten in blasphemy. It accused the Church of Christ of error, of teaching what was false and immoral, of having been conquered by the

"gates of hell." The fomentors of revolt might very properly have accused individuals in God's Church of wrong-doing. That would be quite different from giving the lie to the God of Truth. Today we see the harvest of the sixteenth century sowing,—growing infidelity, indifferentism, religious chaos, consequent moral decadence, blind leaders united in only one thing,—opposition to the Church of Jesus Christ. They rejoice in its sufferings in Mexico or Russia. They approve any programme against it regardless of the character of those responsible for such a plan.

The Catholic Church is the most interesting and the most remarkable fact in the world. Kingdoms and empires have grown in their greatness, have sickened and died. The man-made churches of today shall be no more in comparatively few years. The names may be in use but they shall be only names. Twenty centuries have seen a great many changes, a great many ups and downs. But twenty centuries have seen no change in the Catholic Church,—no change in teaching, no change in principles, no change in her attitude towards sin, no change in her mission to teach Christ crucified and His doctrines to all mankind, no change in her consciousness of her own authority and right to speak to the world. Twenty centuries have seen her grow and expand despite all the forces of earth and hell arrayed against her. In a world of doubt and religious confusion the Catholic Church stands "like Teneriffe above the restless ocean's foam." Men may hate her as men hated and still hate Christ; one thing men cannot do,—

PREFACE

they cannot neglect her. They must be either with her or against her. She arrests the attention of men more every day.

It is about the Catholic Church founded by Jesus Christ that Dr. Berry writes. It is her claims he states and for them he gives proof. It is her position in the world as a divinely authorised teacher he emphasises. Succinctly yet clearly he marshals his arguments to bring conviction to the mind of the reader that the Catholic Church is what she has ever claimed to be,—the Bride of Christ, the mouthpiece of Christ.

He has done his work well. He places all of us under an obligation to him for his lucid explanation of the Church's position and teaching. Let us have an end of indefinite, vague terminology. Let us speak out the truth plainly without apologies, without fear. The world is looking for it. We repeat that the Catholic Church and she alone is the true Church of Christ. The teachings of Jesus Christ are found in their fullness and completeness in the Catholic Church alone. The Catholic Church is the Christian Church. Christianity is Catholicism. There is no Catholicism where there is no recognition of the Vicar of Christ. "Where Peter is, there is the Church."

✠ MICHAEL J. CURLEY,
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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS WORK

Since Christianity embodies the final revelation of God to man,¹ there must be some means instituted by God to preserve it from age to age and propagate it among men. The various societies known as Christian Churches claim to be that means. Hence the first purpose of this work is to inquire whether Christ really established a Church, and if so whether He established one or many.

If Christ established but one Church, it becomes necessary to discover which of the many now existing is, in very truth, the Church of Christ. This can be done by comparing the various Christian churches of today with the Church of Christ as set forth in the Gospels, where its nature and characteristics are portrayed in unmistakable terms. The Church that possesses these characteristics in their fulness today must necessarily be the *one true Church of Christ*.

Having discovered the true Church of Christ, the work of the *apologist* is finished and it becomes the duty of the *dogmatic theologian* to investigate its inner nature. Hence the present work is divided into two parts, —*Apologetic* and *Dogmatic*. The one points out the true Church of Christ; the other investigates its organization and powers.

¹ Proof of this may be found in treatises on Revealed Religion.

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* Non-Catholic authors. Wilberforce became a Catholic shortly after writing the work mentioned.

PART I
APOLOGETIC

THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST

"YOU SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH SHALL
MAKE YOU FREE."

—ST. JOHN VII, 32

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN OF THE CHURCH

SYNOPSIS.—1. ORIGIN AND MEANING OF THE NAME.—
2. CHRIST FOUNDED A CHURCH UNDER THE FORM OF A SOCIETY.—3. CHRIST FOUNDED BUT ONE CHURCH.—4. PURPOSE AND NATURE OF THE CHURCH.

ART. I. ORIGIN AND MEANING OF THE NAME CHURCH

Ecclesia, the Greek and Latin word for *Church*, is derived from ἐκκαλεῖν, which means *to call together; to summon*. Ἐκκλησις is the act of calling together, ἐκκλησία is the result of that act,—the assembly of persons called together. Hence *ecclesia* originally signified an assembly for any purpose whatsoever. It was used in this sense by all ancient writers both sacred and profane; e. g., “*All the tribes of Israel met together in the assembly (ecclesia) of the people of God.*”¹ “*I have hated the assembly (ecclesia) of the malignant; and with the wicked I will not sit.*”² “*Now some cried one thing, some another; for the assembly (ecclesia) was confused.*”³ “*The Athenians*

¹ Judges xx, 2.

² Psalm xxv, 5.

³ Acts xix, 32.

coming together (*ποίησαντες ἐκκλησίαν*) signified their intentions by ballot."⁴

In the course of time the word *ecclesia* was restricted to a religious assembly and then to a religious society, particularly to a Christian society. Even in this sense the word is variously used:

1. *Ecclesia* designates all rational creatures subject to Christ as their head. In this sense the *Church* consists of three parts,—the *militant* Church, composed of all the faithful on earth; the *suffering* Church, which consists of the souls detained in Purgatory; the *triumphant* Church, including both the saints and angels in Heaven. "It is manifest," says St. Thomas, "that both men and angels are ordained for the same end; viz., the glory of the Beatific Vision. Hence angels as well as men belong to the mystic body of the Church."⁵

2. In a somewhat more restricted sense *ecclesia* refers to all those who have been faithful to God in every age, from the beginning of mankind. Thus St. Gregory the Great says: "The holy ones who have lived before the Law [of Moses], those who lived under the Law, and those living under the dispensation of grace,—all these being members of the Church, constitute the body of the Lord."⁶ In like manner St. Augustine says: "Christ is our head and we the body. What say I? we alone and not those also who

⁴ Thucydides, "Historia," i, 139.

⁵ "Summa Theologica," 3a qu. 8, ad 4.

⁶ "Letter to John the Bishop"; P. L., 77, 740.

were before us? Assuredly all the just from the beginning of the world have Christ for their head. They indeed believed in Him to come, whom we believe to have come."⁷

3. *קָהָל*, the Hebrew equivalent of *ecclesia*, is frequently used to designate the people of Israel,—the Church of the Old Law. This is especially true of those passages in which the people of Israel are set forth as a type or figure of Christ's Church in the New Law; e. g., "I will declare thy name to my brethren; in the midst of the church will I praise thee."⁸ "I will give thanks to thee in a great church; I will praise thee in a strong people."⁹ "This was he that was in the Church (*ecclesia*) in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him on mount Sina."¹⁰

4. In the language of the Fathers *ecclesia* usually means the society of all the faithful who adhere to Christ Incarnate as their Head and thus constitute the Church of the New Law. In the writings of the Apostles the faithful are the "called" of Jesus Christ; called according to His purpose; called to be saints."¹¹ Taken collectively, they constitute a community,—the community of the called, i. e., the *Ecclesia* or Church of Christ, who used the word in this sense when He said: "Upon this rock I will build my Church (*ecclesiam*)."¹²

⁷ "Expositio in Psalm.," xxxvi; P. L., 36, 385.

⁸ Ps. xxi, 23.

⁹ Ps. xxxiv, 18; cfr. Num. xix, 29; xx, 4; Deut. xxiii, 3.

¹⁰ Acts vii, 38.

¹¹ Rom. i, 6; 1 Cor. i, 2.

¹² Matt. xvi, 18.

5. The word *church* (*ecclesia*) is also frequently used to designate the faithful of a particular district or country. Thus we speak of the French Church, the Roman Church, the American Church, etc. This use of the word is common with St. Paul in his salutations; e. g., "Paul, called to be an apostle . . . to the church of God that is at Corinth."¹³ In like manner St. John speaks of the seven churches of Asia.¹⁴ Even the faithful who worship together in the same place were called a *church*. St. Paul says: "Aquila and Priscilla and the church which is in their house, salute you."¹⁵ In like manner parishes and dioceses are today often called churches.

6. By an easy transition the word *ecclesia* was applied to the edifice in which the faithful met for divine worship. Hence we have the Spanish *iglesia*, the French *église*, and the Italian *chiesa*, to designate both the society and the edifice. In the early ages of the Church the edifice for worship was appropriately called the house of the Lord,—*domus dominica*, or simply *dominicum*. The Greek equivalent, οἰκία κυριακή, was similarly contracted into κυριακόν.¹⁶ This shortened form was corrupted into *kyreiko* by the Goths and then passed into German as *kirche*, into English as *church*. In the Slavonic languages it became *cirkev* or *cerkov*. It is interesting to note that in the Romance lan-

¹³ 1 Cor. i, 1; vii, 17; Rom. xxi, 4.

¹⁴ Apoc. i, 4; ii, 1; iii, 11.

¹⁵ 1 Cor. xvi, 19; Rom. xvi, 5.

¹⁶ St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Catecheses xviii, 26. P. G. 33, 1043.

guages the word for *church* properly refers to the society. It is only by metonymy that it can be applied to the edifice. In the Germanic languages we find the very opposite. Slovak seems to be unique in having distinct terms for these two ideas; *cirkev* is the society, *kostol* the building. The latter is equivalent to our word *castle*, both being derived from the Latin *castellum*—a fortified place.

Synagogue

Under the Law of Moses the Chosen People were sometimes called a *church* (^{as do} עֵדוּת) but more often the *synagogue* (עֲרֵב) of Israel.¹⁷ This is especially true after the time of Christ, when the Church was often contrasted with the Synagogue. The word is derived from the Greek συναγειν—to drive together. Hence it signifies an assembly of persons brought together by physical or moral force. Commenting on the difference between *ecclesia* and *synagoga*, St. Augustine says: "By the *synagogue* we understand the people of Israel, because *synagogue* is the word properly used of them, although they were also called the Church. Our congregation, on the contrary, the Apostles never called *synagogue*, but always *ecclesia*; whether for the sake of the distinction, or because there is some difference between a congregation whence the Synagogue has its name, and a convocation whence the Church is called

¹⁷ Cf. Exodus xii, 3, 6, 47; xvi, 1, 2, 9; Numbers xxvii, 17; xxxi, 16; Leviticus iv, 13, 45.

ecclesia: for the word congregation (or flocking together) is used of cattle, . . . whereas convocation (or calling together) is more of reasonable creatures such as men are. . . . Hence the worthier name is ours on account of our being *called*." ¹⁸

The name *synagogue* was also used to designate the Jewish faithful who frequented the same house of prayer; hence we read of the "synagogue of the Libertines, and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of them that were of Cilicia and Asia." ¹⁹ At first the edifice in which a particular congregation of Jews met for prayer and instruction was called *house of the synagogue*, but in the course of time it came to be known simply as *the synagogue*.

ART. II. CHRIST FOUNDED A CHURCH UNDER THE FORM OF A SOCIETY

SYNOPSIS.—1. NATURE OF A SOCIETY.—2. ERRORS REGARDING THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF THE CHURCH.—3. CHRIST PERSONALLY FOUNDED A CHURCH AS A SOCIETY.—4. THE CHURCH A SOCIETY DISTINCT FROM THE SYNAGOGUE.—5. OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

§ 1. *Nature of a Society*

A society may be defined as a union of intelligent beings, entered into for the purpose of attaining a com-

¹⁸ "Expositio in Psalm." lxxxix; P. L., 37, 1047.

¹⁹ Acts vi, 9.

mon good by united efforts. A number of individuals is the *material element* necessary for the formation of a society, but they do not form a society unless banded together for the attainment of a common end by united efforts. Hence the union of wills toward a common end is the *formal element* of every society. The specific nature of a society may be literary, political, or religious, according to the end to be attained, and the organization of the society will vary accordingly. Hence the end to be attained may be called the *external formal element*.

The end to be obtained by a society must be more or less permanent. A number of men uniting their efforts to extinguish a fire in a neighbor's house would not constitute a society. The fact that the purpose of a society is to be attained by the united efforts of all its members, does not mean that each and every member must contribute the same kind of effort or perform the same duties. In this respect a society resembles a physical body in which there are many members, each with its own peculiar function, yet all contribute to the well-being of the whole body, which in turn redounds to the good of each member.

Finally, no purpose can be accomplished unless suitable means are used and properly directed. To this end authority is necessary to coördinate and direct the members in the use of these means. Without authority there can be nothing but confusion and discord, and the society itself would soon perish. Those who exercise authority in a society are its *superiors* or *officials*; those

subject to this directing or ruling authority are *inferiors* or *subjects*.

Practically speaking, authority is the formal element of every society since it is authority that preserves and strengthens all the bonds by which the members are held together.

From the above considerations we deduce the following conditions necessary for a society:

- a) a number of individuals;
- b) a moral union, *i. e.*, a union of wills;
- c) a common end to be attained;
- d) suitable means to attain that end; and
- e) adequate authority.

These five conditions are essential and sufficient to constitute a society. If they are found realized in the Church founded by our Lord, then that Church is a true society.

§ 2. *Errors Regarding the Origin and Nature of the Church*

The various errors concerning the origin and nature of the Church may be classed as Protestant, Rationalist, and Modernist.

I. PROTESTANTS for the most part believe that all Christian churches owe their existence in some way to Christ; but few would admit that Christ personally founded any particular society that can claim to be His Church, to the exclusion of all others. In a general way they seem to hold that Christ proclaimed a doctrine, or rather an ideal of life, which He wishes all His

followers to realize. For this purpose they are free to form societies or churches in which to practice the Christian religion as they see fit. "Those believers who dwell together in one place become a church by their recognition of each other and their mutual agreement to observe Christ's ordinances in one society. Thus the visible church is one of the forms through which the kingdom of God is manifested among men."¹ Those who are not satisfied with one church may betake themselves to another or establish a new one to their own liking.²

Protestants were forced to adopt this loose conception of the Church in order to justify the introduction of new churches by the so-called Reformers in the sixteenth and following centuries. If Christ personally founded one definitely organized society to continue as His Church through the ages, then all others must be counterfeits.

II. RATIONALISTS also deny that Christ founded a Church. According to David Friedrich Strauss, Christ was merely the founder of a new school of philosophy. Only in the second century did His disciples conceive and carry out the idea of forming societies similar to the Jewish synagogues.³ Adolph Har-

¹ Clarence A. Beckwith, "Outline of Christian Theology," p. 208.

² In citing Protestant theories on this and other questions, we can only give the opinions of individual Protestant writers. Their churches as such cannot be said to teach anything. Many of them have official creeds, but no two members of any church hold the same views even on matters contained in the creed.

³ Strauss, "Das Leben Jesu."

Church teaches all truth, Church's church must
to that

nack and Weizsäcker maintain that Christ taught no particular doctrine, but simply strove by word and example to win all to the practice of a spiritual life. The *Kingdom* which Christ proclaimed, they contend, is within the soul,—it is purely spiritual. "It is in the nature of a spiritual force, a power which sinks into a man within and can be understood only from within. . . . *It is not here or there, it is within you.*"⁴

This interior communion with God is proclaimed as the essence of Christianity; its collective and social character is only a secondary feature. It was owing entirely to external circumstances that the disciples of Christ finally separated from the Synagogue and formed local societies, which gradually coalesced into one larger society, known as the Church. The doctrines of the Church were elaborated with the assistance of Greek philosophy, and its organization was borrowed from Rome.⁵

They hold
the Church
is evolutionary

III. THE MODERNISTS agree with the rationalists in denying that Christ intended to establish a Church. According to their teaching, religion consists entirely in certain experiences arising from the action of God upon a religious sentiment, which they call the *need for the Divine*. In the first century the faithful began to form local societies to further their common interests. In course of time (in the second or third century ac-

⁴ A. Harnack, "Das Wesen des Christentums," p. 39.
⁵ A. Harnack, "Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte," I, 140 sqq.; Weizsäcker, "Das Apostolische Zeitalter"; cfr. D'Alès, "Dictionnaire Apologétique," art. "Église."

ording to Sabatier) these local societies began to unite, and the Church in the Catholic sense of that term sprang into being. Therefore the origin and present state of the Church are due to evolutionary forces. The *Kingdom of God* announced by Christ is essentially collective and social, *i. e.*, it is a real society, but purely eschatological; it is the kingdom of justice to be inaugurated at the end of the world, which Christ believed near at hand.⁶

A detailed criticism of these theories is unnecessary; they are sufficiently refuted by proving that Christ actually did establish a Church under the form of an external and visible society. It may be noted, however, that Harnack and Loisy are right in making spiritual regeneration an essential element of the *Kingdom of God*, but they are wrong in making it the only one. Our Lord often contrasted the spiritual character of His kingdom with the external formalism of the Old Law; in the new kingdom God is worshipped in *spirit and in truth*.⁷ At the same time the social element is no less essential; the kingdom of God on earth is to be a real kingdom,—a real society, in which interior perfection is demanded.⁸

§ 3. *Christ Personally Founded His Church as a Society*

It is an article of faith that Christ personally estab-

⁶ Cf. A. Loisy, "L'Évangile et l'Église"; G. Tyrrell, "Scylla and Charybdis"; A. Sabatier, "De l'Essence du Christianisme."

⁷ Cfr. Matthew v, 1 sqq; John iv, 24.

⁸ Cf. below, pp. 52.

lished a church under the form of a true society visibly existing among men. This was decreed by the Vatican Council in the following words: "In order to perpetuate the saving work of Redemption, the eternal Pastor and Bishop of souls decreed to establish a holy Church, in which all the faithful might be gathered together by the unity of faith and love as in the house of God."¹ The same doctrine is also taught by the condemnation of the following proposition of Modernism: "It was not the intention of Christ to establish a Church as a society destined to continue upon earth through a number of centuries; in fact, according to the teachings of Christ, the Kingdom of Heaven was to come only with the end of the world."²

DEMONSTRATION. The fact that Christ personally instituted a Church is proved: (1) from His own promise to do so; (2) from the institution of the Apostolic ministry; (3) from prescription. The social nature of the Church is also proved from the same sources and clearly indicated by the various figures or symbols under which the Church is depicted in the Gospels and in the writings of the Apostles.

1. THE PROMISE. "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church."³ In these words our Lord promises to establish a Church, and the promise

¹ Denzinger, n. 1821.

² Decree "Lamentabili," 3 July, 1907; Denzinger, n. 2052.—*Note.*—In this part of our work, definitions of councils and decrees of popes are not cited as proof of a thesis, but simply to prove what is the defined doctrine of the Church.

³ Matt. xvi, 18.

is absolute; its fulfillment is subject to no condition whatsoever. The very name *church* (*ecclesia*) indicates a society.⁴ Moreover, Christ uses the word *build*, thus comparing His Church to an edifice in which parts are joined to parts and so ordered that a completed structure rises from the foundations. Thus also shall it be with the Church: the faithful as living stones shall be built up into a spiritual house.⁵ In a word, the Church which Christ promises to establish, shall be a true society of men amongst men.

2. THE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY. The founder of a society need only formulate the necessary plans and authorize suitable persons to put them into execution. Christ did this in regard to the Church, when He instituted the Apostolic ministry, sending forth the Apostles with authority to teach, govern, and sanctify, and obliged all men to submit to their threefold authority. A few texts will be sufficient to show this triple power granted to the Apostles:

a) *Authority to Teach.* "Going therefore, teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."⁶ And again: "Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature."⁷

b) *Authority to Govern.* "Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven; and

⁴ See above, pp. 9.

⁵ 1 Peter ii, 5.

⁶ Matt. xxviii, 19.

⁷ Mark xvi, 15.

whatsoever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven." ⁸ Again: "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth . . . as the Father hath sent me I also send you." ⁹ With these words our Lord conferred upon His Apostles the same power and authority that He himself had received as divine legate from His Heavenly Father.

c) *Power to Sanctify.* "Going therefore, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." ¹⁰ Again: "Whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained." ¹¹ "This is my body which shall be given for you: this do in commemoration of me." ¹²

The authority to teach, govern, and sanctify, undeniably conferred upon the Apostles, implies the corresponding duty to accept their teaching, to observe their precepts, and to receive at their hands the means of sanctification. These duties are also clearly enunciated by our Lord:

a) *The Duty of Accepting* the teachings of the Apostles is proclaimed in these words: "Preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." ¹³

⁸ Matt. xviii, 18. XXVII

⁹ Matt. xviii, 16-18; John xx, 21.

¹⁰ Matt. xxviii, 19-20.

¹¹ John xx, 22, 23.

¹² Luke xxii, 19.

¹³ Mark xvi, 16.

b) *The Duty of Obedience* is no less stringent: "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me. And he that despiseth me, despiseth Him that sent me." ¹⁴ Speaking of the man in need of correction Christ said: "Tell it to the Church; and if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." ¹⁵

c) *The Duty of Receiving the Means of Sanctification* is also inculcated: "Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and of the Holy Ghost he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." ¹⁶ Elsewhere we read: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you." ¹⁷

Christ, having conferred upon His Apostles authority to teach, govern, and sanctify, sent them forth into the world to make disciples: "Going therefore, teach (μαθητεύσατε) all nations," i. e., make disciples of all nations. A rite of initiation was also prescribed: "Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." All the requisites for a true society were fully realized,—superiors endowed with adequate authority, subjects constituted by a special rite of initiation and brought together in a unity of government, faith, and worship. Hence, Christ personally founded His Church under the form of a true society

¹⁴ Luke x, 16.

¹⁵ Matt. xviii, 17.

¹⁶ John iii, 5.

¹⁷ John vi, 54.

by the very act of instituting the apostolic ministry.

3. PRESCRIPTION. Down through the centuries from the days of the Apostles there has existed a true and visible society claiming Christ as its author,—a claim that was recognized as just by all antiquity. St. Cyprian may be quoted in this connection: "Our Lord first gave this power to Peter, upon whom He built His Church, and from whom He ordained that unity should have its origin."¹⁸ Likewise the Apostles, who certainly must have known the mind of their Divine Master, always looked upon themselves and their associates as the rulers of a society founded by Christ from whom they derived all authority. Thus, for instance, St. Paul writes: "*God indeed hath set some in the Church; first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly doctors . . . for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*"¹⁹

4. SYMBOLS OF THE CHURCH. The social nature of the Church is also clearly indicated by the many symbols or figures under which it is depicted in Holy Scripture. It is often called a *flock*, a *sheep-fold*, a *house*, or a *body*. Christ says: "*Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.*"²⁰ St. Paul thus addresses the clergy of Ephesus: "*Attend to yourselves and to the whole*

¹⁸ "Epistola ad Jubaianum"; P. L., 3, 1114. Further testimony will be found in the article on the apostolicity of the Church; *infra*.

¹⁹ 1 Cor. xii, 28; Ephes. iv, 11. Other texts will be found in the following section on the Church and the Synagogue.

²⁰ John x, 14-16.

flock, in which the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God."²¹ Writing to Timothy he says: "*That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God which is the Church of the living God.*"²² To the Ephesians he writes: "*And [God] hath made him head over all the Church which is his body.*"²³

No symbol could be found more suggestive of a society than that of a fold or flock, in which the sheep are united under the care of a shepherd, whose voice they hear and obey. In fact, so appropriate is the comparison that the rulers of the Church in all ages have been known as *pastores*,—the Latin word for *shepherds*. Scarcely less significant is the comparison with a house or a body, for in both there is union and order of parts to constitute a complete whole. When men are thus united they form a *society*.

§ 4. *The Church Distinct From the Synagogue*

Many rationalists deny that Christ had any intention of founding a society distinct from the Synagogue.¹ They maintain that the influence of St. Paul finally led the disciples to withdraw from the Synagogue and form separate societies, which gradually coalesced into the one society known as the Church of Christ. This the-

²¹ Acts xx, 28.

²² 1 Timothy iii, 5.

²³ Ephes. i, 22, 23.

¹ *Synagogue* is here used to designate the Mosaic religion,—the Church of the Old Law.

ory is sufficiently refuted by establishing the following thesis concerning the origin of the Church:

Thesis.—The Church was established by Christ as a society distinct from the Synagogue

PROOFS. I. *From Reason.* Societies having different authors, different members, different superiors, and striving by different means to attain separate ends, must be recognized as entirely distinct societies. But this is precisely the case with the Church and the Synagogue. Moses was the immediate author of the Synagogue, whereas Christ was the immediate and personal author of the Church. For this reason St. Paul contrasts Moses with Our Lord: "*Moses indeed was faithful in all his house [the Synagogue] as a servant But Christ as Son in his own house [the Church].*"²

The Synagogue was limited in its membership to one nation; the Church was established for all men: "*Going therefore, teach all nations.*" The Synagogue was intended primarily as a preparation for the coming of Christ; it was "*our pedagogue in Christ that we might be justified by faith.*"³ The Synagogue wrought sanctification for one people only, and that a mere legal sanctity, produced by sacrifices and sacraments that were but types and figures,—"*weak and needy elements.*"⁴ The Church, on the other hand, works a real

² Heb. iii, 5, 6.

³ Gal. iii, 24.

⁴ Gal. iv, 9.

supernatural sanctification for all men by means of a sacrifice and sacraments efficacious in themselves. Finally, the rulers of the Synagogue belonged to the priesthood of Aaron, with which the ministers of the Church,—the Apostles and their successors,—have no connection.

II. *From Scripture.* The Acts of the Apostles always portrays the Church as a society having a separate and independent existence. On Pentecost the disciples already constituted a society, to which a large number was added by the rite of Baptism: "*They therefore that received his [Peter's] words, were baptized; and there were added in that day about three thousand souls. And they were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread, and in prayers.*"⁵ Again we read: "*And in those days, the number of the disciples increasing, there arose a murmuring of the Greeks against the Hebrews for that their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Then the twelve calling together the multitude of the disciples said: Look ye out among you seven men of good repute, . . . whom we may appoint over this business. . . . These they set before the Apostles; and they praying imposed hands upon them. And the word of the Lord increased, and the number of the disciples was multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; a great multitude also of the priests obeyed the faith.*"⁶ These passages obviously refer to a society distinct from the

⁵ Acts ii, 41, 42.

⁶ Acts vi, 1 sqq.

Synagogue,—a society having its own officials, its own peculiar doctrines, and a distinctive worship.

After the martyrdom of St. Stephen "*there was raised a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem, and they were all dispersed through the countries of Judea and Samaria except the Apostles.*"⁷ These words depict the Church as a society subject to persecution at the hands of the Jews which could not be the case were the Church not recognized as something different from the Synagogue and opposed to it. St. Paul leaves no room for doubt in the matter: in his Epistle to the Hebrews he makes a lengthy comparison between the Synagogue and the Church, thereby proving that they were absolutely different institutions.⁸ When writing to the Corinthians, he also distinguishes between the Church and the Synagogue: "*Be without offence to the Jews and to the gentiles and to the Church of God.*"⁹

III. *From Roman Law.* The laws of Rome allowed the Jews freedom of religious worship and conferred upon them many privileges, yet the Church was cruelly persecuted from its very beginning. Scarcely thirty-five years after our Lord's death, Nero decreed that it was not lawful to be a Christian,—"*Christianos esse non licet.*"¹⁰ Hence the Roman government must

⁷ Acts viii, 1 sqq.

⁸ Heb. iii, 1 sq.

⁹ 1 Cor. x, 32.

¹⁰ Tertullian, "Apology," iv; P. L., 1, 285.

have looked upon the Church as a society entirely distinct from the Synagogue.

§ 5. *Objections Considered*

OBJECTION I.—Christ expected to return soon after His death to judge the world. This is evident from His words to the Jews: "*There are some of them that stand here that shall not taste death until they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom.*"¹ On another occasion He described the signs preceding the second coming, and then added: "*Amen I say to you that this generation shall not pass till all these things be done?*"² His words to the Apostles convey the same meaning: "*Amen I say to you, you shall not finish all the cities of Israel till the Son of man come.*"³ It is evident, then, that Christ had no intention of founding a Church, or kingdom on earth. The kingdom announced by Him was purely eschatological,—a kingdom to be inaugurated at His second coming.

ANSWER.—Taken by themselves, the passages quoted might suggest that the end of the world and the second coming of Christ were near at hand, but other and clearer texts leave no doubt that our Lord neither expected nor proclaimed His second coming as an event of the near future. He said to the Apostles: "*Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of*

¹ Matt. xvi, 28.

² Matt. xxiv, 34.

³ Matt. x, 23.

the world."⁴ The tenor of these words implies at least several centuries intervening before the end of the world. At another time He said: "*This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony to all nations, and then shall the consummation come.*"⁵ This presupposes a considerable lapse of time; the preaching of the Gospel to the whole world and to all nations was not a work to be accomplished in a few months or years. Again, in foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem, Christ said: "*They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the gentiles till the times of the nations be fulfilled.*"⁶ This indicates a considerable period of time between the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world.

It is a recognized principle of interpretation that the obscure passages of a work must be explained in the light of clearer texts bearing upon the same subject. Hence the rather obscure texts quoted in the objection must be interpreted according to other passages whose meaning is clear. To consider each one in particular: (a) "*Some that stand here shall not taste death till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom,*" *i. e.*, according to some interpreters, *until they see the Son of man reigning in His kingdom, the Church* which was spread far and wide even during the lifetime of some

⁴ Matt. xxviii, 20.

⁵ Matt. xxiv, 14.

⁶ Luke xxi, 24.

who heard these words of our Lord. Other scholars take the words "*coming in His kingdom*" as a reference to our Lord's coming in judgment at the destruction of Jerusalem. Still others take them as a reference to the Transfiguration, which occurred six days later.⁷ On this occasion our Lord was speaking, not to the people, but to His Apostles, three of whom were privileged to see Him in that fleeting moment of glory on the mount. (b) "*This generation shall not pass till all these things be done,*" *i. e.*, the Jewish people shall not perish from the earth until the things foretold shall come to pass. If this be the correct interpretation, the prophecy is wonderfully fulfilled. No other people known to history ever preserved its identity during long centuries of exile like the Jews. (c) "*You shall not finish all the cities of Israel till the Son of man come,*" *i. e.*, before you have preached the Gospel in all the cities of Israel, I shall come in judgment against the city of Jerusalem for its sins of infidelity. In the Old Testament God is often said to come in judgment when there is question of some special manifestation of His justice against iniquity.⁸

Whatever be the interpretation of the texts just considered, it has been proved beyond doubt that Christ not only planned a Church, but actually established it. This fact cannot be overcome by objections taken from one or another text of uncertain meaning.

OBJECTION II.—Christ frequented the Temple and

⁷ Matt. xvii, 1.

⁸ Cf. Is. iii, 14; xxx, 27.

the synagogues, and observed the rites of the Mosaic Law; in fact, He openly declared that He had come, not to destroy, but to fulfill the Law.⁹ The disciples also frequented the Temple as we read in the Acts: "*And continuing daily with one accord in the temple.*"¹⁰ These facts prove that neither Christ nor His disciples had any idea of a society distinct from the Synagogue.

ANSWER.—The conclusion does not follow from the facts adduced. It is possible for a person to belong to two or more societies at the same time, if those societies are not opposed to one another. The Acts of the Apostles relates that the disciples attended the Temple daily, but it also states that they "*were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread and in prayer.*"¹¹ They formed a society under the leadership of the Apostles with their own doctrines and their own distinct worship. They went to the Temple to pray, as they were accustomed to do, but they afterward met in their own homes to celebrate the Eucharist,—"*breaking bread from house to house.*"¹²

Up to the time of Christ's passion and death the Mosaic Law was in full force; the disciples and Apostles were strictly bound by its precepts and ceremonies, and although Our Lord was not bound by the Law, He observed its ordinances, that He might show Him-

⁹ Matt. v, 18.

¹⁰ Acts iii, 46.

¹¹ Acts iii, 42.

¹² Acts ii, 46.

self an example to those who were. Therefore it was necessary for the disciples of Christ to attend the services of the Temple before His death. After that they would only gradually give up practices to which they had been accustomed all their lives.

It is also true that Christ came to fulfill the Law: He came to fulfill the prophecies contained therein, and to establish the Church long prefigured by the institutions of the Law. He came to establish the kingdom promised to the seed of David.

OBJECTION III.—The ceremonies of the Old Law were a profession of faith in a Messiah to come. The disciples of Christ believed Him to be the Messiah already come, hence their observance of the Law was a virtual denial of this new faith, for as St. Paul observes: "*If you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing . . . you are made void of Christ, . . . you are fallen from grace.*"¹³ It is evident, therefore, that those first disciples did not consider themselves as forming a society distinct from the Synagogue until they had come under the influence of St. Paul, the author of the separatist movement.

ANSWER.—The objection has no bearing on the question at issue. The disciples believed Our Lord to be the long expected Messiah, whether He established a Church independent of the Synagogue or not. Their observance of the Mosaic Law would be no greater denial of faith in one case than in the other. It has been proved that Christ did establish a Church as a

¹³ Gal. v, 2 sq.

society distinct from the Synagogue. It is also certain that the first disciples continued to frequent the Temple and observed the Mosaic Law to some extent. Whether they were right in so doing is another question. On this matter Tanqueray says: "The Synagogue was a figure of the Church and a preparation for it; hence the change from one to the other was not a change from a false to a true religion, but from one form of true religion to another. For this reason the change was made gradually in order to win the Jews more securely to the new faith. . . . The Apostles themselves observed certain ceremonies of the Law lest they give offense to their brethren, but when converts from among the Pharisees wished to impose the Mosaic Law upon gentile converts, St. Peter openly declared that it was no longer obligatory.¹⁴ But since both Jew and Christian worshipped the same God and observed the same moral code, and since the new religion, preached first to the Jews, differed but little in doctrine from the old, we should not be surprised to find that at first the separation of the Church from the Synagogue was not complete."¹⁵

St. Augustine clearly explains the relation of the Synagogue to the Church by distinguishing three stages in the history of the Mosaic Law. These stages he designates as the *living*, the *dead*, and the *deadly*. Before the passion and death of Our Lord the Mosaic Law was obligatory (*living*) upon every member of the Jew-

¹⁴ Acts xv, 10, 11.

¹⁵ Tanqueray, "Synopsis Theol. Dogm.," vol. I, p. 317 (6th ed.).

ish nation. After the death of Christ the Law ceased to bind; it was *dead*, yet the Jews were free to observe it until the Gospel of the New Law was duly promulgated. After due promulgation of the Gospel the Old Law was both dead and *death-dealing*; those who still observed its ceremonial precepts thereby denied that the Law of Christ is sufficient for salvation. For this reason St. Paul says: "*You are made void of Christ, you who are justified in the law; you are fallen from grace.*"¹⁶

On this same subject Father Semeria says: "Christianity was a new fruit coming to maturity on an old vine: it was a new life developing from one that had passed maturity and was now growing decrepit. A number of causes, both human and divine, bound this new life to the Jewish religion. According to a happy expression of the Fathers, 'the Synagogue was being buried with honors.' God did not wish a sudden and violent transition, but the infant Church contained within itself an element which soon developed and brought about a complete separation. It was a case of historical biology."¹⁷

ART. III. CHRIST FOUNDED BUT ONE CHURCH

Protestants in general believe that one Christian church is as good as another, since all owe their existence equally to Christ; but they deny that He estab-

¹⁶ St. Augustine, "Letter to St. Jerome," P. L., 33, 156.

¹⁷ Semeria, "Venticinque Anni di Storia," p. 92.

lished any one to the exclusion of all others. Protestant theologians of the sixteenth century introduced the doctrine of a twofold Church,—the one visible, the other invisible. They were forced to this doctrine when asked to explain where the Church of Christ existed before the Reformation, since they taught that the Catholic Church had long since fallen into error and corruption and had ceased to be the Church of Christ. They solved the difficulty by claiming that the true Church of Christ is invisible and comprises all the just, or all those predestined to eternal life. The visible Church is composed of the various religious organizations, or churches, which are but so many external manifestations of the Church invisible. The just and the just alone belong to the invisible Church, regardless of what visible church organization they may belong to. In fact, they may belong to the invisible Church even though they have no connection with any organized church society.

There are some who maintain that Our Lord simply proclaimed the ideal of a Church and left it to His followers to organize actual churches, which realize more or less perfectly the ideal proposed by Him. This doctrine likewise leaves a multitude of churches, in all of which salvation may be obtained with equal security. Hence the belief that one church is as good as another.

These theories are refuted in part by the fact, already proved, that Christ actually instituted a real Church

under the form of a visible society.¹ The question now arises whether Christ established one Church or several. The answer to this question is of supreme importance. If there is but one true Church of Christ, all others must be false claimants, with no right to existence. If there is but one true Church, our eternal salvation depends upon finding and embracing it, and the doctrine that one church is as good as another must be rejected.

Thesis.—Christ founded but one Church

The doctrine stated in the above thesis is not only historically certain, but also a defined dogma of the Church, as is evident from the Nicene Creed: "*I believe in ONE holy, catholic and apostolic Church.*"

PROOFS. I. *From Reason.* Had Our Lord established two or more churches, all would have to teach the same, or different doctrines; employ the same, or different means of salvation. If they taught the same doctrines and employed the same means of salvation, it would be difficult to assign a sufficient reason for their separate existence. If they taught different doctrines or used different means of salvation, one only would be teaching *all* the doctrines of Christ or using *all* the means established by Him for salvation; yet the Church of Christ must "*observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*"² Again, if several churches teach

¹ The visible nature of the Church will be discussed more at length in the following chapter.

² Matt. xxviii, 19.

opposing doctrines, all save one must necessarily teach falsehood, whereas the Church of Christ must ever be "the pillar and ground of truth."³

II. *From Scripture.* Sacred Scripture always speaks of the Church as one,—the one kingdom of God on earth; the single mustard seed that grows into a tree filling the whole earth; the one net cast into the sea; the one field in which the wheat and cockle grow together until the harvest.⁴ Again, the Church is the *spouse* of Christ, and the union between Christ and His Church is held up as the model for the union between husband and wife,⁵—a union between one man and one woman; not a polygamous union with several wives. The Church is also the *body* of Christ,⁶ but Christ is no monster having several bodies.

Our Lord Himself explicitly states that His Church shall be one: "Upon this rock I will build my Church."⁷ He does not say *churches*. He also says: "There shall be one fold and one shepherd."⁸ St. Paul gives the reason why the Church should be one: "One body and one Spirit; as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all."⁹ The Church, which is the body of Christ, should be one, since there

³ 1 Timothy iii, 15.

⁴ Matt. xiii, 24 sq.

⁵ Ephes. v, 25.

⁶ Ephes. i, 22, 23.

⁷ Matt. xvi, 18.

⁸ John x, 16.

⁹ Ephes. iv, 3-6.

is but one God and Father of all, one faith, one baptism, one and the same eternal life to be attained.

III. *From Tradition.* To quote the words of early writers on this question seems a needless task. Neither the Fathers of the Church nor the early heretics ever dreamed of denying that the Church of Christ must be one and only one. A few examples from the early Fathers will suffice for a doctrine so clearly and forcibly stated in Holy Scripture.

a) *The Didache.* "Remember thy Church, O Lord! Deliver it from all evil and establish it in thy love. Gather it from the four winds into thy kingdom which thou hast prepared for it."¹⁰ The author of this ancient work evidently recognized but one Church of Christ,—the Church spread over the four quarters of the earth, whence it shall be gathered into the heavenly kingdom of the Church triumphant.

b) *St. Cyprian:* "There is one God, and Christ is one, and there is one Church and one chair founded upon the rock by the word of the Lord. Another altar cannot be constituted nor a new priesthood be made except the one altar and the one priesthood. Whosoever gathereth elsewhere, scattereth."¹¹

c) *Clement of Alexandria:* "From the very reason that God is one and the Lord one, that which is in the highest degree honorable is lauded in consequence of its

¹⁰ *Didaché Apostolorum*, x, 5; Cfr. Funk, "Patres Apostolici," I, 25.—This work known as "Teaching of the Apostles," was written in the first century, probably between 80 and 90 A. D.

¹¹ "Epistola ad Plebem"; P. L., 40, 336.*

singleness. In the nature of the One, then, is associated in a joint heritage the one Church which they [heretics] strive to cut asunder. . . . Therefore in substance and idea, in origin, in preëminence, we say that the ancient and Catholic Church is alone . . . passing all things else and having nothing like or equal to itself."¹²

d) *St. Ambrose*: "Let us follow this one congregation of the Lord; let us recognize the one Church. . . . From every valley a catholic people is brought together; there are no longer many congregations but one; there is only one Church."¹³

ART. IV. PURPOSE AND NATURE OF THE CHURCH

SYNOPSIS.—1. PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH.—2. GENERAL NATURE OF THE CHURCH.—3. THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

§ 1. Purpose of the Church

FINAL PURPOSE. The Church, in common with all the works of God, must have for its final purpose the manifestation of God's glory. For this reason *St. Paul* says: "*In whom [Christ] we also are called by lot, being predestined . . . that we may be unto the praise of his glory. . . . He is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of acquisition, unto the praise of*

¹² "Stromata," vii, 17; P. G., 9, 551.*

¹³ "Hexaëmeron"; P. L., 14, 146.

his name."¹ Elsewhere he says: "*Christ loved the Church and delivered himself up for it . . . that he might present it to himself a glorious Church.*"²

The Church is eminently fitted to give glory to God by its wonderful manifestation of His power, wisdom, and goodness in providing such efficacious means of salvation for all men at all times, whatever be their condition or state in life.

IMMEDIATE PURPOSE. The immediate end of the Church is twofold,—one to be attained by the Church herself acting as a society; the other, by individuals acting in subjection to her authority. To point out the end to be attained by the Church herself is simply to state what position she holds in the economy of Redemption; to determine the end to be attained by the individual in the Church is to say why Christ commands all men to enter her fold.

a) *The Church*. Christ's greatest work was accomplished when He offered Himself on the Cross for our redemption and thereby merited for us every grace. This work, known to theologians as Redemption *in actu primo*, was personally wrought by Our Lord for all time, "*for by one oblation He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. . . . He was offered once to exhaust the sins of many.*"³ But the price of our redemption being offered, there was still a further work to perform; the merits of Christ's suffering and death

¹ Ephes. i, 11-14.

² Ephes. v, 25-27.

³ Heb. x, 14; ix, 28.

Redemption in actu primo

must be applied to individual souls through all the centuries. This is known as *Redemption in actu secundo*. Since Our Lord was not to remain upon earth in His bodily presence, there was need of some agency to carry on this work; therefore, in the words of the Vatican Council, "the eternal Pastor and Bishop of souls decreed to establish a holy Church in order to perpetuate the saving work of Redemption."⁴

Christ proclaimed His doctrines, gave His precepts, and instituted the Sacraments to enable all men to participate in the fruits of the Redemption. He then instituted the Apostolic ministry to perpetuate this work in the world. He sent forth the Apostles with authority to teach and govern all men and to administer to them the means of salvation. But, as already shown, Christ instituted His Church by instituting the Apostolic ministry. It follows, then, that the Church was established to perpetuate the work of the Redemption by applying it to the souls of men. In a word, the Church was instituted to save all men, or, as St. Paul expresses it: "*For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ until we all meet into the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man.*"⁵

b) *The Individual*. Since the Church was instituted

⁴ Denzinger, n. 1821.

⁵ Ephes. v, 13.—The Church is directly concerned only with man's spiritual welfare, but since the temporal reacts upon the spiritual, she must also give some attention to his temporal well-being. The Church greatly promotes temporal happiness by her care for spiritual things.

to save mankind by bringing souls to eternal life, the ultimate end to be sought by the individual in and through the Church can be no other than eternal salvation, as Christ Himself admonishes: "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice.*"⁶ The immediate end to be attained must be that which Christ enjoined upon all men and which the Apostles demanded of those who entered the Church, *i. e.*, to submit to the authority of the Church, to be instructed by her in all revealed truths, to receive the Sacraments, and to offer true worship to God,—in a word to practice the Christian religion and thus prepare for eternal life.

§ 2. *General Nature of the Church*

THE CHURCH A RELIGIOUS SOCIETY. The end for which a society exists determines to a great extent the nature of that society. The Church, therefore, is a religious society, as all admit, and since it owes its existence to Christ, is known as a Christian society. In fact, it is the only means established by Christ to teach His doctrines, to inculcate His moral precepts, to administer the Sacraments, and to regulate and direct divine worship. No one can practice the Christian religion otherwise than as Christ Himself has ordained: whoever would be His disciple and embrace His religion must submit to the authority of His Church, be taught and ruled by it, and receive through it all the means of salvation. This is evident from the commission which

⁶ Matt. vi, 33.

Christ gave to His Apostles when He sent them forth to teach all nations. The Church, then, is not an institution of Christianity; it is Christianity existing in the concrete.

THE CHURCH A SUPERNATURAL SOCIETY. The end to be attained by the Church, and most of the means to that end, are purely spiritual and supernatural. The Church has Christ for its author and exercises a supernatural power conferred by Him. Her members are raised to a supernatural state and consecrated in a special manner to God by the grace and spiritual character of Baptism. Therefore, the Church is a supernatural society in its origin and purpose, in its authority and means of sanctification, and likewise in its members. For this reason Christ could say: "*My kingdom is not of this world.*"¹

THE CHURCH A DIVINE-HUMAN SOCIETY. The Church, being the work of Christ and holding authority from Him, must be divine in its origin, in its constitution, and in its authority. On the other hand, it is a society of men and for men, and therefore human. In the words of Leo XIII, "the Church is a society divine in its origin, supernatural in its end and means, yet because it consists of human members, it is a human society."² This twofold element in the Church explains the seemingly contradictory characteristics ascribed to it by our Lord Himself. It is a kingdom not of this world, perpetual, ever opposed yet never overcome,

¹ John xviii, 36.

² Leo XIII, "Satis cognitum," 29 July, 1896; Denzinger, n. 1959.

ever displaying the vigor of youth because, unlike other societies, it is not subject to the law of decay; it is a divine institution. On the other hand, Christ clearly foretells evils in His Church: it is the field in which cockle grows with the wheat; it is the net taking fish both good and bad. It is necessary that scandals come because the Church is a human society subject to human evils.

THE CHURCH A PERFECT SOCIETY. A perfect society, in this connection, is not one free from defects and imperfections, but one having everything necessary to make it a *complete* society. In this sense a sovereign state is a perfect society, although there may be many and serious imperfections in its government. Certain conditions are necessary to constitute a perfect, or complete society:

(1) It must be independent of all other societies, both in its existence and in its actions. A corporation is not a perfect society, since it depends upon the State for its existence and is regulated by the State in its actions.

(2) It must not be part of another society, for a part is necessarily incomplete.

(3) Its end must not be subordinate to that of any other society in the same order, otherwise it will also be subordinate to that other society, and therefore not independent in its actions.

(4) It must have at its command the means necessary for its own conservation and for the attainment of its own proper end, otherwise it will be dependent upon some other society for these means and therefore not perfect in itself. A society

may possess necessary means either *in re* or *in virtute, i. e.*, it may have them in actual possession or it may have the right to demand them of some other society, which is bound to supply them.

These four conditions being fully verified in the Church, constitute it a perfect society. It does not depend upon any other society for its existence; its end is supreme in its own order and cannot be subordinated to any higher order since it seeks man's highest good,—his eternal salvation. The Church is also independent in all its actions, as the works of Christ clearly prove: "*Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven.*"³ Since the actions of the Church are ratified in Heaven, no power on earth can modify or nullify them. Christ has also promised that His Church shall endure until the end of time despite the opposition of worldly powers: "*Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.*"⁴ David's prophecy concerning Christ is equally true of His Church: "*The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes met together against the Lord and against his Christ. . . . He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh at them, and the Lord shall deride them.*"⁵ Hated, opposed, and persecuted, the Church shall remain victorious to the end, because she has within her-

³ Matt. xviii, 18.

⁴ Matt. xxviii, 20.

⁵ Ps. ii, 2-4.

self all means necessary to attain the purpose of her existence.

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

OBJECTION I.—The Church cannot be a perfect and independent society, as it has no dominion, no territory of its own, in which to exercise authority.

ANSWER.—It is not necessary that a society have a dominion, or territory, by right of ownership; a territory in which to exercise authority is dominion sufficient for any society, and this the Church has. Her dominion is the world: "*Go ye therefore into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature.*"⁶ The Church has received her dominion from Him to whom belongs "*the earth and the fulness thereof; the world and all they that dwell therein.*"⁷ One and the same territory belongs to the Church and to the civil powers,—to the Church for the exercise of spiritual jurisdiction; to the civil powers for the exercise of temporal jurisdiction.

OBJECTION II.—In this case two independent societies would be exercising supreme jurisdiction in one and the same territory, which is contrary to the axiom that *a State within a State is a contradiction*. Hence the Church cannot be a perfect society.

ANSWER.—Two societies exercising supreme authority in the same territory is a contradiction if both are

⁶ Mark xvi, 15.

⁷ Ps. xxiii, 1.

concerned about the same things; if they have different ends in view, there is no contradiction, unless those ends are incompatible. The ends sought by the Church and the State are different, but not incompatible; in fact, they are mutually helpful.

OBJECTION III.—Without religion there can be neither peace nor happiness in the State. Therefore, religion, or at least religious worship, must be subject to State regulation.

ANSWER.—It is a truth too often neglected today, that there can be no peace or happiness without religion; but it does not follow that religion must therefore be subject to the State. Many things are needed by an individual for his peace and happiness, but he is not thereby justified in becoming a highwayman to obtain them; he must have recourse to the lawful methods of barter. In like manner, if the Church has in her possession anything deemed needful or necessary for the public good of the State, let those in authority seek it from the Church, as they would from a neighboring State, *i. e.*, by mutual agreement.⁸

§ 3. *The Church and the Kingdom*

Throughout the writings of the New Testament we find frequent mention of the *Kingdom of God*, or, as St. Matthew usually terms it, the *Kingdom of Heaven*. These terms are evidently synonymous, for, as Light-

⁸ See *infra*. 512 sq.

foot has pointed out, the Jews frequently put *Heaven* for *God*, just as we do today in such phrases as "*Heaven forbid*," "*heaven be pleased*," etc.¹ St. Matthew, writing for Jewish Christians of Palestine, used expressions to which they were accustomed. For this reason he has "*Kingdom of Heaven*." The other Apostles and Evangelists wrote principally for Christians of gentile origin and consequently gave the Greek equivalent for the Aramaic expression found in St. Matthew and most likely used by Our Lord Himself.

The *Kingdom* so often referred to by Our Lord and His Apostles is evidently the Messianic kingdom, foretold by the prophets, prefigured by the people of Israel, and promised to David and his seed forever. "*In the days of those kingdoms, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, and his kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people and it shall break in pieces and shall consume all these kingdoms and itself shall stand for ever.*"² This Kingdom is the stone cut from the mountain without hands which in turn became a mountain filling the whole earth.³ It is the eternal kingdom promised to the house of David: "*Thy house shall be faithful, and thy kingdom for ever before my face, and thy throne shall be firm for ever.*"⁴ "*Once have I sworn by my holiness: I will not lie*

¹ J. Lightfoot, "*Horæ Hebraicæ*"; On St. Matthew, iii, 2.

² Dan. ii, 44.

³ Dan. ii, 34, 35.

⁴ 2 Kings vii, 16.

unto David: his seed shall endure for ever. And his throne as the sun before me; and as the moon perfect for ever."⁵

At the time of Our Lord's public ministry the Jews were still looking forward with confidence to the establishment of this Kingdom under the leadership of the Messiah, but their conception of the Messiah and of His Kingdom had sadly degenerated since the days of the prophets. They now looked upon the Messiah as a great national leader to restore the kingdom of Israel and to make of it a world power to dominate the gentile nations. For this reason Herod was greatly disturbed when the Magi inquired, "*saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews?*"⁶ The disciples were imbued with this idea when they "*disputed among themselves which of them should be the greatest,*"⁷ and again when the mother of James and John asked Our Lord that "*these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand and the other on thy left in thy kingdom,*"⁸ she was seeking high official positions for her sons in the worldly kingdom which they believed Our Lord would soon establish. Even after the Resurrection of Our Lord, the Apostles could not entirely rid themselves of this belief. When Christ was telling them to wait in Jerusalem for the coming of the Holy Ghost, they asked Him:

⁵ Ps. lxxxviii, 36-38.

⁶ Matt. ii, 2.

⁷ Mark ix, 33.

⁸ Matt. xx, 20, 21.

*"Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?"*⁹

During His public life, Our Lord strove to correct this false conception of His kingdom. He clearly and emphatically proclaimed that it was not to be an earthly one, such as they expected. When the Pharisees asked Him, "*when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said: The kingdom of God cometh not with observation,*"¹⁰ *i. e.*, it shall not be inaugurated by the marching of armies, the shouts of victory, or the trappings of royalty. "*My kingdom is not of the world.*"¹¹

What then, is the real character of this Kingdom? Harnack says that it signifies a purely spiritual and interior reign of God in the soul: "The kingdom of God comes by coming to the individual; by entering into his soul and laying hold of it."¹² Protestants in general hold a similar view; some, however, seem to identify the *Kingdom* with the invisible Church which they postulate: "The kingdom of God includes all those who yield themselves in glad obedience to the will of God."¹³ In either case, it excludes any external or visible society, such as the Church in the Catholic sense. Modernists admit that the *Kingdom* is a real external society, but belongs to the future: "according to the

⁹ Acts i, 6.

¹⁰ Luke xvii, 20.

¹¹ John xviii, 33-37.

¹² A. Harnack, "Das Wesen des Christentums," p. 36.

¹³ Clarence A. Beckwith, "Outline of Christian Theology," p. 208.

teachings of Christ, the kingdom of heaven was to come only with the end of the world."¹⁴ In opposition to these views we sometimes find Catholic interpreters and theologians identifying the *Kingdom* with the Church. A study of the parables in which Our Lord explains the nature of His Kingdom will show how far the above views may be accepted, and to what extent they fall short of the truth. It is evident that the words are not always taken in the same sense; at least three distinct, though related, meanings are attached to it.

a) The Kingdom is the mustard seed that becomes a tree and fills the whole world; it is the field with wheat and cockle growing together until the harvest; it is the net cast into the sea which takes fish both good and bad.¹⁵ There can be no doubt that these parables depict the Kingdom as an external society existing on earth,—a society composed of members both good and bad. In this sense the *Kingdom* is identical with the Church, in which St. Peter exercises the power of the keys: "*Upon this rock I will build my Church . . . and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.*"¹⁶

b) The Kingdom of Heaven is also a hidden treasure, a pearl of great price, a leaven permeating and transforming the meal.¹⁷ In these and similar passages we see the *Kingdom* in its interior and spiritual aspect: it

¹⁴ Denzinger, n. 2052.

¹⁵ Matt. xiii, 24 sq.

¹⁶ Matt. xvi, 18, 19.

¹⁷ Matt. xiii, 24 sq.

is the power of grace transforming and elevating the soul,—the reign of God in the heart. In this sense the Kingdom is something different from the Church, considered as an external society.

c) Finally, the Kingdom is the eternal banquet of heavenly bliss,¹⁸ the place prepared for the just from the foundation of the world,¹⁹ the land that belongs to the poor in spirit,²⁰ and which the rich man shall hardly enter.²¹ These passages present the *Kingdom* in its eschatological aspect, as the glorious reign of Christ with His saints, which shall be inaugurated at His Second Coming. In this sense the *Kingdom* is identical with the triumphant Church.

When Christ said to Nicodemus: "*Unless a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven,*"²² He was probably using the term in its three-fold sense. Baptism is the door by which we enter the Church on earth; it is the beginning of God's reign in the heart by regeneration, without which eternal happiness is impossible.

The above considerations bring out clearly the relations between the Church and the Kingdom of Heaven. The Church, as an external society carrying on the ministry of Christ, *constitutes* the Kingdom in its exterior social aspect. In the work of sanctifying souls the Church *produces* the Kingdom in its interior and spirit-

¹⁸ Luke xxii, 29, 30.

¹⁹ Matt. xxv, 34.

²⁰ Matt. v, 3.

²¹ Luke xviii, 24.

²² John iii, 5.

Kingdom
and Church
the same

ual aspect. By accomplishing the work of salvation on earth the Church *prepares* for the kingdom in its eschatological aspect; it is preparing to become the Church triumphant in heaven.²³

²³ Cf. D'Alès, "Dictionnaire de Apologétique," art. Église; Hastings, "Dictionary of the Bible," art. Kingdom of God; B. Bartmann, "Das Himmelreich und sein König," Paderborn, 1904.

Properties are attributes which can be known externally

Existence of the Church as a society most important thing so far.

CHAPTER II

ATTRIBUTES OF THE CHURCH

The Church as a society instituted to perpetuate the mission of Christ on earth, must be endowed with certain qualities necessary for the proper performance of that work. Necessary qualities are those so essentially bound up with the Church that the loss of any one of them would make the Church other than that established by Christ and render it incapable of accomplishing the purpose of its existence. From the teachings of Christ and His Apostles, and from a study of the Church as set forth in the prophecies of old and in the writings of the Fathers, it will be seen that the principal qualities or characteristics essentially necessary to the Church are *unity, sanctity, catholicity, apostolicity, perpetuity, indefectibility, visibility, and infallibility.*

The first four of these, known to theologians as *properties*, manifest themselves externally and thus serve as a means to identify the true Church of Christ. The others, not externally evident, are called *attributes*,—in Latin, *dotes*.

As a matter of convenience the *attributes* of the Church are treated separately in the present chapter; *perpetuity* and *indefectibility*, being intimately related, are considered together in the first article. *Visibility*

here there are qualities

Principal characteristics

is treated separately in the second article. *Infallibility* will be treated at length in another part of the work.¹

ART. I. PERPETUAL INDEFECTIBILITY OF
THE CHURCH

SYNOPSIS.—1. NATURE OF INDEFECTIBILITY.—2. ERRONEOUS DOCTRINES.—3. THE CHURCH PERPETUALLY INDEFECTIBLE.—4. OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

§ 1. *The Nature of Indefectibility*

The general notion of indefectibility is indicated by the word itself, which is derived from the Latin *in* (*not*) and *deficere* (*to fail*). Hence *indefectibility* is inability to fail, to fall short, to perish. Applied to the Church, it means that she cannot be deprived of any essential power or quality so long as she continues to exist. *Perpetuity* is indefectibility of existence. Strictly speaking, *indefectibility* pertains to the essential qualities of the Church; *perpetuity*, to her existence. These two attributes, though really distinct, are so closely related that it is difficult to treat them separately. If the Church is indefectible in her essential qualities and perpetual in her existence, she must be perpetually indefectible in all essential qualities. Therefore, the two attributes may be combined as *perpetual indefectibility*.

It should be noted that *indefectibility* does not exclude such accidental changes as are incidental to

¹ Cf. pp. 426 sq.

growth and development, nor those necessary to adapt the Church to her surroundings. As the Church increases in numbers and extent, new agencies are needed to cope with her increased activities. For this purpose archdioceses and patriarchates were introduced, religious orders established, schools and other institutions founded. Rites and ceremonies, the celebration of feasts, the laws of fasting and abstinence, and other disciplinary regulations may be changed to suit the needs of time and place. These are all accidental changes, which prove that the Church is a living organism that "can keep its identity without losing its life, and keep its life without losing its identity; that can enlarge its teachings without changing them; that can always be the same, and yet always developing."¹

Indefectibility has been promised to the Church as a whole, not to its various parts. The Church as it exists in particular places may fail; even the Church of a whole nation may fall away as history abundantly proves. The Apostolic See of Rome is the only particular Church to which the promise of perpetual indefectibility has been made.

§ 2. *Erroneous Doctrines*

PROTESTANTS. The defectibility of the Church is one doctrine upon which all Protestants agree. They hold that the Church not only can fail, but that she did fail sometime before the pseudo-Reformation of the sixteenth century. They were driven to this in self-

¹ W. H. Mallock, "Is Life Worth Living?" p. 13.

defense, for if the Church as founded by Christ did not and could not fail, there was neither reason nor excuse for the institution of other churches. Those who maintain the existence of a visible and an invisible Church make the one defectible, the other, indefectible.

MODERNISTS. Modernism holds that the Church cannot be indefectible, since it is the result of evolution and therefore continually subject to evolutionary processes that affect its very constitution. "The organic constitution of the Church is not immutable; the Christian society, as well as human society, is subject to perpetual evolution."¹

RATIONALISTS. Critics of the rationalistic school practically hold that the Church failed in the days of the Apostles. They deny, of course, that Christ founded a Church, since that was the work of the disciples themselves after Our Lord had left them. But these critics maintain that the disciples almost immediately separated into two antagonistic schools under the leadership of St. Peter and St. Paul, respectively. Towards the end of the second century, some one in Asia Minor or Alexandria wrote the Fourth Gospel in an effort to reconcile and reunite the Judaising party of St. Peter with the universalist followers of St. Paul.² Schelling, Fichte and others proclaimed a threefold Church which they called the *Petrine* (Catholic), the *Pauline* (Protestant) and the *Johannine* (Church of the future).

¹ Denzinger, n. 2053.

² Cf. F. Christian Baur in "Theol. Jahrbücher," 1844.

FUNDAMENTALISTS. A considerable number of Protestants in the various denominations today are known as *Fundamentalists*, because they defend what they term fundamental doctrines against the attacks of the growing modernistic element in their respective churches. Many of these Fundamentalists look forward to a more perfect kingdom to be established on earth in the near future and ruled by Christ in person. Their distinctive doctrine is, "I believe in the literal, personal, bodily, visible, imminent return of the Lord to this earth as king."³ This is similar to the doctrine known in the early ages of the Church as *Chiliasm*, from the Greek word for *thousand*. The early Chiliasts taught that Christ would return to reign on earth with His saints for a thousand years after the last judgment. Their error was due to a false interpretation of a passage in the Apocalypse.⁴ The Fundamentalists, however, seem to place this personal reign of Christ before the last judgment and thereby make it supersede the Church as it now exists.

§ 3. *The Church of Christ Perpetually Indefectible*

Thesis.—The Church of Christ is perpetually indefectible in all its attributes and properties

The proposed thesis does not determine the attributes and properties of the Church; it simply states that,

³ Rollin Lynde Hart in *The World's Work*, Sept., 1923, p. 469 sq.

⁴ Apoc. xx, 1-6.

*Propriety
fide not
definitely
defined.*

whatever they may be, the Church can never lose a single one of them, nor fail in her existence. In other words, it means that the Church founded by Christ must exist until the end of time without any essential change. In this general sense the thesis is *proxima fidei, i. e.*, all but an article of faith, being clearly implied in the words of the Vatican Council: "The eternal Pastor and Bishop of souls decreed to establish a holy Church to *perpetuate* (*perenne reddere*) the saving work of salvation."¹ The doctrine is also implied in the condemnation of the following proposition of Modernism: "The organic constitution of the Church is not immutable."² Leo XIII wrote to the same effect when he said: "The Church must carry far and wide to all men *and for all time* the salvation wrought by Jesus Christ and the blessings flowing therefrom. . . . Hence the Church *must be one and perpetual.*"³

PROOF. I. *From Reason.* Christ instituted the Church for the salvation of all men, and endowed it with certain powers and characteristics necessary for this work. If the Church should lose any one of these necessary qualifications, it would be incapable of doing what Christ intended it to do; in fact, it would cease to be the Church instituted by Him. Moreover, if the Church could fail in any of its essentials, even for a time, it would lose all authority to teach and to govern,

¹ Denzinger n. 1821.

² Decree "Lamentabili," 3 July, 1907; Denzinger, n. 2053.

³ Leo XIII, "Satis cognitum," 29 June, 1896; Denzinger, n. 1955.

because the faithful could never be certain at any time that it had not failed,—that it had not ceased to be the Church of Christ, thereby losing all authority. But an authority that may be justly doubted at all times is no authority; it commands neither obedience nor respect as is evident in churches that reject the claim to indefectibility.

II. *From Scripture.* a) *Prophecies.* Daniel represents the Church of Christ as a kingdom standing forever unconquered and unconquerable. "But in the days of those kingdoms, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, and his kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people, . . . and itself shall stand for ever."⁴ Isaias says: "A child is born to us and a son is given to us and the government is upon his shoulders . . . He shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom; to establish it and strengthen it . . . from henceforth and for ever."⁵ According to these prophecies it was announced: "The Lord God shall give unto him [Christ] the throne of David his father . . . and of his kingdom there shall be no end."⁶ In these passages the Kingdom can be no other than the Church to be established by our Lord.

b) *Testimony of Christ.* Our Lord himself distinctly proclaimed the perpetual indefectibility of His Church: "Upon this rock I will build my Church, and

⁴ Dan. ii, 44.

⁵ Is. ix, 6, 7.

⁶ Luke i, 32.

the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."⁷ The Church is an impregnable fortress built upon a firm foundation of living rock,—a fortress against which the powers or darkness shall ever beat in vain. There is no force, either internal or external, that can cause it to crumble or fall. Christ is the wise man of the parable who built his house upon the rock, "*and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and they beat upon that house and it fell not for it was founded upon a rock.*"⁸

When Our Lord instituted the Church by sending forth the Apostles with authority to teach, govern, and sanctify men, He said: "*Behold, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.*"⁹ In these words Christ promised to be with His Church, protecting it at all times, even to the end of the world. But if Christ is for the Church, who can prevail against

⁷ Matt. xvi, 18.—Ancient cities were surrounded by high walls to protect them against their enemies. Entrance to the city was by way of gates in its walls. Before the invention of battering-rams the strength of a city lay in the strength of its gates. For this reason *gates* soon came to mean strength or power. Hence *gates of hell* refer to the forces of evil, which Christ well knew would be loosed against His Church. Many non-Catholic scholars take *gates of hell* as equivalent to *sheol* *i.e.*, the place of the dead, and then death itself. Taken in this sense, the words of Christ are even more striking, for if death can never prevail against the Church, neither can it perish or fail. Death to a society can be only its destruction by dissolution or essential change.

⁸ Matt. vi, 24, 25.

⁹ Matt. xxviii, 20.

it? Our Lord also compares His Church to a field in which the wheat and cockle grow together until the harvest, which, He tells us, is the end of the world. Therefore, the Church must continue unchanged until the end, for, although it contains much cockle, it ever remains a wheat-field.¹⁰

c) *Testimony of St. Paul.* In his Epistle to the Hebrews St. Paul makes a lengthy comparison between the Church and the Synagogue. He represents the one as permanent, the other as transitory. He quotes the words of the prophet Aggeus: "*Yet once more, and I will move not only earth, but heaven also,*"¹¹ and applies them to the Old Law saying: "*In that he saith yet once more, he signifieth the translation of the movable things as made, that those things may remain which are immovable. Therefore receiving an immovable kingdom, we have grace.*"¹² In this passage St. Paul distinctly says that the temporary institutions of the Old Law have been succeeded by the *immovable Kingdom* of the New. Therefore the Church, the immovable Kingdom of the New Law, must be perpetual and indefectible.

III. *From Tradition.* a) *Pseudo-Ambrose*, the author of an ancient work formerly attributed to St. Ambrose, refers expressly to the indefectibility of the Church: "We behold in the Church a ship sailing the

¹⁰ Matt. xiii, 24 sq.

¹¹ Aggeus ii, 7.

¹² Heb. xii, 26-28.

seas of this world . . . though tossed by the storms and buffeted by the waves, it can never suffer shipwreck because Christ hangs upon its mast which is the cross, the Father sits enthroned upon its stern, and the Holy Ghost the Paraclete, as helmsman guides the prow. Through the straits of the world twelve oarsmen [the Apostles] guide it safely into port . . . it can never crash upon the rocks nor founder in the deep."¹³

b) *St. Chrysostom* is not less positive in his statements: "Do not hold aloof from the Church, for there is nothing stronger than the Church. The Church is your hope; the Church is your salvation; the Church is your refuge. It is higher than heaven and broader than earth. It never grows old, but ever keeps the vigor of youth. Wherefore Scripture, wishing to show forth its firmness and stability, calls it a mountain."¹⁴

c) *St. Augustine* says: "The Church cannot be overcome nor rooted up; it cannot yield to any trials whatsoever until the end of this world come."¹⁵

d) *St. Jerome* expresses a similar faith: "We know that the Church will be harassed by persecution until the end of the world, but it cannot be destroyed; it shall be tried, but not overcome for such is the promise of an omnipotent God whose word is as a law of nature."¹⁶

¹³ Pseudo-Ambrose, "Sermo de Salomone"; P. L., 17, 697.

¹⁴ St. John Chrysostom, "Quod Christus sit Deus"; P. G., 52, 402.

¹⁵ St. Augustine, "Enarratio in Ps.," lxxii; P. L., 36, 726.

¹⁶ St. Jerome, "In Isaiam," iv, 6; P. L., 24, 74.

§ 4. *Objections Answered*

OBJECTION I.—The Synagogue, the Church of the Old Law, failed at different times in its history, *e. g.*, when the people forsook their God to worship the golden calf erected by Aaron. Again, during the time of the Judges and still later, under the Kings, the people often fell into idolatry by worshipping the gods of surrounding nations. Now, if the Church of the Old Law could fail, then also the Church of the New.

ANSWER.—There is no parity in this matter between the Church and the Synagogue, for it was never said of the Synagogue that "*the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*" Neither was it said to the priests of old: "*Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.*" Moreover, it may well be denied that the Synagogue ever really failed even for a day. It is true that many forsook the ways of the Lord and worshipped strange gods; but even in the worst days of Israel, there was a goodly number of faithful souls to perpetuate the church of their fathers. Even when Aaron set up the golden calf at Sinai, twenty-two thousand sons of Levi remained faithful under their divinely appointed leaders.¹

OBJECTION II.—It must be admitted by all that the Synagogue with all its observances came to an end at the death of Our Lord, despite many prophecies re-

¹ Cfr. Exodus xxxii, 26; Numb. iii, 39.

garding its perpetual existence.² Therefore, there is no reason why the Church may not fail in like manner, despite the promises of Christ.

ANSWER.—The Synagogue was succeeded by the Church of Christ because the Mosaic Law was only a preparation for the more perfect Law of Christ; it was a mere *paidagogos*, leading man to his Divine Teacher.³ This preparatory character of the Law and its future abrogation was clearly foretold by the prophets. Thus, *e. g.*, Daniel prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem and the worship of the Old Law: "*And in the half of the week the victim and the sacrifice shall fail; and there shall be in the temple the abomination of desolation, and the desolation shall continue even to the consummation and to the end.*"⁴ And Jeremias foretold the establishment of a new covenant to succeed the Law of Moses: "*Behold the days shall come, saith the Lord, and I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Juda. Not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers.*"⁵

Regarding the promises of perpetuity seemingly made to the Synagogue of old, St. Augustine says: "The priesthood of Aaron was but a shadow of the eternal

² Cfr. the promises made to David that his kingdom and his throne should stand firm forever: 2 Kings vii, 16; Ps. lxxxviii, 36-38; Is. lx, 1 sq.

³ Gal. iii, 24.

⁴ Dan. ix, 27.

⁵ Jer. xxxi, 31.

priesthood to come; when promises of perpetuity were made, they were not made to the shadow and figure itself, but to that which was foreshadowed and prefigured. And lest the shadow itself should be thought permanent, its abrogation was foretold."⁶

St. Paul also brings out in bold relief the temporary character of the Synagogue in opposition to the perpetuity of the Church by comparing the one to Agar, the repudiated wife of Abraham, the other to Sarah, who was never put away.⁷

OBJECTION III.—Christ Himself foretold the abrogation of His Church and the institution of a Church of the Holy Ghost: "*And I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete that he may abide with you forever.*"⁸

ANSWER.—These words of Christ refer to the internal mission of the Holy Ghost in the souls of men, and especially to His continual presence in the Church to preserve it from all error. This is explained by Christ Himself in the same passage. "*He [the Paraclete] shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you.*"⁹ Christ promised the Holy Ghost as a *Paraclete*, *i. e.*, a Helper or Protector for the Church already established, not as the Author of a Church to be established in the future.

⁶ St. Augustine, "De Civitate Dei," vii, 6; P. L., 41, 536.

⁷ Gal. iv, 22 sq.

⁸ John xiv, 16.

⁹ John xiv, 26.

ART. II. VISIBILITY OF THE CHURCH

SYNOPSIS.—1. NATURE OF VISIBILITY.—2. ERRORS CONCERNING THE VISIBILITY OF THE CHURCH.—3. THE CHURCH FORMALLY VISIBLE.—4. OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

§ 1. *The Nature of Visibility*

Visibility primarily signifies the capability of being perceived by the sense of sight; then, by extension, it refers to the capability of being perceived by any of the five senses. Finally, it means the capability of an object being perceived or known by the intellect because of the sensible qualities adhering in that object. Hence the division into *material* and *formal* visibility. A thing is *materially visible* in its external, sensible qualities; it is *formally visible* when it can be recognized by these qualities as having a certain nature. For example, a man, considered according to the external qualities of his body, is materially visible,—he can be perceived by the senses; when the soul manifests itself by speech or other external sign, he becomes formally visible,—he is known to be a rational being, called man.

A society is materially visible because its members, its rites and ceremonies, and its places of meeting can be seen or perceived by the senses; when, through these external signs, it may be known that certain individuals are thus banded together, the society is formally *visible as a society*. If there are no external signs by which it can be known that these individuals are banded to-

gether, the society is *invisible* as a society, although the members are perfectly visible as individuals. Furthermore, a society may, and usually does, have certain external characteristics by which it may be recognized as a particular kind of society, *e. g.*, a religious society. In that case it is *formally visible as a religious society*. If there are certain marks to distinguish it as a Christian religious society, it is formally visible as a Christian church, which may be further distinguished from other Christian churches. It then becomes formally visible as a Catholic, Protestant, or Greek Church, as the case may be. Again, if there be marks to identify it as the Church actually founded by Christ, it is formally visible as the one true Church of Christ.

When we say that the Church of Christ is visible, we mean, primarily, that it is a society of men with external rites and ceremonies and all the external machinery of government by which it can easily be recognized as a true society. But we further maintain that the Church of Christ also has certain marks by which it may be recognized as the one true Church founded by Christ when He commissioned the Apostles to convert all nations. In other words, we maintain that the Church of Christ is formally visible, not only as a society known as a Christian Church, but also as the one true Church of Christ. Furthermore, we maintain that the Church of Christ is so clearly visible that it may easily be recognized by all as the true Church. It has marks so evident that all who see it may say with certainty: "This is the true Church of Christ."

This, of course, does not mean that all will actually recognize it as such; those blinded by passion and prejudice can no more recognize the true Church than the Pharisees of old could recognize its Divine Founder. The man who closes his eyes cannot even see the sun in its noonday splendor.

§ 2. *Errors Concerning the Visibility of the Church*

Non-Catholic teaching on the visibility of the Church seems hopelessly involved. Scarcely any two Protestant theologians hold the same views, and even one and the same author frequently expresses contradictory views on the matter. Luther, for example, says that "the Church is hidden in the spirit and known only by faith."¹ "But you may say, if the Church be entirely in the spirit and of a nature thoroughly spiritual, how can we discern where on earth any part of it may be? The necessary mark whereby we recognize it, and which we possess, is Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and above all the Gospel."² Here, then, we have a Church wholly invisible that may be recognized by visible marks! In another work Luther teaches that there is both a visible and an invisible Church: "Because communion with the visible Church constitutes no communion in the invisible, and because many non-Christians are found in the visible Church, so no visible Church is at all necessary."³ Melanchthon in his later

¹ "De Abrogatione Missæ," p. 1.

² "Resp. ad Lib. Ambros. Cathar.," tom. ii, 376, 377.

³ "On the Papacy."

writings emphasizes the conception of the Church as a visible organization in which the pure Word of God is taught.⁴ Buddeus, a later Protestant theologian, says: "When there is question of the congregation of true believers who constitute the Church properly so-called, it is evident that it is invisible."⁵

According to Luther, the just alone constitute the Church of Christ; Calvin taught that it embraces only the predestined. But as the just and the predestined are known to God alone, so in this hypothesis the Church must remain ever invisible to all save God alone. Hence Calvin said: "It is necessary to believe that the Church, invisible to us, is known to God alone."⁶ Yet both Luther and Calvin defined the Church as the congregation in which the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments rightly administered.⁷ The Augsburg Confession contains the same contradictory teachings: "The Church is the congregation of *saints* in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments rightly administered."⁸

These various teachings seem to have settled down to a general belief that there is both a visible and an invisible Church. This was the doctrine of Zwingli: "We believe that the Church is both visible and invisible. In the invisible Church are found all those

⁴ Cfr. Schaff-Herzog, "Encycl. of Relig. Knowledge," art. "Church."

⁵ Johan F. Buddeus, "Institutiones," V, III, sec. xiv.

⁶ "Institutiones," IV, 1, n. 7.

⁷ *Ibid.*, IV, 1.

⁸ Augsburg Confession, Art. IV.

throughout the world who believe. It is called invisible, not because those who believe are invisible, but because it is not patent to human eyes who the believers are. The visible Church is composed of all those throughout the world who have given their name to Christ."⁹ In like manner Reinhard wrote: "The visible or external Church is the universal society of those who profess the Christian religion publicly; the invisible Church is the society of those who, through the doctrine of Christ, are truly regenerated. The visible Church is broken up into many societies, to any one of which a man may join himself, as he sees fit."¹⁰

The Westminster Confession proclaims the same doctrine: "The Catholic or universal church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ the head thereof. . . . The visible church, which is also catholic or universal under the Gospel, consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, and of their children; and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ . . . out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation."¹¹

The advocates of the *Branch Theory* in the Anglican Church¹² maintain that the Church of Christ is essentially visible, but consists of three parts or branches,

⁹ Zwingli, "Expositio Fidei."

¹⁰ Franz V. Reinhard, "Vorlesungen über Dogmatik," § 169 sq.

¹¹ Westminster Confession, XXV, 1, 2; cfr. Schaff, "Creeds of Christendom," Vol. III, p. 657.

¹² Under the name Anglican Church we include the Established Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church of America.

—the Roman, the Greek, and the English. This is simply the ordinary Protestant doctrine limited in its application; instead of all Christian churches, it includes only three in the visible Church of Christ. In either case the visibility of the Church is destroyed, since the various Christian churches are not united into any external visible society that can be called a church in any true sense of the word. There can be no living branches unless they be united in a living trunk but in the *Branch Theory* there is no living trunk visible. If there be one, it must be invisible.

The various Protestant doctrines just reviewed, all agree in denying that there is any one visible society which can claim to be the Church of Christ to the exclusion of all others. The reason for this was candidly stated by a writer in the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review* some years ago: "Everything depends upon the answer to the question, 'What is the Church?' If it be an external society of professors of the true religion, then it is visible as an earthly kingdom; if that society is destroyed, the Church is destroyed, and everything that is true of the Church is true of that society. Then, in short, Romanism must be admitted as a logical consequence."¹³ As a matter of fact the pseudo-Reformers of the sixteenth century at first held the Church to be visible, but were soon forced to change their doctrine, as Palmer explains in his work on the Church: "The Reformed seem generally to have taught the doctrine of the visibility of the Church, until

¹³ *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, June 1855, p. 295.

some of them deemed it necessary, in consequence of their controversy with the Romanists who asked them where their church existed before Luther, to maintain that the church might *sometimes* be invisible."¹⁴

§ 3. *The Church of Christ Formally Visible*

De Fide
Thesis.—The Church of Christ is formally visible, not only as a Church, but also as the true Church of Christ

This is an article of faith, having been defined by the Vatican Council in the following words: "God established a Church through His only begotten Son, and endowed it with manifest marks of its institution, that it might be known by all as the guardian and teacher of the revealed word."¹ This is a clear and comprehensive definition of formal visibility. The Church has certain evident marks by which it can be recognized as the true Church of Christ, the guardian and teacher of the revealed word.

The thesis contains two propositions: (a) The Church is an external society that can be recognized as such by all,—it is formally visible as a religious society or Church; (b) This society has certain marks by which it may be distinguished from all other churches and recognized as the true Church,—it is formally visible as the true Church. It will be sufficient to prove the second proposition, since no society

¹⁴ William Palmer, "Treatise on the Church," Vol. I, p. 35.

¹ Denzinger, n. 1793.

can be recognized as the *true* Church unless it is first recognized as *a* church. Moreover, it has been amply proved that Christ established His Church under the form of an external visible society.²

PROOFS. I. *From Reason.* When Christ instituted the Church, He demanded submission to its authority under pain of eternal damnation: "*Going therefore, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. . . . He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned.*"³ Again Christ says: "*If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican.*"⁴ How could any one be obliged, under pain of eternal damnation, to hearken to the teachings of the Church and obey her precepts unless there be some means of recognizing it as the true Church endowed with authority to teach and govern? Assuredly, Our Lord in His divine wisdom has not obliged all men to do something impossible.

II. *From Scripture.* a) The prophet Isaias represents the Church as a house built upon the topmost peak of the highest mountain, where it may be seen by all nations far and near: "*And in the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of mountains, and it shall be exalted above all hills and all nations shall flow unto it.*" It shall be recognized as the house of the Lord, for the people will

² Cfr. above, pp. 19 sq.

³ Matt. xxviii, 19; Mark xvi, 16.

⁴ Matt. xviii, 17.

say: "Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob."⁵

b) When praying for His Apostles, Our Lord said: "And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in me; that they all may be one, as thou Father in me and I in thee; that they also may be one in us that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."⁶ Christ prays that His disciples be so closely united to one another that this very union will be a proof of His divine mission. In a word, He prays that His Church, the society of His disciples in all ages, shall be recognized because of its perfect unity.

c) In Holy Scripture, the Church is always represented as an external society that may be known by all; it is a *kingdom*, a *city*, a *house*, a *sheep-fold*, a *field*. It is also a *mustard seed* that grows into a tree filling the whole earth, and is easily recognized as such, for all the birds of heaven (*i. e.*, all nations) fill its branches and feed upon it. In fact, almost every page of the New Testament and the prophecies of the Old depict the Church as an external society so eminently visible that even "*fools shall not err therein.*"⁷

III. *From Tradition.* The Fathers were wont to compare the Church to the sun and the moon, because, like them she sheds her light upon the whole world and is known to all peoples. ST. ATHANASIUS, *e. g.*, says:

⁵ Is. ii, 3.

⁶ John xvii, 19 sq.

⁷ Is. xxxv, 8.

"The Church of Christ in her splendor illuminates the world and remains forever as the sun and moon."⁸ ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM says: "Neither is the sun so resplendent nor the moon so bright as those things which pertain to the Church, for the house of God is upon the pinnacle of the mountains."⁹ Even more striking are the words of ST. AUGUSTINE: "When anyone would see the moon, people say to him: Behold the moon; there it is! And if there are any who do not know where to look, it is pointed out with the finger. Now, my brethren, do we thus point out the Church? Is it not plain? Is it not evident? Do not all peoples know it?"¹⁰

§ 4. *Objections Answered*

OBJECTION I.—Our Lord Himself indicates the invisible character of His Church when He compares it to a hidden treasure: "*The Kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in a field.*"¹ What is hidden is undoubtedly invisible.

ANSWER.—It has been noted already² that in this and similar passages the *kingdom* is presented in its inner spiritual aspect, and therefore is not to be identified with the Church, which is the *kingdom* in its external or social aspect. The parable teaches us the

⁸ "In Psalm," lxxviii, 38; P. G., 27, 391.

⁹ "In Isaiam," ii, 2; P. G., 56, 29.

¹⁰ "In Epist. Ioannis ad Parthos," P. L., 35, 1988.

¹ Matt. xiii, 44.

² Cf. above pp. 52.

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inestimable value of the blessings to be obtained in and through the Church; they are such that every other good must be accounted as nothing in comparison. Even if the parable be referred directly to the Church, it proves nothing against its visibility; the treasure was not invisible, since it was found and recognized as a veritable treasure, for which the finder sacrificed all his possessions. If the parable be applied to the Church, it clearly teaches that the man who has found the true Church of Christ must be ready to sacrifice everything to embrace it.

OBJECTION II.—On another occasion Our Lord distinctly announced that His kingdom would be purely spiritual,—a kingdom in the hearts of His faithful: "*The kingdom of God cometh not with observation . . . For lo, the kingdom of God is within you.*"³

ANSWER.—The words quoted in the objection were spoken by Our Lord in answer to a question put by the Pharisees, who had long expected the Messiah to come as an earthly king with all the trappings of royalty. They expected Him to restore the lost glory of Israel and subjugate the surrounding gentile nations. They now ask when these things shall come to pass: "*Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said: The kingdom of God cometh not with observation . . . the kingdom of God is within you.*" The question asked by the Pharisees was probably intended as an insinua-

³ Luke xvii, 20.

tion that Christ was not the Messiah, since He did not come as they had expected. Whatever the purpose of the question, it implied a twofold error; (1) that the Messianic kingdom had not yet begun, and (2) that it would be a great earthly power to rule the world. Our Lord corrected the latter mistake by telling them that the *kingdom of God cometh not with observation, i. e.,* it will not be clothed with the outward signs of earthly power and glory. He also corrected the first error by announcing that the kingdom of God was already in their midst, since He, its founder, had already begun His mission on earth: "*The kingdom of God is within you.*"

The best Scripture scholars, both Catholic and non-Catholic,⁴ agree that the Greek phrase *ἐντὸς ὑμῶν* should be rendered *among you*, instead of *within you*, as the Latin and English texts have it. Hence the whole objection rests upon a faulty translation that makes Our Lord's words ridiculous. He was speaking to the Pharisees, who rejected Him and sought in every way to turn the people against Him. Then if the *kingdom of God* is the reign of Christ in the soul, we hear Him telling these Pharisees that they already possess this kingdom in their hearts: "*The kingdom of God is within you.*"

OBJECTION III.—The Church must be invisible, since the worship due to God is purely internal and invisible; a worship in spirit only, for Christ has said: "*God is a spirit; and they that adore him, must adore*

⁴ Among others we may mention Rosenmiller and Moffat.

him in spirit and truth."⁵ Where then is the need of an external visible society of worshippers?

ANSWER.—The objection illustrates the old saying that "who proves too much, proves nothing." If the worship of God is purely internal and spiritual, as the objection asserts, why should any Christians have churches, ministers, sermons or public worship?

Scripture scholars do not agree in their interpretation of the words "*in spirit and truth.*" The circumstances under which they were spoken will give some insight into their meaning. They were addressed to the Samaritan woman, who had asked Our Lord about the legality of sacrifice offered on Mount Garizim. He tells her that the worship of the Old Law, both in Jerusalem and on Mount Garizim, must soon give way to a worship *in spirit and truth.* Worship *in spirit* is probably a sincere worship, welling up from the heart, as opposed to any mere formal worship. A similar contrast is found in Isaias, where God complains of His people because "*with their lips they glorify me, but their heart is far from me.*"⁶ In like manner, worship *in truth* is opposed either to the worship of false gods, or to the ceremonies of the Old Law, which were but types and figures of the realities of the New. There is not a word in the whole passage that can be construed into an argument against the visibility of the Church.

OBJECTION IV.—St. Paul teaches the invisibility of

⁵ John iv, 24.

⁶ Is. xxix, 13.

the Church by contrasting it with the Synagogue, the visible Church of the Old Law. He says that, in coming to the Church, the Hebrews have not "*come to a mountain that might be touched, and to a burning fire, a whirlwind and darkness . . . but you are come to mount Sion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.*"⁷

ANSWER.—In this passage St. Paul shows the superiority of the Church over the Synagogue by contrasting the circumstances under which the two laws were promulgated: one, being a law of fear, was promulgated on Mount Sinai amid lightnings, whirlwinds, and darkness; the other, being a law of love, was promulgated from Mount Sion, the symbol of heavenly peace and joy. "The latter dispensation is not, as was the Mosaic, severe, onerous, and minatory; but promises salvation, and instills joy, peace, patience and confidence."⁸ There is no contrast between a *visible* Synagogue and an *invisible* Church; both are symbolized by a mountain and therefore equally visible.

OBJECTION V.—St. Peter admonishes the faithful to be "*as living stones built up, a spiritual house.*"⁹ Therefore he conceives the Church to be an invisible spiritual society.

ANSWER.—A society spiritual in every respect would necessarily be invisible but the Church is not such a society. It is spiritual because it is striving for

⁷ Heb. xii, 18 sq.

⁸ Bloomfield, "Greek Testament with Notes," Vol. II, p. 472.

⁹ 1 Peter ii, 5.

a spiritual good and the means to that end are in large measure spiritual. It is also a visible society composed of men,—*living stones*,—externally organized and using visible signs and ceremonies in its worship.

OBJECTION VI.—In the Apostles' Creed we say: "*I believe in the holy Catholic Church!*" Therefore the Church is an object of faith and must be invisible, for otherwise it would be an object of knowledge. What we see and know cannot be an object of faith.

ANSWER.—It is by no means certain that an object of knowledge cannot also be an object of faith; but even granting that it cannot be, it does not follow that the Church must be invisible. The Church has a human element that is visible and capable of being known. It also has a divine element which is invisible and therefore capable of being an object of faith. This fact may be illustrated by the example of St. Thomas the Apostle, who saw and knew Our Lord's human nature and believed in His divinity.

OBJECTION VII.—A body must participate in the nature of its head, but Christ, the Head of the Church, is invisible. Therefore, the Church, which is His mystical body, must also be invisible.

ANSWER.—Christ in his human nature is visible; therefore, the Church, His mystical body, must also be visible in its human element. Christ is said to be invisible because He is no longer on earth by bodily presence, but that does not change the nature of His body.

CHAPTER III

PROPERTIES OF THE CHURCH

Since the Church is a society that may be recognized by all, it must have certain visible characteristics, so distinctive that they cannot be found together in any other society. In the present chapter we shall consider the nature of these characteristics, or *properties*, and prove that the Church of Christ possesses them. In the following chapter we shall determine in how far they serve as *marks* to identify the true Church.

Cardinal Bellarmine enumerates fifteen characteristics of the Church that may be used as distinguishing *marks*; Bozius, an Oratorian, mentions ninety-nine, but all of these, as well as those mentioned by Cardinal Bellarmine, are simply different aspects of the four properties set forth in the Nicene Creed; *viz.*, *Unity, Sanctity, Catholicity and Apostolicity*,—"I believe in *one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.*"¹

ART. I. UNITY OF THE CHURCH

SYNOPSIS.—1. NATURE OF UNITY.—2. UNITY OF GOVERNMENT.—3. UNITY OF FAITH.—4. UNITY OF WORSHIP.

§ 1. *The Nature of Unity*

Unity may be taken in opposition to *plurality* or to

¹ Denzinger, n. 86.

division. When applied to the Church in the former sense, it means that there is but *one* true Church of Christ. This is often called *unicity*, to distinguish it from *unity* in the second sense, which means that the one true Church is not subject to division of any kind in regard to things essential. The *unicity* of the Church was established by proving that Christ founded but one society, which He called *His Church*.¹ We shall now consider the *unity* of the Church, by which its members throughout the world are so bound together as to form a society that is justly said to be *one*.

BONDS OF UNITY. No material bonds,—no fetters of steel,—can bind men together in a society. This must be accomplished by moral bonds that unite the souls of men through the faculties of intellect and will. Intellects are united by the acceptance of a common doctrine; wills are joined by submission to a common authority. Therefore the very existence of a society depends upon this twofold unity,—a unity of government to which all members must submit, and a unity of doctrines proposed to and accepted by all. From these two bonds of unity a third necessarily follows. The internal acts of man naturally tend to manifest themselves externally; his internal acts as the member of a society,—his submission to authority and his acceptance of the doctrine proposed,—will be expressed by external acts, for the most part symbolic. These *symbolic actions* constitute the ritual or ceremonial of the society, which must be essentially the same for all mem-

¹ Cf. above pp. 37.

bers, since it expresses acceptance of one and the same doctrine and submission to one and the same authority. Moreover, every member must strive in some measure to attain the end for which the society exists, for he who rejects the purpose of a society, thereby rejects the society itself and ceases to be a member. But to attain an end, certain means must be employed which are adapted to that end and, therefore, essentially the same for all members.

Applying these principles to the Church, we readily see that it must have (*a*) unity of government or social unity; (*b*) unity of doctrine taught and accepted or unity of faith, and (*c*) unity of external acts symbolizing its doctrines and government, and also unity in the use of means necessary to attain the end for which it exists. As the Church is a religious society, all these external acts pertain to the worship of God and their unity constitutes a unity of worship.

ERRORS. No one denies that the Church of Christ must possess unity of some sort. The Scriptures proclaim this fact so clearly and persistently that not even the pseudo-Reformers of the sixteenth century or their followers have ever dared to question it; but opinions differ widely when it comes to defining the nature of this unity. Protestants, for the most part, maintain that this necessary unity consists in the union of all Christians with Christ by faith, hope, and charity, in obedience to Christ as the one supreme Pastor, and in the worship of the one true God. This, they say, constitutes the unity of *doctrine, organization, and worship*.

Orthodox Churches have no unity one with another

The Orthodox Churches of the East teach that sufficient unity is had when Christians are united by faith and by the law of God in the use of the same Sacraments under the authority of the hierarchy. But they maintain that this unity is not broken by the division of the Church into a number of totally independent national churches. "The separateness of their visible organization does not hinder them from being all spiritually great members of the one body of the Universal Church, from having one Head, Christ, and one spirit of faith and grace."² Practically the same doctrine is maintained by advocates of the *Branch Theory* in the Anglican Communion. According to them the universal Church is composed of the Greek, the Roman, and the Anglican Communions, entirely independent, yet forming one society. These various errors are sufficiently refuted by proving that the Church of Christ must ever be essentially one (*a*) in government, (*b*) in faith, and (*c*) in worship.

§ 2. *Unity of Government*

PRELIMINARY REMARKS. Unity of government, known also as social unity, requires that the members of the Church and all its parts be so united under one supreme authority as to form but one single society. This excludes any division by which parts of the Church would have their own independent government; it also

² Philaret's Longer Catechism of the Eastern Church, n. 261; cfr. Schaff, "Creeds of Christendom," Vol. II, p. 485.

excludes any mere federation of independent churches. Unity of government is by far the most important of the unities, because without it no other form of real unity could be maintained for any length of time.

Protestants in general seem to hold that some form of unity is necessary for the Church of Christ, but the unending multiplicity of sects forces them to adopt the theory of Jurieu, who taught that "the universal church consists of *all* societies agreeing in fundamental doctrines, even though mutually excommunicated and anathematized; that the only true unity of communion consists in spiritual union with Christ, and therefore, that the formation of new sects is in no degree blamable."¹

Many Anglicans of the High Church party follow the lead of Palmer and Pusey in admitting that unity of government in the Catholic sense is at least desirable, and perhaps even a matter of divine ordination; but they deny that it is so essentially necessary that it may not be dispensed with for grave reasons.² Such reasons, of course, were found at the time of the Greek schism and again at the time of the so-called Reformation in England; but efforts should be made to restore the lost unity. These High Churchmen look upon the Anglican Church as "providentially called to be the healer of the breach for a divided Christianity."³ Many societies have been formed within their ranks for

¹ P. Jurieu, "Vrai Système de l'Église."

² Cf. William Palmer, "Treatise on the Church," Vol. I, p. 71 sq.

³ Cf. "The World's Parliament of Religions," Vol. II, p. 1387.

the laudable purpose of bringing about such a "healing of the breach."

Thesis.—The Church of Christ is necessarily one by unity of government

The doctrine set forth in the above thesis is a dogma of the Church defined by the Vatican Council: "In order to preserve the multitude of the faithful in the unity of faith and communion, Christ placed the blessed Peter at the head of the other Apostles, thus making him a perpetual source and visible foundation of this twofold unity"⁴ Pius IX gave expression to the same doctrine in these words: "There is no other Catholic Church save that built upon the one Peter and *united into one compact body* by the unity of faith and charity."⁵

PROOFS. *I. From Reason.* Unity of government means simply that the Church must have one supreme authority, to which all its members and its every part are subject. This is really a self-evident truth that needs no demonstration, because the very moment the Church becomes divided between two or more supreme authorities, it ceases to be one society; there is no longer one, but several churches, contrary to the truth already established that the Church of Christ is and must ever remain one.

II. From Scripture. Sacred Scripture constantly

⁴ Denzinger, n. 1821.

⁵ Denzinger, n. 1686.

represents the Church as a *kingdom, a city, a house*. Therefore, it was instituted, and must continue to exist, after the fashion of a kingdom, a city, or a house; but Christ Himself has said: "*Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation, and house upon house shall fall.*"⁶ And again: "*Every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.*"⁷ Therefore, if the Church is to continue until the end of time, as Christ has promised, it must ever remain a *united kingdom*.

Our Lord also beautifully illustrated the unity of His Church when He compared it to a sheep-fold by saying: "*Other sheep I have that are not of this fold; them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be ONE FOLD and ONE SHEPHERD.*"⁸ What more impressive comparison could have been addressed to a pastoral people? "All the sheep of a flock cling together. If they are momentarily separated, they are impatient till reunited. They follow in the same path. They feed on the same pasture. They obey the voice of the same shepherd, and fly from the voice of strangers."⁹

Our Lord not only foretold that His Church should be one; He also prayed that it might possess the most perfect unity. He prayed that it be one even as He and the Father are one: "*I pray for them also . . . who*

⁶ Luke xi, 17.

⁷ St. Matt. xii, 25.

⁸ John x, 16.

⁹ Cardinal Gibbons, "Faith of our Fathers," p. 7.

shall believe in me, that they all may be one, as thou, Father in me, and I in thee . . . I in them and thou in me THAT THEY MAY BE MADE PERFECT IN ONE."¹⁰

Does a chimerical Church composed of innumerable warring sects fulfill this prayer of Christ for perfect unity?

St. Paul always presents the Church as the mystical body of Christ, and likens it to the natural body in man: "*As the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body.*"¹¹ Therefore, according to St. Paul, the unity of the Church must be similar to that of a human body wherein all the members are so united that if one be separated it loses the life of the body, and if the body itself be divided it perishes. So likewise the Church, if it be divided, must perish, and any one separated from the body of the Church ceases to be a member.

III. From Tradition. The Fathers always insisted upon the unity of the Church in the strongest terms, and stoutly defended it against the authors of schism, whom they accounted the most wicked of men because they sought to rend the seamless garment of Christ. In this they followed the example of St. Paul, who classes schism along with adultery, murder, and idolatry: "*The works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication . . . idolatry . . . SECTS (schisms) . . . envies,*

¹⁰ John xvii, 20 sq.

¹¹ 1 Cor. xii, 12 sq.

murders."¹² A few quotations from the early Fathers will suffice:

a) *St. Ignatius Martyr:* "Be not deceived; if any one follow the author of a schism, he shall not possess the inheritance of the heavenly kingdom."¹³

b) *St. Irenæus:* "Those who cause schism . . . rend and divide the great and glorious body of Christ, and so far as they can, destroy it. . . . No reparation they can make will ever equal the evil of their schism."¹⁴

c) *St. Cyprian:* "God is one, and Christ is one, and His Church is one; the faith is one and the people is one, joined into a substantial unity of body by the cement of concord. Unity cannot be severed; nor can the one body be separated by division, nor torn asunder."¹⁵ "This sacrament of unity, this bond of concord inseparably cohering, is set forth where in the Gospel the coat of the Lord Jesus Christ is not at all divided nor cut, but is received as an entire garment. . . . Who then is so wicked and so faithless; who is so insane with the madness of discord, that he should believe the unity of God can be divided, or should dare to rend the garment of the Lord,—the Church of Christ?"¹⁶

d) *St. Gregory Nazianzen:* "We are all one body

¹² Gal. v, 19–20.

¹³ "Epist. ad Philatel.," III; Funk, I, 267.

¹⁴ "Adversus Hæreses," IV, 33; P. G., 7, 1076.

¹⁵ "De Unitate Ecclesiæ," 23; P. L. 4, 517.

¹⁶ "De Unitate Ecclesiæ," 7, 8; P. L., 4, 504, 506.

in Christ, each one a member of Christ, and all members one of another. Some being placed in command, govern; others obey and are governed. All do not have the same duty, for to rule and to be ruled are not the same, yet all are conjoined and built up by the same Spirit into one body in the one Christ."¹⁷

§ 3. *Unity of Faith*

PRELIMINARY REMARKS. Faith necessarily implies a doctrine taught (*objective faith*), its acceptance by those to whom it is taught (*subjective or internal faith*), and an outward manifestation, or profession of that internal faith. Accordingly, unity of faith will be threefold,—unity of doctrines proposed, unity in their acceptance on the part of the faithful, and unity in their outward profession. Unity of doctrine and unity in the profession of faith are essential to the unity of the Church, but it is a disputed question whether unity of internal faith is also necessary. It must be well understood that there is no question about the necessity of internal faith for salvation. Christ plainly stated: "*He that believeth not shall be condemned.*"¹ The question here raised concerns the necessity of internal faith for the unity of the Church, and as the same question arises under a slightly different form in connection with membership in the Church, it will there find sufficient consideration.²

¹⁷ "Orationes," 32; P. G., 36, 186.

¹ Mark xvi, 16.

² Cf. below, pp. 233.

Protestants, following their fundamental principle of private interpretation, deny that unity of faith in the Catholic sense is necessary in the Church. At first they taught that unity of faith is had by the acceptance of all doctrines contained in Holy Scripture; but private interpretation of the Scriptures led to such confusion of opposing and contradictory doctrines that some other theory had to be invented. This was found in the distinction between *fundamental* and *non-fundamental* doctrines. According to this theory, *fundamental* doctrines are those which must be accepted by all who would retain the name of Christian; *non-fundamental* doctrines are such as need not be accepted even though clearly revealed in Holy Scripture. It is evident that such a distinction cannot be maintained. Christ sent forth His Apostles with the command to teach "*all things whatsoever I have commanded,*" and all men were obliged to accept this teaching in its entirety without distinction of fundamental and non-fundamental: "*He that believeth not shall be condemned.*" Moreover, the very essence of faith is the acceptance of truth on the authority of God; therefore every doctrine must be accepted in its entirety, once it is known to be the revealed word of God. He who rejects a single truth known to be revealed by God is guilty of blasphemy because such rejection is a denial of God's veracity.

Even in practice the theory of fundamental doctrines failed to produce that unity for which it was invoked; there could be no agreement in deciding what are fun-

Protestant Faith is similar to our hope.
It is confidence in Christ as a Redeemer

damental, and what are non-fundamental doctrines. Waterland, a Protestant theologian, says: "There are almost as many *rules* for determining fundamentals as there are different sects or parties."³ As a consequence, Protestants for the most part now maintain that it matters little what one believes, provided he lead a good moral life, and a dogmatic religion is considered a relic of unenlightened ages. Faith is still demanded, but it is not faith in the Catholic sense; it is simply an acceptance of Christ as Saviour, with confidence in His merits and in His will to save. In the Protestant sense, faith differs little, if at all, from hope.

Catholic theologians also distinguish between fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines, but with them fundamental doctrines are either those from which other truths may be deduced by reason, or which must be known and believed explicitly by all. Non-fundamental doctrines are those which need not be known by all; it is sufficient if they be implicitly believed in the general will to believe all that God has revealed. But once known to be revealed truths, they must be accepted without hesitation or doubt. Such a distinction is immediately seen to be reasonable and necessary, because many persons have neither the opportunity nor the ability to know all revealed truths.

Thesis.—The Church of Christ is necessarily one by unity of doctrine and by unity in the profession of that doctrine

The proposed thesis is a doctrine defined by the

³ Daniel Waterland, "Works," Vol. VIII, p. 90 (old ed.). Cf. Murray "De Ecclesia," Disp. VI, n. 401 sq.

Social unity is unity of Government

Vatican Council: "The eternal Pastor and Bishop of souls decreed to establish a holy Church, in which all the faithful should be held together by the bonds of ONE FAITH and a common charity . . . and preserved in the UNITY OF FAITH and communion by THE MINISTRY OF A UNITED PRIESTHOOD."⁴

A. UNITY OF DOCTRINE.

PROOFS. I. *From Scripture.* Christ commissioned His Apostles to "teach all nations . . . all things whatsoever I have commanded you."⁵ He also promised to be with them "all days even to the consummation of the world,"⁶ and to send upon them the Spirit of Truth to abide with them forever, and to bring to their mind all things whatsoever He had taught them.⁷ Consequently the Church must teach all the doctrines committed to her; she must teach them to all nations and at all times, even to the consummation of the world,—a mission made possible by the abiding presence of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth. But in thus proclaiming *all* the doctrines of Christ, to *all* people, at *all* times, the Church enjoys the most perfect unity; her doctrines are the same at all times and in all places. She cannot teach contradictory doctrines in different places or at different times; she cannot even teach a part of her doctrines in one place or in one age, and

⁴ Denzinger, n. 1821.

⁵ Matt. xxviii, 19-20.

⁶ Matt. xxviii, 20.

⁷ John xiv, 16 sq.

another part in another place or another age. She must teach *all* truths at *all* times and in *all* places.

St. Paul admonishes the Galatians in most emphatic terms that there is but one doctrine to be received by all: "*Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema . . . I say to you again: If any one preach to you a gospel besides that which you have received, let him be anathema.*"⁸ These words of St. Paul prove that the doctrines of the Church can suffer no change because they are not from man but "*by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*" St. Jude likewise admonishes the faithful "*to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.*"⁹ It is a faith delivered once for all, incapable of improvement, addition or change of any sort; it is the faith in which, as St. Paul says, they must "*stand fast and hold the traditions which you have learned whether by word or by our epistle. . . . One Lord, one faith and one Baptism.*"¹⁰

II. *From Tradition.* a) *St. Irenæus* treats at length on the unity of faith in the Church; after mentioning the doctrines handed down from the Apostles, he says that the Church "*proclaims them, and teaches them, and hands them down with perfect harmony as though she possessed but one mouth.* For although the

⁸ Gal. i, 8-12.

⁹ Jude 3.

¹⁰ 1 Thess. ii, 14; Ephes. iv, 5.

languages of the world differ, yet the import of the tradition is one and the same. For the churches which have been established in Germany do not believe or hand down anything different, nor do those in Spain, nor those in Gaul, nor those in the East, nor those in Egypt, nor those in Libya, nor those which have been established in the central regions of the world. But as the sun is one and the same throughout the whole world, so also the preaching of the truth shineth everywhere and enlightens all men that are willing to come to the knowledge of truth. . . . The Catholic Church possesses one and the same faith throughout the whole world."¹¹

b) *St. Cyprian* says: "God is one, Christ is one; His Church is one and the faith is one." In the same work he also says: "The Church flooded with the light of the Lord, sheds forth her rays over the whole world, yet it is one light that is everywhere diffused, nor is the unity of the body separated."¹²

c) *Tertullian*: "The Apostles proclaimed the same doctrine of the same faith to the nations. Then they in like manner founded churches in every city, from which all other churches, one after another, derived their traditions of the faith and the seeds of doctrine, and are every day deriving them that they may become churches. Indeed it is only on this account that they will be able to deem themselves Apostolic."¹³

¹¹ "Adversus Hæreses," I, 10; P. G., 7, 550.

¹² "De Unitate Ecclesiæ," XXXIII, v; P. L., 4, 517, 502.

¹³ "De Præscriptionibus," XX; P. L., 2, 32.

B. UNITY OF PROFESSION.

Unity in the profession of faith is a natural consequence of the unity of doctrine; a mere corollary to be explained rather than proved. Members of a society must accept its principles, or teachings, at least in word and action, for he who rejects the very principles of a society by word or act, thereby rejects the society itself and ceases to be a member. Therefore, every member of the Church must accept its teachings, *i. e.*, he must make at least an *outward profession of faith*, "*for with the heart we believe unto justice; but with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation.*"¹⁴ Since this outward profession concerns the one faith taught by the Church, it will be essentially the same for all its members; in other words, there will be unity in the outward profession of faith.

Unity in the profession of faith also follows from the fact that every member of a society must cooperate to some extent in attaining the end which it seeks to realize; therefore, he must use, according to his position in the society, the means necessary to attain that end. But in the Church the very use of those means,—the Sacraments, sacrifice, prayer, and other acts of worship,—not only demand, but in fact *are*, outward professions of faith, and that the one faith taught throughout the world.

It were useless to quote individual Fathers on this

¹⁴ Rom. x, 10.

question for it is a well-known fact that the Church has always demanded the strictest unity in the profession of faith; those who refused to profess even a single doctrine, were condemned as heretics who had already ceased to be members, because, as St. Paul says, they are "*condemned by their own judgment.*"¹⁵ For this reason Tertullian said: "Those who are heretics cannot be Christians."¹⁶

§ 4. *Unity of Worship*

PRELIMINARY REMARKS. Unity of worship, known also as liturgical unity, refers especially to acts of public worship, in which the faithful participate in their capacity as members of a society, the Church. It applies only to those things that are of divine institution, which may be summed up in the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacraments. Unity is not necessary in those things which Christ left to the discretion of the Church, to be changed according to the needs of time and place. The various rites used in the Church in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, or in the administration of the Sacraments, do not affect the unity of worship provided the essential nature of the Sacrifice and the Sacraments, as instituted by Christ, be left intact. Neither is unity of worship disturbed by the use or the neglect of devotions which are not essential, such as the invo-

¹⁵ Tit. iii, 10, 11.

¹⁶ "De Præscriptionibus," XXXVII; P. L., 2, 51.

cation of saints, prayers for the dead, pilgrimages and the like. Denial of their efficacy or lawfulness would constitute heresy, which is opposed to the unity of faith, but lack of uniformity in their use does not break the unity of worship. Practically, then, unity of worship means that all members of the Church be initiated by the same sacramental rite of Baptism, participate in the fruits of the same sacraments, and worship God by the same Eucharistic sacrifice.

According to Protestant teaching, all men are free to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience. This doctrine is widely proclaimed today as "*freedom of conscience*" or "*freedom of worship*." It simply means that every man is free, not only to believe according to his own interpretation of the Scriptures, but also to worship God in his own way. This either denies that Our Lord established any definite form of worship in the New Law, or maintains that we cannot know with certainty what it is, for surely no Christian could believe that he is free to worship as he pleases, if he admits that Christ has established a definite form of worship to be used by His followers.

Thesis.—The Church of Christ is necessarily one by unity of worship

PROOFS. I. *From Reason.* Unity in the outward profession of faith and in the use of the means necessary to attain the purposes for which the Church was

instituted, constitutes unity of worship, because in the Church, which is a religious society, all these things pertain to worship. Furthermore, no one can deny that God has the right to demand one and the same form of worship from all His faithful children in the New Law as He did in the Old. The fact that unity of worship was demanded in the Old Law makes it very probable that a like unity is demanded in the more perfect Law of Christ, which was prefigured by the rites and institutions of the Old Law.

II. *From Scripture.* A comparison of the Church with the Synagogue makes it very *probable* that one form of worship is demanded of all the faithful in the New Law; the words of Christ made it *certain*. All men must be initiated into the Church by one and the same sacramental rite: "*Teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.*"¹ For this reason St. Paul says: "*In one Spirit were we all baptized into one body.*"² All must likewise partake of the same Eucharistic Bread: "*Amen I say unto you; except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you.*"³ St. Paul also teaches that the reception of the one Eucharistic Bread is not only a sign, but also a wonderful source of that unity whereby the faithful are united with one another and with Christ their Head: "*And the bread which we break, is it*

¹ Matt. xxviii, 19.

² 1 Cor. xii, 13.

³ John vi, 54.

not the partaking of the body of the Lord? For we being many, are one bread, one body, all that partake of the one bread."⁴

At the institution of the Holy Eucharist, Christ said to the Apostles: "Do this for a commemoration of me."⁵ And again: "As often as you shall eat this bread and drink the chalice, you shall shew the death of the Lord until he come."⁶ This is the institution of that clean oblation which shall be offered in every place from the rising of the sun even to the going down,⁷—one and the same sacrificial worship to be offered at all times and in all places, *until He come*.

Unity of worship in the Sacrifice of the Mass and in the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist are expressly demanded by Christ Himself; the necessity for unity in the use of the other Sacraments is equally evident from the very nature of a Sacrament. Christ alone has authority to say how grace shall be given; He alone can institute Sacraments to confer it, and no one can change them, abolish them, or add to their number. They must remain the same for all men at all times. But since the Sacrifice of the Mass and the use of the same Sacraments constitute the essential elements of worship, that worship must be the same for the whole Church, *i. e.*, there must be essential unity of worship.

⁴ 1 Cor. x, 16 sq.

⁵ Luke xxii, 19.

⁶ 1 Cor. xi, 26.

⁷ Mal. i, 11.

ART. II. HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH

SYNOPSIS.—1 NATURE OF HOLINESS.—2. PHYSICAL HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH.—3. MORAL HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH.—4. MANIFESTATIVE HOLINESS.—5. OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

§ 1. Nature of Holiness

The English word *holiness* originally meant *wholeness, soundness, or health*. It is now used almost exclusively as an equivalent of the Latin *sanctitas*, from the verb *sancire*,—*to set apart, to dedicate*. Therefore a thing is *holy* (*sanctum*) when set apart or devoted in some manner to God, and *holiness* or *sanctity* is the state or condition of the thing thus set apart and devoted to God. *Holiness* also includes the idea of being pleasing to God because of some union or conformity with Him. Finally, that which serves to manifest holiness is also said to be holy. Hence we have a three-fold holiness,—*physical, moral, and manifestative*.

a) *Physical Holiness* consists in the consecration or dedication of a thing in some manner to the honor and glory of God. It is also called *real* because it is often connected with inanimate things (*res* in Latin). In this sense a church, an altar, or a chalice is said to be holy. Persons are also holy in this sense if consecrated to God in some special manner as, for example, by Holy Orders or religious vows. *a by Baptism*

If the person or thing consecrated to God is instrumental in producing moral holiness in others, it is said

to possess *active* or *causative* holiness; otherwise it has mere *passive* or *ontological*¹ holiness. The Sacraments, the laws of God, the precepts of the Church and the hierarchy, all possess *active* holiness because they are instruments for producing holiness in the souls of men. A chalice, on the other hand, possesses mere passive or ontological holiness.

b) *Moral Holiness* consists in the consecration of the will to God by conforming it to His will. Moralists usually define it as that moral uprightness by which a person is made like to God and united with Him through charity. It is also called *personal* holiness, since it belongs to persons only. In the present order of things, all personal sanctity involves divine grace and is, therefore, supernatural.

c) *Manifestative Holiness*, as the name indicates, is any external evidence that a person or thing is holy and pleasing in the sight of God. As applied to the Church, it signifies rather the abiding power to produce such evidence when needed, and since miracles are practically the only proofs of sanctity, it may be defined as the permanent power of the Church to perform miracles when needed to manifest her physical or personal holiness.

In the Apostles' Creed we profess our faith in "*the HOLY Catholic Church.*" The Vatican Council has also declared that the "*eternal Pastor . . . decreed to establish a HOLY Church.*"² It is therefore an article

¹ From the Greek ὄντα, things.

² Denzinger, n. 1821.

of faith that the Church of Christ is holy, but in what particular sense is not defined. Theologically, it is certain that the Church must be holy in every respect. Physical sanctity, both passive and active, is an essential property; personal and manifestative sanctity also belong to the Church, if not as essential elements, then certainly as qualities contributing to her perfection according to the will of Christ.

§ 2. *Physical Holiness of the Church*

Thesis.—The Church of Christ possesses physical holiness, both passive and active

I. PASSIVE HOLINESS. The Church of Christ must be eminently holy, since her Divine Founder is infinite Holiness itself, and because the very purpose of her existence is eminently holy. She possesses passive or ontological holiness by virtue of her intimate union with Christ. The Church is the mystical body of Christ; therefore, the union between Christ and the Church must be as intimate as that between head and members in a physical body. Again, Christ is the *spouse* of His Church and His union with it is proclaimed the exemplar for that union which should exist between husband and wife, who are "*two in one flesh.*"¹ The only union between God and a creature more intimate than that between Christ and His Church, is the union of the Word with human nature in the person of Jesus

¹ Ephes. v, 23.

Christ. Hence the Church possesses ontological holiness to a degree surpassed only by the human nature of our divine Lord. Well, then, does St. Paul say: "*Christ loved the Church and delivered himself up for it that he might SANCTIFY IT, CLEANSING IT . . . that he might present it to himself a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be HOLY AND WITHOUT BLEMISH.*"² Clement of Alexandria, writing of the Church, says: "Shall we not with propriety call the Church holy, made for the honor of God, sacred to God, of great value, and not constructed by mechanical art, but by the will of God fashioned into a temple?"³

The ontological holiness of the Church consists principally in the union of its members with Christ through Baptism and the Holy Eucharist. By Baptism the members of the Church are engrafted, as it were, into the body of Christ,—coincorporated with Christ, as St. Paul says,⁴ and as Christ Himself indicates when He says: "*I am the vine, you are the branches.*"⁵ This union is strengthened and preserved by the Holy Eucharist so that the members of the Church ever remain "*members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones.*"⁶ They become "*a chosen generation . . . a holy nation, a purchased people.*"⁷ On this account St. Paul ad-

² Ephes. v, 25-27.

³ "Stromata," VII, 5; P. G., 9, 438.*

⁴ Rom. vi, 5 (Greek text).

⁵ John xv, 5.

⁶ Ephes. v, 30.

⁷ 1 Peter ii, 9.

dresses all the faithful as "*saints, i. e., holy ones,*"⁸ because all members of the Church retain in some degree this ontological holiness of union with Christ, so long as they remain within the bosom of the Church.

II. ACTIVE HOLINESS. There can be no question in regard to the active holiness of the Church, because its sole reason for existence is to produce sanctity in her members and thus lead them to eternal life. Among the many means at her command to produce sanctity are the Sacraments, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the sacramentals, the preaching of the Gospel, the authority to teach and govern, and even the hierarchy, as representatives of Christ and bearers of His Person, have a wonderful power for the sanctification of men. This sanctifying power of the Church is symbolized by the "*leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened.*"⁹

§ 3. Moral Holiness of the Church

PRELIMINARY REMARKS. *Moral or personal sanctity may be either perfect or imperfect, and both admit of varying degrees. Perfect sanctity is the effect of sanctifying grace and the infused virtues of faith, hope, and charity; imperfect sanctity requires the infused virtues of faith and hope, and the exercise of, at least, some acts made supernatural by the aid of actual grace.*

Moral sanctity, being a quality of the soul, can be

⁸ Philip. i, 1; 2 Cor. i, 1.

⁹ Luke xiii, 21; Matt. xiii, 33.

predicated in the strict sense of persons only; the Church is said to possess it only in so far as her members are personally holy. Consequently the moral sanctity of the Church may vary from time to time, according to the number of holy persons within her fold, and also according to the degree of their sanctity. But this moral sanctity of the Church can never be entirely lost; there must ever be found a goodly number of holy persons in the Church,—persons who are holy because of her sanctifying powers. Moreover, the Church will always be noted for persons of eminent sanctity.

Many early heretics, especially the Novatians, Donatists, and Pelagians, exaggerated the moral sanctity of the Church by teaching that sinners cannot belong to the Church. "The Wicliffites taught that the Church includes only the predestined. The Anabaptists and the English dissenters asserted that it consists only of those who are visibly holy in their lives . . . therefore they departed [from the Anglican communion] to form a pure society of saints in which no sinner was to find place."¹ Many of the early Reformers held a similar doctrine; others went to the opposite extreme by teaching that the Church of Christ may become so corrupt as to lose all personal sanctity. All Protestants today seem to agree in taking little or no account of extraordinary or eminent sanctity. It could not be otherwise, since they reject the most fruitful means of sanctity,—the Sacraments, the practice of the Evangel-

¹ William Palmer, "Treatise on the Church," Vol. I, p. 134.

ical Counsels and works of supererogation. The Articles of the Anglican Church say: "Voluntary works, besides, over and above God's commandments, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety."² It is true that Baptism and the Lord's Supper (the Eucharist) have been retained as Sacraments by most Protestants sects, but they have been completely devitalized by teaching that the Eucharist is a mere memorial service, and Baptism a rite of initiation similar to that used by any ordinary society.

Thesis.—The Church of Christ possesses moral sanctity, i. e., she must always number among her children many persons of sanctity, even of eminent sanctity

PROOFS. I. From Reason. Christ instituted the Church to sanctify and save all men; "*for this is the will of God, your sanctification.*"³ Is it possible that this purpose of Christ can be frustrated, even for a single day? Is it possible that at any time all the means of holiness especially instituted by Christ for the sanctification of souls, shall utterly fail in their efficacy? To assert such a possibility, would be to accuse Christ of failure.

II. From Scripture. Our Lord proclaimed the moral sanctity of His Church by comparing it to a field of wheat oversown with cockle; it contains much cockle,

² The Thirty-Nine Articles, Art. xiv.

³ 1 Thess. iv, 3.

but still remains a *wheat-field* until the harvest.⁴ The good shall never entirely fail in the Church; in fact, the parable leads to the inference that the good shall always predominate. The same idea is suggested by the parable of the wedding-feast, in which Christ compares the Church to a banquet, at which one alone was found unworthy.⁵ The Church is also a net cast into the sea of this world; it takes both good and bad fish, and they shall be separated only on the shores of eternity. This indicates that there shall always be good and holy persons in the Church.

St. Peter calls the faithful "*a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people . . . who in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God. Who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*"⁶ These words presuppose a considerable number of holy persons in the Church at all times to make it *a chosen generation, a holy nation*. The Prophets of old speak in similar terms. Ezechiel, for example, speaking in the name of God concerning a new covenant to be established, says: "*And I will put my spirit in the midst of you and I will cause you to walk in my commandments and to keep my judgments and do them . . . and you shall be my people and I will be your God.*"⁷ These words intimate that in the new covenant,—the Church of

⁴ Matt. xiii, 24 sq.

⁵ Matt. xxii, 11 sq.

⁶ 1 Peter ii, 9-10; Osee ii, 24.

⁷ Ez. xi, 19; xxxvi, 26 sq.

Christ,—there will ever be faithful souls to walk in His precepts and keep His judgments.

EMINENT HOLINESS.—The dignity and holiness ascribed to the Church in Holy Scripture cannot be justified by anything short of extraordinary sanctity in many of her children. She is represented as the *body* of Christ and, therefore, intimately united with Him, who is the fountain of all holiness. She is also endowed with the most wonderful means of sanctification in the Sacraments, especially in the Holy Eucharist. Such union with Christ and such means of grace cannot fail to produce corresponding effects in some souls at least; neither would the Church be a body suited to her divine Head were she not resplendent with sanctity in some of her members.

The Church is also represented as the *bride* of Christ, and should, therefore, be adorned with sanctity befitting her Divine Spouse, according to the words of the royal Psalmist: "*The queen stood on thy right hand in gilded clothing, surrounded with variety.*"⁸ She should also bring forth children worthy of such a union;—children eminent for sanctity and the practice of those counsels so often commended by Christ in the Gospels.

§ 4. Manifestative Sanctity of the Church

PRELIMINARY REMARKS. Sanctity itself is some-

⁸ Ps. xlv, 10. This text is more appropriately rendered thus: "The queen stands at thy right hand, adorned with gold and embroidery." (Cfr. Berry, "Commentary on the Psalms," pp. 332-334.)

thing internal and invisible, but it may be manifested by external signs. This outward manifestation is called *manifestative sanctity*. There are various means of judging with more or less probability that a particular person or thing is pleasing and acceptable to God; but there is only one means of certain knowledge,—the testimony of God Himself, given through *miracles*, wrought under circumstances that leave no doubt that the person or institution through which they are performed, is pleasing to Almighty God. Miracles, therefore, constitute manifestative sanctity, but as miracles are facts, they cannot be a property or quality of the Church. Hence, manifestative sanctity, as a property of the Church, is rather *the permanent power of the Church to perform miracles*, or at least *a permanent right to have them performed, when necessary to prove her sanctity and her divine mission*. "The Church is said to be holy on account of her miraculous powers, because such powers prove that she is pleasing to God who dwells within her and continues to operate through her; they prove her divine mission in the most convincing manner. For this reason the power of miracles will be most prominent when evidence for the truth and sanctity of the Church is most needed."¹

Protestants, with few exceptions, deny the power of miracles in the Church today, although many admit the occurrence of miracles in the first ages. Middleton, a non-Catholic, says: "The most prevailing opinion is that they subsisted through the three first centuries,

¹ Dorsch, "De Ecclesia Christi," p. 500.

and then ceased in the beginning of the fourth." But he himself rejects this opinion, because, "by granting but a single age of miracles after the times of the Apostles, we shall be entangled in a series of difficulties whence we can never fairly extricate ourselves till we allow the same powers to the present age."² Although universally condemned by Protestants of his day, the opinion of Middleton is quite logical. If miracles ever existed in the Church, there is no reason why they should cease at the end of the third century rather than in the tenth, or the nineteenth, or any succeeding century. The circumstances that made them necessary or useful in the second or third century, may be present in any other century, until the end of time. Hence, we must either sweep aside the testimony of all antiquity and deny the existence of miracles in every age, or admit that the Church is endowed with miraculous powers for all time, unless it can be proved that Christ has ordained otherwise.

Thesis.—The Church of Christ possesses manifestative sanctity, i. e., she has a permanent power of performing miracles when circumstances make them necessary or useful

PROOFS. I. From Reason. The Church as vicergerent of Jesus Christ, carries forward His mission on earth. Therefore, she should have the same means

² C. Middleton, "Introductory Discourse," pp. 46, 96.

for proving her mission and establishing her authority that Christ Himself used to establish His own. For this purpose Christ performed miracles; therefore, the Church also should have power to perform miracles when circumstances demand the exercise of such power.

II. From Scripture. St. Paul represents the Church as the body of Christ animated by the Holy Ghost, who manifests His indwelling presence through the working of miracles: "*To one indeed, by the Spirit is given the word of wisdom . . . to another the grace of healing in the same spirit; to another, the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another, the discerning of spirits; to another, diverse kinds of tongues; to another, interpretation of speeches. But all these things, one and the same Spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as he will . . . For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body.*"³ Therefore, so long as the Holy Ghost dwells within the Church to animate it and guide it, we shall expect these external manifestations of His presence and power by the working of miracles.

When Christ sent forth His Apostles to preach the Gospel and organize His Kingdom, He said to them: "*And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name they shall cast out devils: they shall speak with tongues . . . They shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover.*"⁴ In these words Christ promised the power of miracles to His disciples,—a power

³ 1 Cor. xii, 8 sq; 27 sq.

⁴ Mark xvi, 17.

connected with the profession of the true faith, and unlimited as to time and place. This promise, as we know, is not fulfilled in Our Lord's disciples as individuals, for no one will maintain that all members of Christ's Church have the power of working miracles. Therefore, the promise must be fulfilled in the disciples taken collectively as a society, which is the Church, and Holy Scripture testifies that such was the case in the days of the Apostles. They wrought miracles to prove their mission and confirm their teachings; in this manner many were brought to the knowledge of truth and won for Christ. St. Peter healed the lame man at the gate of the Temple, and "*many of them who heard the word believed, and the number of the men was made five thousand.*"⁵ At Lydda, he also healed Eneas of the palsy and "*all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, who were converted to the Lord.*"⁶ In Joppe, he raised Tabitha to life and "*it was made known throughout all Joppe; and many believed in the Lord.*"⁷ At Paphos, St. Paul wrought a miracle upon the magician of Elymas and "*the proconsul, when he had seen what was done, believed, admiring at the doctrine of the Lord.*"⁸ When writing to the Galatians, the same Apostle appeals to the miracles wrought in their midst as a confirmation of his teaching: "*He therefore who giveth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among*

⁵ Acts iii, 2 sq; iv, 4.

⁶ Acts ix, 38 sq.

⁷ Acts ix, 33-35.

⁸ Acts xiii, 8 sq.

*you; doth he do it by the works of the Law or by the hearing of the faith?"*⁹

If miracles were necessary, or at least useful, for the Apostles when carrying the Gospel to those who had never heard of it, or who denied the Apostolic mission to preach a new faith, are they not likewise necessary under similar conditions in every age? Christ did not promise to be with His Church for a few years, or a few centuries only, but for all time, "*even to the consummation of the world.*"¹⁰

III. From Tradition. Practically all the early Fathers appeal to the miracles wrought in the Church as proof of her divine mission. Middleton, a non-Catholic scholar, candidly admits this: "It must be confessed, in the first place, that this claim of a miraculous power, which is now peculiar to the Church of Rome, was universally asserted and believed in all Christian countries and in all ages of the Church till the time of the Reformation."¹¹ In view of this fact, it will suffice to quote but one early Father on the matter. In his work against heresies, St. Irenæus says: "Those who are in truth His disciples, receiving grace from Him, do in His name perform miracles, so as to promote the welfare of other men according to the gift which each one has received from Him. For some do certainly and truly drive out devils, so that those who have been thus cleansed from evil spirits, fre-

⁹ Gal. iii, 5.

¹⁰ Matt. xxviii, 20.

¹¹ "Introductory Discourse," p. 44.

quently both believe and join themselves to the Church . . . Others heal the sick by laying their hands upon them, and they are made whole. Yea, moreover, as I have said, the dead even have been raised up and remained amongst us for many years. And what shall I say more? It is not possible to name the number of the gifts which the Church scattered throughout the whole world has received from God in the name of Jesus Christ . . . and which she exerts day by day for the benefit of the gentiles."¹²

§ 5. *Objections Answered*

OBJECTION I.—All members of Christ's Church are free moral agents, capable of falling from grace at any time. Therefore, all may fall at the same time, leaving the Church deprived of moral sanctity.

ANSWER.—Sanctity in the individual depends upon his own free-will at all times; sanctity in the whole body of the faithful depends upon the will of Christ and the providence of God. By the distribution of efficacious graces God can provide unfailing sanctity for His Church without destroying man's free-will. In the Old Law God's purposes in regard to the Chosen People were not, and could not be, defeated, yet each and every member of the Hebrew nation was left to the full exercise of his free-will. In like manner God will carry out His purposes in the New Law by preserving

¹² "Adversus Hæreses," II, 32, 4; P. G., 7, 829.

personal sanctity in His Church and free-will in the individual.

OBJECTION II.—The Church, as the mystical body of Christ, must follow the analogy of a physical body, which is said to be sick, or unsound, when any single member is diseased. Hence the Church loses her moral sanctity by the presence of a single sinner within her fold.

ANSWER.—A natural body is not rendered unsound throughout by the unsound condition of one or more members, unless they be vital members. In the Church the vital members are Christ and the Holy Ghost, who are sanctity itself. A body with an unsound member is not *perfectly* sound; it is diseased, because the unsound member reacts upon the whole body thereby causing pain, discomfort or *dis-ease*. In like manner the presence of sinners in the Church deprives her of *perfect* moral holiness, because, as stated above, the Church has moral holiness in so far only as her members are personally holy. The presence of sinners causes her pain and sorrow (*dis-ease*); she sorrows over sinners as she rejoices over the good: "*If one member suffer anything, all the members suffer with it; or if one member glory, all the members rejoice with it.*"¹ The infection of one member cannot spread to the whole body of the Church, as often happens in a physical body; her powers of resistance are always sufficient to prevent such general infection.

OBJECTION III.—Our Lord did not intend His

¹ 1 Cor. xii, 26.

Church to have the power of miracles; in fact, He warns against the workers "of great signs and wonders," who will act as agents of Satan to deceive the faithful: "*There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, in-somuch as to deceive (if possible) even the elect.*"²

ANSWER.—Christ is here warning the faithful against the prodigies that the agents of Satan will produce in the days of Antichrist, to deceive them if possible. Such prodigies are not miracles, but as St. Paul says, "*signs and lying wonders.*" This very warning on the part of Our Lord presupposes the power of miracles in the Church, for otherwise there would be no reason for Satan to attempt such counterfeits. There can be no counterfeit coins where there are no genuine coins to counterfeit. The prophecies of the Apocalypse show that Satan will imitate the Church of Christ to deceive mankind; he will set up a church of Satan in opposition to the Church of Christ. Antichrist will assume the rôle of Messiah; his prophet will act the part of Pope, and there will be imitations of the Sacraments of the Church. There will also be *lying wonders* in imitation of the miracles wrought in the Church.³

OBJECTION IV.—Miracles are no proof of sanctity, for Christ has said that on the day of judgment many will say to Him: "*Lord, Lord, have not we prophesied in thy name, and cast out devils in thy name, and done many miracles in thy name? And then will I profess*

² Matt. xxiv, 24.

³ Cfr. Berry, "The Apocalypse of St. John," pp. 138 sq.

*unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity."*⁴

ANSWER.—Not every miracle is a proof of sanctity in the person through whom it is wrought, nor in the society in which it is wrought. The circumstances and purposes of miracles must be taken into account. For example, the prophecy of Balaam was no proof of sanctity on his part, but the circumstances and purpose of the prophecy gave undeniable proof that the people of Israel were under the special protection of God. In like manner, a miracle wrought through the use of relics, or the intercession of a saint, shows beyond doubt that the veneration of relics and the intercession of saints are practices pleasing to God, since He has sanctioned them by direct intervention of His own power to perform a miracle. When God wrought miracles through the Apostles and thereby brought many souls into the Church, did He not thereby show that the Church is holy and pleasing to Him? What was true in the days of the Apostles, is true at all times in the Church.

OBJECTION V.—“The performance of miracles is *not essential* to real sanctity. It will surely not be pretended, even by Romanists, that all those who are honored by the Church as saints must have wrought miracles.”⁵

ANSWER.—There is no claim that the power to per-

⁴ Matt. vii, 22; cfr. Palmer, “Treatise on the Church,” Vol. I, pp. 142 sq.

⁵ Palmer, “Treatise on the Church,” Vol. I, p. 143.

form miracles constitutes sanctity or is in any way necessary for its existence. Miracles are simply the means, and the only certain means, to make known the presence of sanctity in a person or an institution. But as there is no necessity for sanctity to be made known in all cases, so neither was there any necessity for all the saints to perform miracles.

OBJECTION VI.—If miracles were a property of the Church, they would have to be wrought continuously, because a property, being essential, can never be lacking. But miracles rarely occur in the Church today.

ANSWER.—Miracles themselves are not a property of the Church; the power to perform miracles when necessary constitutes the property which is ever present in the Church. It is not necessary that this power be constantly exercised. Christ did not perform miracles at all times, yet He possessed the power at all times. Miracles are performed in the Church only when necessary according to circumstances of time and place; consequently they will be more frequent in one age than in another. In the first ages they were more necessary than at present, for, as St. Gregory the Great says, “Miracles were necessary in the beginning of the Church that the faith might grow by their nourishment. In the same way we water newly planted trees until we see they have taken root in the soil; then we cease to water them any longer.”⁶ In like manner Lacordaire: “When Jesus laid the foundations of His Church, it was needful for Him to obtain faith in a

⁶ “Homily in Evang.,” 29; P. L., 76, 1213.

work then beginning; now it is formed, although not yet completed. You behold it, you touch it, you compare it, you measure it, you judge whether it is a human work. Why should God be prodigal of miracles to those who do not see *the* miracle?"⁷

As the Church becomes better established and more widely known, the need for miracles decreases, and they become less frequent, but they have never entirely ceased.⁸ Changed circumstances of future years may make them as necessary as they were in the first ages of the Church.

ART. III. CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH

SYNOPSIS.—1. USE AND MEANING OF THE TERM.—2. THE CHURCH CATHOLIC BY DIFFUSION.—3. CATHOLICITY OF CHURCH FURTHER DEFINED.—4. PERFECT CATHOLICITY TO BE ATTAINED.

§ 1. Use and Meaning of the Term

A DISTINCTIVE TITLE. The Church has been called *Catholic* from the earliest years of her existence. St. Ignatius Martyr, in his letter to the Christians of Smyrna, written about the year 107, says: "Wherever Christ is, there is the *Catholic* Church."¹ A few years later (140 A. D.) an account of the sufferings and death of St. Polycarp was addressed "to all the parishes

⁷ Lacordaire, "Jesus Christ," Confer. ii, p. 39 (Eng. Tr.).

⁸ Cf. below pp. 161.

¹ "Epist. ad Smyrnæos," VIII; Funk, Vol. I, p. 283.

of the holy *Catholic* Church throughout the world."² The same title is applied to the Church in an ancient document known as the *Fragment of Muratori*, which was written about 200 A. D. All Christians still profess their faith in the *holy Catholic Church* as often as they recite the Apostles' Creed, which dates back to the days of the Apostles, or at least to the years immediately following.

From the earliest times the word *Catholic* has been used as a proper name to distinguish the true Church from heretical sects. St. Cyril of Jerusalem thus addressed his catechumens in the year 348: "If ever thou art sojourning in cities, inquire not simply where the Lord's House is, for sects of the profane also attempt to call their dens *houses* of the Lord. Neither do you ask merely where the Church is, but where is the *Catholic Church*, for such is the peculiar name of this holy Church, the mother of us all, which is the spouse of our Lord Jesus Christ."³ In like manner St. Augustine says: "The Church is called *Catholic* by all her enemies as well as by her own children. Whether they wish it or not, heretics and schismatics, when speaking with those outside their own sects, can call the Church by no other name than *Catholic*, for they would not be understood unless they used the name by which the Church is known to the whole world."⁴

MEANING OF THE WORD CATHOLIC. The word

² Martyrdom of Polycarp, Funk, Vol. I, p. 315.

³ "Catecheses," XVIII, 26; P. G., 33, 1043.*

⁴ "De Vera Religione," 7; P. L., 34, 128.

Catholic is derived from the Greek καθ' ὅλον, which means *concerning all, or embracing all*. Hence *Catholicity* implies universality of some sort. When applied to the Church, it may mean (*a*) that the Church is to endure for all time; (*b*) that she teaches all the doctrines of Christ and uses all the means instituted by Him for salvation; (*c*) that she is destined for all men; or (*d*) that she is spread throughout the whole world,—καθ' ὅλην τὴν γῆν. St. Cyril of Jerusalem briefly explains the Catholicity of the Church in these various senses: "It is called Catholic, then, because it extends over all the world from one end of the earth to the other; and because it teaches universally and completely one and all the doctrines which ought to come to man's knowledge concerning things both visible and invisible, heavenly and earthly; and because it brings into subjection to godliness the whole race of mankind, governors and governed, learned and unlearned; and because it universally treats and heals the whole class of sins which are committed by soul and body, and possesses in itself every form of virtue which is named, both in deeds and in words, and in every kind of spiritual gifts."⁵

CATHOLICITY OF DIFFUSION. The idea of diffusion, or extension, throughout the world has so predominated in the notion of universality that the term *Catholic* is now used almost exclusively in that sense. The other forms of universality are easily identified with other properties or attributes of the Church. The universal-

⁵ "Catecheses," XVIII, 23; P. G., 33.

ity of time is simply the perpetuity of the Church; universality in doctrine and means of salvation pertain to the perpetual unity of faith and worship.

Catholicity of diffusion may be either *de jure* or *de facto*. The Church is catholic or universal *de jure* (*by right*) because it is destined for the salvation of all men, and therefore endowed with the ability to spread to all parts of the world to fulfill that mission; it is catholic *de facto* (*in fact*) when actually diffused or spread throughout the world. All who admit that Christ founded any church at all, must admit that it is Catholic *de jure*,—that it was commissioned by Christ to carry salvation to all nations, and that it was consequently endowed with the ability to spread throughout the world for this purpose. Hence *de jure* Catholicity is an essential property possessed by the Church of Christ from the first moment of her existence. It is immediately evident that *de facto* Catholicity could come only with the lapse of time, and gradually increase with the passing centuries, until the Church becomes completely Catholic, embracing all nations, tribes and tongues. Therefore *de facto* Catholicity is not an essential property of the Church in the sense that it must have been present at all times from the very beginning; it is an essential property in the sense that it necessarily flows from the very nature of the Church as a society destined to carry the Gospel to all nations. Starting at Jerusalem, the Church was to spread to all parts of the known world and to extend its limits as new countries were discovered; when once spread over the

world it was never to be reduced again to the narrow limits of a nation, or other relatively small portion of the world. This is clearly indicated by the parable of the mustard seed, "*which is indeed the least of all seeds,*" yet it gradually grew into a tree greater than all herbs, "*so that the birds of the air come and dwell in the branches thereof.*"⁶ The same idea is expressed by Daniel when he compares the Messianic Kingdom to a small stone that "*became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.*"⁷ Christ Himself plainly indicated the progressive expansion of His Church when He said to the Apostles: "*You shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth.*"⁸ Many other texts of Scripture could be quoted in this matter, but these few are sufficient.

All Christians admit that the Church of Christ must be *de facto* universal in some sense, but Protestants maintain that the Church Catholic is an intangible something of which all Christian churches are but so many parts. It has been proved already that the Church of Christ is a visible society that enjoys complete unity in government, faith, and worship. Therefore, if the Church is to be Catholic in fact, its members and all its parts throughout the world must be so united as to form but one society,—a visible society with unity of government, faith, and worship. Hence

⁶ Matt. xiii, 31, 32.

⁷ Dan. ii, 35.

⁸ Acts i, 8.

the words of St. Augustine to the Donatists of Africa: "Dissention and division make you heretics; peace and unity make Catholics."⁹ It is not sufficient for actual Catholicity that a Church have members scattered far and wide throughout the world; the Church itself, as a society, must exist in the various parts of the world to exercise its authority and carry on the mission of Christ. In other words, the Church of Christ must be *formally* universal. Neither will mere numbers constitute universality; a large number of members confined to a relatively small portion of the world does not constitute universality.

§ 2. *The Church Catholic by Actual Diffusion*

Thesis.—The Church of Christ possesses *de jure* catholicity of diffusion as an essential attribute, from which *de facto* and progressive catholicity necessarily follows, thus constituting a property of the Church

The doctrine, as stated, seems so self-evident that proofs are really unnecessary. Any one who admits that Christ instituted a Church to save all men, must admit that He intended it to become actually universal and to remain so for all time. To ascribe any other intention to Christ would be to accuse Him of folly.

PROOFS. I. From Scripture. The Church of Christ must be as depicted in Holy Scripture, but, as

⁹ "Contra Litteras Petil.," II, 95; P. L., 43, 333.

St. Augustine says, "almost every page of Scripture proclaims Christ and the Church spread throughout the whole world."¹ In fact, the Prophets single out universality as the chief mark of the Messianic Kingdom. Thus they oppose it to the Mosaic dispensation, which was limited to the one nation of the Chosen People. Isaias says: "*And in the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared . . . and all nations shall flow unto it.*"² Zacharias: "*He shall speak peace to the gentiles, and His power shall be from sea to sea, and from the rivers even to the ends of the earth.*"³ Daniel compares the Church to a mountain that fills the whole earth; he represents Christ as a king whom "*all peoples, tribes and tongues shall serve.*"⁴ Malachias foretold the offering of a new sacrifice in all places and among all peoples from the rising of the sun to the going down.⁵ The Church in which this sacrifice is offered must therefore be universal.

Christ distinctly proclaimed the universality of His Church when He said to the Apostles: "*Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature.*"⁶ On another occasion: "*This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony*

¹ "Sermon.," 46; P. L., 38, 289.

² Is. ii, 2.

³ Zach. ix, 10.

⁴ Dan. ii, 35 sq; vii, 14.

⁵ Mal. i, 11.

⁶ Mark xvi, 15.

to all nations."⁷ Again: "*You shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth.*"⁸

Many other texts could easily be quoted to the same effect, but these are amply sufficient.

II. *From Tradition.* "The primitive Church always understood the prophecies relating to the universality of Christianity [the Church] as descriptive of its permanent condition; for we find the Fathers not merely asserting the fact that the Church of Christ was really diffused throughout the whole world, but arguing that the Church of which they were members must be the true Church, because it was so diffused, and that the societies of heretics which claimed to be the only true Church could not be so from their deficiency in this essential characteristic."⁹ A few quotations from the Fathers will prove the justice of this statement of a non-Catholic author.

ST. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM: "The Church is called Catholic because it is spread all over the world from one end of the earth to the other."¹⁰ ST. AUGUSTINE: "The Church is given the Greek name *Catholic*, because it is spread over the whole world."¹¹ ST. OPTATUS OF MILEVE argues thus with Parmenian, the Dona-

⁷ Matt. xxiv, 14.

⁸ Acts i, 8.

⁹ W. Palmer, "Treatise on the Church," Vol. I, p. 150.

¹⁰ "Catecheses," XVIII, 23; P. G., 33, 1043.

¹¹ "Epist. ad Severianum," P. L., 33, 194.

tist: "Thou has said, brother Parmenian, that the Church is only amongst you . . . therefore that it may exist with you in a part of Africa,—a corner of a small region. It must not be amongst us in the other part of Africa, nor in Spain, Italy, Gaul, where you are not. . . . Where then is the propriety of the name *Catholic*, since the Church is called *Catholic* because it is diffused everywhere."¹² ST. ATHANASIUS and the bishops of the Alexandrian patriarchate use the same argument in their letter to the Emperor Jovian. They tell him that the Catholic faith must be the true one because it is the faith held universally throughout the world, whereas the Arian doctrines are professed by a few only.¹³

§ 3. *Catholicity of Church Further Defined*

The Church of Christ must be universal, or Catholic, by diffusion throughout the world, but this diffusion may be either *physical* or *moral*, *simultaneous* or *successive*, *absolute* or *relative*. Therefore, it may be asked, what is the precise nature of the universality necessary for the Church, and also whether this universality must be perpetual.

MORALLY CATHOLIC. Physical universality would be realized if the Church were so completely spread over the earth that she actually exercised her authority over every portion of the inhabited world. It is evi-

¹² "De Schismate Donatistarum," II, 1; P. L., 11, 942.

¹³ Theodoret, "Church History," IV, 3; P. G., 82-1126, 1127.

Moral catholicity sufficient for Christ's Church.
We know no church that has physical catholicity yet
we know Christ's church must exist.

dent that the Church has never been so diffused, and therefore such universality cannot be necessary. The early Fathers evidently held this view; even in the third and fourth centuries they proclaimed the Church already universal because of her diffusion, yet as St. Augustine said: "It still had much room to increase before the prophecy concerning Christ, prefigured by Solomon, would be fulfilled: '*He shall rule from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.*'"¹

It is sufficient, then, that the Church be *morally* universal, *i. e.*, that she be so wide-spread throughout the world that she may easily be known even in those regions in which she does not actually exist; or, as Suarez puts it: "If she has such universal renown that she may be known and distinguished from all heretical sects."²

SIMULTANEOUSLY CATHOLIC. The Church might have a successive existence in various parts of the world, dying out in one place as it springs up in another, until finally the Gospel would have been announced in all parts of the world. This would constitute *successive* catholicity, but it is evident that such universality is not sufficient, because at no time would the Church be really Catholic in any true sense of the word. Therefore, the Church must be *simultaneously* Catholic, *i. e.*, it must be present throughout the whole world at one and the same time. It is true, of course, that the Church may cease to exist in this or that part of the world,

¹ "Epist. ad Hesych.," P. L., 33, 922; cfr. Ps. lxxi, 8.

² "Defensio Fidei," I, xvi, 10.

but it must ever remain at least morally universal, as explained above.

ABSOLUTELY CATHOLIC. *Absolute* Catholicity is the universality of the Church, considered in itself, regardless of any other religious society. *Relative* catholicity refers to the universality of the Church as compared with that of some other society. In this latter sense, the Church will be Catholic if it is more wide-spread than any other single church. As already noted, mere numbers do not constitute universality; one church is not more Catholic, or universal, than another because of the mere fact that it numbers more adherents.

Absolute Catholicity is necessary in the true Church as shown above, but relative Catholicity does not seem necessary; at least, its necessity can be proved neither from Scripture nor tradition, and there seems to be no reason why a false sect might not become universally distributed over the world, unless perhaps God in His providence prevents it, of which we have no assurance.

PERPETUALLY CATHOLIC. The reason for the Church's universality demands that it be also perpetual; in so far as the Church might fail in her universality at any time, in just that far must she also fail in her mission of carrying the Gospel to all nations. Moreover, all the prophecies of old and all the promises of Christ concerning the universality of the Church were made without restrictions or limitations as to time. They never contemplate any failure; they never so much as intimate that the Church will ever be reduced to narrow or insignificant limits. Cardinal Bel-

larmino seems to have held that the Church might be so reduced in extent as to be confined *for a time* to one single country or province, provided it is still recognized as the Church that had been universally spread over the world. This is practically the same as saying, "provided it remain *morally* universal," which does not in reality deny perpetual universality. However, his opinion does not seem probable and has not been generally accepted.

§ 4. *Perfect Catholicity to be Attained*

Thesis.—The Church of Christ shall at length attain perfect catholicity, i. e., it shall finally embrace all nations and all peoples without exception

Although *moral* universality is sufficient to make the Church truly Catholic, the prophecies of old certainly demand something more for their adequate fulfillment; one and all announce a kingdom that shall be universal to the last degree. A few examples will make this clear: (a) "He shall rule from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth . . . and all kings of earth shall adore him; all nations shall serve him . . . And in him shall all tribes of the earth be blessed; all nations shall magnify him." ¹ (b) "And all the nations thou hast made shall come and adore before thee, O Lord; and they shall glorify thy name." ² (c) "His

¹ Ps. lxxi, 8 sq.

² Ps. lxxxv, 9.

empire shall be multiplied and there shall be no end of peace." ³ (d) "And judgment shall sit . . . that the kingdom, and power, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven may be given to the saints of the most High; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all kings shall serve him and obey him." ⁴ (e) "He shall speak peace to the gentiles, and his power shall be from sea to sea, and from the rivers even to the ends of the earth." ⁵

Prophecies such as these find no adequate fulfillment in the conversion of a few thousand, or even a few million souls among the vast pagan populations of earth. Neither can a world largely steeped in paganism, torn by schism and distracted by heresy, be the only fruit of Christ's death upon the Cross. We are forced to say with St. Augustine: "Even in the islands of the sea shall be fulfilled the word of prophecy, 'He shall rule from sea to sea,' and if a prophet cannot deceive, it is necessary that all nations whatsoever He has made, shall adore Him." ⁶

Even the scattered nation of the Jews shall follow the gentiles into the Church, as St. Paul plainly states: "I would not have you ignorant, brethren, of this mystery . . . that blindness in part has happened in Israel until the fulness of the gentiles should come in. And so all Israel should be saved as it is written: There

³ Is. ix, 7.

⁴ Dan. vii, 26, 27.

⁵ Zach. ix, 10.

⁶ "Epist. ad Hesychium," P. L., 33, 922.

shall come out of Sion, he that shall deliver and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." ⁷ Again he says of the Jewish people: "If the loss of them be the reconciliation of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?" ⁸

After the gentile nations have entered the Church, the Jews also shall submit to the faith of Christ and the Church shall be universal indeed. Then shall begin the reign of Christ in all its fullness, "from sea to sea," and all the prophecies shall be justified. This does not mean that each and every individual of every nation and tribe shall submit to the Church; *nations* and *peoples*, not *individuals*, have been promised to the Church for her inheritance. It does mean, however, that all nations, as nations, and at least the vast majority of their subjects, shall recognize the true Church of Christ and submit to her authority.

These prophecies will not be fulfilled before the time of Antichrist, since the Apocalypse makes it certain that he will come into a world harassed by paganism, apostacy, schism, and heresy.⁹ The Jews, still unconverted, will accept him as Messiah and assist in his warfare against the Church. Only after the defeat of Antichrist and the conversion of the gentile nations, will the Jews accept Christ as Messiah. According to the generally accepted opinion, this will take place shortly before the end of the world, since the coming of

⁷ Rom. xi, 25.

⁸ Rom. xi, 15.

⁹ Apoc. ix, 20, 21.

Antichrist is looked upon as a prelude to the consummation of all things earthly. If this be true, the universal reign of Christ would seem a failure in point of time. It certainly does not seem probable that thousands of years spent in preparation shall lead up to a universal reign of Christ lasting but a few short months, or at most, a few short years. It would be considered a mark of folly in a human society to labor for years building itself up to the point where it could most effectively carry out its programme, and then disband. Are we not accusing Christ of like folly if we suppose He will in like manner bring the earthly career of His Church to an end almost immediately upon attaining the state in which it can perfectly carry out its mission?

It seems far more probable that the period of fruition will at least equal, and perhaps even exceed, the period of preparation, and therefore that many centuries will intervene between the destruction of Antichrist and the end of the world. The progressive character of the Church in her extension has already been noted. Beginning at Jerusalem, she spread with miraculous rapidity, extending her limits ever farther and farther with the passing centuries, yet all the while the *gates of hell* were struggling to prevent it. The Church has been forced to wage unceasing war upon her enemies. Judaism assailed her in infancy; then followed, in succession, Arianism, Islamism, the Greek schism, the pseudo-Reformation of the sixteenth century, and Rationalism in the eighteenth. Today she is warring against indifferentism and the denial of all re-

ligion. The "*mystery of iniquity*," mentioned by St. Paul,¹⁰ grows apace with the spread of the Church, and will culminate in the coming of Antichrist, when Satan will make a last supreme effort to prevent the universal reign of Christ in His Church. After a short but desperate struggle, the Church will emerge victorious, Antichrist will perish, and the powers of Satan will be curbed, so "*that he should no more seduce the nations.*"¹¹

After the defeat and destruction of Antichrist, all nations will flow into the Church, the Jews will enter her fold, and the universal reign of Christ will be established over all peoples, tribes, and tongues. Then shall the words of Christ be literally and completely fulfilled: "*I have overcome the world.*"¹² After a long period of time, symbolically designated as a thousand years,¹³ "*Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go forth to seduce the nations which are over the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, and shall gather them together to battle*"¹⁴ for a final persecution of the Church. By special intervention of God, these hostile nations shall be quickly defeated and the Church shall stand forth once more victorious. Then will the day of judgment be near at hand.¹⁵

¹⁰ 2 Thess. ii, 7.

¹¹ Apoc. xx, 3.

¹² John xvi, 33.

¹³ Apoc. xx, 2, 3.

¹⁴ Apoc. xx, 7.

¹⁵ Cf. Berry, "The Apocalypse of St. John," pp. 189 sq.—The interpretation of the prophecies regarding the time of Antichrist and

ART. IV. APOSTOLICITY OF THE CHURCH

SYNOPSIS.—1. THE NATURE OF APOSTOLICITY.—2. THE CHURCH OF CHRIST APOSTOLIC.

§ 1. *The Nature of Apostolicity*

Apostolicity denotes connection in some manner with the Apostles, or a likeness to them. Hence we speak of Apostolic men, *i. e.*, men who lived in the days of the Apostles, or who are inspired with a like zeal in their ministry. In like manner the Church is said to

subsequent events is given as an opinion to be accepted for what it is worth. So far as we know, there is no pronouncement of the Church on this question. In fact, no doctrine is involved. It is generally held by Catholic theologians that the Church will be completely Catholic after the days of Antichrist. This doctrine is not materially affected by the further consideration concerning the time of his appearance. This is merely an interesting speculation, of which the above solution seems probable to us. It might be objected that Christ Himself places the end of the world immediately after the attainment of complete Catholicity by the Church: "This gospel shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to all nations, and then shall the consummation come." (Matt. xxiv, 14.) And St. Paul connects the coming of Antichrist with the second coming of Christ. "And then that wicked one shall be revealed whom the Lord Jesus . . . shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." (2 Thess. ii, 8.) Neither objection has any weight; in the first Our Lord was simply assuring the Apostles that there would be sufficient time to carry the gospel to all nations, since the consummation will not come until that has been accomplished. He does not say that it will come immediately upon its accomplishment. In the other case, we see no reason why "his coming—*παρουσία*—must be taken to mean the personal coming of Our Lord at the last day, rather than a metaphorical coming in manifest judgment against Antichrist.

be Apostolic because of some relation it bears to the Apostles. Historians use the term to designate the Church as it existed in the days of the Apostles; with theologians, it means that the Church is, in some manner, derived from the Apostles. In this sense the Church is Apostolic in *origin*, *doctrine*, and *ministry*. The Church is Apostolic in *origin*, because it is and must ever remain, the identical society founded by Christ and organized through the ministry of the Apostles; it is Apostolic in *doctrine*, because it teaches the self-same truths that Christ committed to its custody in the persons of the Apostles. Finally, the Church is Apostolic in *ministry* (or *succession*), because the authority which Christ conferred upon the Apostles has come down through an unbroken line of legitimate successors in the ministry of the Church.

SUCCESSION. Apostolicity of *origin* and of *doctrine* are easily understood without further explanation, but some knowledge of *succession* is necessary for a proper conception of apostolicity of *ministry*. Succession, as used in this connection, is the following of one person after another in an official position, and may be either *legitimate* or *illegitimate*. Theologians call the one *formal* succession; the other, *material*. A material successor is one who assumes the official position of another contrary to the laws or constitution of the society in question. He may be called a successor in as much as he actually holds the position, but he has no authority, and his acts have no official value, even though he be ignorant of the illegal tenure of his office.

A formal, or legitimate, successor not only succeeds to the place of his predecessor, but also receives due authority to exercise the functions of his office with binding force in the society. It is evident that authority can be transmitted only by legitimate succession; therefore, the Church must have a legitimate, or formal, succession of pastors to transmit apostolic authority from age to age. One who intrudes himself into the ministry against the laws of the Church receives no authority, and consequently can transmit none to his successors.

TWOFOLD POWER. Succession in the Church differs from that in other societies from the fact that there is a twofold power to transmit,—the power of *Orders* and the power of *jurisdiction* or government. The power of *Orders* is purely spiritual and concerned directly with the conferring of grace; it is obtained through the Sacrament of Orders validly received and cannot be revoked by any power of the Church. For this reason, the power of Orders may be obtained by fraud or conferred against the will of the Church by anyone having valid Orders himself, and therefore does not depend upon legitimate succession.

Jurisdiction is authority to govern and must be transmitted in the Church as in any other society; it can be conferred only by a lawful superior, according to the constitution and laws of the society, and may be revoked at any time. Consequently jurisdiction in the Church can neither be obtained nor held against the will of her supreme authority; its transmission depends entirely upon legitimate succession. It is not sufficient,

therefore, that a church have valid Orders; it must also have a legitimate succession of ministers, reaching back in an unbroken line to the Apostles, upon whom our Lord conferred all authority to rule His Church.

UNION WITH ROME. No one can be a legitimate successor in any society unless he receive due authority therein; it follows, therefore, that there can be no legitimate successor in the Church of Christ who has not received jurisdiction either directly or indirectly from her supreme authority. But, as will be proved elsewhere, supreme authority in the Church of Christ was committed to St. Peter and his lawful successors, the bishops of Rome: consequently all legitimate succession, or Apostolicity of ministry in the Church, depends upon communion with the chair of Peter and is lost the moment that communion is severed. Hence no particular part of the Church is indefectibly Apostolic, save the see of Peter, which is universally known by way of eminence as *the Apostolic See*.

ERRORS. Those who deny that Christ founded any visible Church must also deny the possibility of Apostolicity in the sense just explained. Practically all Protestants admit the necessity of Apostolicity of some sort in the Church, but they differ in regard to its nature according to their different conceptions of the Church itself. Anglicans maintain that the Church must be Apostolic in its ministry, but they seem to place this Apostolicity in the valid transmission of Orders alone: "The authoritative ministry [of the Apostles] was propagated by being imparted in succession to oth-

ers in different degrees by the laying-on of hands." ¹

§ 2. *The Church of Christ Apostolic*

Thesis.—The Church of Christ is necessarily Apostolic in origin, doctrine, and ministry

That the Church is in some sense Apostolic, is a dogma of faith as appears from the Nicene Creed: "I believe in one, holy, Catholic and *Apostolic* Church." Apostolicity of ministry and of doctrine have been defined, at least implicitly, by the Vatican Council: "If any one should say that it is not by the institution of Christ, and therefore not by divine right, that the blessed Peter has *perpetual successors in his primacy over the whole Church*, . . . let him be anathema." ¹

"The Holy Ghost was not promised to the successors of Peter that He might reveal to them a new doctrine, but that *He should assist them to preserve religiously and faithfully expound the revelation, or deposit of faith, handed down by the Apostles.*" ²

PROOFS. I. *From Reason and Scripture.* The thesis is a self-evident truth, rather than a proposition to be demonstrated.

a) *Origin.* Christ instituted but one Church through the ministry of the Apostles, and to none other

¹ Bishop Gore (Anglican), "Catholicism and Roman Catholicism," Lecture I; cfr. *Church Times*, Dec., 1922; also W. Palmer, "Treatise on the Church," Vol. I, p. 171 ss.

² Denzinger, n. 1825.

³ Denzinger, n. 1836.

did He give any authority to organize a church in His name. Consequently a church existing at any time since then, is either the identical Church established by Him, and therefore Apostolic, or it is not that identical Church, and therefore in no wise the Church of Christ, but merely a false claimant having no right to exist.

b) *Doctrine.* Our Lord committed the teaching of all His doctrines to the Apostles and promised to be with them until the consummation of the world: "*Teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you . . . And behold, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.*" ³ He also promised to them the Spirit of Truth, to remain with them forever guiding them in all truth: "*I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete that he may abide with you for ever . . . he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you.*" ⁴ Christ has either failed in His promises, or the Church must ever preserve and teach all truths committed to her through the ministry of the Apostles. In other words, the Church must be Apostolic in her doctrine even to the consummation of the world.

c) *Ministry.* It is evident that there can be no authority in the Church save that which comes directly or indirectly from her Divine Founder, Jesus Christ. But there is not the slightest intimation in Scripture or tradition that Christ ever promised to confer authority

³ Matt. xxviii, 19-20.

⁴ John xiv, 16, 20, 26.

directly upon the ministers of the Church; consequently it can only be obtained by lawful succession from those upon whom Christ personally and directly conferred it, *i. e.*, from the Apostles. In other words, the Church must be Apostolic in her ministry by means of a legitimate succession reaching back in an unbroken line to the Apostles.

I. From Tradition. In controversies with the heretics of their age, the early Fathers always appealed to Apostolic succession as a proof for the true Church of Christ, and argued that heretical sects could not be the true Church for the simple reason that they lacked this succession. In order to show that the Catholic Church actually possessed Apostolic succession, many early writers drew up lists of bishops in various churches running back to Apostolic days. Among the compilers of such catalogues of bishops may be mentioned Hegeppus, St. Irenæus, Eusebius, and St. Optatus of Mileve. A few quotations will show the mind of the Fathers on this question.

a) St. Irenæus: "It is necessary to obey the presbyters in the Church, those who, as I have shown, possess the succession from the Apostles; those who, together with the succession of the episcopate, have received the certain gift of truth according to the good pleasure of the Father."⁵

b) Tertullian: "But if there be any [heresies] bold enough to plant themselves in the midst of the Apostolic age, that they may thereby seem to have

⁵ "Adversus Hæreses," IV, 26; P. G., 7, 1053.

been handed down by the Apostles because they existed in the time of the Apostles, we can say: Let them unfold the roll of their bishops running down in due succession from the beginning in such manner that their first bishop shall be able to show for his ordainer and predecessor some one of the Apostles, or of Apostolic men,—a man moreover who continued steadfast with the Apostles."⁶

c) St. Cyprian: "Novatian is not in the Church; nor can he be reckoned as a bishop who succeeding no one and despising the Evangelical and Apostolic tradition, sprang from himself. For he who has not been ordained in the Church can neither have nor hold to the Church in any way."⁷

⁶ Tertullian, "De Præscriptionibus," xxxii, P. L., 2, 44.

⁷ St. Cyprian, "Epist. ad Magnum," n. 3. P. L., 3, 1140.

CHAPTER IV

MARKS OF THE CHURCH

Thus far we have considered the Church of Christ as portrayed for us on the pages of Holy Scripture and in the writings of the early Fathers. We have learned that Christ established a Church as an external visible society endowed with perpetual and indefectible unity, sanctity, Catholicity, and Apostolicity. Since the Church is perpetually indefectible, it must exist today with all its essential properties; it must still be perpetually and indefectibly one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic. The Church which possesses these characteristics must be the one true Church of Christ; all others, mere human inventions.

Since Christ intended His Church to be known and accepted by all, He must have endowed it with certain exterior marks, by which it may be known with certainty and clearly distinguished from all false claimants. Therefore it is necessary to consider (1) what is required for a *mark* of the Church, (2) which properties of the Church fulfill these conditions, and (3) in what church these properties are found today.

ART. I. REQUISITES FOR A MARK OF THE CHURCH

§ 1. *The Nature of a Mark*

(A *mark* (Latin, *nota*) may be defined as a *quality or*

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characteristic by which the subject in which it inheres may be recognized and distinguished from every other thing. Hence it must be a manifest and essential quality. (a) It must be manifest, *i. e.*, it must be something that can be perceived, otherwise it cannot lead to the knowledge of the subject in which it inheres. (b) It must be an essential quality, something that must be present at all times. A mere accidental quality may be present or absent without affecting the nature of the subject; it may even be found in subjects of entirely different nature, and, therefore, can never serve as a distinguishing mark.

It also must be able to be recognized by a person of ordinary intelligence.

Marks may be either *positive* or *negative*. A *positive* mark is one whose presence is sufficient to distinguish the subject in which it inheres from all other objects; *e. g.*, the presence of a right angle is sufficient of itself to distinguish a right-angled triangle from all other triangles. A *negative* mark is a quality that can never be absent in the thing sought, yet its presence is not sufficient to distinguish that object from all others; *e. g.*, a square must have four straight sides. Any figure in which this quality is lacking cannot be a square, but a figure having four straight sides is not necessarily a square; many other figures have this same characteristic.

MARKS OF THE CHURCH. The requisites for a mark of the Church are easily deduced from the above considerations: (1) it must be an essential characteristic or property of the Church, (2) it must be externally manifest to all, (3) it must be suited to the capacity of

all, whether learned or unlearned. All men are bound to accept the faith of Christ and submit to the authority of His Church. Therefore, the marks by which the Church is recognized must be such that the unlearned as well as the learned may know and accept it. Finally, if there is question of a *positive* mark, it must be a characteristic found nowhere save in the true Church of Christ.

The four properties,—unity, sanctity, Catholicity and Apostolicity,—fulfill these conditions, and are therefore true marks. Moreover, as they are the only characteristics of the Church that do fulfill these conditions, they must be sufficient; otherwise the Church could not be known. It follows, then, that any church lacking a single one of these marks cannot be the Church of Christ, and any Church possessing all of them must be the true Church of Christ.

§ 2. *Marks Claimed by Non-Catholics*

ORTHODOX CHURCHES. The schismatic churches of the East agree with Catholics in teaching that the Church of Christ must be one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic, but they maintain that *identity with the Church of the first centuries* is the only distinctive mark by which it may be known today. This identity is to be recognized by strict conformity with the doctrine and discipline laid down by the first seven ecumenical councils.

CRITICISM. Identity with the early Church proves

nothing unless we know that the Church of those centuries was in reality the true Church of Christ. The *marks* by which the faithful of those days recognized the true Church, must still be sufficient for the people of our own day. It is true that the Church must be identical with the Church of the first centuries in all essential things, but this identity could not serve as a *mark*, even if it be granted that the early Church was true. Only the learned could make the investigation necessary to establish the fact of such identity.

PROTESTANTS. The Reformers of the sixteenth century and many of their followers claimed two marks for the Church, or rather for *a* church. Calvin wrote: "Wherever we see the word of God sincerely preached and heard, and the Sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, there without doubt is *a* church of God."¹ The nineteenth article of the Anglican Church reads: "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached and the Sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that are of necessity to the same." Bullinger, an Anglican theologian, says: "There are two special and principal marks: the sincere preaching of the word of God and the lawful partaking of the Sacraments of Christ."²

CRITICISM. Calvin and Bullinger make *sincere* preaching of the Gospel a mark of the Church. There

¹ "Institutiones," IV, 1.

² W. Wilson, "The Thirty-Nine Articles," p. 168.

is a vast difference between *sincere* and *true* preaching of the Gospel. Sincerity can never make truth out of falsehood; neither can sincere preaching serve as a mark for the true Church. The doctrine proclaimed by the Thirty-Nine Articles is equally foolish. The pure word of God must be preached in the true Church of Christ, and the Sacraments must be administered according to the will of Christ, but how shall we know what is the true word of God? How shall we know that the Sacraments are duly administered unless we first know what Sacraments Christ really instituted, whom He ordained to administer them, and what is essential to their right administration? These are not questions to be decided without study and investigation beyond the ability of the unlearned. Even learned Protestants do not agree on these matters.

Many Protestants of the present day are little concerned about marks of any kind; the question of deciding between true and false in religion never occurs to them. They hold that all churches are equally true, since all taken collectively constitute the Church Catholic with which a man may be united by a good life even though he belong to no particular church organization. It is a matter of supreme indifference whether a person belong to one church or another; in fact, it seems to matter little whether he belong to any church. Moreover, they hold that every man enjoys full liberty to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. Hence every man is free to select the church that suits his fancy or convenience, or failing

that, he may establish a new one to carry out any peculiar ideas he may have about religion or divine worship. God, it seems, has no voice in the matter; He must be content to receive such worship as man sees fit to render Him. It is evident that *marks* for recognizing the true Church have no place in such a system.

ART. II. THE FOUR MARKS OF THE CHURCH

§ 1. *Unity as a Mark of the Church*

Several eminent theologians, such as Bellarmine, Stapleton, and Perrone, maintained that unity is a *positive* mark, sufficient of itself to identify the true Church of Christ and distinguish it from all others. In support of this opinion they appealed to the words of Christ: "*I pray . . . that they may be made perfect in one; and the world may know that thou hast sent me.*"¹ These words leave no doubt that Christ intended the unity of His disciples to be a proof of His own divine mission, and, therefore, a proof also for the Church established to carry out that same mission till the end of time. But the words of Christ do not prove that this unity is a *positive* mark, which in fact it cannot be. Unity as a mark of the Church must be a unity of faith, worship, and government, regardless of their nature; or a unity of *true* faith, *true* worship, and *legitimate* government. But as the preaching of true doctrine (the

¹ John xvii, 23.

pure word of God) and the practice of true worship (due administration of the Sacraments) cannot constitute a mark of the Church, so neither can unity of true doctrine and true worship. The same reasons hold good in both cases; how are we to know what is true doctrine or true worship? How are we to know whether the government is legitimate or not? All these things must be accepted on the authority of the Church, and cannot be accepted until the Church herself has been accepted. On the other hand, if we take unity of faith, worship, and government, regardless of truth or legitimacy, we have only a *negative* mark. Any Church lacking unity in these things cannot be the true Church of Christ, but a church is not necessarily true because it has such unity, since unity of *false* faith, *false* worship, and *illegitimate* government is possible, at least for a time. Therefore unity, considered in itself, is merely a negative mark, yet it has always had the force of a positive mark due to the fact that unity in any form has always been found in one church alone.

§ 2. Sanctity as a Mark of the Church

Sanctity, being essentially internal and invisible, can serve as a mark only in so far as it is manifested in some outward act. Hence the ontological sanctity of the Church need not be considered in this connection. The other forms,—causative, personal, and manifestative,—will be considered separately.

CAUSATIVE SANCTITY. The active or causative sanctity of the Church is manifested principally through its effects in bringing men to the practice of virtue. It is also manifest in the outward means of grace,—Sacraments, doctrine, and discipline,—if they are recognized as eminently suited to produce personal holiness. In this sense causative sanctity constitutes, at least, a negative mark, because any Church lacking such means of sanctification cannot be the Church of Christ. This is especially true if the church in question not only lacks such means, but also teaches a doctrine or practice clearly opposed to right reason and morality.

In fact, causative sanctity almost amounts to a positive mark, since the presence of means *eminently* fitted to lead men to a holy life gives at least a *very strong* presumption in favor of the Church possessing them.

PERSONAL SANCTITY. Ordinary personal sanctity, considered in itself, is a *negative* mark of the Church, because, as noted above,¹ the Church of Christ can never be without a large number of persons devoted to the practice of Christian virtues; but the value of personal sanctity as a mark is somewhat lessened by the fact that persons of virtuous life may be found in all Churches, owing to the fact that all have retained some salutary doctrine and discipline, and in many cases they retain the Sacrament of Baptism and even the Holy Eucharist, as do many schismatic Churches of the East. Nevertheless, a Church that stands out promin-

¹ Cf. above pp. 109.

ent for the works of piety which it inspires, and for the number of members leading holy lives, certainly has a very strong presumption in its favor,—perhaps even certain proof that it is the Church of Christ.

MANIFESTATIVE SANCTITY. Miraculous power manifested by the performance of undoubted miracles is a positive mark sufficient in itself to make known the true Church of Christ. Since miracles require the direct intervention of God, they are certain and infallible signs of divine approval for any doctrine or institution in whose favor they are wrought. Therefore, even one undoubted miracle wrought under circumstances that make it an approval of any distinctive doctrine or practice of a Church, is proof sufficient that it must be the true Church of Christ. Extraordinary or eminent sanctity must be referred to the miraculous, especially if practiced by many, because such sanctity is not acquired without special assistance from Almighty God. For this reason, personal sanctity was limited in the above paragraph to such as is practiced in the ordinary degree.

§ 3. *Catholicity as a Mark of the Church*

There can be no doubt that catholicity is at least a negative mark, since a church that is not universally spread throughout the world cannot be the Church foretold by the prophets and set forth in the promises of Christ. But is catholicity also a positive mark, so that the true Church may be recognized by the mere

fact of its universal diffusion throughout the world? Some theologians maintain that it is. Straub says that "catholicity, which is both absolute and relative, can belong to the true Church alone; therefore such catholicity is a positive mark."¹ This argument presupposes that the true Church must be relatively catholic, *i. e.*, it must be more wide-spread than any other Christian church. But the necessity for such catholicity cannot be proved from Scripture or tradition, and there seems to be no reason why a false Church might not become universal, even more universal than the true one, at least for a time.

Wilmers holds that catholicity of diffusion is a positive mark when taken in connection with the fact that this diffusion began at Jerusalem. It matters not how widely a church may be diffused, if it did not begin at Jerusalem, it cannot be the Church of Christ.² The fallacy of this argument is immediately apparent to any one who asks himself what Church really began its diffusion at Jerusalem. All the schismatic churches of the East can lay claim to this honor, if material succession alone be considered. Moreover, the circumstance of beginning at Jerusalem belongs to the Apostolicity of the Church rather than to its catholicity.

A third opinion was proposed by De San, who maintained that catholicity is a positive mark, because it is externally manifest in the undying zeal with which the light of the Gospel is constantly spread farther and

¹ "De Ecclesia Christi," Vol. II, n. 1443.

² "De Ecclesia Christi," p. 557.

farther throughout the world. Although a like zeal may be found in false sects, it can never be so ardent nor so fruitful as it is in the true Church, endowed with all the means of sanctification.³ The futility of this opinion is quite evident; comparative degrees of zeal and fruitfulness are not so easily recognized by all. Moreover, zeal and fruitfulness belong not to the catholicity of the Church, but to her sanctity.

It is evident from the above considerations that catholicity in itself is merely a negative mark of the Church; practically, however, it has always been a positive mark, owing to the fact that the one Church alone has ever been truly catholic by universal diffusion throughout the world, and it is probable that this one Church has been relatively more wide-spread at all times than any other Church.

§ 4. *Apostolicity as a Mark of the Church*

Apostolicity of doctrine is equivalent to "preaching the pure word of God," and, therefore, cannot be a mark of the Church; in fact, it is only through the testimony of the Church, already known and accepted, that all the doctrines taught by the Apostles may be known with certainty. Apostolicity of doctrine may serve as a mark of the true Church in individual cases. A person may know from a study of Scripture or tradition that a certain doctrine is undoubtedly Apostolic; he can then easily judge that any Church rejecting this

³ "Tractatus de Ecclesia," p. 123.

doctrine is not the true Church of Christ, and if there be but one Church teaching and professing it, that Church must be the true one.¹

Apostolicity of origin, being necessarily included in that of succession, need not be considered here. Apostolicity, as a mark, is thus restricted to succession, and that a material succession, since legitimacy is not an external quality easily recognized by all, whereas material succession, *i. e.*, an unbroken line of pastors reaching back to the Apostles, can be known even by the unlearned as easily as the succession of civil rulers in the State. But since Apostolicity of material succession may, and probably does, exist in some schismatical churches, it constitutes a negative mark only.

§ 5. *Persecution as a Mark of the Church*

Persecution may serve as a quasi-mark of the Church during the period of preparation prior to the coming of Antichrist. Christ has foretold that His Church must suffer unrelenting hatred and persecution: "*If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated me before you . . . But because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember my word that I said to you: The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you . . . But all these things they will do to you for my name's sake.*"² Again He said: "*They will put*

¹ T. W. Allies, "The See of Peter," Introd.

² John xv, 18-21.

*Manifestation
Sanctity
The only
positive
mark of
His Church.
Miracles*

*you out of the synagogues; yea, the hour cometh that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth a service to God . . . and you shall be hated by all men for my name's sake."*²

As Christ was hated, despised, calumniated, and persecuted in His natural body, so also shall He be in His mystical body, the Church. Therefore a Church that is not thus despised and persecuted, can scarcely be the one which Christ had in mind when He uttered the words quoted above. It is always consoling to realize that those who calumniate the Church and stir up persecution against her, are fulfilling the prophecies of Christ and thus they unwittingly prove her divine character. Thus does "*He that dwelleth in heaven laugh at them; and the Lord deride them.*"³

CONCLUSION

The power of miracles (manifestative sanctity) is the only positive mark whose presence alone is sufficient to identify the true Church of Christ. The other marks, taken separately, are only negative; the presence of one or another is not sufficient proof that the true Church has been found. Taken collectively, however, they furnish infallible proof for the Church in which they are found.

Today there are hundreds of religious organizations claiming to be the Church of Christ, yet we know there

² John xvi, 2, 3; Matt. x, 22.

³ Ps. ii, 4.

can be but one true Church. Knowing the marks which this one true Church must possess, we begin our search for it by examining the different churches one by one. If we chance upon a church with the power of miracles,—the signature of God's own writing,—we look no further; God's approval is sufficient proof. But if examination shows a church to lack any one of the four marks, it must be rejected and the search continued, until a church is found possessing all four. When once this Church is found, further investigation is unnecessary; the true Church has been identified, and the others must be false. This is the investigation to be carried out in the following pages by examining (1) the Catholic Church, (2) the Protestant churches, (3) the Anglican Church, and (4) the schismatic Churches of the East. The Anglican Church will be considered separately, not because it differs essentially from other Protestant churches, but because the High Church party makes special claims to Apostolicity.

ART. III. MARKS OF THE CHURCH APPLIED

§ 1. *The Catholic Church*

A. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH POSSESSES UNITY OF FAITH, WORSHIP, AND GOVERNMENT

a) Unity of Faith. Absolute unity of faith is found in the Catholic Church. This fact is patent to any one who will examine her creeds, the decrees of her councils, her catechisms and other books of instruction,

in which the same doctrines are proposed to each and every member throughout the world. It is also a well-known fact that the Catholic Church demands complete and unqualified acceptance and profession of all her teachings.

b) *Unity of Worship.* The Catholic Church maintains strict unity of worship throughout the world by administering the same Sacraments and by offering the same Sacrifice in all places and at all times. She even maintains unity in many things that are not essential; e. g., in the invocation of Saints, the veneration of relics and images, praying for the dead, and many similar devotions. These facts are obvious to all who will observe them.

c) *Unity of Government.* If there is any one characteristic of the Catholic Church more widely known than another, it is her unity of government; in fact, it is so well-known that Catholics are often unjustly accused of blind obedience to the Church even in civil matters. Unity of government is preserved by the exercise of one supreme authority, to which all Catholics give willing obedience in things spiritual; all bishops are appointed by the Roman Pontiff and rule their dioceses in subjection to him. Every priest in the Church receives authority from a bishop in communion with Rome. All laws for the universal Church are enacted by the one supreme authority, and there is but one supreme judge for the whole Church. Moreover, every part of the Church is in communion with every other part under the direction of the chief pastor, the

Bishop of Rome, just as all members of the body are united under one common head. In other words, there is perfect social unity in the Catholic Church. Père Lacordaire has eloquently portrayed the unity of the Church in these words: "I hear from far and near, from the depths of ages and of generations; I hear the voices which form but one,—the voices of infants, of virgins, of young men, of the aged; of artists, of poets, of philosophers; the voices of princes and nations; the voices of time and space: the deep musical voice of unity! It chants the canticle of the only society of minds found here below; it repeats without ceasing that declaration, the only one to be found which is stable and consolatory: *Credo in unam, sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam.*"¹

B. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH POSSESSES MANIFESTATIVE AND CAUSATIVE SANCTITY

I. MANIFESTATIVE SANCTITY. a) *Miracles.* The sanctity of the Catholic Church is proved by a series of innumerable miracles reaching back to the day when St. Peter cured the lame man at the gate of the Temple.² Even today miracles are frequent in the Church and performed under conditions that make them a confirmation of her doctrines and practices. The many miracles performed every year at Lourdes in France are a divine approval of the veneration which the

¹ "Conferences on the Church," Conf. 29 (Eng. tr.).

² Acts iii, 1 sqq.

Church gives to the Mother of God,³ and the miracle of St. Januarius's blood that takes place at Naples several times each year is a positive approval for the veneration of relics.⁴ These are only a few of the better known miracles taking place in the Church today, and they are mentioned in particular because they are well authenticated by the testimony of eminent men, both Catholic and non-Catholic.

b) *Eminent Sanctity.* The Catholic Church is justly renowned for the eminent sanctity of many of her children. Witness the glorious line of martyrs, confessors and virgins of both sexes, of every age, and from every condition of life that has spread lustre upon the Church from the days of St. Stephen, the first martyr, until the present day! How many youths and virgins, how many men and women has the Church been able to hold up as perfect examples of all virtues! Their very names fill volumes.

Eminent sanctity shines forth daily in the many religious orders of the Church, where the Evangelical Counsels are reduced to daily practice in hospitals, orphanages, and other charitable institutions that dot every country of the globe. Note, too, the many priests and religious who, from pure love of God, give themselves up to a living death in caring for lepers in different parts of the world.⁵

³ Dr. A. Marchand, "The Facts of Lourdes and the Medical Bureau"; E. Le Bec, "Medical Proof of the Miraculous."

⁴ E. P. Graham, "The Mystery of Naples," Herder.

⁵ Cf. Robert L. Stevenson's "Open Letter to Rev. Dr. Hyde"; Charles W. Stoddard, "The Lepers of Molokai."

c) *Wonderful Fecundity.* Along with the eminent sanctity of her children, the wonderful fecundity of the Catholic Church must be classed as a moral miracle attesting her divine mission. Here should be noted her unprecedented propagation throughout the Roman Empire in the first ages of her existence, and her glorious triumph over paganism. In the centuries that followed this triumph, she tamed the fierce barbarians from the North, and reared the present structure of Christian civilization in Europe. In fact, the Catholic Church alone has succeeded in bringing barbarian tribes and nations to civilization and to the faith of Christ. Others have tried, but the only result is extermination. Witness the native tribes of America; wherever the Catholic Church announced the Gospel, the Indians were converted and remain today in the process of civilization. Everywhere else they have practically disappeared.

The civilizing and leavening power of the Catholic Church is evident today in the various pagan lands where converts are being made by the millions, while others are self-admitted failures. In 1897 the secretary of Protestant Missions in India wrote: "The Romanists are advancing by leaps and bounds in Tonquin. . . . Their advance is still greater at present in China and Corea where there are more than a million and an half converts with one thousand priests and eight hundred schools. In India and Ceylon the strides of Romanism are startling and unprecedented."⁶ An-

⁶ Quoted in the *London Tablet*, Jan. 30, 1897.

other non-Catholic wrote some years ago: "The Roman Church in India is gaining ground so rapidly that in many districts it threatens to swamp the Established missions, which it is able to outbid, while elsewhere it has the field to itself."⁷ The progress of the Catholic Church is no less remarkable in Africa where today she numbers ninety bishops, three thousand priests and over three million faithful. The native Protestants of Africa number about four hundred thousand, with little more than half that number reported as "communicants." In China the Catholic Church now has more than two million converts whereas the native Protestants scarcely amount to fifty thousand.⁸

II. CAUSATIVE SANCTITY. It is immediately evident to any investigator of the Catholic Church that her every doctrine and precept, all her practices of devotion, and especially her sacramental system, are eminently fitted to lead men to the practice of virtue and to a life of holiness. This becomes still more evident when it is noted that her members are always holy in exact proportion to their faithfulness to her teachings and precepts. It will be sufficient to call attention to her teaching and practice in regard to marriage and divorce, to the honor she pays to the Blessed Virgin, and to the practice of confession. The Church teaches

⁷ *Church Times*, Jan. 28, 1910.

⁸ Cfr. *Encyclopedia Americana*, art. "China"; *Catholic Encyclopedia*, art. Africa.

that marriage is a Sacrament of the New Law, indissoluble except by death; this sanctifies the union of husband and wife, and protects the morality of the individual, the home and society to a degree that cannot be overestimated.

Lecky, a rationalist, has eloquently set forth the influence of veneration for the Blessed Virgin: "The world is governed by its ideals, and seldom or never has there been one which has exercised a more profound, and, on the whole, a more salutary influence than the medieval conception of the Virgin. For the first time woman was elevated to her rightful position, and the sanctity of weakness was recognized as well as the sanctity of sorrow. . . . The moral charm and beauty of female excellence was for the first time felt. A new type of character was called into being; a new kind of admiration was fostered. Into a hard and ignorant and benighted age this ideal type infused a conception of gentleness and purity unknown to the proudest civilizations of the past. . . . All that was best in Europe clustered around it, and it is the origin of many of the purest elements of our civilization."⁹

The value of confession, even apart from any question of sacramental absolution, has been recognized by many non-Catholics. Leibnitz said: "This whole institution, it cannot be denied, is worthy of divine wisdom; and if, in the Christian religion, there be any ordinance singularly excellent and worthy of admiration,

⁹ W. E. H. Lecky, "Rationalism in Europe," Vol., I, p. 225.

it is this. . . . I believe a pious, prudent, and grave confessor to be a powerful instrument in the hands of God for the salvation of souls."¹⁰

C. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH POSSESSES UNIVERSALITY OF DIFFUSION

The universal diffusion of the Catholic Church is admitted by all. Wherever the name of Christ is heard and revered, there also is the Catholic Church known. There also has she her pastors with faithful subjects in communion with the See of Rome. For this reason she is known preëminently as *the* Catholic Church. Even in the beginning of the fifth century St. Augustine could say: "In the Catholic Church there are many things that justly hold me; . . . among these is the very name itself, which this Church alone among so many heresies has obtained. Even those heretics who wish to be known as Catholics, when asked by a stranger where the Catholics meet for worship, will never point out their own basilica or house of worship."¹¹

The Catholic Church is not only diffused throughout the whole world, but is also more widely diffused than any other Christian denomination, and most probably has always been thus relatively universal. Many theologians insist upon the fact that the Catholic Church numbers more adherents than any other Chris-

¹⁰ "Systema Theologicum."

¹¹ "Contra Epist. Fundament.," P. L., 42, 175.

tian Church, perhaps even more than all the others combined; but, as already noted, this has no bearing on the question of Catholicity, since it is diffusion, not numbers, that makes a Church universal. Simply as a matter of interest it may be stated that H. K. Carroll, a non-Catholic, estimated the Christian population of the world for the year 1918 as follows: Catholics 294,583,000; Protestants 194,102,000; Eastern Schismatics 120,729,000.¹²

ROMAN CATHOLIC. The Church is usually referred to as *Roman Catholic*. The title *Roman*, however, is not used in a restrictive sense, to indicate that the Church exists only in Rome; neither is it used as a distinctive term, intimating that there are other Catholic churches from which this one must be distinguished. The title *Roman* merely points out the fact that Rome is the centre from which all authority in the Church radiates; it is the centre whose circumference occupies the whole world.

D. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH POSSESSES APOSTOLICITY OF SUCCESSION

The unbroken succession of bishops in the Roman See from the days of St. Peter to the present time, is a matter of historical knowledge, admitted by all, and since all parts of the Church are in communion with the See of Rome and derive authority from it, there can be no doubt of Apostolic succession in the whole Church.

¹² H. K. Carroll in the *Encyclopedia Americana*, art. "Christian Church."

CONCLUSION

The four characteristic marks of the Church founded by Christ are completely realized in the Catholic Church of today; therefore she is the one true Church of Christ, the Church commissioned to carry the Gospel and the means of salvation to all nations until the consummation of the world. She has received power and authority to carry out this mission, and all men are obliged to accept her teaching and submit to her authority under pain of eternal damnation. "*If he will not hear the Church let him be as the heathen and the publican.*"¹³

E. OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

OBJECTION I. At the time of the Western Schism the Catholic Church lost her unity for many years by being divided into two, and even three, parties each following a pope of its own choosing.

ANSWER.—The Western Schism caused great harm to the Church in many ways, but it did not affect her unity. After the death of Gregory XI, in 1378, the cardinals proceeded to elect Urban VI as his successor. Three months later, several cardinals claimed the election of Urban to be invalid and selected Robert of Geneva as Pope, under the name of Clement VII. Differences of opinion naturally arose regarding the validity of these elections; some believed Urban VI the

¹³ Matt. xviii, 17.

rightful pope, while others accepted Clement VII. In 1409 an attempt was made to remedy this situation, but the result was disappointing, and matters were made worse by the election of a third claimant, who took the name of Alexander V. Thus matters continued until the Council of Constance, in 1417, when Martin V was elected and recognized by all as the lawful Pope.

At no time during these troubles did any one ever entertain the idea that there were three popes, or that the Church was divided in its government. All admitted that there could be but one legitimate pope, and each party followed the one whom they believed to be the lawfully elected successor of St. Peter. The Church was no more divided by the schism than our own government would be by a disputed election to the *office of presidency*.

OBJECTION II. During the Arian heresy in the fourth century, the Catholic Church ceased to be Catholic or universal, for, as St. Jerome said on one occasion: "The whole world groaned and was surprised to find itself Arian."¹⁴

ANSWER.—These words of St. Jerome are not to be taken literally, as is evident from the circumstances. At the councils of Rimini and Seleucia, in 359, the Arians gained a victory by having a creed adopted in which their errors were not directly condemned. This aided them in the spread of their doctrines, because they could make it appear that the councils had ap-

¹⁴ "Contra Luciferianos"; P. L., 23, 172.

proved them. When hearing of this, St. Jerome used the words quoted in the objection. It is true that the Arians made rapid strides, even many priests and bishops fell into their errors, but the Church never ceased to be truly universal, and most probably continued at all times more wide-spread than the Arian sect, despite the fact that the emperors did all in their power to spread the heresy. St. Athanasius and the bishops of his patriarchate wrote to the Emperor in this matter: "The churches of every nation agree with the Nicene Faith,—those in Spain, Britain, and Gaul; in Italy, Dalmatia and Mysia; in Macedonia, in all Greece and the whole of Africa; in Sardinia, Cyprus, Crete, Pamphylia, Isauria, and Lycia, and in all Egypt and Lybia, Pontus, Cappadocia, and adjacent districts, and in all the eastern churches, except a few who believe with Arius. We have certain knowledge regarding the above-mentioned churches, because we have letters from them, and we know, most religious Emperor, how few they are who contradict this faith."¹⁵

Even granting that these words contain some rhetorical exaggeration, they still show that the Church had not ceased to be truly Catholic by her diffusion throughout the then known world.

OBJECTION III.—The condition of Catholic countries as compared with countries in which Protestantism prevails, clearly proves that Protestantism has far greater influence on the progress and civilization of

¹⁵ St. Athanasius, "Ad Jovianum," quoted in Theodoret's Church History, IV, 3; P. G., 82, 1126.

the world than the Catholic Church, and, therefore, has greater claims to consideration as the true religion of Christ.

ANSWER.—The solution of this objection depends to a great extent upon the meaning attached to progress and civilization. Does it consist in spiritual or material progress? The Church of Christ was commissioned to preach the Gospel and save souls, not to provide material prosperity and bodily comfort. She was not established to build factories, railroads, and steamships, nor to increase the commerce of nations. That is the purpose of civil governments, and progress in these matters depends not upon religion, but upon racial genius, climate, soil, geographical position, and the nature of governments. Religion has only an indirect effect upon material progress. Many heathen nations surrounding Palestine were far more advanced materially than were the Israelites, yet no one would claim this as proof that the religion of those nations was superior to that of the Chosen People.

Nations, like individuals, are often materially prosperous precisely because they have neither religion nor conscience. A church that makes material progress and prosperity the measure of truth cannot be the Church of Him who said: "*Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth, . . . but lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven.*"¹⁶ When it is said that Protestant countries are more prosperous than Catholic countries, it is implied that the Protestant religion has pro-

¹⁶ Matt. vi, 19, 20.

duced this prosperity and, therefore, should be preferred to the Catholic religion. Prosperity and wealth are held out as the motive for accepting it. This is the argument used long ago by Satan when he said: "Behold the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. All these will I give to thee, if falling down thou wilt adore me."¹⁷ Any church that wishes to appropriate this argument of Satan is welcome to it; the Catholic Church has no need for it.¹⁸

§ 2. Protestant Churches

Having discovered that the Catholic Church possesses all the marks of the true Church, it is unnecessary to make further investigation; the true Church has been identified and all others must be rejected as human inventions, having no claim upon our consideration. Yet, for the sake of making our investigations complete, it is well to show that no other church has any claim whatever, since they all lack every single mark of the Church as set forth in the Sacred Scriptures.

I. UNITY. It is obvious to the most casual observer that Protestant churches, whether taken collectively or singly, possess no unity of faith. Such unity is absolutely excluded by their fundamental doctrine of private interpretation in matters of faith. Each one

¹⁷ Matt. iv, 8-9.

¹⁸ On this matter cfr. Father Young, "Catholic and Protestant Countries Compared"; H. G. Graham, "Prosperity Catholic and Protestant"; Balmes, "History of European Civilization."

must decide for himself what doctrines he is to believe, with the result that there are as many different faiths as there are members in the churches. They agree in one thing only,—protesting against the Catholic Church; hence the name *Protestant*. "Protestantism always bears the same name despite the great diversity of faith, and this because the name is purely negative, signifying nothing save renunciation of Catholicism. Hence the less they believe and the more they protest, the more truly do they become Protestants."¹

The total lack of unity of faith in Protestant Churches is well illustrated by the following words of a Presbyterian author: "The catholicity of the Presbyterian Church appears in her one condition of church membership. . . . The applicant is not asked to subscribe to our standards or to assent to our theology. He is not required to be a Calvinist, but only to be a Christian. He is not examined as to his orthodoxy, but only as to his 'faith in and obedience unto Christ.' He may have imperfect notions about the Trinity and the atonement; he may question infant baptism, election, and final perseverance; but if he trusts and obeys Christ as his personal Saviour and Lord, the door of the Presbyterian Church is open to him, and all the privileges of her communion are his."²

As there is no unity of faith, so neither can there be unity of worship in Protestant churches. For example,

¹ J. De Maistre, "Du Pape," IV, 5.

² E. W. Smith, "The Creed of Presbyterians," p. 198.

some hold Baptism to be necessary and religiously look to its proper administration; others reject it as an empty ceremony, having no more value than the initiation ceremonies of a lodge. Some practice infant Baptism, while others reject it as unscriptural. These differences are found, not only among members of the different denominations, but also among the members of one and the same Church.

The lack of unity in government is no less obvious than in faith and worship. No Protestant church even claims to be *the* Church of Christ; each is but a part of the Church universal, yet they are in no way united to form one universal, visible Church. Any attempt at union results in further division, because their fundamental doctrine of private interpretation is a principle of division that continually separates them into an ever increasing multiplicity of sects. The Methodists of this country are now divided into twenty-five distinct churches! And still the division goes on. Some years ago Dr. Stowe said: "Protestantism is a kind of modern Cerberus with a hundred and twenty-five heads, all barking discordantly, and is like the mob of Ephesus. Thoughtful Christians looking on and beholding with sadness this confusion worse confounded, cannot fail to ask: Did our Lord Jesus Christ come on this earth to establish this pitiful mob of debating societies, or a Church of the living God, capable of making itself felt as a pillar and ground of truth?"³

II. SANCTITY. Protestant Churches lack all mani-

³ Dr. Chas. E. Stowe in the *Boston Herald*, Dec. 15, 1905.

festative sanctity; in fact they stoutly deny that the Church has any power of miracles, and they make no pretence to eminent sanctity in their members. They have never produced a saint and claim none. A non-Catholic author, writing of St. Catherine of Siena, said: "The rarity of such saints in Protestantism is probably to the devout mind the strongest argument in favor of Catholic claims."⁴ Protestants have rejected the very means to produce such saints; they ridicule the practice of the Evangelical Counsels, and stigmatize works of supererogation as superstitions. Therefore, as a non-Catholic periodical admitted, "religious orders cannot flourish in Protestant countries. Those who wish to establish such orders must betake themselves to the Church of Rome."⁵

Protestant Churches also lack causative sanctity, except in so far as they have retained Catholic teaching and practices. Every distinctively Protestant doctrine tends directly to break down morality and lessen sanctity in the lives of the people. Witness, for example, the distinctively Protestant teachings on marriage and divorce. The evil results have been incalculable, as all students of social conditions admit. In rejecting confession, Protestants have removed a most powerful influence for good in restraining evil passions. Refusing honor to the Mother of God has resulted logically in a wide-spread denial of the divinity of her Son, and private interpretation of the Bible has brought about

⁴ T. W. Stead, in the *Review of Reviews*, Feb., 1897.

⁵ *The Independent*, Nov. 28, 1895.

the present rejection of inspiration by an ever increasing number outside the Catholic Church. The group of Fundamentalists, who are striving to check the spread of this evil, are acting contrary to Protestant principles. The Modernist group are correct in their contention that they are carrying the principles of the Reformation to their logical conclusions. With justice then has it been said that "the doctrines and morals of Protestantism have been placed in the balance these three hundred years, and have been found wanting."⁶

III. CATHOLICITY. Protestant churches, taken singly, are not universal in any sense of the word. For the most part they are merely national churches strictly limited in their diffusion. Even if taken together as forming one Church,—which they do not,—they can scarcely be called universal in their diffusion.

IV. APOSTOLICITY. With the exception of the Anglican Church, no Protestant church makes any claim to Apostolicity for the very good reason that it could establish no succession beyond the sixteenth century. Moreover most Protestant churches have rejected the very idea of a ministry having any authority to teach and govern other than that derived from the faithful.

§ 3. *The Anglican Church*

All that has been said concerning Protestant churches in general, applies also to the Anglican Church in par-

⁶ Rev. Dr. Percival in the *Nineteenth Century*, Vol. 46, p. 515.

ticular; but we have reserved it for separate treatment because an influential party in that Church lays special claims to Catholicity and Apostolicity by what are known as the Branch Theory and the Theory of Continuity. For convenience sake we include under the term *Anglican* both the Established Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, because the latter is a lineal descendant of the former and holds the same views on the matter in question.

Before beginning an examination of the Anglican claims, it should be noted that such an examination is really unnecessary, because the Anglican Church is notoriously deficient in another essential mark of the Church; it lacks unity of doctrine, and therefore could not be the true Church of Christ even though it possessed Catholicity and Apostolicity, as claimed.

UNITY. Lack of unity of faith in the Anglican communion is proved by the mere fact that it contains three distinct parties, teaching doctrines directly opposed one to another. The *High Church* party is strikingly Catholic in its teaching; it accepts almost every doctrine of the Catholic Church except the infallibility of the Pope. The *Low Church* is thoroughly Protestant in its teachings and practices and rejects nearly all Catholic doctrine as "Romish superstition." The *Broad Church* is rationalistic and makes no definite statement of doctrine. Yet all these parties are recognized as members of the Anglican Church, teaching and professing her approved doctrines! This constitutes her "glorious comprehensiveness," by which

every shade of doctrinal difference is embraced within her fold. Justly, therefore, did Macaulay say that "the religion of the Church of England . . . is in fact a jumble of religious systems without number."¹

There can be no unity because there is no authority to enforce it. "The Church," says an Anglican vicar, "possesses no control over the conscience, mind or spiritual life of its members, save by consent; and even then can only exercise that control indirectly,—by appeal, suggestion, or influence."² "Bishops of the Anglican Communion," says Father Finlay, "can meet together in Lambeth or in Canterbury; and the Anglican Archbishop who holds the cathedral of Anselm and Thomas à Becket will probably be invited to preside over them. But no one has a right to convoke them; they meet because they themselves choose to meet, as the members of a Section on Religion in the British Association; and the outcome of the conference and discussions is entirely without authority. They cannot decide a doctrinal controversy. They cannot determine a point of liturgy. They cannot enact or abrogate a single detail of Church discipline. They know, they have been warned, and they profess, that even a Pan-Anglican Synod can only discuss and offer counsel; it can neither teach nor command authoritatively. There is no living principle of unity in the Anglican, as there is none in the Greek Communion."³

¹ Macaulay, "Essay on Church and State."

² Charles A. Barry, "First Principles of the Church," p. 36.

³ Peter Finlay, S. J., "The Church of Christ," p. 168.

THE BRANCH THEORY. As already noted, the Branch Theory maintains that the Church of Christ consist of three parts or branches,—the Roman, the Greek, and the Anglican, and that consequently the Anglican Church is truly Catholic, since it is a part of the Church universal and a corporate continuation of the Church in England before the Reformation. The following quotation from Father Finlay will show the utter absurdity of this theory: "Though it has been prominently before the world for three-quarters of a century, it finds no one to accept and advocate it outside of the Anglican Communion. A section,—a small minority probably of the Church of England,—maintains the theory. The large majority of Protestant Episcopalians know nothing of it; while Greeks and Roman Catholics repudiate it utterly. Is it likely that the Church of Christ is constituted on a pattern which not one in a hundred of her members will acknowledge? Are we to believe that the true constitution of the Church was hidden from mankind,—from the Church herself,—through nineteen centuries, and was only then to be made known to a little group of Anglican theologians who have failed to persuade any but a handful of their own Communion that their conception of the Church is that of Christ?"⁴

THE CONTINUITY THEORY. According to this theory the Anglican Church is a continuation of the Catholic Church which existed in England before the Refor-

⁴ "Church of Christ," p. 168.

mation; thus she is an integral part of the Church universal and truly Apostolic in her succession, which reaches back in an unbroken line beyond Augustine to the first missionaries who brought the Gospel to the British Isles, perhaps even in the days of the Apostles. She differs only in a few accidental matters from the other *branches* of the Church. "The facts of history," says an Anglican writer, "compel us to assume the absolute identity of the Church of England after the Reformation with the Church of England before the Reformation. . . . No act was done by which legal and historical continuity was broken."⁵

This theory has as little to commend it as the Branch Theory. The facts of history compel us to assume the absolute *lack* of identity between the Church of England before the Reformation and the Church of England after the Reformation because acts were done that *did* break the legal and historical continuity. The year in which continuity was finally broken can be given, as well as the acts and the actors by which it was accomplished.

The Catholic religion had been reestablished in England by Mary, but in 1559, shortly after the accession of Elizabeth, Parliament again rejected the authority of the Pope, declared Elizabeth supreme head of the Church, and reinstated the reformed ritual of Edward VI. An oath recognizing royal supremacy in matters ecclesiastical was demanded of all the bishops. Those who refused to take it were to be deprived of their sees.

⁵ E. A. Freeman, "Disestablishment and Disendowment."

As a result of this action but one bishop was left by the end of that year. The places of the others were filled by men conspicuous for their attachment to the new order of things. Matthew Parker was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, but no Catholic bishop would consecrate him; even Kitchen of Landaff, the only one who took the oath of supremacy, pleaded ill-health to escape the responsibility of consecrating the new pseudo-archbishop. Elizabeth then took matters in hand and commissioned Barlow, Scorey, Coverdale, and Hodgkins to consecrate Parker according to the Edwardine ritual. This act was undoubtedly invalid,⁶ yet every bishop in the Anglican Church derives his orders and succession from Parker.

In 1560 A. D. the ritual was revised and the forty-two Articles reduced to thirty-nine, as at present accepted by the Anglican Church. These articles renounced the authority of the Pope, made Elizabeth head of the Church in England, rejected five Sacraments, the doctrine of Purgatory, the invocation of saints and the veneration of relics, and declared the Mass a blasphemous fable and a vain deceit. It is evident, then, that the faith of the Church was changed in its essential doctrines,—the supremacy of the Pope, the Mass, and the Sacraments. Elizabeth also removed every lawful bishop and filled the sees with pliant tools of her own choice, contrary to all the canons and traditions of

⁶ Cf. Alzog, "Church History," Vol. III, p. 329, note 2 (Eng. ed.); Catholic Encyclopedia, art. "Anglican Orders"; H. C. Semple, S. J., "Anglican Ordinations."

the Church, and had them consecrated by an invalid ceremony. If the Church resulting from these acts be identical with the Church before the change, there is no possibility of destroying continuity. On the same principle the United States of America are still a part of the British Empire, because the change wrought by the American Revolution was no greater in the realm of political life than the revolution caused by Elizabeth in the Church. The American colonies rejected the authority of the English king, ousted his officials, drew up new articles of political faith, and established a supreme authority instead of the rejected authority of the king,—and the result is recognized by all as a distinct and independent government, a new nation, having no legal continuity with the British government and forming no part of it. Elizabeth and her Parliament did the same for the English Church, and the result was a new and independent Church, established, not by Christ but by Parliament,—a Church having no continuity with the ancient Church in England and forming no part of it.

SUCCESSION. The Church of England, having no valid Orders, can have no Apostolic succession in regard to the power of Orders, since this power is transmitted by valid consecration. But even granting her valid Orders, she can have nothing more than material succession, because her whole line is derived from an intruder, who obtained his position contrary to the canons of the Church and, therefore, did not receive

the jurisdiction or authority belonging to the office. A usurper may found a new dynasty; he cannot continue the old.

But for the sake of argument, let it be supposed that all bishops of the Anglican Communion have valid Orders, and that all the bishops of Elizabeth's creation were selected according to the canons of the Church and actually confirmed by the Roman Pontiff; even then they could lay no claim to legitimate succession of jurisdiction, for the simple reason that it would have been lost by their rejection of papal supremacy. Communion with Rome, as we have seen,⁷ is an essential condition for receiving or retaining jurisdiction in the Church. The situation is aptly expressed in the words of St. Optatus of Mileve to the Donatists of Africa: "You should realize, even at this late date, that you are limbs broken from the tree; branches torn from the vine; a stream separated from its source. . . . By the chair of Peter, which is ours, the other marks are proved to be in the holy Catholic Church."⁸

§ 4. *Schismatic Churches of the East*

I. UNITY. The schismatic churches of the East all lack unity of government. What is known as the Orthodox Church of the East is a mere fiction; in reality it is but a number of independent, national churches,

⁷ Cf. above, p. 141.

⁸ "De Schismate Donatistarum," II, 9; P. L., 11, 962.

united only in their opposition to Rome. Neither have they unity of faith, since there is no supreme authority to teach or govern. Under such conditions, differences and changes in doctrine are inevitable. The rejection of the deuterocanonical books of Scripture may be cited as an example of changed teaching. The Eastern churches always numbered these among the inspired books of Scripture until Prokopovitch rejected them at the beginning of the eighteenth century. There was no authority to correct this error, and in the course of a few years it became the official doctrine of the schismatic churches. Even the official creeds, *e. g.*, the creed of Moghila and that of Dositheus, teach contradictory doctrines on many important points,¹ and in many cases their official teaching is contradicted by their liturgies.

II. CATHOLICITY. The schismatic churches of the East, even when considered as one church, are in no sense Catholic or universal in their diffusion. They are limited almost entirely to Asia Minor, Egypt, Abyssinia, and eastern Europe.

III. APOSTOLICITY. Most of the Orthodox churches of the East have valid Orders, and to that extent may be called Apostolic; they have Apostolic succession of the powers of Orders. In some cases they may also have a *material* succession of bishops from Apostolic times, but this avails them nothing, since they lack both unity and Catholicity,—two essential

¹ Cf. D'Alès, "Dictionnaire Apologétique," art. "Grecque, Église."

marks of the true Church. In no case do they have legitimate succession; there is no transmission of jurisdiction because they have withdrawn from communion with Rome, the centre and source of all jurisdiction.

PART II

DOGMATIC

ORGANIZATION AND POWERS
OF THE CHURCH

"BEHOLD THE TABERNACLE OF GOD WITH MEN, AND HE
WILL DWELL WITH THEM. AND THEY SHALL BE HIS
PEOPLE,

—APOCALYPSE XXI, 3.

INTRODUCTION

In Apologetics, the institution and nature of the Church is considered only in so far as necessary to determine which of the many Christian churches existing today is the true Church of Christ. When this Church has been identified, dogmatic theology proceeds to investigate more thoroughly its organization and powers. This investigation is most easily carried out by studying the Church as set forth on the pages of Scripture, and as she has existed through the centuries. The prophecies of old and the words of Our Lord give us the plans,—the blue-prints, as it were, according to which the Church was established and built up; the writings of the Fathers and the official acts of the Church herself show us what she has been in every age since the days of the Apostles, who actually carried out the organization according to the plans laid down for them by Christ, the Divine Architect.

Complete and systematic knowledge of a thing is best obtained by studying its various *causes*,—*efficient*, *final*, *material*, and *formal*. The *efficient* cause of a thing is the agent whose activity brings it into being; the *final* cause is the purpose for which it is brought into being. The *material* and *formal* causes are the constitutive elements,—the material of which a thing is made

and that by which the material becomes this particular thing instead of something else. For example, the material cause of a watch is the metal from which it is made; the formal cause is the shape and arrangement of parts by which the metal becomes a watch. Applying these notions to the Church, it is evident that Christ is its efficient cause, and the salvation of souls its proximate final cause. The members of whom it is composed are the material cause, and the bonds by which they are united to form the particular society known as the Church of Christ constitute the formal cause. But since all the bonds by which men are constituted a society depend upon *authority* for their preservation, we may, for all practical purposes, consider authority as the formal cause of the Church.

Since the efficient and final causes of the Church have been sufficiently considered in the first part of our work, we may now pass on to a study of its material and formal causes, *i. e.*, the members who constitute it and the bonds by which they are united. But no study of the Church would be complete unless it took into consideration St. Paul's conception of it as the *Body of Christ*. Finally, the Church must exist in the world side by side with civil authority; therefore, it is necessary to consider their mutual relations. Hence this second part of our work will consider, (1) the Church as the mystical body of Christ, (2) its members, (3) its authority, (4) its ministry, *i. e.*, those in whom authority resides and by whom it is exercised, (5) the relations between Church and State.

CHAPTER V

THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST

In describing the Church as *the body of Christ*, St. Paul sets forth its real nature in a manner that could never be known from a mere study of its external organization and powers. When understood in this light, the Church stands out in all the glory of her divine majesty, and the ineffable union of her members with Christ is clearly perceived. This conception of the Church also sheds much light upon other doctrines, particularly upon the nature and operation of the Sacraments. "The Apostle surely was well aware how wonderful was the truth which he was communicating when he affirmed Christians to be members of Christ's *body from His Flesh and from His Bones*; for he himself declared it to be *a great mystery*.¹ . . . The mystical Body of Christ has an organic life like His Body natural; for Christ was personally Incarnate in that Body which was slain, but by power and presence will He be Incarnate in His Church till the end of the world. As the Gospels are the record of His Presence in the one, so is Church History that of His Presence in the other."²

¹ Ephes. v, 30-32.

² B. I. Wilberforce, "Principles of Church Authority," p. 29.

The Church as the body of Christ must be a *living* body; therefore, it is necessary to inquire, (1) in what sense it is the *body* of Christ, and (2) what is its life-giving principle; its *soul*.

ART. I. THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST

We often speak of a *body* of men and we refer to societies as *bodies*; in fact, certain organizations are known officially as *corporations*, from the Latin *corpus*—*a body*. In the days of St. Paul such usage was unknown. The Greek *σῶμα* (*body*) was never used in reference to a society, nor *κεφαλή* (*head*) for its chief ruler. In Latin *corpus* (*body*) was sometimes used to designate a band of soldiers, but the modern use of the word to designate a society seems to be in imitation of St. Paul. It is evident, then, that the Apostle wished to convey some special doctrine when he called the Church a *σῶμα*; it is no mere figure of speech. There is, of course, a striking similarity between the Church as a society and a human body; both are composed of members, each having its own peculiar duties or functions, yet all working together for the good of the whole. "*As in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office. So we being many, are one body in Christ and every one members one of another.*"¹ But St. Paul goes beyond this mere external similarity by which any society may be called a *body*; he not only compares the Church to a human

¹ Rom. xiii, 4, 5.

body, but also calls it the *body of Christ*: "*He gave some apostles and some prophets . . . for the edifying of the BODY OF CHRIST.*"² Elsewhere he says: "*Now you are the BODY OF CHRIST and members of member.*"³ Again he says: "*For as the body is one and hath many members; and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ*" [*i. e.*, the Church].⁴ Writing to the Colossians, he says: "*And he is head of the body, the Church.*"⁵

The mere fact that Christ is Head of the Church is not sufficient to make it His body. A king or ruler is often called the *head* of his people, but they are never referred to as his *body*, neither are they called his *members*. This proves that the bonds of union in the Church are far different from those found in mere human societies. The members of a human society are united to their head by moral bonds only, *i. e.*, by mutual rights and duties; there is no physical connection of member with member, or of members with the head. In the Church, the members are united one with another, and all with Christ, their Head, by the real physical⁶ bond of supernatural grace flowing from the Head into each and every member, thus making them partakers of His divine nature: "*He hath given us*

² Ephes. iv, 11, 12.

³ 1 Cor. xii, 27.

⁴ 1 Cor. xii, 12.

⁵ Col. i, 13.

⁶ The word *physical* is here opposed to *moral*, and therefore does not imply anything material.

most great and precious promises, that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature."⁷ So real is this union between Christ and His faithful that St. Paul could say: "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me."⁸ For the same reason he says that by Baptism we are *concorporated* with Christ, being engrafted, as it were into His body.⁹

According to this doctrine of St. Paul, the union between Christ and the Church must be in every respect analogous to that between head and members in the human body, where the head holds the position of eminence and direction, exercises a vivifying influence, and together with the members forms one complete whole, the body:

a) *Preëminence*. In the human body the head occupies the most prominent position, being placed above all other members to guard and direct them. In like manner, Christ occupies the position of preëminence; He sits at the right hand of God the Father, whence He looks out, as it were, upon His Church, to guard and direct it: "Above all principality, and power, and virtue, and domination, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And He hath subjected all things under his feet, and hath made him head over all the Church which is his body, and the fulness of him who is filled all in all."¹⁰

⁷ 2 Pet. i, 4.

⁸ Gal. ii, 20.

⁹ Rom. vi, 5 (Greek text).

¹⁰ Ephes. i, 21-23.

The head also excels all other members of the body, particularly because it contains the brain, the seat of all the senses and the intellectual faculties which direct every bodily power and all their activities. So also does Christ, in His divine perfection, excel by far every other member of His mystical Body, whose every power and activity He directs. "Our Head intercedes for us at the right hand of the Father; some He receives as members; some He punishes, others He cleanses; some He consoles, others He creates; some He calls, others He recalls; some He corrects, others He reinstates."¹¹ St. Paul compares Christ's fostering care for His Church to that of a bridegroom for his bride: "Christ also loved the Church and delivered himself up for it, that he might sanctify it . . . that he might present it to himself a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish . . . for no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it; so also Christ doth his Church, because we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones."¹²

b) *Vivifying Influence*. The vitalizing forces of the human body reside principally in the head, whence impulses go out along the tiny nerve filaments to every cell, directing its activities and thus enabling it to discharge its proper functions. In like manner, impressions received in any portion of the body are carried back along the nerve fibres to the brain. Any

¹¹ St. Augustine, "Enarratio in Ps.," lxxxv, 5; P. L., 37, 1085.

¹² Ephes. v, 25 sq.

member cut off from this union with the head by a severance of its nerves, soon decays and ceases to be a member of the body. So also in the Church, the vivifying power of grace resides in Jesus Christ, its Head, whence it flows into every member, thus uniting him with Christ and enabling him to perform supernatural acts. "I am the vine," says Christ, "and you the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without me you can do nothing. If any one abide not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither."¹³ As the branches of a vine draw from it the life-giving sap, so do the members of Christ's mystical body draw from Him the life-giving principle of grace. This is done principally in the Sacraments, especially in the Holy Eucharist, where we are corporally united with Christ, as St. Paul explains: "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?"¹⁴

c) *Intimate Union.* In the material body, head and members are physiologically united to form one complete whole; neither the head nor the trunk is complete without the other. In like manner the Church is so united with Christ as Head that St. Paul does not hesitate to call the resulting whole by the very name of Christ himself: "As the body is one and hath many

¹³ John xv, 5-6.

¹⁴ 1 Cor. x, 16.

members; and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ."¹⁵ Here the Apostle plainly applies the name *Christ* to the Church. In another place he says that we *grow together* in Christ as the members of a natural body with their head: "Doing the truth in charity we may in all things grow up in him who is the head, even Christ from whom the whole body being compacted and fitly jointed together, by what every joint supplieth according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in charity."¹⁶ These words represent Christ as dwelling within the Church, where He operates through every joint and member, that we all may grow together with Him (*concrescamus cum illo*), and be ever more closely united with Him through charity. The Church, then, is not merely a society of men instituted by Christ and subject to His authority; it is also a society of men so intimately and physically united with Him that it may be called the *Body of Christ* or *Christ Himself*.

THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST. St. Paul also calls the Church the *fulness of Christ* (*plenitudo Christi*), for he says: "And he hath subjected all things under his feet, and hath made him head over all the Church which is his body and the fulness of him who is filled all in all."¹⁷ St. Thomas explains this as follows: "If

¹⁵ 1 Cor. x, 12.

¹⁶ Ephes. iv, 15.

¹⁷ Ephes. i, 22-23.

any one should ask, why the natural body has such varied members,—hands, feet, mouth, and the like,—we reply: That they may serve the different operations proceeding from the soul as their principle and cause . . . The body was made for the soul, not the soul for the body; therefore, the natural body is the *fulness* (or complement) of the soul. Unless the body be complete in all its members, the soul could not completely perform its varied operations. So also with Christ and the Church, which was instituted on His account and is, therefore, rightly called His *fulness*.”¹⁸ The Church is the instrument in which and through which Christ ordinarily exercises His divine power in the world.

MYSTICAL BODY. The Church is called the *mystical* body of Christ, to distinguish it from a natural physical body on the one hand, and from a mere moral body on the other. The word *mystical* shows that the Church is not a body hypostatically united to the Word after the manner of Christ's human nature. It also shows that the Church is not a merely natural society, in which the members are united to their head by the simple bonds of rights and duties. The Church far surpasses such societies, because her members are actually and physically united to Christ by means of supernatural grace. The Church is called a *mystical* body also because many mysteries of faith underlie this union with Christ,—a union which “*the sensual man per-*

¹⁸ “In Ephes.,” c. i, Lec. 8.

ceiveth not”;¹⁹ it can be known by faith alone.²⁰

COROLLARIES.—I. Channels of Grace. The natural body is equipped with various systems of organs for carrying on the processes of life. The most important of these are the circulatory system and the nervous system. The former consists of a wonderful net-work of arteries, veins, and capillaries, through which the life-bearing stream of blood flows to every cell of the body. This system is regulated in its every part by a net-work of nerves, which have their common centre in the brain. In the mystical body of Christ the Sacraments are the arteries through which the life-giving streams of grace flow into each and every soul. For this reason they are often called the *channels of grace*. The nervous system of the natural body is here replaced by the ministerial power of the Church; her priests participate in the priesthood of Christ to direct the flow of grace through the Sacraments which they administer.

II. The Second Adam. St. Paul's conception of the Church as the mystical body of Christ is intimately connected with the doctrine of original sin, upon which he insists so strongly. Adam was endowed with supernatural gifts, not only as an individual, but also as head of the whole human family. Eve was formed from his side that this “bone of his bone and flesh of

¹⁹ 1 Cor. ii, 14.

²⁰ Cf. Dorsch, “De Ecclesia Christi,” p. 364; Hurter, “Compendium Theol. Dogmat.,” Vol. I, n. 210; B. I. Wilberforce, “Principles of Church Authority,” ch. i.

his flesh" might become the mother of all living, who would thus form one body with Adam as its head. Every member of that body was to participate in the blessings bestowed upon its head, but by Adam's disobedience those blessings were lost, and we as members of his body share in his guilt as well as in his loss: "*By one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passes upon all men, in whom all have sinned.*"²¹ We are members of a diseased body, and the history of mankind is the history of that body reaching out through time and space, with its deepening malady of sin in the individual and in society. This is the *mystery of original sin*: without any act or will on our part we share in the guilt of our common head. But "where the obscurity of the fall was deepest, the light of the restoration is brightest; and where the sentence was most severe, the grace was most wonderful."²² The divine Word assumed human nature in order to become a second Adam,—a second head of the human family: "*The first man Adam was made into a living soul; the last Adam into a quickening spirit.*"²³

The Church formed from the side of Christ, "bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh," becomes the mother of a new race, who also form a body with Christ as Head, and "as there is a unity of the fallen Adam . . . so much the more is there a unity of the second Adam,

²¹ Rom. v, 12.

²² T. W. Allies, "Formation of Christendom," Part II, p. 78.

²³ 1 Cor. xv, 45.

which is not a collection of individuals, but a body with its Head."²⁴ As in the mystical body of Adam we inherit his guilt without any fault of our own, so likewise in the mystical body of Christ we inherit His graces without any merits on our part. "*Where sin abounded, grace did more abound.*"²⁵ In the history of the Church we see the body of the second Adam reaching out into time and space with its ever increasing blessings for the individual and for society. Eve still bears children of men to the first Adam, but the Church bears children of Christ to the second Adam. "These are not two mysteries, but one, unfathomable in both its parts of justice and mercy; but the whole history of the human race bears witness to the first, and the whole history of the Christian people, to the second . . . Our Lord stands in the midst of His Church visibly forming from day to day and from age to age that Body of His which reaches through the ages. He takes from Himself and gives to us. He incorporates Himself in His children. He grows up in us, and by visible streams from His heart maintains the life first given."²⁶

ART. II. THE SOUL OF THE CHURCH

"The Church," says Leo XIII, "is not something dead; it is the body of Christ endowed with supernat-

²⁴ T. W. Allies, "Formation of Christendom," Part II, p. 79.

²⁵ Rom. v, 20.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Part II, p. 102.

ural life.”¹ Therefore, the Church must possess the two elements essential to every living body,—it must have an external organism and an internal principle of life,—a body and a soul. In the Mystical Body of Christ, the external organism is the Church, considered merely as a society of faithful with Christ as their Head. It possesses all the organs necessary for the vital functions of such a body; it has Sacraments, a Sacrifice, an organized hierarchy, authority, and various institutions to promote supernatural life. But all these are as nothing unless they be animated by a life-giving principle. There must be a *soul* to vivify them with supernatural life and constitute them the Mystical Body of Christ, just as the human soul vivifies the natural body of man and constitutes it a human body.

The vital activities of the Church consist in the distribution of supernatural grace to her members and the supernatural acts performed by them through its aid. The principle or source of these activities can be none other than the Holy Ghost, by whom “the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts,”² for to Him is appropriated the work of sanctification. Therefore the Holy Ghost is the *Soul* of the Church; the principle of supernatural life, who unites with the external organism of the Church to make it a living body, a divine body, the Body of Christ. For this reason St. Augustine says: “What the soul is to the body, that the Holy Ghost is to the body of Christ, which is

¹ Encyclical “*Satis cognitum*,” July 29, 1896.

² Rom. v, 5.

the Church. What the Holy Ghost does in the whole Church, that the soul does in all the members of each body.”³ The Holy Ghost is the *informing element* in the Mystical Body of Christ, and its *vital principle*.

a) *Informing Principle*. In the language of Scholastic philosophy, the *informing principle*, or *formal cause* of a thing is that constitutive part which unites with the material element to form a complete entity of a particular kind. A human soul, for example, is the *informing principle* that unites with a material body to form the one complete entity, a man. The soul does not act upon the body from without, but dwells within and unites with every part to vivify it and to coordinate it with every other part. The Holy Ghost *informs* the Church in a similar manner; He dwells within it by a real substantial presence and is, in a sense, substantially united with its every member. The Church, taken as a society, is the material element, the organism whose every member is vivified by the indwelling presence of the Holy Ghost and through Him united with every other member and with Christ the Head, thus constituting the Mystical Body of Christ. This is the teaching of St. Paul who says: “*Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*”⁴ Again he says: “*And because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying; Abba, Father.*”⁵ Christ

³ “Sermon,” 267, 4; P. L., 38, 1213.

⁴ 1 Cor. iii, 16.

⁵ Gal. iv, 6.

himself also promised that the Holy Ghost should dwell with His Church for all time: "*And I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you forever. . . . He shall abide with you and shall be in you.*"⁶

The early Fathers are explicit in their teaching on this subject. *St. Gregory Nazianzen* says: "Now the Holy Ghost is given more perfectly, for He is no longer given by His [mere] operation, as of old, but is present with us, so to speak, and converses with us in a *substantial* manner."⁷ *St. Cyril of Alexandria* says: "The Holy Ghost works in us by Himself, truly sanctifying us and uniting us to Himself . . . makes us partakers of the divine nature."⁸ Another ancient author says: "The holy universal Church is one body constituted under Christ the Head . . . and as the soul is one which quickens the various members of the body, so the Holy Spirit quickens and illuminates the whole Church. For as Christ, who is the Head of the Church, was conceived by the Holy Ghost, so the holy Church which is His Body, is filled with the same Spirit, that it may have life, and is confirmed by His power that it may subsist in the bond of one faith and charity."⁹ Therefore, as Cardinal Manning says: "We are under the personal direction of the Third Person as truly as the Apostles were under the guidance

⁶ John xiv, 16-17.

⁷ "Oratio in Pentecosten"; P. G., 36, 443.

⁸ "Thesaurus de Trinitate"; P. G., 75, 593.

⁹ "Expositio in Ps. Poenit." (author unknown); P. L., 79, 602.

of the Second. The presence of the Eternal Son by incarnation, was the centre of their unity; the presence of the Eternal Spirit, by the incorporation of the mystical body, is the centre of unity for us."¹⁰

b) *Vital Principle*. All our vital activities,—acts of intellect and will, sensation, and even the bodily functions of nourishment and growth,—proceed in some way from the soul as their ultimate source. In like manner all activities in the Mystical Body of Christ proceed from the Holy Ghost: "*There are diversities of graces but the same Spirit . . . to one indeed by the Spirit is given the word of wisdom; and to another, the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another, faith in the same Spirit; to another, the grace of healing in one Spirit; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, the discerning of spirits; to another, interpretation of speeches. But all these things one and the same Spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as he will; for the body is one, and hath many members; and all the members of the body whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ.*"¹¹ In this passage St. Paul represents the Church as the body of Christ, whose members have varied functions to perform, but the Holy Ghost is the source of all power to perform them; from Him flows the diversities of graces. All our supernatural virtues find their source in the graces of the Holy Ghost: "*The fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace,*

¹⁰ "Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost," p. 68.

¹¹ 1 Cor. xii, 7-12.

patience, . . . mildness, faith, modesty, continency."¹² Even the simplest prayer comes only from a soul united in some manner with the Holy Ghost, for "*no man can say the Lord Jesus but by the Holy Ghost,*"¹³ *who also helpeth our infirmity. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit himself asketh for us with unspeakable groanings.*"¹⁴

St. Augustine aptly describes the office of the Holy Ghost in His capacity as *Soul* of the Church. He says: "The spirit by which man lives is called the soul. Now see what the soul does in the body; it gives life to all the members, it sees through the eyes, hears through the ears, smells through the nostrils; with the tongue it speaks, with the hands it works, with the feet it walks. It is present in every member to give it life; it appor-tions to every part its proper function. . . . What the soul is to the body, that the Holy Ghost is to the Church. . . . Through some He works miracles, in others He speaks truth, in others He preserves virginity. In some He does one thing, in others another thing, but each has his proper task, yet all alike live by Him."¹⁵

A similarity between the soul of our natural body and the Soul of the Church is seen even in the bodily func-tions of assimilation and growth. Under the direc-tion of the soul, food is prepared and received into the

¹² Gal. v, 22, 23.

¹³ 1 Cor. xii, 3.

¹⁴ Rom. viii, 26.

¹⁵ "Sermon," 267, 4; P. L., 38, 1231.

To be animated by Holy Ghost one must belong
to the Church

body, where it is digested and assimilated by activities which proceed likewise from the soul; the food then becomes an integral part of the body, united to the soul and vivified by it. In like manner the Holy Ghost pre-pares men by His graces for union with the Church; through Baptism He unites them to Himself and makes them members of Christ's Mystical body: "*For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body.*"¹⁶

COROLLARIES.—I. *Creation of the Mystical Body.* The formation of the Mystical Body of Christ bears a striking similarity to the creation of the first man. Adam's body was formed from the slime of the earth and did not become man until God breathed into it the living soul. The Church was instituted by Christ, when He sent forth the Apostles with authority to teach, govern and sanctify, but it remained a lifeless body, as it were, until Christ ascended to the Father and breathed upon it the Spirit of Life; the Holy Ghost descended upon the Church and it became a living body,—the Mystical Body of Christ. Hence the com-ing of the Holy Ghost on that first Pentecost was in reality the creation of the Church.

There is another noteworthy parallel between the formation of Christ's natural body and that of His Mystical Body. When the Word was about to assume human form, the angel announced to the chosen Virgin: "*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And there-fore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be*

¹⁶ 1 Cor. xii, 13.

called the Son of God."¹⁷ Before ascending into Heaven, Our Lord makes a similar announcement to His Apostles and disciples: "You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you . . . I send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay you in the city till you be endued with power from on high."¹⁸

The natural body was formed by the action of the Holy Ghost within the body of the Virgin Mary; the Mystical Body, by the same Spirit acting within the little band or body of Apostles and disciples.

II. *Indissoluble Union.* Before the coming of the Holy Ghost on Pentecost, He had been united with individual souls by His work of enlightening and sanctifying, but this union was conditioned upon the coöperation and fidelity of individuals. His union with the Church is an indissoluble union of personal and substantial indwelling. The union with individual souls is still conditional; it still depends upon fidelity to grace; but the union with the Church is unconditional and indissoluble; "The Father shall give you another Paraclete that he may abide with you for ever."¹⁹ Individuals may fail; the Church cannot fail. "Individuals may fall from it, as multitudes have fallen; provinces and nations, particular churches may fall from it; but the body still remains, its unity undivided, its life indefectible. . . . The line of faith, hope and charity is never dissolved. The threefold cord cannot be

¹⁷ Luke i, 35.

¹⁸ Acts i, 8; Luke xxiv, 49.

¹⁹ John xiv, 16-17.

broken, and the ever-blessed Trinity always inhabits His tabernacle upon earth,—the souls of the elect who "are builded together into an habitation of God the Spirit."²⁰ From this indissoluble union of Body, Head and indwelling Spirit flow all the attributes and properties of the Church,—unity, sanctity, authority, infallibility and the like.

III. *Membership.* There is a widely accepted theory that the soul of the Church is wider in extent than the body; that many persons belong to the soul of the Church who are in no wise connected with her external organization. This theory seems to have been invented to explain the axiom "Out of the Church no salvation,"²¹ but it is not tenable if we carry out the doctrine of the Mystical Body. In the natural body nothing pertains in any way to the soul unless it be physiologically connected with the body. Once a member is severed from the body, it ceases to be animated by the soul; it loses all life and immediately decays. In like manner, any part of the body that ceases to receive any life-giving influence from the soul, also decays and sloughs off; it ceases to be a part of the body. Now, since the Church is an organic body, vivified by the Holy Ghost as its life-giving principle, no person can belong to the one unless he belongs also in some degree to the other. He who belongs to the soul of the Church, must therefore also belong to her body,

²⁰ Cardinal Manning, "Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost," p. 74; Ephes. ii, 22.

²¹ See below, p. 240 sq. for an explanation of this axiom.

and he who belongs to her body, must also belong to her soul. A member may be diseased, because the life-giving influence of the soul is impeded or lessened; but once all influence ceases, the member is dead,—he is no longer a portion of Christ's Mystical Body.

The Fathers of the Church strongly insist upon this doctrine. For example, St. Augustine says: "But see what ye have to beware of, to watch over, and to fear. In the body of man it may happen that a member, the hand, the finger or foot may be cut off. Does the soul follow the severed member? While it was in the body, it was alive; cut off, its life is lost. So a man is a Christian and a Catholic while he is alive in the body; cut off, he becomes a heretic. The Holy Ghost does not follow the amputated limb."²²

²² "Sermon," 267; P. L., 38, 1231. For further information on the subject of this chapter see T. W. Allies, "Formation of Christendom," Part II, Ch. viii; Cardinal Manning, "The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost," Ch. I.

CHAPTER VI

MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

In studying man, we may turn our attention to the nature and powers of the soul, or we may examine the organic structure of his body and investigate the functions of its various parts. Finally, we may investigate the manner in which body and soul are united, the action of one upon the other and the nature of the composite being resulting from their union. The striking analogy between the Mystical Body of Christ and the natural body of man suggests a similar method of treatment for both. The nature of the mystical body resulting from the union of the Church with Christ as its Head, and with the Holy Ghost as its Soul, was considered in the preceding chapter. This and the following chapters are devoted to the *anatomy* and *physiology* of the Church: the one considers its organic structure, *i. e.*, the members who compose it and the manner in which they are united to constitute the Church of Christ; the other investigates the acts by which all conspire to a common end and the power or authority by which these acts are performed.

The members of the Church constitute its material cause; the authority by which their union into a society is preserved and directed, may be considered the formal

cause. The material cause of a society is either *proximate* or *remote*: the former consists of those who actually compose the society; the latter, those who are eligible for membership. The whole human race constitutes the remote matter for the Church, since it was established for the salvation of all men, regardless of race, color, or condition. The proximate matter of the Church consists of those who fulfill the necessary conditions of membership and thereby become constituent parts of her organization.

In order to arrive at a proper conception of these matters, it is necessary (1) to consider some errors regarding the conditions of membership in the Church, (2) to establish the true conditions, (3) to point out those who certainly do not belong to the Church, (4) to consider certain classes whose membership is doubtful, and (5) to prove the necessity of membership in the Church.

ART. I. FALSE CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

Wyclif, Huss, and Calvin taught that none but the predestined¹ are members of the Church. According to Wyclif and Huss all the predestined without exception

¹ God decreed from all eternity that those who, by their own free will, cooperate with His grace and keep His commandments, should be saved. In His infinite knowledge, He knew from all eternity who would thus freely cooperate and be saved. In this sense it can be said that God has predestined us to eternal life or eternal damnation. Calvin taught that every man is predestined to Heaven or hell regardless of his merits or demerits. No one is predestined in this sense.

belong to the Church; according to Calvin, only such as are predestined to accept the true faith of Christ. Luther taught that all the just, and they alone, belong to the Church; he thus made the state of grace the one necessary condition for membership in the Church. This seems to be the prevailing doctrine among Protestants of the present day, at least among those who maintain that the true Church of Christ is invisible. The visible churches may contain sinners, but not the Church invisible.

§ 1. *Predestination as a Condition*

Thesis.—Predestination is not a condition for membership in the Church; much less is it the only condition

This thesis is an article of faith, as appears from the condemnation of the following propositions at the Council of Constance: "There is but one holy and universal Church, *i. e.*, the Church which consists of all the predestined," and "The grace of predestination is the bond by which the Church and all its members are indissolubly joined to Christ the Head."¹

PROOF. *a)* It has been proved that the Church is essentially an external, visible society; therefore, all members of this visible society are members of the Church. But predestination is not a condition for membership in this visible society, as Christ himself teaches by the parable of the wheat and the cockle.

¹ Denzinger, nn. 627, 647.

The field is the Church, the wheat and the cockle are the members, who will not be separated until the day of judgment. The cockle to be gathered up and burned at the harvest cannot be those who are predestined to eternal life, yet they too are represented as members of the Church, since the cockle continues to grow *in* the field together with the wheat. Likewise, in the parable of the net cast into the sea, the bad fish are as truly a part of the draught taken as the good, yet they cannot be those destined to eternal life, since they are to be separated from the good at the shore, *i. e.*, on the day of judgment. In the parable of the banquet, the man cast forth into the darkness because he had not on a wedding garment could not have been predestined, yet he was actually a guest and partook of the banquet as really as those who were properly arrayed for the occasion.²

b) If predestination were the only condition for membership in the Church, it would follow that all who are predestined to eternal life, are actually members of the Church, although they may be Mahometans, pagans, or even atheists at present. It would also be useless to send missionaries to pagan lands, since all those who are predestined to be saved are already members of the Church.

c) The predestined are known to God alone; therefore, the Church must be invisible if none but the predestined belong to it. Pastors could not recognize their flock, nor the flock its pastors. St. Paul's admonition

² Matt. xiii, 24 sq; xxii, 11 sqq.

to the pastors of Ephesus would have been useless: "Take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops to rule the Church of God."³ All authority would be impossible and the duty of obedience would cease. Hence Calvin and Luther were strictly logical when they taught, contrary to the express words of Christ, that the Church is invisible.

§ 2. *The State of Grace as a Condition*

Thesis.—The state of grace is not a condition for membership in the Church

This also seems to be a defined doctrine of the Church, as appears from the condemnation of several propositions that at least imply the necessity of sanctifying grace for membership in the Church. Among these may be mentioned the following condemned by Clement XI: "A mark of the Christian Church is that it is Catholic, comprising, as it does, all the angels of heaven and all the elect and just on earth during all the centuries"; and "The Church, which is Christ entire, has the Word Incarnate as Head and all the just as members."¹

PROOFS. a) This theory also destroys the Church by making it invisible, since the just as well as the predestined can be known only to God. It seems probable that Luther and his followers adopted this doctrine

³ Acts xx, 28.

¹ Denzinger, n. 1424.

when they were forced to accept the theory of an invisible Church, as mentioned above.² At any rate, the two doctrines are so intimately related that either one logically leads to the other.

b) Holy Scripture plainly teaches that sinners will always be found among the members of Christ's Church on earth. The parables of the wheat and the cockle, of the good and bad fish, and of the man without a wedding garment, show that just and unjust, saints and sinners will be found mingled together in the Church until the end of the world, for then only will "*the Son of man send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all scandals, and them that work iniquity.*"³ Those who work iniquity cannot be gathered out of the kingdom, unless they be *in* the kingdom.

St. Paul admonishes Timothy how to conduct himself toward the faithful. He says: "*In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some indeed unto honor, but some unto dishonor.*"⁴ The vessels *unto honor* are the just; those *unto dishonor*, the unjust, as is evident from the words which immediately follow those just quoted: "*If any man, therefore, shall cleanse himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and profitable to the Lord, prepared unto every good work.*" According to St. Paul, therefore, the great house of the

² See above, pp. 73.

³ Matt. xiii, 41.

⁴ 2 Tim. ii, 20-23.

Church contains vessels unto honor and vessels unto dishonor, *i. e.*, both saints and sinners.

c) The very purpose for which the Church was instituted would be in a large measure frustrated if all sinners were excluded from membership; the Sacraments, the greatest means of sanctification, would have to be denied them, and the Church's influence over them would be indirect and of slight effect. We cannot conceive that Christ founded a Church to save all men, and at the same time excluded those who stand most in need of its ministrations.

§ 3. *Objections Considered*

OBJECTION I.—The Church could not be holy if sinners were numbered amongst her members.

ANSWER.—This objection has been answered in connection with the holiness of the Church.¹ It may be noted, however, that the personal sanctity of the Church need not be perfect, and may vary from time to time, but can never be entirely lost. There will always be a large number of holy persons in the Church, even though the sinners may at times outnumber them.

OBJECTION II.—No one can be a member of Christ and a member of Satan at the same time, yet St. John says: "*He that commiteth sin is of the devil.*"²

ANSWER.—A person cannot belong to two societies that are opposed to each other, but he may belong to a

¹ See above, pp. 108.

² 1 John iii, 8.

society and yet act in a manner derogatory to it. A sinner belongs to the Church, because he retains at least the supernatural gifts of faith and hope, and preserves the other bonds of union; he belongs to the devil in so far as he imitates him in his actions. A sinner does not become a member of the devil in the same sense that he is a member of Christ, because the devil has no mystical body; his imitators form no real society.

OBJECTION III.—When speaking of certain sinners, St. John says: "*They went out from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have remained with us.*"³ These words leave no doubt that these sinners were not members of the Church; *they were not of us.*

ANSWER.—In this passage St. John is not speaking of sinners in general, but of certain men, whom he calls Antichrists, because they had "*denied the Father and the Son.*" Consequently they were heretics and as such did not belong to the Church, as will be proved elsewhere.⁴

OBJECTION IV.—If sinners are members of the Church here, they must also be members hereafter, since death is a mere separation of body and soul that in no way affects man's spiritual condition. But such a conclusion is manifestly absurd.

ANSWER.—The conclusion is not only absurd, but also unfounded. God, who ordained that sinners may

³ 1 John ii, 19.

⁴ See above, pp. 224.

be members of the Church in this life, also ordained that they shall not be members in the life to come. This is evident from the many passages in which Christ foretells eternal death for all sinners who die impenitent. Moreover, death severs all the bonds by which sinners are united to the body of the faithful in this life. After death there remains to them neither faith, hope, nor charity, and there is no external bond of union with the just.

OBJECTION V.—In many passages of his work on Baptism, St. Augustine teaches that sinners do not belong to the Church.

ANSWER.—These passages must be interpreted in the light of others, where St. Augustine proves at length against the Donatists that sinners may be true members of the Church. Moreover, we have the Saint's own interpretation of these passages. He says: "Wherever in those books [on Baptism] I have referred to the Church as not having spot or wrinkle, I do not mean the Church as it is, but as it shall appear when glorified."⁵

ART. II. TRUE CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

Conditions for membership in the Church, as in every other society, include those things which are absolutely necessary to make one a member in the true sense of the word. There is no question about the conditions necessary to make a *perfect* member, or even a *good*

⁵ "Liber Retractationum," II, 18; P. L., 32, 637.

member. St. Paul compares the Church to a house, in which there are *vessels unto honor* and *vessels unto dishonor*, yet all are vessels in the true sense of the term, and all belong to the house. In this connection we do not ask why they are *honorable* or *dishonorable*, but simply why they are vessels at all.

INITIATION. The first condition for membership is deduced from the social nature of the Church. No one becomes a member of any society unless he is received into it by proper authority, and made a participant in its benefits according to his capacity. The official act of receiving a person into a society must be manifested externally in some manner. This is usually done by a symbolic act, known as the rite of initiation. The initiatory rite of the Church was instituted by Christ himself, when He sent forth the Apostles to make disciples of all nations: "*Going therefore, teach (μαθητεύσατε) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*"¹ Baptism, therefore, is the rite of initiation into the Church; hence St. Paul says: "*In one Spirit were we all baptized into one body.*"² For this reason also the Council of Trent calls Baptism the *door* by which we enter the Church,³ and Eugenius IV in his decree *pro Armenis* says: "*By Baptism we are made members of Christ and of His Body, the Church.*"⁴

¹ Matt. xxviii, 19.

² 1 Cor. xii, 13.

³ Denzinger, n. 895.

⁴ Denzinger, n. 696.

PROFESSION OF FAITH. Every member of a society must accept its end and aims according to his ability, and he must strive, at least in some degree, to realize those aims. He that rejects the purposes of a society thereby rejects the society itself; he can neither become a member, nor remain one if already received into the society.

The practice of the Christian religion, which consists in the external profession of Christian faith, is the proximate end to be obtained in the Church. Therefore, external profession of faith is an essential condition for membership. Moreover, the Church must be one in the external profession of faith, consequently he that severs this bond of unity is separated from the body of the Church, *i. e.*, he ceases to be a member.

SUBJECTION TO AUTHORITY. The very existence of a society depends upon the subjection of its members to authority; therefore he that rejects the authority of a society, rejects the society itself and ceases to be a member. Neither can the end of a society be realized unless the members be directed by its authority in their common endeavors to that end. Therefore, rejecting the authority of a society is tantamount to rejecting its end and aims, which is to reject the society itself. Consequently no one can be a member of any society unless he submits to its authority according to his ability. Furthermore, in regard to the Church, there must be unity in the external profession of the *true* faith, which Christ committed to the teaching authority of the

Church.⁵ Therefore, the profession of faith necessary for membership in the Church practically resolves itself into submission to her teaching authority.

SUMMARY OF CONDITIONS. I. FOR ADULTS. The above considerations show that three conditions are absolutely necessary and of themselves sufficient for membership in the Church; *viz.*:

a) Initiation by Baptism, which gives the right to participate in all the benefits of the Church;

b) External profession of the true faith, which is had by submission to the teaching authority of the Church;

c) Submission to the ruling authority of the Church.

These conditions may be briefly summarized in one phrase: the reception of Baptism and the preservation of the unities,—unity of faith, unity of worship, and unity of government; or, in other words, the reception of Baptism and submission to the teaching and ruling authority of the Church. It should be noted, however, that *perfect* observance of the unities is not required for mere membership in the Church; a person need not make explicit profession of faith at all times, nor conform all his actions to it. He need not make *diligent* use of the Sacraments at all times, neither must he be free from all infractions of Church laws and precepts. His transgressions will not exclude from membership unless they amount to total rejection of authority.

From the principles just established it follows that the adult membership of the Church comprises all those

⁵ See below, pp. 98.

who have been baptized and have not rejected her teaching or ruling authority.

II. FOR INFANTS. In the explanations given above it was stated that a member of the Church must submit to her teaching and ruling authority *according to his ability*, because infants,⁶ not having the use of reason, are incapable of such submission. They become members of the Church by the valid reception of Baptism, and remain members so long as they do not violate the bonds of unity by their own free act, which, of course, cannot take place before the age of discretion. From this it follows that the validly baptized children of heretics and schismatics are true members of the Catholic Church until they attain the age of discretion and reject the authority of the Church by their own free act. Benedict XIV, writing on this matter, says: "We hold it for certain that those baptized by heretics are separated from the Church and deprived of all the blessings enjoyed by her members, *if they have arrived at the age of discretion and have adhered to the errors of their sect.*"⁷

ART. III. PERSONS EXCLUDED FROM MEMBERSHIP

Only those who fulfill the three conditions mentioned above, enjoy the privilege of membership in the Church; therefore all unbaptized persons, whether in-

⁶ The term *infant* includes all persons, of whatever age, who have not attained the age of discretion, *i. e.*, sufficient use of reason to distinguish between right and wrong.

⁷ Benedict XIV, "Singulari nos," Feb. 9, 1749.

fants or adults, all manifest heretics and schismatics, and those excommunicated as *vitandi* are excluded. There is one class of unbaptized persons that might seem to have some claims to membership in the Church. These are the catechumens, *i. e.*, persons preparing to receive Baptism. They have fulfilled all the conditions necessary on their part by submitting to the authority of the Church in preparation for Baptism, but the Church has not yet accepted them; consequently they cannot be accounted members. The mind of the Church on this point is expressed in her prayer on Good Friday: "Increase the faith and understanding of our catechumens, that, being reborn in the font of Baptism, they may be associated with the children of thine adoption."¹ They are not yet associated with the children of adoption,—they are not yet members of the Church. In the early centuries catechumens were never numbered with the *faithful*, but formed a class apart and were not even permitted to be present at Mass.

§ 1. Manifest Heretics and Schismatics

A heretic is usually defined as a Christian, *i. e.*, a baptized person, who holds a doctrine contrary to revealed truth; but this definition is inaccurate, since it would make heretics of a large portion of the faithful. A doctrine contrary to revealed truth is usually stigmatized as heretical, but a person who professes an heretical doctrine is not necessarily a heretic. *Heresy*,

¹ Roman Missal, "Mass of the Presanctified."

A heretic rejects the teaching authority of the Church.

from the Greek *αἵρεσις*, signifies a *choosing*; therefore a heretic is one who chooses for himself in matters of faith, thereby rejecting the authority of the Church established by Christ to teach all men the truths of revelation. He rejects the authority of the Church by following his own judgment or by submitting to an authority other than that established by Christ. A person who submits to the authority of the Church and wishes to accept all her teachings, is not a heretic, even though he profess heretical doctrines through ignorance of what the Church really teaches; he implicitly accepts the true doctrine in his general intention to accept all that the Church teaches.

A person may reject the teaching authority of the Church knowingly and willingly, or he may do it through ignorance. In the first case he is a *formal* heretic, guilty of grievous sin; in the second case, he is a *material* heretic, free from guilt. Both formal and material heresy may be *manifest* or *occult*. Heresy is *manifest* when publicly known to such an extent that its existence could be proved in a court of law; it is *occult* if not externally manifested by word or act, or if not sufficiently public to allow proof of its existence in court.

The word *schism* is derived from the Greek *σχίσμα*, which means a *division* or *separation*; hence a schismatic is a Christian who separates from the Church by rejecting her authority. He may do this by refusing submission to his bishop, no less than by rejecting the supreme authority of the Roman Pontiff. It is evident,

however, that a person does not become a schismatic by a mere act of disobedience; there must be some word or act that involves rejection of authority. Schism, like heresy, may be *formal* or *material*, *manifest* or *occult*.

EXCLUDED FROM MEMBERSHIP. Manifest heretics and schismatics are excluded from membership in the Church. Heretics separate themselves from the unity of faith and worship; schismatics from the unity of government, and both reject the authority of the Church. [So far as exclusion from the Church is concerned, it matters not whether the heresy or schism be formal or material.] Those born and reared in heresy or schism may be sincere in their belief and practice, yet they publicly and willingly reject the Church and attach themselves to sects opposed to her; they are not guilty of sin in the matter, but they are not members of the Church. For this reason, the Church makes no distinction between formal and material heresy when receiving converts into her fold.

There is no need to adduce arguments from Scripture or tradition for a truth that is practically self-evident. It may be noted, however, that St. Paul expressly refers to it in his letter to Titus: "*A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, avoid, knowing that he, that is such an one, is subverted and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment.*"¹ In commenting on these words, St. Jerome, says: "An adulterer, a homicide, and other sinners are driven from

¹ Titus iii, 10.

the Church by the priests [*i. e.*, by excommunication]; but heretics pass sentence upon themselves, leaving the Church by their own free-will."² St. Augustine gives expression to the same doctrine: "If you do not wish to belong to the Church, . . . separate yourselves from her members, cut yourselves off from her body. But why should I now urge them to leave the Church, since they have already done this? They are heretics, and therefore already out."³

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

OBJECTION I.—Heretics and schismatics retain the baptismal character, a perpetual sign of their initiation into the Church. Therefore, they also remain members of the Church, whose rite of initiation they have received.

ANSWER.—The spiritual character imprinted upon the soul in Baptism does not make one a member of the Church; it is rather a sign or badge showing that he has received the rites of initiation, but it does not prove that he retains membership. This may be illustrated by the case of a person receiving a tattoo mark as a sign of initiation into a society that uses such marking. If the person afterward leave the society, he would cease to be a member, though he still bore the indelible sign of his initiation.

OBJECTION II.—The Church claims jurisdiction over

² "In Titum," iii, 10; P. L., 26, 597.

³ "Sermon.," 181; P. L., 38, 980.

heretics and schismatics, as is evident from the fact that she formerly interpreted many of her marriage laws as binding upon them. But the Church could not thus exercise jurisdiction over persons who do not belong to her fold, for as St. Paul says: "*What have I to judge them that are without? . . . For them that are without, God will judge.*"⁴

ANSWER.—This objection overlooks the necessary distinction between *members* and *subjects*. A person may be subject to a society even though he is not a member. This is a well-known fact in our own civil life; persons coming to our shores from foreign countries are not members (citizens) of our government until they have been naturalized by legal process, yet they are subject to our State and Federal laws. Likewise, citizens by naturalization or birth, who lose their rights of citizenship for any reason, cease to be members of the State, but remain subject to its laws so long as they remain within its borders. Heretics and schismatics lose their rights of citizenship in the Church; they cease to be members, but they remain subject to her laws so long as they remain within her territory, which comprises the whole world.

§ 2. *Excommunicates*

Just as a person cannot enter a society against its wishes, so neither can he retain membership therein against its expressed will. It is acknowledged by all that a society, not subject to a higher jurisdiction, has

⁴ 1 Cor. v, 12-13.

full power and authority to expel a member with or without cause. In the latter case it would act unjustly, but none the less effectively.

The Church, being a society subject to no authority save that of Christ, must also have the right to deprive members of communion with her, unless Christ has ordained otherwise, which we know He has not done. On the contrary, He gave the Church full authority in the matter when He said: "*Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven,*"¹ and again when He said: "*If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican,*" *i. e.*, let him be excluded from membership. St. Paul seems to have been the first to exercise this power by excommunicating the incestuous Corinthian.²

A person expelled from the Church loses the benefits and privileges of membership and is deprived of communion with the faithful; for this reason he is said to be *ex-communicated*. The Church exercises this power, for the most part, by decreeing that any person guilty of certain specified sins is excommunicated by that very fact. In some cases, however, excommunication does not take place until judicial sentence has been pronounced against a person proved guilty of a crime for which such punishment has been established by law. The first is known as excommunication *latae sententiae*; the second as excommunication *ferendae sententiae*.

¹ Matt. xviii, 17-18.

² 1 Cor. v, 1-5.

Excommunication, like heresy and schism, may be either *manifest* or *occult*. Manifest excommunication is incurred by judicial sentence of excommunication, or by commission of a public sin known to involve the punishment of excommunication. Occult excommunication is incurred by the secret commission of a sin to which excommunication is attached by law. Those who incur manifest excommunication are either *vitandi* or *tolerati*. The former are deprived of communication with the faithful so far as possible even in civil and social life; they are to be entirely avoided (*vitandi*). The second class are deprived of communion with the faithful in things spiritual, but may be tolerated (*tolerati*) in civil and social matters. No one incurs excommunication unless he knows before commission of the crime that it involves such punishment; consequently there can be no question of *formal* and *material* excommunication.

Since the Church may deprive a person of all the privileges and benefits of membership in punishment for sin, it follows, as a matter of course, that she may also deprive him of any part of them short of actual exclusion from membership. Consequently it depends upon the intention of the Church whether excommunication shall involve actual loss of membership or not. The new Code of Canon Law defines excommunication as "a censure by which a person is excluded from the communion of the faithful."³ This can scarcely mean anything less than complete loss of membership in the

³ Canon 2257.

Church; at least when there is question of excommunication in all its severity. For this reason all theologians are agreed that the *vitandi* lose all membership in the Church. In regard to the *tolerati*, the answer is not so certain. Since the canon just cited makes no distinctions, it would seem that all excommunicates without exception are excluded from the Church. Another canon, however, does make a distinction between these two classes; it provides that an excommunicated person be deprived of the benefits and emoluments arising from any office or dignity that he may hold in the Church, and in case of a *vitandus*, the office or dignity itself is lost.⁴ It is evident, then, that a *toleratus* does not lose his office or dignity in the Church, but it is not at all probable that the Church would exclude a person from membership and still allow him to hold an office or dignity of any kind.

COROLLARY I. A person unjustly excommunicated loses membership in the Church; he is deprived of the Sacraments and all other benefits arising from union with the Church. In this case he can only rely upon the mercy and goodness of God to compensate him in some other way for the loss unjustly sustained until such time as the excommunication is lifted.⁵ It should be noted, however, that the caution exercised by the Church in such matters makes an injustice of this kind practically impossible.

COROLLARY II. Excommunication is an official

⁴ Canon 2266.

⁵ Cf. Dorsch, "De Ecclesia Christi," p. 412.

juridical act; therefore, an excommunicated person, although reconciled to God by an act of perfect contrition, is not reinstated in the Church until the censure of excommunication has been lifted by another official act on the part of the Church.

An excommunicated person remains a subject of the Church, bound by all her laws, just as a person deprived of citizenship still remains a subject of the country in which he lives.

ART. IV. PERSONS OF DOUBTFUL MEMBERSHIP

§ 1. *Persons Invalidly Baptized*

There is room for doubt concerning the membership of persons who have been invalidly baptized,¹ or not baptized at all, yet are publicly known as Catholics and live as such in the firm conviction that they have been baptized. Many eminent theologians, *e. g.*, Bellarmine, Palmieri, and Straub,² maintain that such persons are true members of the Church because the necessary conditions are fulfilled; the persons in question submit to the teaching and ruling authority of the Church, and she, on her part, publicly recognizes them as members by admitting them to the Sacraments and other privileges of membership. Innocent II is also cited in support of this opinion because of the reply he

¹ "Invalidly baptized," *i. e.*, an invalid ceremony of Baptism was performed.

² Bellarmine, "De Ecclesia Militante," iii, 10; Palmieri, "De Romano Pontifice," Proleg., xi, 4; Straub, "De Ecclesia Christi," n. 1304-1307.

made to inquiries concerning such a person: "I do not hesitate to assert that the person who died, as you say, without Baptism, was freed from original sin and has obtained the joys of Heaven because he persevered in the faith of holy mother, the Church, and in the confession of Christ's name."³

Dorsch and Wilmers⁴ are of the opinion that such persons cannot be considered members of the Church because they are incapable of receiving the other Sacraments validly, and, therefore, do not participate in the most essential benefits of the Church. They are publicly regarded as members, but wrongly so; being regarded a member and being a member are two different things. These authors rightly claim that the words of Innocent II prove nothing in the matter, since he does not say that the person in question was a member of the Church; he simply says that he attained salvation, which, as all theologians admit, can be obtained by perfect contrition and a desire for membership in the Church, if actual membership is impossible. The question is of little practical importance, since the number of such persons will always be small, and their salvation cannot be affected in the least by our opinions, one way or the other, in the matter.

§ 2. *Occult Heretics and Schismatics*

The condition of occult heretics and schismatics in

³ Denzinger, n. 388.

⁴ Wilmers, "De Ecclesia Christi," p. 627; Dorsch, "De Ecclesia Christi," p. 401.

regard to membership in the Church has long been a matter of dispute among theologians. Many, such as Bellarmine, Cornelius à Lapide, Perrone, Palmieri, Straub, and Billot, maintain that they are true, even though very imperfect, members of the Church. Suarez, Franzelin, Billuart, Dorsch,¹ and others hold that they are not members, and, therefore, belong to the Church in appearance only. Practically speaking, the question has little importance, because, as we shall see, such persons are always in bad faith; consequently membership or lack of membership makes little or no difference in their spiritual condition. The matter is considered here simply because it helps to a better understanding of the real nature of membership in the Church.

The question concerns only such as are publicly regarded as Catholics, because the moment one becomes publicly known as a heretic or a schismatic, his heresy or schism ceases to be *occult*, and there is no longer any doubt that he has lost membership in the Church. Here, then, we have to consider only such as outwardly conduct themselves as Catholics, but inwardly reject the authority of the Church; in a word, those who are hypocrites in their adherence to the Church. Since it is practically impossible for a person to act thus in good faith, *material* heresy and schism may be disregarded in this connection. The question then narrows itself down to this: Does a person who conducts himself

¹ Consult these various authors in their respective works on the Church.

outwardly as a Catholic while inwardly rejecting the Church, still belong to it? This is but another phase of the question referred to in connection with the unity of the Church: Is interior faith necessary for the unity of the Church, or is the mere external profession of a faith that does not inwardly exist, sufficient? The question under either form is still debated, but most of the arguments adduced by both sides are merely disguised statements asserting or denying that interior faith is necessary. Those wishing to pursue the subject further may consult the authors mentioned above.

ART. V. NECESSITY OF MEMBERSHIP

KINDS OF NECESSITY. In regard to attaining salvation, theologians distinguish between those things which are necessary by a *necessity of means* and those which are necessary by a *necessity of precept*. The former are the *means* to salvation, constituted such by their nature or by divine institution; the latter are necessary simply because prescribed by law. Matters of mere precept are necessary because by omitting them we commit grievous sin, which excludes salvation; consequently whatever excuses from sin in these matters also excuses from their necessity, *e. g.*, fasting before Communion is necessary for salvation because violating the fast constitutes a grievous sin, but any circumstance that renders this violation licit also takes away the necessity for the fast. The case is quite different with those things necessary as the *means* to salvation; they cannot be omitted without loss of salvation, even

though the omission be without fault on our part. In some cases the thing is *absolutely* necessary, because it is of such nature that nothing can supply for its absence; *e. g.*, sanctifying grace is an *absolute* necessity, whose absence cannot be supplied by anything else. Other things are necessary, not by their very nature, but by divine institution. In regard to these things God is pleased to accept substitutes when the things themselves cannot be had. Such means of salvation may be called *relatively* necessary, to distinguish them from those of *absolute* necessity. Baptism is an example of a *relative* necessity for salvation; it is a necessary *means* of salvation, because Christ has so ordained, but if for any reason it is impossible to receive Baptism, its absence can be supplied by perfect contrition and a sincere desire to receive it. The reason for this is obvious: God, being all-wise and merciful, cannot demand the impossible from His creatures.

With this brief explanation, we proceed to show that membership in the Church is necessary by the twofold necessity of precept and means, but that the necessity of means is only relative.

§ 1. *Twofold Necessity of Membership*

Thesis.—Membership in the Church is necessary both by necessity of means and necessity of precept

The doctrine set forth in the thesis is a dogma of faith, since the Church has often declared membership

in her fold necessary for salvation. The Fourth Lateran Council decreed: "There is one universal Church, out of which no one can be saved."¹ Even stronger are the words of Boniface VIII: "We declare, say, define, and pronounce that subjection to the Roman Pontiff is strictly necessary to all men for salvation."² Pius IX declared that "it must be held as an article of faith that out of the Apostolic Roman Church no one can be saved."³ These declarations are sufficient to prove that the thesis is a dogma of faith, at least in regard to necessity of precept.

PROOFS. I. FROM REASON. Christ said that no one can come to the Father except through the Son, who is the *way, the truth and the life.*⁴ But the Church bears the person of Christ to carry out His mission on earth; therefore, no one can come to the Father except through the Church. The Church is also the Mystical Body of Christ; consequently no one can receive the vivifying influence of Christ the Head, nor be animated by the Soul, which is the Holy Ghost, unless he be united as a member with the Body. Hence St. Augustine says: "A Christian man is a Catholic while he remains in the body; cut off, he becomes a heretic. The Spirit does not follow the amputated member."⁵

II. FROM SCRIPTURE. In Holy Scripture, Baptism,

¹ Denzinger, n. 430.

² "Unam Sanctam," Denz., n. 469.

³ Allocutio die 9 Dec., 1834; Denzinger, n. 1647.

⁴ John xiv, 6.

⁵ "Sermon.," 267; P. L., 38, 1231.

faith, and subjection to the authority of the Church are set forth as necessary means of salvation: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."⁶ "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned."⁷ "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican."⁸ The conditions laid down in these passages as necessary for salvation are precisely the conditions necessary for membership in the Church. Therefore, it is only by becoming a member of the Church that one can fulfill the conditions for salvation: in other words, membership in the Church is a necessary means of salvation.

God has destined all men to salvation; "He will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."⁹ Therefore the means necessary for salvation must be a matter of precept. Again, Christ sent forth His Apostles with the injunction to bring all nations into the Church and to teach them all truth: "Going therefore, teach all nations (*i. e.*, makes disciples of all nations), teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."¹⁰ Such an injunction on the part of Christ necessarily presupposes a corresponding command that all nations hearken to

⁶ John iii, 5.

⁷ Mark xvi, 15.

⁸ Matt. xviii, 17.

⁹ 1 Tim. ii, 4.

¹⁰ Matt. xxviii, 19.

the teachings of the Apostles and become disciples by entering the Church. There are also the express words of Christ demanding this: "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me."¹¹ Hence union with the Church is a matter of divine command; it is a necessity of precept.

III. FROM TRADITION. The Fathers have from the very earliest ages, insisted upon the necessity of union with the Church. For example:

a) *St. Ignatius Martyr*: "Do not be deceived, brethren, if any one follows a person making a schism, he cannot obtain the inheritance of the divine kingdom."¹²

b) *Origen*: "Let no one deceive himself; outside this house, *i. e.*, outside the Church, no one can be saved."¹³

c) *Council of Cirta* (412 A. D.): "If a person be separated from the Catholic Church, it matters not how praiseworthy his life may be otherwise, he shall not have life, but the anger of God rests upon him for this one crime of separation."¹⁴

d) *St. Cyprian*: "He cannot have God for his Father who does not have the Church for his mother. If anyone escaped death outside the ark of Noah, then also may a person escape outside the Church."¹⁵

¹¹ St. Luke x, 16.

¹² "Epist. ad Philad.," 3; Funk, I, 267.

¹³ "Hom. in Josue," IV, 5; P. G., 12, 841.

¹⁴ "Epist.," 141; P. L., 33, 579.

¹⁵ "De Unitate Ecclesiae"; P. L., 4, 503.

§ 2. *Membership a Relative Necessity*

Membership in the Church is necessary for salvation not only by necessity of *precept*, but also by necessity of *means*; Christ *commands* all men to belong to the Church because it is the *means* which He established for salvation. Hence the well-known axiom of theologians, "*Out of the Church there is no salvation.*" Pius IX declared this an article of faith, as already noted, but he immediately added: "It is likewise certain that those who are in ignorance of the true religion, are not accountable for any guilt in the matter before God if the ignorance be invincible."¹ On another occasion he wrote to the bishops of Italy: "It is known to us and to you that those who are in invincible ignorance concerning our most holy religion . . . can attain eternal life by the power of divine light and grace."² St. Augustine says: "The effects of Baptism are invisibly wrought when the ministry of Baptism is excluded, not through contempt of religion, but by force of necessity."³ We also know that the Church numbers among her saints persons who died without the Sacrament of Baptism; *v. g.*, St. Emerentiana, a catechumen who suffered martyrdom in the third century, is commemorated as a saint.

These facts prove that membership in the Church is

¹ Allocutio die 9 Dec., 1854; Denzinger, n. 1647.

² Pius IX, "Quanto conficiamus mœrore" 10 Aug., 1863. Denz. n. 1677.

³ "De Baptismo," iv, 22; P. L., 43, 173.

a *relative necessity*, *i. e.*, if actual membership is impossible for any reason, other means are available to supply the deficiency. This is usually explained by distinguishing between membership in the soul of the Church and membership in the external society, or body of the Church. According to this explanation, a person in ignorance of the true Church or otherwise hindered from entering it, belongs to the soul of the Church if he be in the state of sanctifying grace through perfect contrition or an act of perfect love of God. Hence, it is said that membership in the soul of the Church is an absolute necessity of means for salvation, whereas membership in the body of the Church is merely a necessity of precept. But the Church herself never makes this distinction between body and soul, when there is question of membership in her fold, and it has already been noted that a person cannot belong to the soul of the Church unless he also belongs to her body.⁴ Moreover, all Scriptural texts cited to prove the necessity of membership in the Church refer directly to the Church as an external organization. Therefore, union with the body of the Church is a necessity of *means*, no less than union with the soul of the Church.

"Out of the Church there is no salvation" is a dogma of faith, and membership in the Church means union with the body as well as with the soul of the Church; yet it is certain that persons who do not externally belong to the Church may be saved. How are these

⁴ See above, pp. 209.

facts to be reconciled? Cardinal Bellarmine gives the true explanation: "When we say, *Out of the Church there is no salvation*, it must be understood of those who belong to the Church neither *in fact* nor *in desire*, as theologians commonly teach concerning Baptism."⁵ The necessity of belonging to the Church,—both body and soul,—is a *relative* necessity of means; if actual membership is impossible, it can be supplied by perfect contrition, or perfect love of God, with the desire to belong to the true Church of Christ. This is evident from the fact that Baptism is the rite of initiation into the Church,—the *door* to the Church, as the Council of Trent calls it. The necessity of membership in the Church must be the same as the necessity for the rite by which one becomes a member. But all admit that Baptism is a relative necessity of means; when its actual reception is impossible, perfect contrition or perfect love of God, with the *desire* to receive it, will effect the same results as far as the mere attainment of salvation is concerned, but the person has not received the Sacrament of Baptism nor has the baptismal character been imprinted upon his soul.

OBJECTION. It may be objected that a person in the state of sanctifying grace is necessarily united with the Holy Ghost dwelling within him and that, therefore, he belongs to the soul of the Church, the Holy Ghost, although he does not belong to the external society or body of the Church. The conclusion does not follow. The Holy Ghost is not restricted

⁵ "De Ecclesia," III, 9.

is His operations to the limits of the Church: "*The Spirit breatheth* where He will."⁶ He operates outside the Church, just as He operates outside the Sacraments, distributing graces as He will. But the person receiving the grace no more belongs to the Church in the one case, than he actually receives a Sacrament in the other. In neither case is the Holy Ghost acting in His capacity as soul of the Church.

COROLLARY I. A person who knowingly and willingly remains outside of the Church and dies in that condition, cannot hope for salvation; he has rejected Christ by rejecting His Church: "*He that despiseth you, despiseth me.*"⁷ But a person who is out of the Church through no fault of his own, can obtain salvation by an act of perfect contrition, or perfect love of God and, at least, an implicit desire to belong to the Church. He is then a member of the Church, both body and soul, not in fact but in desire,—*non in re sed in voto*. The desire to belong to the Church is implicitly contained in the general desire to do all that Christ commands, even though the person never heard of the Church or actually rejects it through ignorance of its real character.

COROLLARY II. All men are bound to belong to the true Church of Christ, because He has so commanded, and also because it is the means established by Him for our salvation. Therefore, it is absolutely wrong to maintain that it matters not to what Church a man belongs, provided he accept Christ as his personal

⁶ John iii, 6.

⁷ Luke x, 16.

Saviour and lead a virtuous life. Even those in good faith, sincerely believing that they really belong to the true Church, are far less secure of their salvation than they would be in the Church with the use of the Sacraments and other means of salvation found there.

COROLLARY III. As all men are bound to belong to the true Church of Christ, so also are they bound to use all possible efforts to find and embrace it, despite any temporal losses that may ensue. The amount of effort necessary will depend upon each one's ability and the opportunity presented for study and investigation. Investigation is impossible for the person who sincerely and firmly believes that he already possesses the true Church, but the moment a doubt or suspicion arises in his mind, he is bound to use all means at his command to discover the truth. If a sincere and serious effort fails to bring him to the truth, he is still in invincible ignorance and, therefore, guiltless of his errors before God.

CHAPTER VII

AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH

Having considered the membership of the Church and the bonds by which the individual members are united into a visible society, we now turn our attention to the power of authority that preserves these bonds of union and enables the Church to attain the purpose of her existence by bringing the fruits of Redemption to all men. The existence and origin of authority in the Church are self-evident. Being a true society, the Church necessarily possesses authority of some sort, and since Christ is the Author and supreme Head of the Church, whatever authority she possesses must come from Him. It has also been proved that Christ conferred upon His Church the power and authority to teach, govern, and sanctify,¹ as the very nature and purpose of the Church demanded.

Every society is directed to the attainment of its purposes by the power of ruling which is more properly called *authority*; there must also be suitable means for attaining the end sought and power to use them effectively. The end to be obtained by the Church requires acceptance of certain truths as well as the observance of precepts, for "*without faith it is impossible*

¹ Cf. above pp. 21 sq.

to please God,"² and "faith without works is dead."³ Therefore, authority in the Church requires submission of intellect and will; in other words, the Church has authority to teach as well as authority to rule in the stricter sense of that term. And since the salvation of souls is the immediate end of the Church, she must also have the priestly power of sanctification. This power is concerned with the offering of sacrifice and the administration of Sacraments; its treatment belongs more properly to Sacramental Theology. The authority to teach is intimately connected with the infallibility of the Church and will be considered in connection with it. The present chapter, therefore, will be limited to the power of government, or authority in the strict sense of the word.

ART. I. AUTHORITY TO GOVERN

SYNOPSIS.—1. THREEFOLD POWERS OF GOVERNMENT.—2. RIGHT OF TEMPORAL PUNISHMENT.—3. RIGHT TO INFLICT CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.—4. PERSONS SUBJECT TO PUNITIVE POWER.

§ 1. *Threefold Power of Government*

Government implies a threefold power,—*legislative, judicial, and coercive*. Government without laws is impossible, but laws without interpretation and application are worthless; there must be an author-

² Heb. xi, 6.

³ Jas. ii, 20.

ity to interpret the laws officially and to judge whether they have been violated in individual cases. Both the law-making power and the judicial power presuppose coercive power; a law without sanction, *i. e.*, without power to enforce its observance by adequate punishment, is not a law but a mere counsel: and a judicial sentence that cannot be executed by force, if necessary, is a pure travesty.¹ It is evident, then, that Christ conferred this threefold power upon His Church by the very fact that He instituted it under the form of a society. Moreover, we have the express words of Our Lord referring to each of these powers separately, and we find the Apostles exercising them from the very first days of their ministry.

I. LEGISLATIVE POWER. Christ conferred the law-making power upon His Apostles when He said to them: "*Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven.*"² The words *bind* and *loose* refer to bonds which, by the very nature of the case, can be none other than moral bonds, or laws, by which the faithful are obliged to do something or leave something undone. The Apostles themselves understood the words in this sense, for we find them exercising the power to make laws from the very beginning. At the Council of Jerusalem they decreed: "*It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay no further burden upon you than these necessary*

¹ Cfr. Murray, "De Ecclesia Christi," Disp. xv, n. 26.

² Matt. xviii, 18.

things; that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication." ³ This decree had the force of law in all the churches, for it is said that St. Paul "went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches, commanding them to keep the precepts of the Apostles and ancients." ⁴ St. Luke also says that St. Paul and Timothy "passed through the cities, and delivered unto them the decrees for to keep, that were decreed by the Apostles and ancients who were at Jerusalem." ⁵ St. Paul himself decreed that women should pray with head covered, and that no one should be bishop if married a second time. ⁶ He also warned the faithful to "obey your prelates, and be subject to them, for they watch as being to render an account of your souls." ⁷

II. JUDICIAL POWER. The words of Christ presuppose judicial powers in the Church, for He said: "If any brother offend against thee, . . . tell the Church. And if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." ⁸ It is evident that our Lord does not command such a case to be brought before the Church for mere counsel or advice; it is to be a judicial proceeding, and should the guilty party refuse to comply with the sentence, he is to be

³ Acts xv, 28-29.

⁴ Acts xv, 41.

⁵ Acts xvi, 4.

⁶ 1 Cor. xi, 5 sq.; 1 Tim. iii, 1 sq.

⁷ Heb. xiii, 17.

⁸ Matt. xviii, 15 sq.

excommunicated: "Let him be to thee as the heathen and publican."

The Apostles certainly knew what powers they had received from the Divine Master, and we find them exercising judicial as well as legislative power. St. Peter passed judgment upon Ananias and Saphira, ⁹ and St. Paul gave judgment in the case of the incestuous Corinthian: "I indeed absent in body, but present in spirit, have already judged as though I were present him that doth such things." ¹⁰ He even laid down rules for the guidance of Timothy in hearing cases against priests accused of misconduct. ¹¹ This presupposes that Timothy had power and authority to hear and judge such cases according to their merits.

III. COERCITIVE POWER. Christ plainly acknowledged coercitive, or punitive, power in the Church, when He said: "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." Excommunication is the severest form of punishment known in the Church. St. Paul exercised this power when he excommunicated the Corinthian and delivered him "to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ." ¹² He also excommunicated Hymeneus and Alexander, whom he "delivered up to Satan, that they may learn

⁹ Acts v, 1 sq.

¹⁰ 1 Cor. v, 3.

¹¹ 1 Tim. v, 19 sq.

¹² 1 Corinth. v, 5.

not to blaspheme."¹³ Now, if the Church has authority to inflict the supreme penalty of excommunication, she also has power to inflict lesser punishments.

Appeal to tradition in regard to these powers of the Church is needless, since it is well known to all that she has ever claimed and exercised legislative, judicial, and punitive powers. This is evident from the canons of councils, the decrees of popes, and the acts of individual bishops. In every age the Church has established laws, judged the erring and the guilty, and punished those who refused to submit to her authority.

§ 2. *Right of Temporal Punishment*

Punishment consists in depriving a person of some good in reparation for an offense.¹ Hence there are three kinds of punishment, corresponding to the three orders of goods,—*spiritual*, *temporal*, and *corporal*. Spiritual punishment deprives one of some spiritual good, the use of the Sacraments, participation in the prayers of the Church, communion with the faithful, and the like. Temporal punishment deprives one of the goods of this world by fines, confiscation, inability to hold office, and the like. Corporal punishment affects the very person of the offender by depriving him of bodily comforts, freedom, and even life itself.²

¹³ 1 Tim. I: 20.

¹ Suarez, "De Fide," xx, 3, 13.

² In connection with indulgences, *temporal* punishments are often mentioned as distinct from *eternal*. Here the word is used in opposition to *spiritual*. As a general term it includes corporal punishments as well as those known simply as temporal.

Thesis.—The Church has authority to impose both temporal and corporal punishments

This is a defined dogma of Catholic faith, as appears from the condemnation of the following propositions; one by Pius VI, the other by Pius IX, who stigmatized them as *heretical*: "It does not belong to the Church to exact obedience to her decrees by external force," and "The Church has no right to coerce the violators of her laws by temporal punishments."³ To these proofs may be added the decrees of several ecumenical councils; the second Council of Lyons, the fourth Lateran Council, the Council of Vienna, and the Council of Constance decreed fines and imprisonment for various crimes. The new Code of Canon Law declares that the Church has an innate right, independent of any human authority, to coerce her delinquent subjects by temporal as well as spiritual punishment.⁴

PROOFS. The Church, being a society, even more perfect and independent than the State, must have coercive powers at least equal to those of the State. Therefore, she has authority to inflict any just punishment which she finds necessary or useful, unless Christ has ordained otherwise. But Christ has not forbidden the use of temporal or corporal punishment, and such punishment is often useful or even necessary.

I. NOT FORBIDDEN. Christ never denied the Church the use of temporal or corporal punishment; on the con-

³ Denzinger, n. 1504, 1697.

⁴ Codex Juris Canonici, can. 2214.

trary, He implicitly granted authority to use it when He said: "*Whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven.*"⁵ These words, universal in themselves, are not limited by the context nor by any other ordinance of Christ. They refer directly and primarily to moral obligations, but these include the obligation to undergo punishment inflicted by the Church just as our moral obligations to the State include that of submitting to just punishment.

II. USEFUL.—The Church is a spiritual society, because the end to be attained is spiritual; consequently the means to that end will be in large measure spiritual. On the other hand, the Church is composed of human beings, who do not always yield to purely spiritual motives. Therefore, temporal, and even corporal, punishments must be resorted to at times by the Church as well as by the State. St. Augustine recognized this fact, although he was opposed to temporal and corporal punishments except as a last resort. He says: "It is better indeed for men to be brought to the worship of God by doctrine, than to be compelled by fear and pain; but these means are not to be neglected because the other is better. Experience has proved and still proves that it is profitable to many to be forced by fear and pain that they may afterward be taught."⁶

⁵ Matt. xviii, 16.

⁶ "Epist. ad Bonifatium," 6; P. L., 33, 802.—The so-called Reformers of the sixteenth century taught that heretics should suffer temporal and corporal punishment, but in accordance with their system they assigned the power of punishment to the State. Calvin and Beza wrote works in defense of this doctrine, and Beza quotes

§ 3. Right to Inflict Corporal Punishment

Many theologians maintain that although the Church has the authority to *decree* corporal punishment, she has no authority to actually *inflict* it, but must call upon the State,—the *secular arm* as they call it,—to execute the sentence. In confirmation of this opinion they cite the words of Boniface VIII: "The Gospels teach us that there are two swords in the power of the Church,—one spiritual, the other temporal. . . . One is to be exercised *for* the Church, the other *by* the Church. One is wielded by the hand of the priest; the other by the hands of kings and soldiers, but according to the will and permission of the priest."¹ These words, however, are not to the point, because Boniface was not treating of the coercive power of the Church, but of the relations between Church and State.

It seems that the Church has never inflicted corporal punishment directly, but it is certain that she has often turned persons over to the State for corporal punishment and demanded under pain of excommunication that such punishment be administered. The difference between this and direct administration of the punishment is slight indeed. Moreover, it would be strange for the Church to have authority with no inherent right to use it, yet such would be the case if she could

Luther and Melancthon as advocates of it. Calvin was the instigator and prime mover in having Michael Servetus burned at the stake as a heretic.

¹ "Unam sanctam"; Denzinger, n. 469.

not directly inflict corporal punishments. Prudence, of course, may often prevent the exercise of a power that is otherwise licit, for, as St. Paul says, power is "*given unto edification and not unto destruction.*"² There seems to be nothing but the law of prudence to prevent the Church from inflicting corporal punishment directly and in her own name whenever she deems it necessary or useful.

§ 4. *Persons Subject to Punitive Powers*

It is evident that only members of the Church are subject to her spiritual punishments, since they alone enjoy spiritual benefits of which she can deprive them in punishment for crime. In regard to temporal and corporal punishments, three classes of persons must be considered,—members of the Church, baptized persons who are not members, and unbaptized persons. There is no doubt that the Church has full authority to punish her own members by spiritual, temporal, or corporal punishments, as she deems best. It is likewise certain that the Church has no authority to punish or coerce the unbaptized, since they are neither members nor subjects. The Fathers and theologians of the Church are unanimous on this point. St. Paul says: "*What have I to do to judge them that are without? . . . For them that are without, God will judge.*"¹ From this it follows that the Church can

² 2 Cor. xiii, 10.

¹ 1 Cor. v, 12-13.

never use force of any kind to bring persons into her fold, nor to make them accept her doctrines; but she may use force against those who unjustly invade her rights or the spiritual rights of her members. This is merely the natural right of self-protection granted to every individual and to every lawful group of individuals.

Since all baptized persons are subjects of the Church, even though they may not be members, it follows that heretics and schismatics are subject to the coercive or punitive authority of the Church, but the exercise of this authority would be unjust and illicit in the case of those who are out of the Church through no fault of their own. Punishment, by its very nature, presupposes guilt, but in the supposition there is no guilt, and the use of force in such cases would only result in evil for the Church and spiritual harm to those coerced. Hence the Church can exercise punitive or coercive power against none but her own members and against formal heretics or schismatics, *i. e.*, those who are out of the Church through their own fault. The fear of the Church, entertained by many non-Catholics because of her supposed claims in this matter, is groundless. The doctrine of the Church forbids the use of force to bring any one into her fold, and history proves that she has never resorted to force for this purpose. The much dreaded Inquisition was instituted to search out and punish heretics, but only such as had fallen away from the Church through their own fault. Its purpose was to bring back such persons to a sense of

the duties they had freely accepted and acknowledged. Whether this was psychologically the best means to employ for the purpose, is another question, but there can be no doubt that the Church was acting within her rights. The State resorts to the same means when it searches out and punishes traitors, and in a lesser way, when it forces persons to fulfill obligations which they have undertaken. If force was ever used to bring persons into the Church, it was without her sanction and against her will.²

ART. II. NATURE OF CHURCH POWERS

POWERS OF CHRIST. Our Divine Saviour possesses a twofold power, corresponding to His dual nature as God and man. As God, He possesses a power that is infinite and divine; as man, He received a finite power that is human since it proceeds from His human nature, but divine in as much as it belongs to His divine Personality. It is evident that the Apostles did not participate in the power that proceeds from the divine nature of Christ, because man, being finite, cannot become the subject of an infinite power. Hence the power conferred upon the Church in the person of the Apostles is that which flows from the human nature of Christ,—the power which He himself had received: *"All power is given to me in heaven and on earth."*

² Vacandard, "L'Inquisition" (Eng. trans. by B. L. Conway, C. S. P.).

*Going therefore, teach all nations. . . . As the Father hath sent me, I also send you."*¹

But the power proper to the human nature of Christ is also twofold, because He came in the double capacity of priest and king. A priest, says St. Paul, *"is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins."*² Our Lord offered Himself on the cross as a propitiation for our sins, *"to reconcile all things . . . making peace through the blood of his cross."*³ Thus was He constituted a priest forever. He also came as king, to collect all men into His spiritual kingdom and direct them to their eternal destiny: *"He shall reign in the house of Jacob forever. And of his kingdom there shall be no end."*⁴ But His kingdom is a kingdom of truth: *"Thou sayest that I am a king. For this was I born, and for this came I into the world that I should give testimony to the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth me."*⁵ Therefore, the kingdom of Christ requires submission of intellect as well as submission of will: *"He was teaching them as one having power, and not as the scribes and Pharisees."*⁶

When Christ said to His Apostles: *"As the Father hath sent me, I also send you,"* He made them par-

¹ Matt. xxviii, 18; John xx, 21.

² Heb. v, 1.

³ Coloss. i, 20.

⁴ Luke i, 32-33.

⁵ John xviii, 37.

⁶ Matt. vii, 20.

takers of all the powers proper to His human nature,—all the powers given to Him as priest and king. They were to go forth to *offer up gifts and sacrifices for sin* and to apply the fruits of His redemption through the administration of the Sacraments. They were also to teach and govern the disciples gathered from all nations into His Church.

POWERS LIMITED. The powers conferred upon the Church through the Apostles, seem all-comprehensive: "*As the Father hath sent me, I also send you,*" and "*Whatsoever you shall bind . . . whatsoever you shall loose.*" Yet these powers are necessarily limited to some extent, since all derived or delegated power is limited by the nature of the purpose for which it is given and by the nature of the society in which it is to be exercised. In regard to the powers of the priesthood, the Apostles received no authority to institute new Sacraments or to change essentially those already instituted. They were commanded to baptize according to a prescribed rite, and to offer a sacrifice instituted by Christ himself. They were simply agents to administer the Sacraments and to offer Sacrifice in the name of Christ and by His power.

In regard to governing power, the Apostles were constituted superiors to rule the Church already established by Christ; they received no authority to change or abolish it, much less to establish another. Hence St. Paul speaks of the "*power which the Lord hath given me unto edification and not unto destruction.*"⁷ This

⁷ 2 Cor. xiii, 10.

is clearly implied in the words addressed to St. Peter: "*I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.*"⁸ He that receives the keys of the house from the master, receives power and authority to care for the house and to preserve it, not to destroy or change it. Hence the Apostles and their successors are the custodians who preside over the house of the Lord, to guard and preserve both the house and the treasures which it contains. For this reason the rulers of the Church are called *bishops*, from the Greek word ἐπισκοπεῖν, which means *to superintend* or *oversee*.

In regard to doctrine, the Apostles were commissioned to teach only those things which Christ commanded: "*Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded.*"⁹ They could neither add to nor subtract from the truths taught them by their Divine Master; they were but the dispensers of His mysteries: "*Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God.*"¹⁰

MINISTERIAL POWER. When a person acts in the name and by the authority of another, he is a mere instrument in the hands of the one whom he represents; he is an agent or minister, and the power or authority by which he acts is *ministerial*. The power of conferring grace and forgiving sins in the Church is purely ministerial, because the human agent is merely an in-

⁸ Matt. xvi, 19.

⁹ Matt. xxviii, 20.

¹⁰ 1 Cor. iv, 1.

strument in the hands of Christ. For this reason the one who confers a Sacrament is rightly called the *minister* of that Sacrament. It is Christ himself who confers the grace through the instrumentality of the Sacrament and its minister. Hence the Apostles always refer to themselves as *ministers of Christ* when there is question of conferring grace or forgiving sins. St. Paul says: "*Christ hath placed in us the word of reconciliation. For Christ therefore we are ambassadors, God as it were exhorting by us.*"¹¹ Again he says: "*Was Paul then crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?*"¹² St. Augustine explains this matter in regard to Baptism in particular. He says: "Lest as many baptisms should be spoken of as there are servants who received power from the Lord to baptize, the Lord kept to Himself the power of baptizing, and gave to His servants the ministry. The servant says that he baptizes; he says so rightly, as the Apostle says, *And I baptized also the household of Stephanas, but as a servant.*"¹³ The Council of Florence has confirmed the teaching of St. Augustine by defining that "The Holy Trinity is the principal cause whence Baptism derives its efficacy, but the minister who confers the Sacrament externally is the instrumental cause."¹⁴ Since the minister of the Sacraments is only an instrument in the hands of God, the efficacy of the Sacra-

¹¹ 2 Cor. v, 19-20.

¹² 1 Cor. i, 13.

¹³ Augustine, "On the Gospel of St. John," v, 7; P. L., 35, 1417.

¹⁴ Denzinger, n. 696.

ments does not depend upon the worthiness of the one who administers it, for, as St. Augustine says, "the special virtue of the Sacrament is like the light; it is received pure by those to be enlightened, and if it pass through the impure, it is not stained."¹⁵

In regard to priestly power, Christ is the supreme and only Head of the Church. No bishop or pope can confer this power, except in so far as he is an instrument in the hands of Christ to administer the Sacrament of Holy Orders, and in this matter the pope has no more power than any other bishop. When Orders are once validly conferred, no power on earth can revoke or annul them; therefore, even an excommunicated bishop can ordain a priest, consecrate a bishop, celebrate Mass, or confer any other Sacrament that does not require jurisdiction, just as validly as the Pope.

PRINCIPAL POWER. A person who acts in his own name and by his own power is a principal cause, and the power by which he acts is a *principal* power. If the power be that of commanding others, it is properly called *authority*, and the person possessing it is thereby constituted a superior. Authority may be obtained by virtue of an office, or it may be delegated by another; in either case it is a principal power if it is exercised in the name of the person who possesses it.

In regard to jurisdiction or power of ruling, the Apostles were constituted true superiors with authority to enact laws in their own name: "*It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay no further*

¹⁵ "On the Gospel of St. John," v, 15; P. L., 35, 1422.

burden upon you."¹⁶ The enactments of this first council are known as the decrees, not of Christ but of the Apostles and ancients: "*Paul went through Syria . . . commanding them to keep the precepts of the apostles and ancients.*"¹⁷ When writing to the Corinthians, St. Paul lays down certain precepts in his own name and carefully distinguishes them from the precepts of Christ: "*To them that are married, not I, but the Lord commandeth . . . for the rest I speak, not the Lord.*"¹⁸ It is evident therefore that jurisdiction, or the power to rule, is a principal power conferred by Christ, but exercised by the Church in her own name. He who holds supreme jurisdiction in the Church is as truly head of the Church as a king is of his kingdom; no jurisdiction in the Church can be obtained or held against his will. Since the Church exercises a principal power in ruling, it also follows that she has full authority to abrogate or dispense from her laws at any time.

PROTESTANT TEACHING. Protestants in general seem to hold that all power in the Church is purely ministerial and consists in authority to preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments. Stahl, a German Protestant, says: "With Protestants the Church is an electric conductor that conveys the divine spark to men. With Catholics it is a glowing

¹⁶ Acts xv, 28.

¹⁷ Acts xv, 41.

¹⁸ 1 Cor. vii, 6 sq.

iron having in itself the power of burning."¹⁹ The simile is good, but wrongly applied. According to Protestant theology, the faith of the individual is the sole cause of justification; neither the Church nor the Sacraments have any intrinsic efficacy. Consequently faith, not the Church, should be compared to an electric conductor. According to Catholic teaching, the Church is both an electric conductor and a glowing iron;—an electric conductor in the power of Orders, where it acts merely as the agent of Christ; a glowing iron in the power of jurisdiction, which the Church exercises in her own name.

CHURCH POWERS PERPETUAL. Perpetuity of the powers of the Church is a necessary consequence of her perpetual indefectibility. It follows also from the very purpose for which the Church was instituted, namely, the glory of God and the salvation of souls. The power of Orders is directly concerned with both; therefore, it must exist so long as there are men on earth to attain salvation through the proper worship of God. The power of jurisdiction is ordained for the government of the Church, a visible society that must endure until the end of time; therefore, this power itself must be perpetual. Finally Christ has promised perpetual powers to His Church: "*Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.*"²⁰

¹⁹ Fr. J. Stahl, "Gegenwärtige Parteien in Staat und Kirche," p. 373.

²⁰ Matt. xxviii, 20.

CHAPTER VIII

RULERS OF THE CHURCH

The nature of the powers conferred upon the Church being determined, the further question arises: To whom were these powers committed? To the whole body of the faithful, or to superiors divinely commissioned to teach, govern, and sanctify? The answer to this question demands (1) a notice of the principal errors in the matter; (2) proof that Christ himself instituted a ruling body in the Church by conferring all power and authority upon the Apostles and their successors, to the exclusion of all others; (3) an inquiry to establish the identity of these successors to the Apostles; (4) consideration of the prerogatives proper to the Apostles and therefore not transmitted to their successors.

ART. I. ERRONEOUS DOCTRINES

MARSILIUS OF PADUA (1270-1342 A. D.). During the troubles between Louis of Bavaria and Pope John XXII, Marsilius of Padua and Jean de Jandun sided with the Emperor and defended his position in a work entitled *Defensor Pacis* (*Defender of Peace*). In this work they maintained that all power of government in the Church rests with the faithful, who exercise it

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through their chosen representatives, the secular rulers. Consequently the Church is subject to the State, and neither bishops nor Pope can make any laws or regulations for Church government without the consent of the State, for whom they are mere agents. These authors admitted that the power of Orders is conferred independently of the faithful, but they denied any distinction between priests and bishops.

PROTESTANTS. With the exception of a party in the Anglican Church, Protestants follow the teaching of Luther and Calvin, that whatever powers the Church possesses, resides in the body of the faithful, but since it is impossible for all to exercise authority, certain ones are chosen to act as delegates in the matter. They maintain that "every believer is a priest of God. Every believer has as much right as anybody else to pray, to preach, to baptize, to administer communion. . . . But it does not follow that therefore the clergy are superfluous. Experience has shown that certain persons are by natural endowment better fitted for spiritual functions than others, and also that in the Christian communities there will be leaders to whom will gravitate the major part of the work. The clerical order took its rise therefore in the very necessity of the case. . . . If everybody discharged the spiritual functions of which they are capable, then confusion and anarchy would result. . . . The office is only necessary to the orderly progress of the Church. But the means of grace gain not a whit of efficiency from their administration. Baptism, the Lord's Supper, preaching and

praying, like singing and taking up a collection; reading the Scriptures, like reading of notices,—may be performed by laymen with precisely the same spiritual effect as if the highest or the most godly minister in the land had been the administrator.”¹

According to this doctrine, Protestant clergymen are mere agents or representatives of their people, and are therefore rightly called *ministers*,—ministers, not of God, but of the people, from whom they receive their *call*, and by whom they are hired and discharged, much the same as an ordinary servant. Ordination is not a Sacrament, but a mere external ceremony by which a person is constituted a minister of the people to preach the Gospel and administer what few sacred rites they have. This is a logical deduction from the Protestant viewpoint that the real Church of Christ is invisible. The various external organizations known as churches are merely human societies, differing from hundreds of other private societies only in this, that they are religious. They were organized without any special authority from Christ, and there is no reason why one person should have any special power not possessed by every other. A person becomes a leader or minister because he is selected by the society for that purpose.

FEBRONIUS. Nicholas von Hontheim, auxiliary bishop of Treves, conceived the idea of effecting a union between Catholics and Protestants by paring down the teachings of the Church to such an extent that Protestants might be induced to accept them. With this pur-

¹ Burger in Schaff-Herzog, art. “Clergy, Biblical.”

pose in view, he wrote a work under the fictitious name of Justin Febronius. The work, edited in 1763, was entitled *De Statu Ecclesiæ* (*On the State of the Church*). The doctrine which it sets forth differs little from that of Protestants. All power in the Church belongs to the faithful; the bishops, including even the Roman Pontiff, are merely representatives delegated by the people to act in their name in the government of the Church, especially in ecumenical councils.²

ART. II. A RULING BODY OF DIVINE INSTITUTION

It is a defined doctrine of Catholic faith that the pastors of the Church are constituted a ruling body by divine appointment, and receive their power and authority, not from the faithful, but from Christ, through succession from the Apostles, upon whom He conferred all power in the Church. The Council of Trent decreed: “If anyone should say that all Christians have equal powers to preach and to administer the Sacraments let him be anathema.”¹ Pius VI condemned as heretical the “proposition which states that all power was given by God to the Church to be communicated to the pastors, who are her ministers for the salvation of souls; if the proposition be understood to mean that the power of ministry and government is communicated to the pastors by the faithful.”² The Vatican Council

² Cfr. Catholic Encyclopedia, art. “Febronianism.”

¹ Denzinger, n. 853.

² Denzinger, n. 1502.

Turbullian 922 Vol II migne patrology
no difference between priest and layman
Vol II - (Vol 957)

declared that, as Christ "sent the Apostles . . . as He himself had been sent by the Father, so He willed that there should ever be pastors and teachers in His Church to the end of the world."³ This doctrine of the Church presupposes (1) that Christ conferred all authority in the Church upon the Apostles exclusively, and (2) that this authority descends to their legitimate successors for all time.

§ 1. *Apostles Alone Receive All Authority*

Thesis.—All power in the Church, whether of Orders or jurisdiction, was immediately conferred upon the Apostles alone

PROOF. a) *From the Words of Christ.* Whenever there is question of conferring power or authority, Christ addresses none but the twelve chosen disciples, whom He calls Apostles: "He called unto him his disciples; and he chose twelve of them whom he also called apostles¹ . . . And having called his twelve disciples together he gave them power over unclean spirits."² It was to the twelve alone that Christ said: "Amen I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed also in heaven."³ It is certain that the twelve alone are meant for, as a non-

³ Denzinger, n. 1821.

¹ Luke vi, 13.

² Matt. x, 1.

³ Matt. xviii, 16-20.

Catholic author says, "The word *disciple* is applied most especially to the twelve in all four Gospels, sometimes with δώδεκα⁴ and sometimes without; they are *the* disciples. Matthew seems indeed to confine the plural to them, unless v, 1 and viii, 21 be exceptions."⁵

After the Resurrection Jesus appeared to the eleven in Galilee and "spoke to them saying: All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations."⁶ In these words He gave full power to the Apostles, and to them alone. On the very day of the Resurrection, "when it was late that same day . . . and the doors were shut where the disciples were gathered together, . . . Jesus came and stood in the midst of them. . . . He breathed on them and said: Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained. Now Thomas one of the twelve who is called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came."⁷ Here again Power is conferred, and the Apostles alone are mentioned; they are even called the *twelve*, although at that time there were only eleven. This indicates that the Apostles formed an official body known as *The Twelve*.

b) *From the Practice of the Apostles.* The Apostles always proclaimed by word and act that all their powers came immediately from Christ. In His name they

⁴ The Greek word for *twelve*.

⁵ Hasting's Bible Dictionary, art. "Disciples."

⁶ Matt, xxviii, 16-20.

⁷ John xx, 14-19.

spoke, in His name they taught, in His name they ruled. St. Paul distinctly says that he is "*an Apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father.*"⁸ To the Romans he writes: "*By Christ we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith in all nations.*"⁹ In the Epistle to the Galatians he proves at length that he is the equal of the other Apostles, for the simple reason that he received authority, not from man, but from Christ himself. St. Peter likewise claims authority from God and a divine command to teach: "*Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but to witnesses preordained by God, even to us who did eat and drink with him after he arose again from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people.*"¹⁰

The Apostles placed bishops and other ministers over the various churches without the advice or consent of the faithful. St. Paul leaves Titus as bishop of Crete, with orders to constitute other pastors in every city, but there is no mention that the faithful have any voice in the matter.¹¹ It is God, not the people, who "*hath set some in the church; first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly doctors.*"¹²

These few references are sufficient to show that the Apostles never recognized any power or authority in

⁸ Gal. i, 1.

⁹ Rom. i, 5.

¹⁰ Acts x, 41-43.

¹¹ Titus i, 5.

¹² 1 Corinth. xii, 28.

the people; in fact, St. Paul tells the Corinthians plainly that the Apostles, as ministers of Christ, are independent of the faithful, and therefore have no fear of any criticisms: "*Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God. Here now it is required among dispensers that a man be found faithful. But to me it is a very small thing to be judged by you, or by man's day.*"¹³

COROLLARY. AN OBJECTION. St. Peter calls the faithful "*a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation a purchased people.*"¹⁴ Therefore, the faithful are both rulers and priests,—a kingly priesthood; all have equal powers and rights to rule and to perform spiritual functions as Protestants maintain.

ANSWER. In this passage St. Peter applies to the faithful of the New Law words addressed to the chosen people of the Old: "*You shall be to me a priestly kingdom, and a holy nation.*"¹⁵ These words did not constitute all the people rulers in Israel, neither did they give to all the power of the priesthood, as Core, Dathan, and Abiron learned to their sorrow.¹⁶ In both passages the words are used in a spiritual sense. The faithful of the Old Law as well as those of the New, are in a sense priests; they are consecrated to God and offer to Him the spiritual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving according to the admonition of St. Paul:

¹³ 1 Cor. iv, 1-3.

¹⁴ 1 Pet. ii, 9.

¹⁵ Ex. xix, 6.

¹⁶ Numb. xvii, 1 sq.

"Let us offer the sacrifice of praise always to God, that is to say, the fruit of lips confessing his name,"¹⁷ In this sense St. Jerome calls Baptism the priesthood of the laity, which he contrasts with the true priesthood of Orders.¹⁸ In the same spiritual sense the faithful may be called kings, because by Baptism they become co-heirs with Christ, the King of kings, destined to reign with Him: "They who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift and of justice, shall reign in life through one, Jesus Christ."¹⁹

§ 2. Apostolic Power Descends by Succession

Thesis.—The power of Orders and jurisdiction, conferred upon the Apostles, is perpetuated in their successors according to the institution of Christ

PROOF. All power in the Church was originally conferred upon the Apostles, to the exclusion of all others, and there is not the slightest intimation in Scripture or tradition that Christ promised to confer a similar power upon others at any time in the future. It follows, then, that all power, whether of Orders or jurisdiction, must be perpetuated by an unbroken line of succession, reaching back to the Apostles, who received it directly from Christ Himself. This is clearly intimated in the words of Christ to the Apostles: "*Behold I*

¹⁷ Heb. xiii, 15.

¹⁸ "Dialog. adversus Luciferianos," 4; P. L., 23, 158.

¹⁹ Rom. v, 17.

Heavily with authority would descend - Succession

am with you all days even to the consummation of the world."¹ Christ was with His Apostles during their life on earth; He remains with them in their successors through all the centuries. Therefore, succession is a matter of divine institution, and those who occupy the place of the Apostles in the Church, obtain also their power and authority; they obtain it independently of any action on the part of the faithful, and exercise it by divine right.

The practice of the Apostles shows how their power was to be transmitted to others. Matthias, elected to succeed Judas, was immediately "*numbered with the eleven apostles*" and exercised equal authority with them.² A little later, Paul and Barnabas were also numbered with the Apostles and, in turn, appointed others to teach and govern the faithful: "*And when they had ordained to them priests in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord.*"³ St. Paul left Titus in Crete with authority over the church there, and commanded him to ordain others for the various cities: "*I left thee in Crete that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and shouldst ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee.*"⁴

The teaching of the Fathers on this question will be given in the following article on the successors of the

¹ Matt. xxviii, 20.

² Acts i, 20 sq.

³ Acts xiv, 22.

⁴ Titus i, 5 sq.