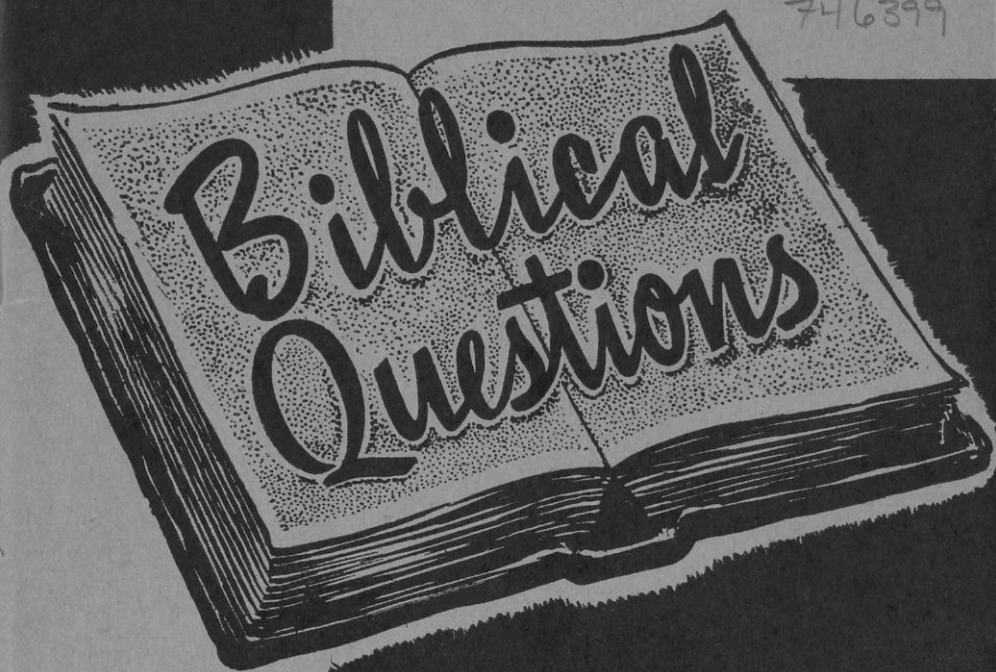


Bandas, Rudolph G.
Biblical questions
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A MANUAL FOR HIGH SCHOOL
AND COLLEGE STUDENTS AND
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S AND
ADULT DISCUSSION GROUPS

By REV. RUDOLPH G. BANDAS

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BIBLICAL QUESTIONS

A Discussion Club Manual for
Young People's and Adult Groups

by

REV. RUDOLPH G. BANDAS

Series VII

Nihil Obstat

Rev. George Ziskovsky, S.T.D., L.S.Sc.
Censor Deputatus
die 14a Februarii, 1949

Imprimatur

✠ JOANNES GREGORIUS MURRAY,
Archiepiscopus Sancti Pauli
die 15a Februarii, 1949

Published in U. S. A.
May 21, 1949
by
Our Sunday Visitor Press
Huntington, Indiana

Deacidified



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Series I of Biblical Questions aims to give the student a general acquaintance with the Bible. The Chapters and Discussion Aids are constructed in such a way as to oblige the student to page the Bible, become acquainted with the arrangement of the Books, and read some sections of each Book.

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Series III takes up specific questions in the Old and the New Testament, and this method is continued in the subsequent Series.

With the permission of the Bruce Publishing Company of Milwaukee, some of the materials in the Series are taken from our work, *Biblical Questions, Old Testament*, a book which is now out of print. We also wish to express our gratitude to St. Anthony's Guild of Paterson, New Jersey, for permission to incorporate into these booklets materials found in our volume "Biblical Questions, Vol. II: New Testament," published by the Guild, and to use its Scriptural publications in the preparation of these booklets. The Biblical texts are from the Rheims-Douay Version published by the E. M. Lohmann Company of St. Paul. In enunciating the Church's traditional and unchanging dogmatic teachings bearing upon the questions under discussion, we have used as sourcebooks J. M. Herve's *Manuale Theologiae Dogmaticae* (Paris, 1924) Vol. II, Tanqueray's *Synopsis Theologiae Dogmaticae* (Tournai, 1921) Vol. II, and our own work, *The Master Idea of St. Paul's Epistles or the Redemption* (Bruges, 1925).

The Author

Chapter I

The Paschal Supper and the Holy Eucharist

I. Origin and Nature of the Paschal Supper

The ceremonies of the Paschal Supper had their roots far back in the history of the Jews in Egypt. When the Israelites were in Egyptian bondage, God sent one plague after another upon the Pharaohs in order to effect the release of the Jews (Exodus 7 to 11). The tenth and last of these plagues came when, on the fourteenth day of the month at midnight, the destroying angel went through Egypt and smote all the first-born, whether of man or beast, throughout the land.

By command of God, this month became the first month of the Hebrew year. Originally it was called the month of Abib, but after the Babylonian Captivity it received the name of Nisan. It corresponds approximately to the greater part of our month of March and the first days of April.

The Lord made provisions, however, to exempt the Hebrew people from this plague. He commanded that at evening before that dreadful night of God's wrath, every Jewish family should kill a male yearling lamb without blemish. The Jews were to sprinkle the blood of the lamb on the two side posts and on the lintel of every Hebrew house. This blood was to be a sign: wherever the avenging angel saw the blood on the house, he "passed over" that house and struck no one therein. Hence the



event itself eventually came to be known as the "passover." By metonymy the animal killed and eaten was also called the passover.

The people were commanded to eat the roasted lamb in haste, with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand. They were to eat its flesh with unleavened bread and wild lettuce. Suddenly at midnight, "there arose a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house wherein there lay not one dead" (Exodus 12:30). Then Pharaoh arose and ordered the Hebrews to depart out of the land at once. "And the Egyptians pressed the people to go forth out of the land speedily, saying: We shall all die" (Exodus 12:33). The Hebrew people were ready to depart hastily out of the land. The command to eat unleavened bread facilitated their quick exit; the dough could not have been leavened at the time and would have been difficult to carry: "The people, therefore, took dough before it was leavened; and tying it in their cloaks, put it on their shoulders . . . for it could not be leavened, the Egyptians pressing them to depart" (Exodus 12:39).

The deliverance of the Jews out of Egypt was at God's command commemorated annually by the feast of the Pasch. The word "Pasch" comes from the Hebrew term *pisach*, meaning "to pass over." The Pasch was kept on the fourteenth day of Nisan, commencing after sunset on the thirteenth of Nisan and ending at sunset on the fourteenth. This was called the eve or the preparation of the Pasch. The Pasch was also called "the day of the unleavened bread," a feast which really occupied seven additional days: "On the fourteenth day of the month

at evening, ye shall eat unleavened bread until the one and twentieth day of the same month in the evening. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses" (Exodus 12:18, 19). This abstinence was in memory of the Jews' hurried departure from Egypt, when they had no time to leaven their dough. During the eight days of the Paschal solemnity, the Israelites were not allowed to keep leavened bread in their house. They were enjoined to search their houses carefully with a lighted candle and in silence lest any crumbs of leavened bread should have been overlooked.

The Paschal Supper was eaten after sunset on the fourteenth day of Nisan, and comprised the following six articles of food:

1. The Paschal lamb which was to be a male of one year and without blemish (Exodus 12:5). The Paschal lambs were generally purchased at the sheep market which to a certain extent was under the control of the Jewish priests. They were killed between noon and sunset on the fourteenth day of Nisan. All the statutes relating to the Passover seem to fix the Temple as the only lawful place of slaying the Paschal lamb. Scholars, however, are of the opinion that the law was fulfilled if the lamb was slain in Jerusalem. After the lamb was flayed, the fat was removed from the intestines and thrown into the fire, and the body was then roasted whole. The Paschal lamb was eaten in memory of that lamb whose blood, sprinkled on the lintels of the homes of the Israelites, saved the firstborn of the Jews in Egypt. It was eaten in companies of ten or more persons.

2. The unleavened bread, which was eaten in

memory of the quick exit of the Jews out of Egypt.

3. To these two articles were added the bitter herbs, lettuce, endive, horehound, succory, parsley, to recall the bitter servitude of the Jews in Egypt.

These three articles in the celebration of the Pasch were prescribed by law. The tradition of the Jewish Fathers added three others:

4. A condiment known as "charoseth" and made of figs, filberts, pistachio nuts, almonds, apples—all of which was crushed in a mortar and mixed with spices; vinegar and salt were also used. The unleavened bread was dipped into this sauce before being eaten. This dish recalled to the Jews their making bricks with clay and straw while they were in the land of Egypt.

5. A pitcher of red wine; during the Supper a chalice of wine was passed around four or five times.

6. A pitcher of water; this water was partly mixed with the wine and partly used for the ablution of the hands.

In Egypt the Jews ate the lamb standing; at the subsequent Paschal solemnities they ate the Passover reclining—a bodily attitude which was indicative of rest, safety and liberty. It was customary for the Jews of Jerusalem to lend their rooms to the pilgrims who came to celebrate the Pasch. With characteristic Eastern hospitality they offered the visitors the best room, and expected and accepted little or no remuneration. This guest chamber was usually on the upper floor, and contained a table, couches and the necessary utensils. The Gospels do

not indicate the name of the "master of the house" in which Christ ate the Paschal Supper with His Apostles. He was undoubtedly one of our Lord's disciples; some conjecture that the house in question was the paternal home of St. Mark. Whatever may be said about the controversy concerning the date on which Christ celebrated the Paschal Supper, it is certain that He Himself partook of the Paschal Supper and that He used unleavened bread. Both He and the Apostles would naturally wish to retain all the ancient observances. The belief of the Greek Church that Christ used leavened bread is based on an error concerning the date of the Paschal Supper and can claim little authority in its support. In instituting the Eucharist Christ made use of unleavened bread and of one of the four chalices of wine passed around at the Paschal Supper.

*Ceremonies Of The Paschal Supper—
The Eucharist*

The Paschal Supper comprised several steps.

1. It began by the head of the company taking the first of the four cups of wine mingled with water, and speaking over it "the thanksgiving." The formula of blessing in use consisted really of two benedictions—the first "over the wine" and the second "over the day." The latter was a thanksgiving for the return of the feast day and for being preserved once more to witness it. The cup was then passed around the circle of the company. Some scholars think that each one present had his own cup.

2. At the next stage of the ceremonial the head of the company rose and "washed hands." It is this

part of the ritual of which St. John records (13:4) the adaptation and transformation on the part of Christ. The washing of the disciples' feet is evidently connected with the ritual of hand-washing.

3. After the hand-washing, the head of the company would dip some of the bitter herbs into salt water and vinegar, pronounce a blessing over them, and hand them to each in the company. Next he would break one of the unleavened breads, of which half was put aside for after supper. This "after-dish" was probably the bread of the Holy Eucharist. The youngest in the company was instructed to make formal inquiry as to the meaning of the observances which were carried out on that night. The president replied by explaining each rule.

4. A part of the Hallel (Psalms 112, 113) was then chanted, and the second cup of wine was filled and passed around. The dipping of the unleavened bread into the charoseth also took place at this point. It was in this connection that the traitor Judas was revealed and identified (John 13:26).

5. All the members of the company then washed hands and prepared to eat the Paschal lamb. The actual supper now began. Each one could satisfy his appetite and conversation was allowed.

6. They then partook of the "after-dish," and the cup of blessing (I Corinthians 10:16) was handed round to each. The institution of the Holy Eucharist by our Lord is supposed by many commentators to have taken place at this point. It is narrated in the following terms by St. Matthew: "And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread,

and blessed and broke, and gave to His disciples and said: Take ye, and eat. This is My body. And taking the chalice, He gave thanks, and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is My blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins (Matthew 26:26-28).

7. A prayer of thanksgiving followed, after which the fourth cup was drunk, and the remainder of the Hallel was sung (Psalms 114-117).

It is certain that Christ Himself also ate the Pasch. The certainty of this fact is implied in the question of the Apostles recorded by St. Matthew: "Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the Pasch?" (Matthew 26:17). St. Luke's Gospel is even more explicit: "And when the hour was come, He sat down and the twelve with Him. And He said to them: With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you before I suffer. For I say to you that from this time I will not eat it till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God" (Luke 22:14-16).

On the evening of the Paschal Supper the Apostles were alone at table with Christ. The Evangelists mention only the Apostles whether before or during or after the meal. The Divine Mister no doubt wished to be alone on this solemn occasion with those who eminently represented His Church. He was about to confer a new office upon them, and impart to them special instructions. There is an ancient legend that Our Lady was in the adjoining room and that Martha and Mary unsuccessfully asked of our Lord permission to be present at the institution of the Eucharist.

What was the exact position of Christ and the Apostles at table? The Orientals half reclined on

couches when at table. Each of the dinner couches ordinarily held three persons, the most honored person being in the middle, the two others reclining one in front of him and one behind him. Now, we know that St. John was at Christ's side, so that in reclining his head would be close to Jesus' breast, so that in fact he declared of himself that he reclined on Christ's bosom. Since it was customary for the guests to recline on their left elbow, John was at our Lord's right hand. Judas was close at hand, probably at the other side of Jesus. The fact that Jesus gave him a piece of bread dipped in the condiment is proof that Judas must have been near Jesus. This explains, too, that when Judas asked directly of Jesus if he should betray Him, Jesus answered him yes, and no one save Judas heard the declaration (Matthew 26:21). Men have assigned to Peter the last place on the other side of the table, opposite St. John. This position assigned to St. Peter is based on St. John's statement that in washing the Apostles' feet, our Lord began with St. Peter (John 13:6).

Did Judas Receive Holy Communion?

The question is often asked whether at the Last Supper Judas partook of the Holy Eucharist. According to St. Matthew and St. Mark, whose accounts are substantially the same, the denunciation of the traitor took place before the institution of the Holy Eucharist. St. Matthew gives us the following account of this incident: "But when it was evening, He sat down with His twelve disciples. And whilst they were eating He said: Amen I say to you, that one of you is about to betray Me. And

they, being very much troubled, began every one to say: Is it I, Lord? But He answering said: He that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish, he shall betray Me. The Son of Man indeed goeth, as it is written of Him. But woe to that man by whom the Son of Man shall be betrayed; it were better for him if that man had not been born. And Judas that betrayed Him answering said, Is it I, Rabbi? He saith to him: Thou hast said it. And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed and broke, and gave to His disciples, and said: Take ye and eat. This is My body. And taking the chalice, He gave thanks, and gave to them saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is My blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins" (Matthew 26:20-28; Mark 14:17-22). According to St. Matthew and St. Mark, then, it does not seem probable that Judas remained to be ordained a priest and to receive Holy Communion.

St. Luke seems to give us a different account. He places the denunciation of the traitor only after the institution of the Holy Eucharist (22:19-20): "But yet behold, the hand of him that betrayeth Me is with Me on the table. And the Son of Man goeth, according to that which is determined. But yet woe to that man by whom He shall be betrayed. And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing" (22:21-23).

St. John does not narrate explicitly but rather presupposes the institution of the Holy Eucharist. The thirteenth chapter opens with the immortally beautiful phrase, "Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end." Some

understand these words as referring to the Eucharist which had already been instituted. Later, in the course of the thirteenth chapter, St. John describes the denunciation of the traitor in the following terms: "When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and He testified and said: Amen, amen, I say to you, one of you shall betray Me. The disciples therefore looked one upon another, doubting of whom He spoke. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, and said to him: Who is it of whom He speaketh? He therefore, leaning on the breast of Jesus, said to Him: Lord, who is it? Jesus answered: He it is to whom I shall reach bread dipped. And when He had dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon . . . He, therefore, having received the morsel, went out immediately" (John 13:21-30).

Did Judas receive the Eucharist? Opinions differ widely, and both the negative and affirmative have had ardent exponents. The negative opinion—the view, namely, that Judas did not receive the Eucharist—seems preferable for many reasons.

In the first place, the designation of the traitor took place during the Paschal Supper, "whilst they were eating" (Matt. 26:21), "when they were at table and eating" (Mark 14:18). According to John's account likewise, the designation took place during the supper: "He it is to whom I shall reach bread dipped" (unleavened bread dipped into the charoseth). Judas left before the end of the Paschal Supper: "He, therefore, having received the morsel, went out immediately" (John 13:30).

According to St. Luke (22:20) and St. Paul (I Corinthians 11:25) Jesus instituted the Eucharist "after He had supped," that is, at the end of the Paschal Supper. Hence Judas was not present when the Holy Eucharist was being instituted.

But what about the section in Luke 22:21-23 which seems to place the denunciation of the traitor after the institution of the Eucharist? It is probable that St. Luke was not following the historical order in enumerating the different stages of the Paschal Supper. He narrates, first of all, what was essential and then, after the manner of an appendix, mentions some of the other things that were said and done that night. St. Luke clearly indicates that he is not following a chronological order. He tells us that the Eucharist was instituted after the Paschal Supper—"after He had supped." And yet, although he places the account of the traitor after that dealing with the Eucharist, he tells us that the traitor was designated during the Paschal Supper: "Behold, the hand of him that betrayeth Me is with Me on the table," that is, to take food. Hence St. Luke is substantially in agreement with St. Matthew and St. Mark. The passage in John 13:1, refers to all the proofs of Christ's supreme love to be afforded the disciples that night. Even if it did refer to the Eucharist, it does not determine the moment of its institution.

The universal command, "Drink ye all of this" (Matthew 26:27), refers to the body of the Apostles who remained after the sole exception, Judas, had gone out. Besides, could Christ command that Judas, by a new and horrible sacrilege, bring Christ's blood and hence Christ Himself into a soul

which had become the abode of Satan? Did He not direct His ministers not to submit holy things to the abuse of the unworthy? Would Christ direct to Judas the words, "Do this in commemoration of Me," thereby creating him a priest, and at the same time by that dignity increasing Judas' eternal suffering? St. Thomas says that Christ could not publicly refuse the Eucharist to an occult sinner. This is true. But Christ prudently postponed the institution of the Eucharist until after the departure of Judas, so that the traitor might not be stained by a new sacrilege. St. Paul (I Corinthians 11:27) speaks a good deal about an unworthy communion but makes no reference to Judas.

Did Our Lord Partake Of The Eucharist?

It is not probable that Christ partook of the Eucharist after its institution at the Last Supper. The Gospels give no positive support to the contrary opinion. It is recorded that Christ took break, broke, gave to His disciples and said to them: "Receive ye and eat." Such a mode of expression does not imply but rather excludes the supposition that Christ ate His body which He gave to the disciples. In like manner He blessed the chalice, gave to His disciples, and said to them: "Drink ye of it all." He who gives a chalice to another and commands him to drink of it is not, by that fact, thought to drink himself.

Some maintain that Christ partook of the Eucharist in order to prevent His disples from being disturbed at the thought of eating His body and blood. But this is hardly a serious reason. Since the species as well as the appearances of bread and

wine remained, it is difficult to see why the disciples should be so confused and perturbed as to refuse to eat and drink the Eucharist.

Others claim that Christ first observed Himself what He commanded others to do. This reason, however, is not universally valid. Christ bade the Apostles to go into the whole world and to baptize every creature. Yet He Himself did not leave the land of Israel nor did He receive sacramental Baptism.

Did He receive the Eucharist in order to give us an example? No. Christ's precept and the great blessings which would flow from a reception of the Eucharist were sufficient reasons for this great Sacrament's never being neglected.

From the Eucharist flows life—eternal life. By it we abide in Christ and Christ in us. By it we apply to ourselves the fruits of the Redemption. Now, no one would assert that Christ was in need of the Eucharist in order to participate in these blessed effects of the Sacrament.

Discussion Aids

Set I

1. How many plagues did God send on the Pharaohs and the Egyptians?
2. How were the Israelites saved from the tenth plague?
3. Describe the first Passover. What was the origin of the unleavened bread?
4. What was the feast of the Pasch? When was it kept? What is the meaning of the word "Pasch?"
5. What articles of food were eaten at the

- Paschal Supper? What ideas was each to recall to the Jews?
6. How is the "charoseth" associated with the traitor Judas?
 7. Where was the Paschal Supper ordinarily eaten? Where did Our Lord eat the Paschal Supper?
 8. What were the principal steps of the Paschal Supper?
 9. At what stage was the Holy Eucharist probably instituted?
 10. Did Christ eat the Paschal Supper?
 11. Who was present at the Paschal Supper?
 12. What was the exact position of Christ and of the Apostles at the table?
 13. Why does the priest use unleavened bread at Mass?
 14. Why does he add a few drops of water to the wine at the Offertory?

Set II

1. When did the denunciation of Judas the traitor take place?
2. Did Judas receive the Holy Eucharist?
3. Why is it more reasonable to suppose that Judas did not receive the Holy Eucharist and was not ordained a priest?
4. What arguments are advanced to show that Christ partook of the Holy Eucharist? Are they valid?

Religious Practices

1. I will celebrate gratefully and devoutly on Holy Thursday the annual commemoration of the institution of the Holy Eucharist.

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2. I will make a visit to the Repository on Holy Thursday and thank God for giving us the great gift of the Eucharist.
3. I will try to assist at the solemn procession on Corpus Christi.

Chapter II

The Agony and the Betrayal of Christ

I. The Bloody Sweat

The agony and bloody sweat are recorded only by the Third Gospel. Being a physician by profession (Colossians 4:14), St. Luke was no doubt interested in a special way in this unusual event. The agony took place in the garden of Gethsemani. Since no gardens were permitted in Jerusalem, the wealthier classes had garden on the adjacent mountain slopes. The garden of Gethsemani probably belonged to one of Christ's disciples. Today eight ancient olive trees mark the site, probably sprung from trunks of trees that stood there in our Lord's time. The garden, as it now exists, is almost square, each side measuring about 168 feet. In Hebrew the word "Gethsemani" signifies "olive-press."

The term "agony" denotes an intense struggle, pressure and tension of the soul. Our Lord's agony was due to several reasons. It was caused partly by the terrible sufferings which Christ—in the fullness of His knowledge—saw that He must undergo. Since He was true and perfect man, His human was even more sensitive than ours, and hence He dreaded the awful torments of the Passion. By an act of His own will, He prevented the Beatific Vision of His Soul from in any way influencing His body and lessening His sufferings. With His full consent all inter-

nal consolation was withdrawn. At the same time, His thrice-holy conscience perceived the heinousness of humanity's sins and the ingratitude of those numberless souls who would not profit by His redemption.

Our Lord met these rising anxieties and fears with a powerful resistance and great fortitude of soul. "And being in an agony," says St. Luke, "He prayer the longer. And His sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground (22:43, 44)."

"Physicians tell," writes Father Maas, "that in certain cases of great mental excitement the palpitation of the heart is so greatly increased and the circulation of the blood so accelerated that the pressure becomes very great on the blood vessels, and results in hemorrhage, and sometimes in an exuding of the blood, which mingles with and discolors the perspiration." ¹

A learned dissertation on Christ's bloody sweat has been written by the theologian Calmet. This author tells us that in his investigation he was assisted by Dr. Alliot de Mussey, a doctor and professor of medicine at the University of Paris. He quotes examples of men condemned in prison or awaiting execution and undergoing a bloody sweat in their whole body. Dr. Baraban, professor of medicine in Nancy, France, says that the "account of St. Luke does not present anything impossible since other observers have reported facts of the same kind." Christ's bloody sweat, however, was miraculous: that He lost thereby so great a quantity of

(1) *Life of Christ*, p. 497.

blood without death ensuing is to be ascribed to miraculous power.

In this connection the following question is occasionally raised: If saints looked forward to an equally terrible death—slow roasting on grid-irons, being flayed alive, being dissected joint by joint—not only without agony but with joyful expectancy, why did Christ undergo a bloody sweat? The answer to this question is easy: It was in the agony in the garden that Christ merited for us the graces to bear our sufferings patiently and even gladly. Christ voluntarily underwent—without any mitigation—the cruelest of sufferings in order to make our sufferings light and easy.

While Christ in utter loneliness was undergoing the agony and bloody sweat, His disciples were asleep. How could St. Luke, then, come to a knowledge of the happenings during those dread moments? It is possible that the Apostles saw the red marks on His face and clothing when they rejoined Him. It is possible, too, that they perceived bloody traces on the spot where He had been kneeling. Besides, they did not sleep continually nor were they so far away. In the light of the full moon or in the radiant light of the angel's presence they could observe what was going on. Christ during the forty days after His Resurrection could have narrated the principal facts connected with this incident to the Apostles. The Holy Ghost, too, could have revealed them directly to St. Luke and inspired him to put them down in writing.

II. The Treason of Judas

During the Paschal season there was stationed at the Tower Antonia a Roman legion to guard the

city and watch over the Temple. On their great festivals the Jews were wont to be very turbulent, and hence the Romans on these occasions were in readiness to quell any uprising. The Roman legion differed in number at different periods. In the time of the republic it consisted of 4,500 men. In the days of Marius the legion numbered about 6,000 men, besides the cavalry. The cohort—which was a tenth part of a legion—varied in size accordingly, and numbered at times 450 men, at times 500 men, and sometimes 600 men. But in common parlance the term “cohort” was applied to any band of soldiers. How these soldiers were brought into the drama of the Redemption will be explained shortly.

The Jews had by now fully determined that Jesus was to die. But they did not wish to apprehend Him openly during the feast, lest a tumult should arise among the multitude of pilgrims. For the knowledge of Christ's words and deeds had come to many of the common people who regarded Him as a prophet and wonderworker. On the other hand, the chief priests and elders shrewdly calculated that if they could capture Jesus, they could easily persuade the unthinking multitude that He was an enemy of their nation. For they knew that the mob is usually illogical, unreflecting and fickle. An unforeseen event now shaped itself favorably to their designs.

In the soul of one of Christ's chosen Twelve a tendency toward covetousness was waxing without resistance. The gradual growth of this vice in Judas' heart can be traced throughout the Gospel narrative, until it comes to a head in Holy Week. After the anointing of Christ's feet, we find Judas

unblushingly exclaiming: "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor?" (John 12:4-6). And St. John aptly remarks: "Now he said this not because he cared for the poor but because he was a thief." In the measure in which this habit filled the heart of Judas, to that extent it excluded the workings of Divine grace. And when finally this attachment to creatures, under the instigations of Satan, completely dominated Judas' soul, the workings of divine grace ceased entirely. Judas was left to his own natural powers, and a crash became inevitable. Hence we find that he who has been closely associated with Jesus for years, is now bargaining in cold blood with the priests for the best possible price for delivering Him to death. One of the Twelve sells his Master for thirty pieces of silver—about twenty dollars. Judas' crime is aggravated by the fact that the Jews had not come to him and offered him a bribe; he voluntarily went to them and offered to do the deed for money.

Judas' proposal precipitated the action of the Jews. It relieved them of the necessity of apprehending Christ in the open, among the people. With the traitor's help they could be guided by night to the silent retreat where Jesus prayed. By representing to the Romans that Christ was a seditious man, the priests and Pharisees were able to obtain from the Roman military authorities a cohort—that is, a band of soldiers—to assist in the arrest of Jesus. At the same time, they organized a band of their own followers; perhaps some of the priests and Pharisees went with the party. We know that Malchus, the servant of the high priest, was present.

All were fully armed and prepared for a night attack and the putting down of any resistance.

In the crowd there were many rude men who did not know Jesus by sight. In the uncertain light of night a mistake might be made and the wrong man apprehended. Hence Judas was not only to guide them to the spot where Jesus prayed but he was to point out Jesus Himself. The prearranged sign of betrayal was a kiss—in the Orient a customary sign of friendship. Judas thus wished to act as a faithful disciple and so conceal his treachery, for he feared the anger of the other Apostles. To bring out this twofold aspect and purpose of Judas' kiss has always proved a severe task for painter and artist. According to the reading of the original Greek, Judas not only kissed our Lord but covered Him with kisses—kissed Him repeatedly, effusively, loudly.

Why did Christ choose Judas as an Apostle, since He foreknew and predicted Judas' deed even before it was conceived in the traitor's mind? Christ chose Judas in order to show us that the stability of the Church would not be destroyed by the scandals which should come. The members of the Church are, indeed, human and often fail. But the power on which the Church's infallibility and indefectibility rest is Divine and can never fail. Hence if one or another of the Church's rulers fails, we must not condemn the whole priesthood and the Church itself. Although Judas was a traitor, the other Apostles loved our Lord with all their hearts.

III. Peter's Denial

After having been bound by the soldiers, Christ was led back into the city by the same road on

which He had left it. Since our Lord was accused of teaching false doctrines, and since it was the office of the high priest to judge religious questions, Christ was led thither. The nominal high priest at that time was Caiphas, but the former high priest Annas was the real power. The two probably lived in the same place as the common official residence. Annas had for a long time controlled the office of the high priesthood, and had placed five of his sons, his son-in-law Caiphas and a grand-son in this office. In Acts 4:6 we read that Annas again holds the post in person. The high-priestly office, it must be remembered, remained in the families of Eleazar and Ithamar (the sons of Aaron) and was inherited with the primogeniture. After the time of Antiochus Epiphanes (165 B. C.) the high-priestly office was no longer hereditary and for life, but was bought from the Roman governors, who arbitrarily appointed and dismissed high priests.

After the first panic of our Lord's sudden capture by the soldiers and the flight of the Apostles, Peter and John seem speedily to have rallied. Peter was the first to stop in his flight and to follow "afar off"; he finally entered the court of the high priest. After the manner of Oriental houses, the house of Caiphas was built round a quadrangular court which was paved and opened to the sky. Through a large gate which gave entrance Peter advanced to the middle of the court. Here, because of the chill spring air, a coal fire had been lighted. The glow threw a light on the faces of the men who gathered around it to discuss the events of the night.

It was at this point that Peter's denials of Christ begin. Commentators are wont to note that

it was not Pilate, nor a member of the Sanhedrin, but a simple waiting-maid that scared the presumptuous Peter into a denial of Christ. Nor was a simple denial sufficient, but Peter added successively oaths, cursing and swearing. Then, as Christ was being conducted across the court, to or from Caiphas, He "looked upon Peter" and brought him to his senses. This look burned itself into Peter's mind and memory, and was the mainspring of Peter's life-long tearful repentance.

In this connection theologians discuss the causes, nature and import of Peter's sin. The causes which finally led to Peter's denial of our Lord are quite apparent in the Gospels. Peter was impetuous and impulsive. He presumed too much on his own natural strength and did not heed Christ's warnings. He neglected to "watch and pray" in Gethsemani, followed his Master from "afar off," and joined the company of Christ's foes. Finally, he feared excessively for his own personal safety. What lessons are we to draw from this incident? We must learn to watch and pray against temptations, to distrust ourselves, have confidence in God's mercy and look to Him for strength. We must learn to repent sincerely of our faults, and have compassion on those who sin grievously.

Theologians also discuss the gravity of Peter's sin. Some, as St. Ambrose, try to excuse Peter by means of the following distinction: Peter denied that he knew the man, the Nazarene, the Galilean—not that he knew the Son of God. This explanation is untenable because Peter denied the Person of Jesus Christ Who was at once God and man. Others maintain that Peter lacked adequate knowledge; he

could not view the message and work of Christ in its completeness and the faith of the world was not yet confirmed by the miracle of the Resurrection. This explanation is likewise inadmissible. It confuses sufficient with exhaustive knowledge. After hearing Christ's teachings, witnessing His miracles, and proclaiming His Divinity, Peter had sufficient knowledge of Christ's Person. Hence—although God alone is judge in these matters—we believe with St. Thomas and Suarez that Peter sinned mortally.

Theology can also offer some explanations as to why God permitted Peter to fall. Both the head of the Church and the members of the Church were soon to pass through terrible trials, tribulations and persecutions. They needed to learn from the outset that man is weak in himself but strong in God. Peter had not yet realized this, and his excessive trust in himself brought upon him the bitter experience of his weakness. God permitted him to fall to teach him not to confide too much in his own strength—to make him realize that man can do all things only with the help of God's grace.

Discussion Aids

Set I

1. What is the meaning of the word, "Gethsemani"? Where was the garden of Gethsemani? What is its present size?
2. What is the meaning of the term "agony"? To what was Our Lord's agony due?
3. How do physicians explain a bloody sweat?
4. Why was Our Lord's bloody sweat miraculous?
5. Why do saints today look forward with

calm and peace to cruel tortures and a terrible death?

6. Since Christ suffered in utter loneliness, how did St. Luke obtain information about Our Lord's bloody sweat?

Set II

1. Why was a Roman legion stationed in Jerusalem during the Paschaltime?
2. How large was a Roman legion? A cohort?
3. Why did not the Jews wish to apprehend Jesus openly during the feast?
4. If the Jews did capture Jesus, how did they plan to justify their action before the people?
5. What was Judas's predominant fault? How did it lead to his downfall?
6. How did Judas play into the hands of the Jews?
7. Why did the Jews take a band of soldiers with them when they went to arrest Jesus?
8. What was the prearranged sign of betrayal? What was its double purpose?
9. Why did Christ choose Judas as an Apostle when He foreknew that Judas would turn out to be a traitor? Was Judas damned (John 17-12; Matthew 26:24)?

Set III

1. Who was high priest at the time of Our Lord's death?
2. Describe the house of the high priest?
3. Who was the occasion of Peter's denying Our Lord? What brought him back to his senses?
4. What were the causes of Peter's downfall?

5. What was the gravity of Peter's sin?
6. Why did God permit him to fall?
7. Is it true that each one of us has a predominant fault? How is it to be cured?

Religious Practices

1. I will examine my conscience frequently in order to ascertain my predominant fault, and with the help of God's grace try to eradicate it and practice the opposite virtue.
2. I will watch and pray against temptations, distrust myself, and rely on God's grace and help.
3. I will sincerely repent of my falls and have compassion on those who sin grievously.

Chapter III

The Condemnation of Christ

I. Pilate

During the hearing before the Sanhedrin—the supreme court of the Jews—our Lord remained meek and silent. He had nothing to say to the lying witnesses, who contradicted one another so openly that even the false-hearted Pharisees dared not issue a verdict of guilt on their evidence. Sorely vexed, the high priest now forces the issue to a crisis. He says to Jesus: “I adjure Thee by the living God that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God” (Matthew 26:63). This was a most solemn adjuration: it juridically coerced the accused to swear by the living God to the truth of His answer. Should Jesus remain silent now, His enemies could say that He failed to affirm His Divinity at a most critical moment, and the basic truth of Christianity would have been weakened. Jesus therefore solemnly declared Himself to be the Son of God in the sense of equality and consubstantiality with the Father. Hardly had Jesus professed this divine Sonship when the Jews forthwith condemned Him to death for blasphemy.

Although the Jews could condemn Jesus to death, mock and maltreat Him, they could not put Him to death. History shows that at this time the power of capital punishment had been taken away from Israel. The murder of St. Stephen and St. James the Less by the Jews does not disprove this

fact, since the killing of these two men was not a legal act but mob violence. The Jews themselves openly admitted to Pilate: "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death" (John 18:31). They knew, moreover, that Jesus was innocent and were unwilling to be responsible for His execution. They longed for Christ's death, but in their fear of the consequences of such an unjust act, they wished to transfer the responsibility of it on Pilate.

Judea was at this time a Roman province and Pontius Pilate was its governor. Pilate's habitual residence was at Caesarea on the sea coast. But during the Paschal season, because of the riots in the Holy City, Pilate was wont to come to Jerusalem and take up his abode in the castle of Antonia. In the province under his jurisdiction the governor represented the Roman emperor. Among other responsibilities it was his duty to judge criminal cases. He could decree capital punishment but if he did so, he had to report the "cause" of the condemnation to the emperor.

Before the Sanhedrin the Jews charged Christ with blasphemy because He declared Himself to be the Son of God. But they well knew that Pilate would care naught for such a charge. For in all offenses against the Jewish law the Romans disclaimed any wish to interfere. The Sanhedrin was left free to deal with these, provided it did not violate a man's civil rights. Hence the Jews laid aside the religious question, and quickly invented new charges—accusations which would impress the timid and weak-spined Pilate. They now bring forth three civil charges and accuse Jesus 1) of stirring up sedition and perverting the nation; 2) of

refusing to pay tribute; and 3) of claiming to be king.

Pilate notices that Jesus is making no defense before the Jews, and hence takes Him aside privately and asks Him directly the question: "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" Jesus then explains that His kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, and that it in no way conflicts with the earthly powers of the Caesars or any earthly rulers. Christ's kingdom is the kingdom of heaven into which man enters by embracing truth and justice. Pilate now clearly understands that there is no reason for condemning Christ, as the Jews are urging him to do.

II.—The Great Alternative

Utterly convinced that Jesus is innocent, Pilate is now confronted with a dilemma: on the one hand he does not wish to condemn an innocent man and deliver him to the unjust and the bloodthirsty rabble; on the other hand, he does not wish to displease the Jews for fear that they might report him to Rome. Six times does Pilate seek to shift the burden and avoid the issue—each successive time manifesting a greater weakness and a more pronounced lack of courage and determination.

1. At Pilate's words, "I find no cause in this man," the crowd broke out more vehemently, saying: "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place" (Luke 23:5). The mention of Galilee opened up the way for Pilate to shift the responsibility upon Herod, who was prince of that section of the Roman province. Though Pilate exercised supreme jurisdiction also over Galilee, yet there was left to its

tetrarch a certain autonomy, and Pilate wished it to appear that he deferred to Herod's authority by sending Jesus, a citizen of Nazareth in Galilee, to him. For Herod was also in Jerusalem for the Paschal feast. This action seemed courteous, and Herod and Pilate who had been at enmity—probably because Pilate massacred some Galilean pilgrims (Luke 13:1)—became friends again. But the real motive of Pilate was to shift the burden on Herod. Legally, Pilate had no right to send Christ to Herod. According to Roman law, a case could be sent from one court to another provided it had not been settled; whereas Pilate as supreme judge had examined Christ's case and declared Him innocent. Like Pilate, Herod did not condemn Christ and thereby declared Him innocent.

2. Pilate now makes a second effort to gratify the Jews' hatred of Jesus by something less than capital punishment. He proposes—yet by what right?—to scourge Him and let Him go (Luke 23:16, 22). The Evangelists merely mention the fact that Jesus was finally scourged, but do not indicate the details of the punishment. The Jewish mode of scourging limited the number of blows to 40, and the Pharisees, for fear that the number might be exceeded, placed the number at 39. Jesus was scourged according to the Roman law which placed no limit on the number of blows. An apparently extravagant estimate places the number of blows inflicted upon Christ above 5,000. The terms used by the Evangelists give evidence that Christ was punished with the leathern scourge. Very often the scourge's thongs terminated with hooks or were knotted with bones or pieces of brass and hard wood.

In this punishment the person was stripped and bound to a post of some kind.

3. Pilate's proposal to scourge Christ was met with a wild cry of disapproval on the part of the Jews, who insisted on the extreme penalty. Hence Pilate was forced to try some other expedient. At the time of the Passover it was customary for the Roman governor to pardon one of the criminals in the fortress of Antonia. This custom, which by now had almost the force of law, was very likely of Jewish origin and was intended to commemorate the deliverance of the Jews from Egyptian bondage. Although the Jews had the right to choose the prisoner, Pilate seems to have limited the choice to two individuals, Christ and Barabbas. There is a design in Pilate's action: he selects the wickedest prisoner available, to compel the Jews to ask for Christ. But he has not fully estimated the malice of the Jews, especially of the chief priests. They ask for the release of him who was really guilty of the crime of which they have been falsely accusing Christ.

4. After Christ has been scourged, and mocked, and crowned with thorns, Pilate brings Him forth and presents Him to the multitude with these significant words, "Behold the Man" (John 19:5). Pilate hopes that the Jews will be softened by the spectacle of suffering to which Jesus has been reduced, and again protests that he finds no crime in Him. Again he hears the same answer of the chief priests, "Crucify Him."

5. Pilate now challenges the Jews to assume responsibility for Jesus' death and directly empowers them to inflict capital punishment (John 19:6). At this point the Jews stop. They recognize that their

civil charges against Jesus have failed. On the other hand, they are not willing to bear responsibility for the foul deed which they wish done. Hence they return to their first, religious accusation against Christ: By claiming to be "Son of God," Christ has transgressed the Jewish law which even Pilate is bound to respect and uphold. When Pilate, a polytheist in his religious life, hears that Christ is the "Son of God," he fears that by acting against Him, he may draw down on himself the wrath of some pagan divinity. Again he endeavors to procure Jesus' release. The Jews now meet him with the greatest of all threats: By declaring Himself a king, Jesus committed treason: if Pilate releases Him, it is evident that Pilate is not faithful to Caesar.

6. Pilate will make one more despairing appeal to the Jews. He will awaken their national feelings in favor of Jesus. He will hold out to them the prospect of the glory of having a religious king. Will the Jews allow one of their race—one who gives such good evidence that He is a religious king—to be put to death by crucifixion? "Shall I crucify your king?" But all his efforts are in vain. The chief priests answer: "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15). The cunning hypocrites, who hate Caesar and all the Romans, now profess great loyalty to Caesar to accomplish the death of Christ. This last cry of the Jews is decisive. Pilate sides with self-interest against justice and truth, and delivers Jesus to the wishes of the Jews, to be crucified.

III. Pilate in History

In order to impress upon the Jews that he was convinced of the innocence of Jesus and that he desired to place on them the responsibility of Jesus'

death, Pilate employed a symbolical action. He washed his hands before the multitude and declared: "I am innocent of the blood of this just man, look you to it." (Matthew 27:24). This action of Pilate was one of the rites ordained in Deuteronomy (21:1-8) to attest that one was guiltless of a man's blood. Before God, of course, Pilate was not cleared of guilt and responsibility, and could well have exclaimed with Macbeth:

"Will all great Neptune's ocean wash the blood
Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red."²

The Jews reassuringly accepted the responsibility of Christ's death, and gave utterance to the fearful imprecation: "His blood be on us and on our children!" And these awful words were not without their fulfillment in the course of history.

A tendency has arisen in a recent class of literature to palliate the crime of the Jews and to place the responsibility for Jesus' death on Pilate and on the Roman authorities. This view, however, seems hardly justifiable. The Evangelists, alluding to the Jews who had finally obtained the ratification of their death decree, say that the procurator "delivered Him unto them to be crucified, (Matthew 27:26) or that he decreed that "Jesus be delivered up to their will" (Luke 23:25); thus signifying that in this great judicial crime the Jews had by far the greater part—that, as our Lord says, they committed "the greater sin" (John 19:11). Pilate, it is true, had

(2) Act II, Scene II.

been their sinister accomplice, and like them would not escape the judgment of Heaven.

Pilate's period of office (26-36 A.D.) comprised the entire active ministry of both St. John the Baptist and of our Lord. When history begins to close upon Pilate, we find him in trouble with the Samaritans who appeal to Vitellus, the legate in Syria, and complain of Pilate's whole administration. Pilate is summoned to Rome to answer their charges. Before he could reach the city, Tiberius had died. This is the last we know of Pilate from historical sources.

From this point on legend elaborates two accounts—one unfavorable, the other favorable—about Pilate. On one hand, he is represented as constantly encountering bad luck and as finally committing suicide. His body was first thrown into the Tiber, but the waters were so disturbed that the body was taken to Vienne and sunk in the Rhone. The Rhone also refused to absorb him, and hence he was sunk in a lake at Lausanne. The final disposition of the body was in a deep pool on a mountain still called Pilatus, near Lucerne.

On the other hand, Christian legend began to regard him in a sympathetic way. It was thankful to him for having repeatedly and clearly proclaimed the Saviour's innocence and for having made efforts to save His life. The writer Tertullian claims that at heart Pilate was a Christian, and some of the apocryphal gospels incline to the view that Pilate eventually became a Christian. The Abyssinian Church reckons Pilate and his wife, Claudia Procula, as saints, and assigns June 25 as their feast. The belief that Claudia became a Christian goes

back to the second century, and may be found in Origen. The Greek Church assigns her a feast on October 27.

Discussion Aids

1. Of what crime was Our Lord accused in the court of the high priest?
2. Did the Jews have the power to inflict capital punishment?
3. Could Pilate decree capital punishment?
4. What charges against Our Lord did the Jews press before Pilate? Why?
5. Was Christ's kingdom a temporal kingdom?
6. What dilemma now confronted Pilate?
7. In what six ways did Pilate try to avoid the issue and shift the burden?
8. What was the symbolism of Pilate's washing his hands? Did it have any efficacy?
9. Who was responsible for Our Lord's death, the Jews or Pilate?
10. What is the last allusion to Pilate in history?
11. What two accounts of Pilate have been elaborated by legend?
12. What was Pilate's outstanding weakness? What class of Catholics may be likened unto Pilate?
13. Why did the people, whom Christ so often befriended, turn so quickly against Him and demand His death?

Religious Practices

1. I will always uphold what is true and righteous no matter what the consequences may be.

2. I will never permit self-interest to prevail against justice.
3. When I am humiliated I will recall the patience of Our Lord when Barabbas was preferred to Him.

Chapter IV

The Crucifixion

1. *Way of The Cross.*

The cross (from *crux*, meaning "torment") as an instrument of punishment is of Oriental origin. It was transmitted by the Persians, Assyrians and Chaldeans to the Greeks, Cathaginians, Egyptians and Romans. Crucifixion was not a Jewish mode of punishment, nor was it employed by the Romans till after the time of Caesar, when with the increasing cruelty of punishment it became very common. Especially did it characterize the Roman domination in Judea under every governor. During the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., hundreds of crosses rose daily, till there seemed to be insufficient room and wood for them, and the soldiers diversified their awful amusement by new modes of crucifixion. The Jewish appeal to Rome for the crucifixion of Christ came back in hundredfold eches.

In the course of its evolution as a mode of punishment the cross took on different forms. At first it was a simple stake to which the condemned person was fastened. Later a forklike addition was fastened to the top of the stake. The cross again assumed a new aspect by the addition of a transverse arm. According to the manner in which this arm was fastened to the original pillar, there arose three kinds of crosses; that in the form of an X (St. Andrew's cross); that in the form of a T (Anthony's cross); and the Latin cross, which differed from

the second by having the pillar of the cross extend slightly above the transverse arm. It is almost certain that the Saviour's cross was of this form. It is the only one favored by early tradition and by the universal testimony of those who were nearest to Christ's time and who had only too much occasion to learn what the crucifixion meant. This form would admit most readily of affixing the board with the three-fold inscription which we know Christ's cross bore. The inscription written by Pilate was placed over His head. Some writers maintain that Christ carried only the transverse section which was to be nailed to a tree. Had this been the case, Christ would not have needed Simon's help. Besides, St. John expressly says that Christ bore His cross (19:17).

St. Luke tells that as they led Christ away, "they laid hold of one Simon of Cyrene, coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him to carry after Jesus (23:26). Simon who probably had some rural occupation, was from Cyrene in Libya, which was in Northern Africa between Carthage and Alexandria. He was one of the many pilgrims of the Dispersion who came to Jerusalem for the Jewish feast (Acts 2:10). Simon did not carry the cross willingly; St. Matthew tells us that "they forced him to take up His cross (27:32). Nor was it for pity that the executioners relieved Christ of the load of the cross, but they were eager to finish the awful act. Just in what way did Simon carry the cross "after Christ"? The theologian Cajetan understood St. Luke to say that Simon carried the cross together with Christ. Some painters, too represent the burden as remaining upon the

Saviour's shoulders and Simon as merely lifting up the lower end of the vertical beam. But this does not seem to be a natural interpretation of the passage. St. Luke's statement implies that the cross was removed from Jesus and placed on Simon; and that Jesus was led first, and Simon followed with the cross. But what about the seventh and ninth stations? Christ, no doubt, fell three or more times but this probably occurred before Simon was drawn into service. Probably, too, Christ reassumed the cross and fell under its load. The Stations of the Cross, we must remember, were fixed only in the Middle Ages.

According to the law of Moses the criminal was to be executed outside of the camp, (Numbers 15:35). When all preparations had been completed, the procession set out. The composition of the way of the cross was as follows: 1) a mounted centurion in charge of the crucifixion; 2) soldiers marching in rank, whose office was to prevent riots and disturbances; 3) a herald next, proclaiming the crimes of the accused and his sentence; 4) finally the cruciarius—the classical term applied to those condemned to this punishment—bearing his heavy cross. Suspended around his neck was a tablet on which was inscribed the "cause" of the condemnation. This tablet was later nailed to the cross above the head of the crucified. The cruciarius was surrounded by four soldiers (Acts 12:4), who were to exercise the office of executioners and afterward to keep guard at the cross, until the body would be taken down after his death. In return for their services these four soldiers divided among themselves the articles of clothing of the crucified. 5)

On the occasion of our Lord's crucifixion, two robbers—rioters who probably belonged to the band of Barabbas, and who had been condemned to be crucified on the same day—followed behind Christ, carrying their crosses and accompanied by their executioners. 6) At the end of the procession came the crowd of friends and foes.

Can we find today in Jerusalem the road followed by Christ and marked with His blood during His Passion? The traditions regarding the "Way of the Cross" are not much earlier than modern times. The "Stations" designed as such today were not fixed till the Middle Ages. Of the fourteen Stations, the first nine are actually in the streets of Jerusalem, the rest are inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The general route is from east to west, the distance about 3,000 feet. The places historically certain are the pretorium, located in the Antonia Tower, Calvary and the Sepulchre.

BIBLICAL QUESTIONS

2. *The Crucifixion*

Christ was crucified on Calvary. The Latin term Calvaria and the Hebrew word Golgotha mean "Skull"—a name derived from the fact that the hill was imagined to resemble a human skull. This practice of designing places for their real or fancied resemblance to well-known objects, was common among the ancients. The ground of Calvary was rocky, and as executions took place there, it is probable that holes were already cut in the rocks to receive the crosses. An ancient tradition tells us that the cross of Christ was reared over the sepul-

chre of Adam, and that it stood exactly over his skull. This is the origin of the custom of placing a skull and crossbones on crucifixes just under the feet of the image of Christ. Whatever may be said about this tradition, it is certain that Christ by His death on the cross destroyed death which Adam by his fall brought into the world.

The place of execution was always a raised spot near a thronged highway, so that the sight of the criminals might inspire horror and in the case of our Lord's death, so that the mob might mock Him. Hence it is that Christ was crucified outside of the walls of Jerusalem. The Calvary which Christians have always identified with the Calvary of the Gospels is today enclosed within the city walls. In this connection, some recent writers have raised the point whether our Calvary is actually the historical one (Hebrews 13:12). Certain commentators have rejected the old site and proposed a new one (designated as "Gordon's Calvary")—the elevation over Jeremias' grotto, not far from and outside the Damascus gate. This site, however, lacks all historical basis. The two outstanding archeologists in Palestine, Father Vincent and Abel, tell us that the "archeological security" of the present Calvary is "complete."

How was Christ attached to the cross? It is probable that the cross was first erected and thereafter His body was elevated and nailed to it. This seems to be the common teaching of the Fathers of the Church. It would be far easier to raise a man up and bind Him to a cross already fixed in position than to raise a cross on which a man was bound. Besides, we must remember that it was not

customary among the Romans to raise the body to any considerable height above the ground. Christ's crucifixion, then, took place in about the following manner: A long rope was tied to the arms of Christ and thrown over the transverse arm of the cross. Christ was partly drawn up by that rope and partly raised by the hands of the soldiers. Then one of the executioners climbed on a ladder or a stone and attached the hands to the transverse beam and then the feet to the vertical beam. However, the opinion that Christ was nailed to the cross lying on the ground, though not probable, is not to be condemned.

According to the general method of crucifixion of the time, our Lord's hands and feet were first tied to the cross by ropes. The crucified person would certainly writhe and struggle in the agony caused by the crucifixion, and without additional fastenings the body would be thrown sidewise from its vertical position and torn from the cross. The support under the middle of the body would not be sufficient.

Our Lord's hands and feet were then pierced by nails. That's Christ's hands were pierced is clear from the words of the Apostle Thomas recorded by St. John: "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hands into His side, I will not believe (20:25)." Christian tradition has universally taught the piercing of the feet, in connection with the prophecy in Psalm 21:17, which is understood literally: "They have dug My hands and feet." And when the Apostles were troubled and frightened at the sudden appearance of the

risen Christ He—to assure them that it was He—
“showed them His hands and feet (Luke 24:40.)”

Our Lord was nailed to the cross by four nails, one being driven into each hand, and one into each foot. The most ancient images always represent Christ's feet as pierced separately. St. Helena, according to the testimony of the Father, found four nails; and none of the ancient writers mention that one foot was placed on top of the other, both then being pierced by one nail. It is only in the thirteenth century that this conception appears. Cimabue and Giotto adopted this manner of representing Christ, and all subsequent painters imitated them. This conception may have originated in the wish to accentuate Christ's sufferings.

According to ancient writers, a support was placed under the middle of Christ's body, this being necessary to sustain its weight. This support was of the form of a peg or wooden horn projecting from the cross, and would have been hidden by the linen cloth around our Lord's loins. In some scenes of the crucifixion a rest is fastened to the cross under the feet of our Lord, but there is no evidence for this among the ancient writers.

The feet of our Lord were not more than two or three feet above the ground. Thus could the communication described in the Gospels take place between Him and others. Thus also might His sacred lips be moistened with the sponge attached to a short stalk of hyssop. Sometimes the crucified body was so near the ground that wild beasts could devour it.

Our Lord very probably wore a covering about His loins. When ancient writers say that a man

is naked they do not mean that he is without some such covering as this. The Latin writer Cicero says that "actors had this respect for the ancient disciples, that no one dared go forth before the people without a loin-cloth." In the tract of the Mischna, De Synedriis, it was ordered that the person who was stoned should not be entirely naked.

Ancient writers also teach generally that Christ wore the crown of thorns on the cross. It is difficult to determine the species of thornbush from which the crown was taken. Relics of the crown of thorns are preserved at Paris, Pisa and Treves, but they are doubtful, and all cannot be genuine because they are quite different in character. Botanists find it hard to determine the species of any of them. All through Palestine thorn bushes flourished, and it would not have been difficult for the soldiers to obtain a branch of a thorn bush for their cruel purpose. In this connection we might add that it is equally impossible to ascertain the species of reed used as the mock sceptre of Christ.

The Evangelist tell us that darkness was over the earth from the sixth hour (12 M.) until the ninth hour (3 P.M.). This darkness did not envelop the whole earth, for at that hour it was night in the other hemisphere of the globe, and consequently such part could not be subject to a miraculous darkening of the sun. Many exegetes understand the word "earth" to mean the whole hemisphere in which it was then day: If the darkness was due to an obscuring of the sun it ought to affect the whole hemisphere. The darkness was not due to an ordinary eclipse, because it occurred at the time of the full moon (the 14th of the lunar month Nisan)

when such a phenomenon could not take place naturally; moreover, the darkness lasted for three hours, whereas a total eclipse of the sun can last only fifteen minutes. Some Scripturists think that God, by withholding His sustaining power or by changing the photosphere, prevented the sun's rays from reaching the earth. Although the darkness was quite dense, it was not as thick as that of the middle of night. The miracle was a testimony to the Divinity of Jesus when His weakness seemed the greatest. It was nature's testimony of the sorrowful event that sin had made necessary. Finally, it was a testimony to the Jews of the crime they had committed.

A difficulty exists in regard to the hours of the Crucifixion. In Mark 15:25 we read: "And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him," whereas John 19:14, says: "And it was the parasceve of the Pasch, about the sixth hour, and Pilate saith to the Jews: Behold your king." How could Christ be crucified at the third hour (9 A. M.), if about the sixth hour (12 M.) He was still standing before Pilate? In approaching this problem, we must remember that we are dealing with a people not furnished with clocks and watches. The Hebrews divided the day into four parts called respectively the first (6 A. M.), the third (9 A. M.), the sixth (12 M.) and the ninth hour (3 P. M.). They grouped the twelve hours of the day into four periods which they denominated from the number of the hour with which they began. A man determining time by the position of the sun in the heavens cannot accurately assign the hours, but he can with considerable certainty ascertain the four great divisions. St.

Mark's expression declares that Jesus was crucified in that division of the day whose beginning was called the third hour. St. John describes the crucifixion in its relation to the sixth hour.

3. *Pierced With a Lance*

Crucifixion did not of itself usually cause immediate death. Hence recourse was had to a barbarous method of hastening death—the *crurifragium*, the breaking of the bones of the legs with a club or hammer. The inflicting of death by breaking the legs was a common Roman punishment. All things point to the fact that it was a means of torture to make the death of a condemned man more painful. The breaking of the bones was followed by a thrust of a lance in the side. This thrust of a spear or sword ended the agony, and was known as a “mercy stroke.”

The Roman soldiers were very careful to certify the death of executed men. When they arrived at the Saviour's cross, to do the same to Him as to the robbers, they saw that He was already dead. One of them by way of precaution gave our Lord the “mercy stroke.” He plunged the spear into Christ's side so that all doubt about death was removed.

It is often asked, which side of our Lord was pierced? Since the thrust was to bring certain and instantaneous death, one would naturally expect that the left side should have been pierced. The apocryphal gospels of Nicodemus and of the Infancy, however, as well as the Ethiopian version, tell us that Christ's right side was pierced. This early belief, since it recedes from the customary manner of procedure, seems to rest on a historical basis. From the gospel of Nicodemus we also learn that

the name of the penitent thief was Dysmas, that of the other robber Gistas, and that of the piercing soldier Longinus. The last-named is not to be identified with the centurion: it is incredible that he who exclaimed, "Truly this is the Son of God," would have dare to pierce the Saviour's side. Sometimes this soldier is depicted as sitting on a horse and thrusting a long lance into the side of the Crucified. But since, as we have already pointed out, the cross was not very high, the wielder of the lance was very likely a foot-soldier.

St. John tells us that after the soldier pierced Christ's side, "immediately there came out blood and water (19:34). Whether the blood preceded the water is not absolutely certain. It is clear, however, that the two did not flow at the same time, since it would have been impossible to discern the water. St. John's words plainly declare that the blood and the water were distinct.

Writers have advanced many explanations of the flow of blood and water from the Saviour's side. Some think that after the death of Jesus there was a partial separation of the corpuscles of the blood from the serum, and that the latter is what St. John calls water. This opinion is hardly tenable. In the first place, serum is not water; it is a pale yellowish liquid which separates from the clot in the coagulation of the blood. Physiologists are agreed that this separation does not take place until at least four hours after death, whereas Christ's side was pierced very soon after His death.

Even less tenable is the view that the water witnessed by St. John was the fluid contained in the pericardium. This fluid is a viscous humor,

small in quantity, which could not flow forth as water.

Equally objectionable is the theory that Christ's heart broke on the cross, and that the water seen by St. John was the serum which resulted from the subsequent coagulation. A healthy heart never breaks of itself. Our Lord's heart was not diseased but physically perfect. For the same reason the heart of Jesus cannot be said to have broken because of grief over man's sins. Christ's consciousness of His exact mission and the fullness of His knowledge precluded all despair.

The most acceptable interpretation seems to be the following: The blood flowed naturally from the pierced side and pierced heart of Christ; the water was wrought by a miracle and symbolized the washing away of our sins by Christ's blood. The water was the figure of the sacrament of regeneration, namely Baptism. The blood flowing forth from Christ's side shows the source whence the efficacy of Baptism and man's Redemption come.

In this connection it is well to note that devotion to the Sacred Heart—though securely founded on the fact that Christ's human nature belonged to a Divine Person—took its origin from Christ's open side. During the first ten centuries we find in the Church devotion to the love of God and love of Christ, but no worship was rendered the Sacred Heart as a symbol of love. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries we find unmistakable indications of devotions to the Sacred Heart. Through the devotion to Christ's opened side the pierced Heart was gradually reached.

Discussion Aids

Set I

1. Give a brief history of the cross as an instrument of punishment.
2. Give a brief history of the development of the form of the cross.
3. Describe the three forms of the cross.
4. On what kind of a cross was Our Lord crucified?
5. In what way did Simon of Cyrene carry the cross after Our Lord?
6. Explain the composition of the way of the cross.
7. What is the meaning of the letter I.N.R.I. above the head of Our Lord on the Cross? How did these letter come to be placed there?
8. Can we find in Jerusalem today the road followed by Christ to Calvary?

Set II

1. Where was Christ crucified? What is the meaning of the word Calvary?
2. Why are crossbones and a skull placed under the image of Christ on crucifixes?
3. Why was Christ crucified outside the wall of Jerusalem?
4. In what manner was Christ attached to the cross?
5. Were His hands and feet first tied to the cross?
6. Were His hands and feet pierced by nails?
7. Was Our Lord attached to the cross by four nails?

8. Was a support placed under His body? Under His feet?
9. How high above the ground were the feet of the crucified Christ?
10. Did Christ on the cross wear a covering about His loins? A crown of thorns on His Head?
11. What was the nature and extent of the darkening of the sun at the crucifixion?
12. At what hour was Christ crucified?

Set III

1. What was the "crurifragium?" The "mercy stroke"?
2. Which side of Our Lord was pierced?
3. What was the name of the piercing soldier? Did he pierce Our Lord's side from the ground or seated on a horse?
4. What was the water which flowed from Our Lord's side? Give the four explanations?
5. What did the water symbolize?
6. How did devotion to the Sacred Heart originate?

Religious Practices

1. I will make the Stations of the Cross frequently during Lent.
2. I will say the sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary every Friday.
3. I will try to appreciate more fully that the Sacrifice of the Mass is a repetition of the Sacrifice of Calvary.

Chapter V

Our Lord Forlorn

Since the days of the Reformation the torments of Christ's Passion have, in certain cases, received such undue emphasis that not only the beauty and harmony but the essence itself of the Redemption have been obscured. Because certain ideas lend themselves to oratorical extravagance or strike the imagination forcibly, Catholic preachers occasionally make use of expressions which are Lutheran in origin, and which traditional Catholic theology has always disowned. Christ in His Passion and death is said to have become an object of God's anger, a malediction and an outcast from God, an object repulsive to the heavenly court, the universal sinner, and anathema in the real sense of the word. He is represented as suffering the pains of the damned, as abandoned and persecuted by the Father, as dying only after God had discharged against Him all His wrath.

Luther unshrinkingly identified Christ with sinners and transferred our sins upon Him: "All the prophets saw this in the Spirit, that Christ would be of all men the greatest robber, murder, adulterer, thief, sacrilegious person, blasphemer, etc., than whom none greater ever was in the world, because He Who is a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world now is not an innocent person, and without sin, is not the Son of God born of the Virgin, but a sinner who has and bears the sin of Paul who was a blasphemer, a persecutor and violent, of Peter

who denied Christ, of David who was an adulterer, a murderer, and made the Gentile blaspheme the name of the Lord . . . If, indeed, it is not absurd to confess and believe that Christ was crucified between robbers, neither is it absurd to say that He was accursed and a sinner of sinners⁽¹⁾. It is to be noted that Luther's conception of the Redemption followed logically from his doctrine on original sin; if man is radically incapable of doing good, if all his actions, performed under the influence of concupiscence, are necessarily evil, if man can at best only cloak himself externally with Christ's merits, it is natural that Christ should Himself have been cursed and punished in the place of the guilty.

The famous French orators are fond of certain expressions which are exaggerated and justly deserving of the strictures which they have received from Catholic theologians. Bossuet speaks of an open war waged against Christ by a vengeful God Whose justice bursts like a storm over His Son and dies down gradually as the pent-up energy is dispersed in the flood. "I see a vengeful God," he says⁽²⁾, "Who exacts from His Son the whole debt that is due." And again, "Divine Justice looks at His Son with flaming eyes, with a glance darting fire— He looks on Him as a sinner and strides against Him with all the adjuncts of Justice Divine."⁽³⁾ Elsewhere he adds: "It is an unheard of thing that a God should persecute a God, that a God should abandon a God, and that the abandoner should turn a deaf ear to the complaints of the abandoned; yet this is what we behold on the cross. The

(1) Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians 3:13.

(2) *Oeuvres Oratoires* (ed. Labarq III, p. 416).

(3) *Ibid.* p. 416.

blessed soul of our Saviour trembles with the fear of God's wrath, and when it would fain seek refuges in the arms of its Father, it sees His face averted and itself abandoned and delivered over bound hand and foot as a prey to the fury of outraged Divine Justice."⁽⁴⁾

Bourdaloue imagines a sort of a conflict in the bosom of the Divine Being between God's Justice and Mercy; when one is about to strike, the other holds back the threatening sword. Since Christ took upon Himself our sins, it is on Him that Divine Justice will be exercised: "Clothed in the leprosy of sin God's Justice looks on Him as an object worthy of every punishment, wherefore it takes up arms against Him, and sword in hand pursues Him."⁽⁵⁾ Forgetful of His Fatherhood, God looks upon His Son as His foe, and declares Himself His persecutor, or rather the chief of His persecutors. Commenting on Christ's dereliction on the cross, Bourdaloue says that "this rejection by God is in a sense the pain of loss, which it behooved Christ to experience for us all."⁽⁶⁾

According to Monsabré, Christ in His Passion is the universal man substituted for sinners of all places and times, the man-humanity. At the sight of Him, Divine Justice forgets the common herd of men, and sees only this strange and monstrous phenomenon on which it will satisfy itself. "Spare Him, O Lord, spare Him, it is Your Son—No, no it is sin, He must be punished."⁽⁷⁾ God will have none of Him, He humiliates Him, strikes Him,

(4) IV, p. 286.

(5) *Oeuvres complètes*, IX, p. 161 ff.

(6) *Ibid.* X, p. 157 ff.

(7) *Conferences*, Careme, 1881, p. 24.

wounds Him, and crushes Him. "Go, poor leper, deliver yourself of all shame and wounds, go and be banished from the land of the living."⁽⁸⁾

Statements such as these may lend themselves to good oratory, but make exceedingly poor theology. The God which such conceptions imply—a cruel and sanguinary God, full of fury and vengeance—is, needless to say, the God neither of reason nor of Revelation. The New Testament writers never attribute Christ's sufferings and death to Divine anger, even in passages where the line of argument might tend to culminate in such a thought. In fact, it seems that the sacred authors deliberately refrained from any language that might suggest that the Son became the object of the Father's anger, or that His death was due to an ebullition of God's wrath. Descriptions are given implying that Jesus bore sin through a profound realization of what the Divine attitude toward it really is, but in these very descriptions, phrases which might lead to inferences regarding the anger of God being endured by the Son of His love are carefully avoided. Christian faith is always directed to One Who was the Son of God, in Whom the Father was well pleased, Who hung upon the Cross in fulfillment of the mission to which His Father summoned Him, and Who must therefore have been in that hour the object of the Father's deepest satisfaction and most tender love. As Second Person of the Blessed Trinity Christ is coequal with the Father and with Him breathes forth the Holy Ghost, the bond, as it were, of Their mutual love. Besides, we must remember that all such terms as "anger," "wrath," "vengeance," etc.,

⁽⁸⁾ Conferences, Careme, 1879, p. 217.

when applied to God are anthropomorphic and must not, under pain of error, be applied to Him in the same way as to us.

The exponents of the exaggerated and extravagant descriptions of Christ's sufferings usually rely on one or another of the following Scriptural texts: "My God, why has Thou forsaken Me?" (Mark 15:34) "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Galatians 3:13). "Him Who knew no sin, He (God) hath made sin for us" (II Corinthians 5:21). "He spared not even His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" Romans 8:32).

The painful cry of our Lord—"My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"—cannot be understood as implying a cessation of loving communion between the Son and Father. These words, it must be remembered, are a quotation from Psalm 21:1, and in uttering them, our Lord was no doubt animated by the same sentiments of confidence and trust as the psalmist. The phrase came to the lips of Jesus in His agony not as an isolated cry of utter despair but charged with the meaning of the whole poem from which it is taken.

The Reverend Dr. G. Jouassard of Lyons, France, who has made an exhaustive study of this passage in Tradition, tells us that Patristic writers never interpreted the text in the sense of a true abandonment of Christ by the Father. Some of them, following St. Augustine, explain the passage in terms of Christ's solidarity with the human race; Christ is not speaking here on His own account but as the interpreter of a fallen humanity in its utter helpfulness and abandonment. At any rate, the

words, "My God," and "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit," (Luke 23:46), clearly show that communion between the Father and the Son was not interrupted. The Father abandoned the Son only in a relative and restricted sense, says St. Thomas Aquinas⁽⁹⁾ in that He did not protect Him against the cruel tortures but exposed Him to suffering and death.

Some compare Christ's dereliction on the Cross to the "passive night" of the soul in contemplation. The German mystics, as Suso, Tauler and Ruysbroeck, were perhaps the first to explain the forlornness of the dying Christ in this way. In this mystical state the soul is stricken with the terrible thought that she is cast off and abandoned by God forever, and that she shall never see His face. So utterly terrible is the anguish, and so awful the darkness, that the mind is scarcely able to maintain its balance under this tremendous trial. In her memory she suffers great agony, for look where she will she sees only sin. Her every thought and desire appear to be tainted. Her will seems paralyzed and helpless in the midst of this fearful conflict. In her intellect the soul finds only darkness. She cannot pray; she strives for spiritual utterance, and seems held as in a vise so that no touch of sweetness and no ray of light comes to relieve the inexpressible misery of her complete dereliction.

While such a state as this is intelligible in the case of saintly men who ordinarily do not have absolute certitude of God's friendship, it is not attributable to Christ Who was sinless and Who enjoyed even on earth the Beatific Vision. Christ could

(9) Summa Theologica, III a, q. 47, a. 3.

suffer because of physical pain, or because of the experimental or infused knowledge of the evils which awaited Him, or because of sin which dominated mankind. But He could not be deprived of the Beatific Vision which Scripture and Tradition attribute to Him from the first moment of His conception.

Others compare the Redeemer's suffering to those mystical states in which the soul enjoys a great spiritual peace and joy, and at the same time suffers intensely because of the consciousness of the consequences of sin or because of physical pain. But this analogy is deficient since there could be no remains of sin in the sinless Christ, and since His sufferings were absolutely disinterested. It is true, however, that during the agony and Passion our Lord's intuitive vision did not in any way lessen the intensity of His moral and physical sufferings or impede the spontaneous movements of fear and sadness. The contemplation of saints, since it is not entirely free from sensible activity, diminishes somewhat their physical and moral sufferings. The Beatific Vision of Jesus, being independent of the senses and of the activity of the soul in so far as it animates the body, did not exercise this moderating influence.

St. Paul's statements that Christ was made "sin" and a "curse" for us do not imply that Christ became an outcast from God. Since Christ's Person was Divine, since our Lord was sinless and impeccable, He could not become a sinner personally nor identify Himself with sin or with a curse. The Pauline passages are to be interpreted in the light of a principle so characteristic of his doctrine—namely, the law of solidarity. Christ became man

in order to save man. He was clad in the "likeness of sinful flesh" in order to vanquish the flesh (Romans 8:3). He was born under the Law in order to redeem those who were under the law (Galatians 4:4). He became a member of the sinful human family in order to save the guilty (II Corinthians 5:21). He took upon Himself the malediction of the Law in order to save the Jews from the curse of the Law (Galatians 3:13). Christ, then, became "sin" in the sense that He became a member of the sinful human race whose cause He espoused and whose interests He embraced. He became a "curse for us" in so far as He placed Himself in a state which the Law declared accursed; for the Law—though in itself good and just and holy—in reality cursed all men because it did not give the strength and energy necessary for the fulfillment of what it commanded (Galatians 3:10).

But does not the Pauline assertion that "God did not spare His own Son but delivered Him up for us all" (Romans 8:32) imply that the Father dealt very severely with Christ? According to St. Thomas Aquinas⁽¹⁰⁾ God "delivered up" His Son in a three-fold sense; by preordaining from all eternity Christ's Passion for the liberation of the human race; by inspiring Christ with the will and love to suffer for us; and by not protecting Him against suffering but exposing Him to His torturers. This interpretation of the Angelic Doctor, which is based on the teaching of the Fathers, clearly shows that the Pauline text cannot be adduced in support of the exaggerated penal theories.

Others pretend to catch an echo of a struggle

⁽¹⁰⁾ Summa Theologica, III, a. q. 18, a. 5, 6.

between the Father and the Son in the agonizing cry of the Saviour; "Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me. Nevertheless, not as I will but as Thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39). In attempting to determine the precise meaning of this passage it is important to keep in mind basic dogmatic principles. Since Christ had two complete and perfect natures, He also had two wills—the Divine and the human. A conflict between the Divine and human wills of Christ would be admissible only if there were in Him also two persons, a human person and a Divine Person. But in Christ there was only one Person which operated through the two wills. Since a person is one and indivisible, it cannot be in contradiction with itself at one and the same time and in regard to the same object.

Besides the rational will, which determines itself by deliberating and by comparing one thing with another, St. Thomas⁽¹¹⁾ posits in Christ another will—namely, the "natural" will. The "natural" will is the rational will in so far as it spontaneously and instinctively tends toward the desirable and recoils and flees from everything disagreeable and contrary to human nature. The sensitive nature may be considered as a participation of the "natural" will, with which it equivalently constitutes the law of self-preservation. Christ by the fullness of His human knowledge saw all the sufferings which awaited Him; He saw the heinousness of sin and the punishments due to it; He saw the future ingratitude of men for whom His sacred Passion would be of no avail. Now, because of the substantial union of the

(11) *Summa Theologica*, IIIa, q.18, a.5, 6.

soul and body, there is no internal idea or emotion which is not accompanied by a physical reaction, no psychosis without a corresponding neurosis. Since Christ's human nature was absolutely perfect, it was more sensitive than ours, and its reaction to the knowledge of His mind took the form of a bloody sweat, of great sadness and fear. The words, "Let this chalice pass from Me," are an articulate expression of His sensitive nature spontaneously recoiling from all these sufferings.

There was no conflict, however, between Christ's "natural" will and sensitive nature, on the one hand, and Christ's Divine will—with which His rational will was in full conformity—on the other. "Not My will ("natural" will) but Thine (Divine) be done (Luke 22:42). By His "natural" will and sensitive nature Christ fled death inefficaciously ("if it be possible") as an evil of nature. By the Divine will—which is common to the Three Persons—and His rational will Christ willed His death efficaciously for the salvation of men.

The problem may be illustrated by an analogy. A martyr for example, deliberately and joyfully determines to lay down his life for the faith. Yet when the instruments of torture are applied to his body, his sensitive nature immediately and spontaneously recoils from them. This phenomenon does not indicate that the martyr is faltering in his faith or weakening in his resolve, but merely exemplifies a law governing human nature as such.

In conclusion, let us point out a few principles which are fundamental in a doctrine of the Redemption:

In the first place, the whole work of the Re-

demption was a work of love—a work of all the Three Persons in the God-head, cooperating in blessed harmony. It is the revelation of the infinite love of Three Persons in one God. The Father in love gives His Son; the Son in love gives Himself; the Holy Ghost in love cooperates at every stage. By His Passion—which in its inception as well as in its consummation was a work of love—Christ satisfied Divine Justice. Some theologians excuse the exaggerations of the French preachers on the ground that these statements were oratorical descriptions of Christ's expiation of sin and satisfaction of Divine Justice.

Secondly, there was no schism in the Divine Nature, no conflict between the Divine attributes. God's justice and mercy did not need to be composed by the cross, since they had never fallen out. On the contrary, the Redemption manifested the harmonious working of God's mercy and justice. Since the Redeemer was God-Man, His offering had an infinite value and safeguarded fully the rights of Divine Justice. Since He was at the same time Head of the human race, He freed us from undergoing personally the penalty of our sins, and thereby satisfied the claims of Divine Mercy.

Thirdly, Christ may be said to have borne our sins and experienced the pains of the damned in the sense that He fully understood what sin means. His lively sentiment of the Divine Holiness and His great love of men intensified the impression which moral evil produced upon His most pure conscience.

Finally, Christ was not punished in the real sense of the word, nor did He become an object of Divine wrath. For punishment implies guilt, and

guilt attaches to the sin committed and to the will and person who commits sin. Punishment would be an injustice where there is no guilt. If Christ—Who was Innocence and Holiness itself—suffered, it was on our behalf. However, there was not a substitution of persons but of effects; the meritorious sufferings of Christ the Head were substituted for the punishment due to our sins.

Discussion Aids

1. What statements should we avoid as exaggerated and objectionable in speaking of the Passion and Death of Christ?
2. Is it correct to say that God was angry at Christ?
3. How are we to explain the passage, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me"?
4. May we compare Christ's dereliction on the cross to the "passive night" of the soul in contemplation?
5. May we compare it to other mystical states of the saints?
6. May we say that Christ became a "sin" and a "curse" for us?
7. How are we to interpret the following two Scriptural passages:
 - a) "God did not spare His own Son but delivered Him up for us all" (Romans 8:32).
 - b) "Father, if it be possible let this chalice pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will but as thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39)?
8. Show that the Redemption was a
 - a) work of love

- b) a manifestation of the harmonious workings of God's mercy and justice.
9. May we say that Christ
- a) suffered the pains of the damned?
 - b) was punished for our sins?

Religious Practices

1. I will not only abstain from meat on Friday but I shall also at the same time gratefully recall the Passion and Death of Christ.
2. I will meditate devoutly during the Holy Hour on the Passion and Death of Christ.
3. I will express my love for God by suffering, that is, by denying myself and mortifying my evil inclinations.

Chapter X

"He Descended Into Hell"

Several passages in the Old Testament have been understood by the Fathers of the Church as referring, in a veiled and typical manner, to Christ's descent into hell. Here are a few of these texts found in the Psalms: "Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be lifted up, O eternal gates, and the king of glory shall enter in" (Psalm 23:7, 9); "Thou hast brought forth, O Lord, my soul from hell; thou hast saved me from them that go down into the pit" (Psalm 29:4); "God will redeem my soul from the hand of hell, when He shall receive me" (Psalm 48:16); "Thou hast delivered my soul out of the lower hell" (Psalm 85:13). The following three passages have likewise been considered as pre-figuring Christ's descent into the lower regions: "I will penetrate to all the lower parts of the earth, and will behold all that sleep and will enlighten all that hope in the Lord" (Eccli. 24:45); "Thou also by the blood of Thy testament hast sent forth Thy prisoners out of the pit" (Zachary 9:11); "I will deliver them out of the hand of death. I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy death; O hell, I will be thy bite" (Osee 13:14).

The decisive tests are found principally in the New Testament. In his sermon to the people after the Ascension, St. Peter quotes Psalm 15:10 and applies the text directly to Christ: "Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, nor wilt Thou give Thy Holy One to see corruption . . . Forseeing this, he (David)

spoke of the Resurrection of Christ. For neither was He left in hell, neither did His Flesh see corruption" (Acts 2:27, 31: 13:35; 2:24). In this passage the term "hell" cannot refer to the grave because the soul was not buried; it cannot mean "death" because Christ's soul did not die; it must, therefore, denote an abode in which our Lord's soul sojourned until it was reunited to the "uncorrupted" flesh.

In his First Epistle St. Peter tells us that after His death Christ applied the fruits of the Redemption to the spirits detained in prison: "Because Christ also died once for our sins, the just for the unjust; that He might offer us to God, being put to death indeed in the flesh, but enlivened in the spirit, in which also coming He preached to those spirits that were in prison, which had been some time incredulous, when they waited for the patience of God in the days of Noe when the ark was a building, wherein a few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water" (I Peter 3:18-20); the men who remained incredulous while Noe was building the ark, sincerely repented when the waters of the deluge came upon them and after the purgatorial purification were admitted into the abode into which Christ descended. Further on the Apostle adds: "For this cause was the Gospel preached also to the dead, that they might be judged indeed according to men, in the flesh, but may live according to God in the spirit" (I Peter 4:6). This doctrine of Christ's descent into hell is based not only on these Scriptural passages but also on the unmistakable teaching of the Fathers and the infallible authority of the Church.

What was the nature of the "hell" or "prison"

into which Christ descended? In the teaching of the Old Testament the term "hell" (Sheol, Hades, infernum) may denote any one of the following four abodes, its specific meaning in each case being determined by the context: 1) hell in the strict sense of the term, the abode of the reprobate and the demons; 2) the purgatory of the faithful, that is of those who believed in the future Redeemer, but who died with venial sin or with unexpiated temporal penalties—such as the soldiers of Judas Machabeus (II Machabees 12: 43-46); 3) the pagan limbo; 4) the limbo of the just or of the Fathers—as Jeremias (II Machabees 15:14) and Onias—who by their prayers can aid the living. The Limbo of the Fathers is identical with the "bosom of Abraham" (Luke 16:19) and with the "Paradise" of the penitent thief (Luke 23:43). The phrase, "bosom of Abraham," was employed by the rabbis as a figurative expression to denote the sojourn of the blessed. The ancestor of the chosen race and the father of all believers is pictured as receiving on his knees and in his bosom all the faithful children and admitting them to a participation of his bliss. In this abode the just—and those who had finished their purgatorial sufferings—enjoyed repose, consolation, refreshment and an imperfect bliss which consisted principally in the immunity from pain and the assured expectation of heavenly glory. Their sojourn in this place was only provisional; they awaited Christ, Who would introduce them into the bosom of perfect happiness.

Now, into which one of these four abodes—and in what manner—did Christ descend after His death on the Cross?

Did Christ's soul descend into the hell of the damned? According to St. Thomas,⁽¹⁾ Christ after His death could sojourn in a place in two ways: first, in the inseparable unity of the Divine Person with the soul, and, secondly, by the mere exercise of His Divine power; the first is called in theology a "substantial" presence, the second, a "virtual" or "dynamic" presence. It is certain that Christ did not descend substantially into hell. A personal sojourn in hell would have been repugnant to the dignity of the God-Man. The opinion of Calvin and other heretics that Christ descended into hell to experience the penalties of the damned, is sheer blasphemy, since it presupposes that His soul was sinful and did not always enjoy the Beatific Vision. Besides, the souls in hell were absolutely irredeemable, as were the demons themselves; it would have been useless for Christ to "preach" (I Peter 3:18-20) to them or try to console them. Christ's descent into the hell of the damned was only virtual and consisted in His reproaching of the damned with their bad faith and their malice. The triumph over hell which the Church celebrates in her Easter liturgy, is sufficiently explained by this exercise of Christ's Divine power in hell. Although Christ did not descend into hell, did He, nevertheless, snatch one or another of the souls from its just tortures? St. Thomas and St. Robert Bellarmine answer decidedly in the negative: the penalties of hell are eternal; secondly, no soul can attain the Beatific Vision unless it be first endowed with faith and sanctifying grace.

Christ did not descend into the pagan limbo.

(1) *Summa Theologica*, IIIa. q. 52.

In fact, it is uncertain whether Christ exercised in this abode any influence whatsoever. The lot of these souls is definitely fixed for all eternity. They have once for all arrived at their destination. Having had neither faith nor sanctifying grace, they are incapable of receiving the Beatific Vision. On the other hand, Christ could not have desired to triumph over these souls since their sojourn in this place is not due to any malice on their part, but simply and solely to original sin contracted by physical descent from Adam.

Did Christ descend substantially into purgatory? And if so, did He liberate unconditionally all the souls there detained? Did He grant them a sort of plenary indulgence in commemoration of His Redemption? St. Thomas holds that Christ's presence in purgatory was only virtual and consisted in granting the souls temporarily imprisoned there "the hope of early Beatitude." It is a law of Divine justice that the faithful who have failed to render complete satisfaction in this life must suffer in purgatory. Revelation supplies no evidence for assuming that an exception was made in this instance. Nor is there any warrant for believing that the intensity of the pains compensated for and supplied what was lacking to the expiation. The Passion of Christ operated then with the same manner of efficacy as it does now. On the other hand, it is not very probable that all the inmates of purgatory finished their expiation at exactly the same moment. Hence it is commonly held, with the Angelic Doctor, that at the time of the descent only those souls were liberated who had fully finished their purification, or who—because of a special faith in and devotion

to the death of Christ during their lifetime—merited the favor of being released from the temporal sufferings of purgatory on the occasion of His descent.

Christ descended into the Limbo of the Fathers, that is into the place where the patriarchs and just men of the Old Testament, together with those pagans who had died in the state of grace after having been cleansed from all stain of sin in purgatory, were awaiting the Beatific Vision. Since, according to Revelation, the purpose of Christ's descent was the deliverance of the just, it seems necessary to restrict His substantial descent to the Limbo of the Fathers. Christ's soul remained in Limbo as long as His body was dead and remained in the tomb. Christ descended into this abode not merely by the exercise of His power but in His Divine Person substantially united to His soul. St. Peter says that Christ "preached" the "Gospel" to the spirits that were in "prison." What and why did He preach to them? Did He wish to evangelize and convert them? This was impossible since the souls in this state were fully converted to God. The "Gospel" which Christ as triumphant Victor descended to preach to the inmates of Limbo was the glad tidings that their imprisonment was at an end.

These souls had truly been in "prison." Under the influence of Satan, Adam, the head of the human race, committed a universal offense, that is an offense affecting all men. With the universal offense was indissolubly connected a racial penalty, namely, exclusion from heaven. An individual's repentance, although it removed his personal offenses

and placed him in a state of grace, did not repair the universal offense or atone for the universal penalty. From this viewpoint the just in Limbo were still in Satan's clutches, forced to remain in Limbo until the death of Christ Who, as second racial Head, expiated the universal offense and penalty. Christ descended into Limbo to apply to these souls the fruits of His Redemption, to deliver them from prison by conferring upon them the Beatific Vision, and thereby to triumph over Satan. From the moment of Christ's entrance into Limbo these souls were flooded with Beatific light and began to enjoy the bliss which is its consequence. During the forty days of Christ's sojourn upon earth, these souls remained His invisible companions, and on Ascension Day formed His triumphant cortege into heaven.

Discussion Aids

1. What old Testament passages prefigure Christ's descent into "hell"?
2. What New Testament passages prove Christ's descent into "hell"?
3. What four abodes may the word "hell" denote?
4. What is meant by "Abraham's bosom"?
5. Into which one of these four did Christ descend?
6. In what two ways could Christ sojourn in a place?
7. Did Christ descend substantially into hell? Why?
8. Did He liberate some souls from hell?
9. Did Christ exercise any influence on the

souls in the pagan limbo?

10. Did He descend substantially into purgatory?
11. Did Christ grant a sort of a plenary indulgence to the souls in purgatory?
12. What message did Christ bring to the souls in the Limbo of the Fathers?
13. In what sense were these souls the captives of Satan?
14. When did they enter heaven?

Religious Practices

1. On Holy Saturday I will meditate devoutly on Christ's sojourn in the Limbo of the Fathers.
2. I will nourish my love of Christ by reflecting frequently on the loving kindness with which He visited the souls in Limbo immediately after His death.
3. On Ascension Day I will recall the glory and the triumph of the souls of Limbo as they accompanied Our Lord to heaven.

Chapter VII

The Redemption

The Redemption may be defined as follows: "The God-Man's or second Adam's loving obedience, expressed amid sufferings and death, meriting graces which are distributed to us by the risen Christ, and which restore to us—though not entirely in the same form—the gifts lost by the first Adam."

We admit that this definition is somewhat long and involved. But it is not easy to express in one sentence a dogma which is so rich in content, so manifold in its aspects and so detailed in its implications. At any rate, the definition is intended to emphasize the essential elements in the doctrine of the Redemption, namely:

- 1) The dignity of the Person of the Redeemer, Who is the "God-Man";
- 2) the Redeemer's headship of the human race as the "second Adam";
- 3) the moral or formal element of the Redemption—Christ's love and obedience;
- 4) the penal or material element—Christ's Passion and death;
- 5) the Resurrection, which is the necessary complement of the Redemption; and
- 6) the restoration—through a participation in Christ's merits—of the heritage which the race lost in Adam.

THE PERSON OF THE REDEEMER

1. We have already assembled in another chapter the numerous Scriptural passages which show clearly and explicitly that Christ is God. In the present chapter we shall touch on Christ's Divinity only in so far as it bears upon the Re-

demption. Had Christ been mere man, He could not have rendered to God an equivalent satisfaction for the sins of men. For the offense committed against God is morally infinite. In explaining the character of mortal sin the great theologians of the Middle Ages appealed to the following philosophical principle: "The injury is in the person injured." In other words, an injury is proportionate to and grows with the dignity of the person injured. The same injury committed successively, for example, against a priest, a bishop, archbishop, cardinal and Pope—or against the mayor of a city, governor of a state and president of a nation—becomes correspondingly greater with each higher personage. Yet in all these instances we are within the domain of the human and finite. What shall we say of an offense against an Infinite Being, against Him upon Whom we essentially depend, against Him Who is our Creator, Conserver and Last End, and Who has a strict right to our obedience? It is morally infinite.

Man of himself can do nothing to repair this morally infinite offense which he committed against God by mortal sin. For, as the same mediaeval theologians say, "Honor is in the person honoring," that is, its value is measured by the dignity of its author. Now, God is nowise dependent on us nor does He need our praises. If He deigns to accept them as meritorious, He nevertheless takes them at their intrinsic worth, namely, as something human and finite.

Who then can bridge the gap or abyss between an Infinite God and finite man? Only the God-Man, Christ. As Man, Christ can speak and make satisfaction in our name; as God and equal in all things

to the Father, His voice penetrates to the throne of the Almighty. His actions have an infinite value, are infinitely pleasing to God, and blot out the offense caused by our sins.

2. As God-Man, Christ verifies in Himself all the characteristics of a mediator. In the physical order He binds together in the unity of His Person the Divine and human natures. This union exists, however, only with a view to the reconciliation of sinful man with an offended God. St. Paul pregnantly sums up this natural and moral mediation in the following passage: "For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and men, the Man Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself a redemption for all." (I Timothy 2:5, 6). Elsewhere the Apostle bases Christ's universal and unique moral mediation upon His natural mediatorship: "In Him it hath well pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell, and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, making peace through the blood of His cross, both as to the things that are on earth, and the things that are in heaven" (Colossians 1:19). Paul's doctrine of the Redemption turns, as it were, on the pivotal concept of the mediatorship to Christ: "God indeed was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself" (II Corinthians 5:19). Christ's mediation began at His conception and was consummated by His Passion and death; it comprised all the actions of His life on earth, from the manger to the cross.

CHRIST AS "SECOND ADAM"

When St. Paul reflected in the light of Divine Revelation on the series of stupendous events of which Christ was the cause, when he pondered over

the incalculable blessings which His brief presence effected in the life of mankind, there gradually arose in the Apostle's mind a grand antithesis between the first and last heads of mankind, between the author of sin and death and the Author of justice and life. He saw a clear relation between unregenerate humanity and its natural head, Adam, on the one hand, and between the new spiritual humanity and its Head, Jesus Christ, on the other. As sinful humanity was in some way present at and partook of Adam's transgression, so redeemed humanity was similarly present at and partook of Christ's death, burial and Resurrection. In a passage which is rightly considered as classical, St. Paul has pointed out with unmistakable clearness that Adam is the head of the human race in respect to its sinfulness, Christ the Head of humanity in regard to its redemption:

"Wherefore as by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned. But not as the offense, so also the gift. For if by the offense of one, many died; much more the grace of God, and the gift, by the grace of one Man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

"And not as it was by one sin, so also is the gift. For judgment indeed was by one unto condemnation; but grace is of many offenses, unto justification.

"For if by one man's offense death reigned through one; much more they who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift, and of justice, shall reign in life through One, Jesus Christ.

"Therefore, as by the offense of one, unto all

men to condemnation; so also by the justice of One, unto all men to justification of life.

“For as by the obedience of one man, many were made sinners; so also by the obedience of One, many shall be made just” (Roman 5:12-19).

Adam and Christ, then, stand in analogous relations to mankind, and it is the aim of the Apostle to show that “where sin abounded, grace did more abound” (Roman 5:20).

In another pregnant formula St. Paul again tells us that the fall as well as the redemption of humanity take place according to the law of solidarity; “For by a man came death, and by a Man the resurrection of the dead. And as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive” (I Corinthians 15:21, 22). At no time does St. Paul separate the Christians from Christ, the human race from its Representative and Head. At every stage in the economy of Redemption, the acts of the Saviour are done in our name and for our advantage, or, more precisely, they profit us because they are accomplished in a certain way by us in the Person of our Head. In our Chief we expiate our sins and satisfy Divine Justice, in Him we are reconciled to God and God to us. In close union with its Head and Representative mankind repairs its faults and cooperates in the restoration of its supernatural life. The Son of God, consubstantial with the Father, became man to render us, by His participation of human nature, partakers of the Divine Nature and a blessed immortality.

For the sake of clarity, let us recall that Christ is our Head under a three-fold title. Christ is Head of the human race, first of all, by reason of the

Incarnation; in the Incarnate Christ the whole human race was—in the words of St. Irenaeus—“summed up.” Christ is our Head, secondly, by reason of conquest; since Christ Himself was sinless, His victory over Satan, sin and the flesh was merited in behalf of His mystic members. Finally, Christ becomes our Head actually when we come to participate in His atoning merits. While Christ is—or at one time was—Head of every man under the first two titles, He becomes Head of men under the third title only after they have received the Sacrament of Baptism.

MORAL ELEMENT

The Passion of Christ was not a mere material endurance of pain. The immolated Christ of Calvary was not an inert victim. The Redemption was the divinely ordained remedy for the evil of sin. Just as sin consists of a twofold element, the guilt and the obligation to undergo punishment, so Christ's death involves a moral and a penal phase. The moral element is Christ's self-oblation to God, His obedience to God's will and command, and His great love of God and men; the penal element is His Passion and death. In the Redemption, as it took place historically, the two elements were indissolubly united: Christ's loving self-oblation and obedience took the form of and expressed itself in sufferings and death. For the present we shall study only the formal or moral element.

The self-oblation of the suffering servant of Jahve and its reward are beautifully described by the prophet Isaias: “He was offered because it was his own will, and he opened not his mouth. He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb

as a lamb before his shearer, and he shall not open his mouth . . . If he shall lay down his life for sin, he shall see a long-lived seed, and the will of the Lord shall be prosperous in his hand" (Isaias 53:7, 10).

The Redemption was a work of love. God gave His Son in love: "For God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish but may have life everlasting" (John 3:16), (John 4:10). God commandeth His charity towards us," says St. Paul, "because when as yet we were sinners, according to the time, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8, 9).

Christ gave Himself in love: "And that I live now in the flesh, I live in the faith of the Son of God Who loved me, and delivered Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). "Walk in love," says St. Paul, "as Christ also hath loved us, and hath delivered Himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness" (Ephesians 5:2); "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it" (Ephesians 5:25). In this we have known the charity of God," writes St. John, "because He hath laid down His life for us" (I John 3:16).

The Redeemer's death was not only a proof of the greatest love but also of a magnanimous obedience. This latter point is developed in the Epistle to the Romans (Chapter 5), where the Apostle is comparing the work of the first and the second Adam, the two heads of humanity. Against the transgressions of Adam, who introduced sin and death into this world, the Apostle places the act of Christ Who brought justification and life. The

Apostle calls this salvific and justifying act of the new Adam an act of obedience: "For as by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners, so also by the obedience of One, many shall be made just" (Romans 5:19). It was likewise the obedience of the God-Man, the Saviour, which was the cause of His personal exaltation: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross; for which cause God also hath exalted Him, and hath given Him a name which is above all names" (Philippians 2:5-9).

A generous love and a perfect obedience culminating in a voluntary sacrifice—this is what St. Paul emphasizes in the redeeming work. From the bosom of humanity to which He came to restore the supernatural life which it had lost, the well-beloved Son in Whom the Father is well pleased causes to rise toward God greater honor than that of which original sin and all sins had robbed Him. The obedience and love which animated our Head from His entrance into the world until His death on the cross, constitute an act of immense reparation, which re-establishes the supernatural order broken by the transgression of Adam.

The love and obedience of the second Adam consisted principally in the acceptance of death, the penalty of sin. Christ freely accepted humiliations, sufferings and death—"proposito sibi gaudeo, sustinuit crucem," Since the consequence and penalty

of Adam's sinful act, which was a refusal of obedience, was death, one can readily understand how reparation should indeed consist in love and obedience, but in love and obedience taking the form of sufferings and death. Sin, which had condemned man to eternal death leads the Son of God—Whom love had made Son of Man—to death, that we might become adopted sons in eternal life. The moral and penal elements are both essential and inseparable in Christ's redeeming work. It is by the two indissolubly united that man was redeemed.

PENAL ELEMENT

The penal element permeates the whole New Testament and finds its fullest statement in the recitations of the Passion of our Lord. The Old Testament, however, is not without its prophetic images. According to Christ's own words, the brazen serpent in the desert was a figure of His cross: "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him, may have life everlasting" (John 3:14, 15; Numbers 21:9). The penal element in Christ's Redemption is also prefigured in the exodus from Egypt. Just as the Jews were liberated from bondage and protected against the devastating angel by the blood of the Paschal lamb, in order that they might thereafter enter as the chosen race into the promised land, so, too the human race was liberated from the captivity of Satan by the blood of the true Paschal Lamb and restored to its heavenly heritage (Exodus 12:3, 51). In Isaias the Messiah is represented as the humble servant of Jahve who would save His people, not by crushing the enemy, by undergoing an ignominious death: "He was wounded for our

iniquities, he was bruised for our sins; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, every one hath turned aside into his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaias 53:5, 6).

The Synoptic Gospels indicate the purpose of Christ's descent upon earth and explain how His death entered in an essential manner into His redeeming mission. St. Luke tells us that "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10) and illustrates this doctrine by the parables of the Lost Sheep and the Prodigal Son. In the beginning Christ hints only remotely at His death: He asserts that the bridegroom cannot always remain with the children (Matthew 9:15). But after St. Peter's confession in the quarters of Caesarea Philippi, "Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the ancients and scribes and chief priests, and be put to death, and the third day rise again" (Matthew 16:21). Toward the close of His earthly career, Christ declared that His Passion and death will be the cause of our liberation from sin: "For the Son of Man also is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life as redemption for many" (Mark 10:45). Finally at the Last Supper He affirms that His blood "shall be shed for many unto remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28).

St. Peter tells us that the once erring sheep have now become the chosen people of acquisition. This marvelous restoration was wrought by the Passion and death of Christ. "You were not re-

deemed with corruptible things as gold or silver . . . but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled . . . Who His own self bore our sins in His body upon the tree; that we, being dead to sins, should live to justice; by Whose stripes you were healed" (I Peter 1:18-19; 2:24). St. John likewise writes that we were liberated from sin and darkness and transferred into light by the death of Christ. The Good Shepherd gave His life that the children who were dispersed might be gathered together. Christ is the Lamb, standing as it were slain, by Whose blood all were washed and made citizens of God's kingdom (John 3:19-21; 10:10-18; Apocalypse 5:6-10).

St. Paul represents the redeeming death of Christ under various aspects. At times the instrument of this death is put by metonymy for the death itself, and salvation is then said to be by the cross. It was "by the cross" that Christ reconciled both Jews and Gentiles to God "in one body, killing the enmities in Himself" (Ephesians 2:16) that He "blotted out the hand-writing of the decree that was against us, which was contrary to us, and hath taken the same out of the way, fastening it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14). It was the same image of Christ on the cross that the Apostle depicted in vivid colors before the eyes of his Galatian converts (Galatians 3:1).

At other times the Apostle emphasizes the shedding of the Redeemer's blood: "It hath well pleased the Father through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, making peace through the blood of His cross" (Colossians 1:19, 20). God hath proposed Christ to be a propitiation through faith in His

blood (Romans 3:25) and "when as yet we were sinners Christ died for us; much more, therefore, being now justified by His blood, shall we be saved from wrath through Him" (Romans 5:8, 9). In Christ "we have redemption through His blood, the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7). In Him those "who some time were afar off, are made nigh by His blood" (Ephesians 2:13).

From Calvary—where the penal element reaches its highest point of intensity—flow all the blessings of the new dispensation. On Calvary was verified the antithesis between the first Adam, "by whose disobedience many were made sinners," and the second Adam, "by Whose obedience—even unto the death of the Cross (Philippians 2:5-8)—many shall be made just (Romans 5:19). There all humanity was concentrated in Christ as in the terrestrial Paradise it was concentrated in our first parents: "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive" (I Corinthians 15:22). On Calvary was wrought the great reconciliation between God and man, between heaven and earth, and between men themselves (Colossians 1:20). On Calvary Christ became the supreme and eternal Pontiff, the Paschal Lamb, the expiatory and propitiatory Sacrifice, the Immolation which seals the alliance. It is there that Christ conquers Satan, sin and the flesh, and strikes a mortal blow at death. It is there that He assumes preeminence over the angels and becomes the Master of the spirit powers who henceforth are powerless to overcome man by their insidious onslaughts.

Discussion Aids

1. Define the Redemption.
2. Show how each one of the following is related to the Redemption:
 - a) Divinity of Christ.
 - b) Christ's physical and moral mediation.
 - c) Christ's headship of the human race.
3. Under what three titles is Christ our Head?
4. What are the two essential elements of sin?
5. What are the two essential elements of the Redemption?
6. In what ways were the moral elements exemplified in Christ's work?
7. In what way is the penal element prefigured in the Old Testament?
8. In what ways is the penal element presented in the New Testament?
9. What is the relation of the moral and penal elements?

Religious Practices

1. I will have a special devotion to the Sacred Heart, the symbol of Christ's love, meekness and obedience.
2. I will frequently pray that the five glorious wounds of the Risen Christ will plead for me in the presence of the Blessed Trinity.
3. In honor of Christ's death on the Cross I will always make the Sign of the Cross reverently and thoughtfully.

Chapter VIII

The Redemption Continued

THE RESURRECTION

The Resurrection is intimately connected with the Redemption. The Resurrection shows that Christ is God. When the Jews pressed our Lord on the question of His Divinity, when they demanded a proof or a sign of His Divine mission, He, to convince their minds and confound their incredulity, always referred them to His future Resurrection. "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign; and a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights" (Matthew 12:39, 40). And again, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). If Christ after His death had not risen, belief in His Divinity would have been destroyed by the word of His mouth; His Divinity destroyed, His other miracles would lose their force, His words would become a falsehood, and Christian faith a phantom. God never performs a miracle to confirm a falsehood. Hence if after this prophecy Christ did rise, it follows that what He said is true, that He is God and one with the Father.

The Resurrection is thus the Father's seal of approval on Christ's completed mission; it is the Father's public declaration of His acceptance of the Saviour's work. If Christ remained a prey to death,

where would be our full knowledge, certainty and assurance that complete atonement has been made, that the Father had accepted Christ's redeeming work in behalf of our sinful race, and that the foundation of perfect reconciliation between God and man had been laid? "If Christ be not risen again, your faith is vain, for you are yet in your sins. Then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (I Corinthians 15:17, 18). The joyful confidence that the work of the Redeemer has accomplished its purposed effect comes from the Resurrection.

The Resurrection, however, did more than place the stamp of God's approval on Christ's redeeming work. The Resurrection is an essential complement of the Redemption. St. Paul tells us that Christ was "delivered up for our sins, and rose again for our justification" (Romans 4:25). At the Resurrection Christ became a quickening spirit (I Corinthians 15:45) both for Himself and for us; for Himself, because the glory of which He possessed the plenitude overflowed, as it were, on His body and made it spiritual; for us, because He communicates to us the gifts of the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit Himself. Before the Resurrection Christ had indeed possessed the Spirit in its plenitude, but He was not as yet free to communicate this fullness of life to others because of the limitations inherent in the economy of Redemption. This privilege had as a preliminary condition His death and Resurrection, so that it is only in His glorified state that Christ becomes a life-giving principle. As "quickeningspirit" the Lord is the Depositor as well as the Dispenser of the spirit (John 14:17, 18; 16:7).

The risen Christ, then, is for us the Source of all supernatural graces and blessings. We usually associate grace and merits with the Christ of Gethsemani, or the Christ of Calvary, or the Christ hanging upon the Cross and dying for us. But the risen Christ is not a new Christ. The five glorious wounds are a most certain link between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Though we did not live in Christ's time nor stand beneath the Cross on Calvary's hill, though a drop of Christ's precious blood did not fall on our bowed and sinful head, we know that the inexhaustible, infinite merits of Calvary are stored up for us in the risen Christ to Whom we are now united as to our Head. Like a captain returning triumphantly with the spoils of victory, the risen Christ brings with Him the graces which He won for us during His Passion and Death. Every time we receive a grace of illumination for the mind or of inspiration for the will, it is the risen Christ Who is strengthening us. Into the channels of the sacraments the five glorious stigmata are continually distilling supernatural life. Everyone who is in a state of sanctifying grace adheres to the risen Christ as a branch to a vine.

The penalty which God decreed against sin after Adam's fall was death. This death the second Adam endured for us on the cross, and triumphed over in His Resurrection. But though death was conquered by Jesus Christ, it was not completely annihilated. It still retains some of its former power and men continue to die even after the Passion. But though the body is still mortal, the "law" of death is neutralized by a superior force, by "the law of the spirit and of life" (Romans 8:2)—by

sanctifying grace. This life of grace in the soul will eventually culminate in the life of glory. When at the general resurrection this glorified soul will be reunited to its body, the latter will come to share in the glory of the former. When in the hour of the resurrection the last hostile power, death, shall be swallowed up in the supreme triumph of the Redeemer (I Corinthians 15:16), and "when this mortal hath put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" (I Corinthians 15; 54-55).

Of this, our future resurrection, Christ's own Resurrection is the model. Christ remained on earth forty days after His Resurrection and frequently manifested His glorified humanity to His Apostles and disciples, in order to make us see what we ourselves ought to and can become, to make us contemplate the blessed state to which we ourselves can be elevated. St. Paul calls Christ the "first-born of the dead" (Colossians 1:18), and the "first fruits of them that sleep" (I Corinthians 15:20). The earth is, as it were, a vast field in which our bodies are planted like seed, and since the "first fruits" have already appeared, the harvest also will follow. God will reassemble from the dust of the earth the elements of the body to which the glorified soul will be reunited. For if God could create our bodies out of nothing, He can also form them a second time out of their own proper matter. Who can prevent Him from reestablishing what once was, Who once created what never was? If Christ by His omnipotence raised Himself, why should He not do for

others what He did for himself? If by His own power He rose in a flesh like ours, is this not an evident sign that we shall also one day be raised by Him? Are we to say that Christ is less powerful in our regard than in His own? Is not that power which is always the same in Him capable of producing the same miracles?

BAPTISM

The atoning merits of Christ's Redemption are communicated to men for the first time in the Sacrament of Baptism. This initial sacrament is viewed by St. Paul wholly with reference to Christ's Death and Resurrection: "Know you not that all we who are baptized in Christ Jesus, are baptized in His death? For we are buried together with Him in Baptism into death; that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of death, we shall be also in the likeness of His Resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, to the end that we may serve sin no longer" (Romans 6:3-6).

The immersion and submersion in the water as practised in the early days of Christianity was an image of Christ's death and burial. The total submersion of the Christian was a fitting representation of Christ's envelopment in the tomb.

Baptism "into the death" of Christ is Baptism into the dying Christ, incorporation into Christ at the very moment that He saved us, a mystical union with the second Adam suffering death in the name of and for the profit of all. In Baptism our "old man," that is, our sinful nature inherited from the

first Adam, is nailed to the cross of Christ. But as Christ died and was buried only to be raised from the dead by the power of His Father, so also we are immersed and submerged in the waters of Baptism only to emerge and rise to the new spiritual life of sanctifying grace; and we are to continue in that new life as Christ continues in His glorious risen state. The baptismal rite has equal efficacy in symbolizing and reproducing the Death and the Resurrection.

Faith, which St. Paul frequently correlates with Baptism, is likewise directed to Christ's Death and Resurrection as to its primary object (I Thessalonians 4:13). The Eucharist, the supernatural food of the members of Christ's Mystic Body, is truly a "memorial of Christ's death": "As often as you shall eat this bread and drink the chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord" (I Corinthians 11:26).

ASPECTS AND EFFECTS OF THE REDEMPTION

Christ's redeeming work is depicted in the Scriptures with a great variety and richness of detail. Since Christ was the second Adam, since He was our Head, Mediator and Representative, the relation of His works to His mystic members is similar to that of the works of a just man to himself. What Christ did, He did for those whom He represented and in whose name He acted. His life and death were worthy of a recompense involving the whole human race of which He was Chief. Viewed from this aspect, Christ's "work" has the character of "merit." Because of Christ's merits, supernatural blessings were conferred upon us as if we had

merited them ourselves. However, that which is communicated to us is not the meritorious actions themselves but the fruit of these actions: from the viewpoint of the effects obtained, the merits of Christ, our Head and Representative, have replaced ours.

Since the merit of Christ had reference to the offense against God, it was, more specifically, vicarious satisfaction. This second aspect of Christ's redeeming work is taught in all those passages where it is said that Christ was crucified and died for us, and that Christ is our propitiation, justification and reconciliation. The doctrine of vicarious satisfaction is proved by the preposition "for" as well as by the general movement of St. Paul's thought and by the place which he assigns to Christ in humanity. The same doctrine may be stated in another way. The penalty of sin is death. Since Christ was sinless, He did not need to undergo death. If He submitted to it, His death was "vicarious," that is, endured in our favor and in our behalf.

Since this satisfaction of our Lord took place through penal sufferings and an immolation of Himself to God, it was a sacrifice. The sacrificial character of Christ's death—the idea of a blood sacrifice—is clearly insinuated in those texts which attribute the effects of the Redemption to the Blood of Christ. More specifically, the immolation of Christ is assimilated to the sacrifice which seals the new alliance: "This chalice is the new testament in My blood" (I Corinthians 11:25). Christ is also the true Paschal sacrifice of which the Paschal lamb of the Jews was only a figure: "For Christ our Pasch is sacrificed" (I Corinthians 5:7). Again, the sacri-

fice of the cross is for Christians what the sacrifice of propitiation on the solemn day of the atonement was for the Jews: "God hath proposed Christ Jesus to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood" (Romans 3:25). Unlike the sacrifices of the Old Law, Jesus Christ on Calvary is not only the victim but also the willing offerer: "Christ loved us and hath delivered Himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness" (Ephesians 5:12).

The first effect of Christ's sacrificial death is the appeasing of God's wrath against the sinner and the reconciliation of humanity with God. In its strict sense, reconciliation denotes deliverance from present wrath; deliverance from final wrath is usually denoted by the term "salvation." Both terms are used in their exact meaning in the following passage: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled shall we be saved by His life. And not only so, but also we glory in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by Whom we have now received reconciliation" (Romans 5:10, 11). Closely related to these terms are the words propitiation and expiation. Christ's redeeming work was a propitiation and expiation. Christ's redeeming work was a propitiation because it repaired the offense done to God; it was an expiation because the penalty due to sin was borne by the God-Man.

St. Paul frequently represents the redeeming work as a "redemption" or "ransom." These two terms are derived from the Oriental customs of slave-liberation. The master would conduct the slave to the temple, sell him to the diety, and re-

ceive from the temple treasury the purchase money. The whole process was called "redemption" and the purchase money was referred to as the "ransom" or "price." St. Paul no doubt had these conditions in mind when he announced to his Corinthian converts a new redemption—a liberation from the bondage of sin, of death and of Satan. From these oppressive powers we were ransomed by Christ: "You are bought with a great price" (I Corinthians 6:20; 7:23). This ransoming was procured by Christ's blood and is identified with "the remission of sins" (Ephesians 1:7); Colossians 1:13,14). The ransoming act of Christ liberates us from the guilt and penal consequences of sin, and through this relief secures for us liberation from Satan and death.

The Pauline doctrine of man's slavery to Satan needs an additional word of explanation. By inducing Adam, the head of the human race, to commit sin, the devil gained a victory over man's will and turned him from his Last End. Through Satan's instigation the whole human race thus fell into a state from which it cannot rise of its own powers and in which it remains Satan's captive. God, however, always remained true Master of fallen man. In holding men under his control, Satan was merely acting—with God's permission—as an executor of Divine justice. Satan still tempts us, but with the aid of actual grace, merited for us by the Redeemer, we can overcome all his onslaughts.

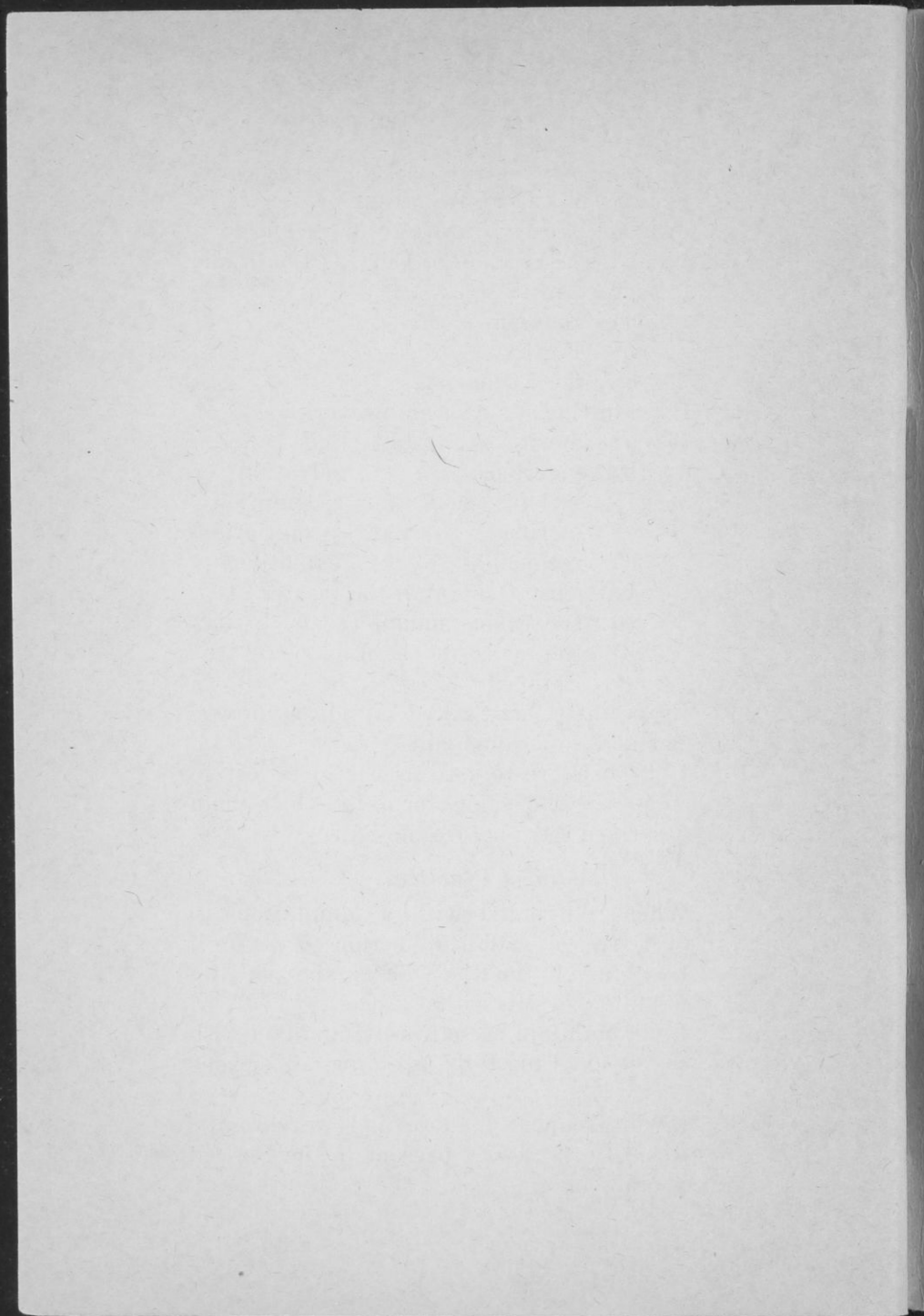
Even the just in Limbo were to a certain extent in Satan's clutches and power. Under the influence of the tempter, Adam, the head of the human race, committed a universal offense—that is, an offense affecting all men. With this racial offense was

indissolubly connected a racial penalty, namely, exclusion from heaven. An individual's repentance, although it removed his personal offenses and placed him in a state of grace, did not repair the universal offense or atone for the universal penalty. Hence the just had to remain in Limbo until the death of Christ Who, as second racial Head, expiated the universal offense and penalty. Christ's Redemption was truly universal: "He is a propitiation for our sins, not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world" (I John 2:2). Nay more, it was superabundant: "Where sin abounded, grace did more abound" (Roman 5:20).

Let us again note here, in conclusion, that all these effects and blessings of Christ's Redemption become the individual's actual possession only in the Sacrament of Baptist. The gifts lost by Adam, however, are not restored to us in the same form. The sacrament of regeneration blots out all sins and all penalties due to sin, and places us directly and immediately in a state of grace and of friendship with God. Concupiscence is not eradicated but is neutralized by its antidote—Christ's actual graces. Death finds an antidote in sanctifying grace and will be completely annihilated at the final resurrection.

Discussion Aids

1. Prove that the Resurrection is
 - a) a proof of Christ's Divinity
 - b) the Father's seal of approval on Christ's work
2. What is the relation of the Redemption and the Resurrection?
3. Whence do all graces come to us at present?



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