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THE
CATHOLIC CHURCH

BY

RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR CAPEL, D. D.

Domestic Prelate of His Holiness, Leo XIII, happily reigning, Member
of the Congregation of the Segnatura, Priest of the
Archdiocese of Westminster.

Fifth Thousand.

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“All the ends of the earth shall remember, and shall be converted to the Lord, and all the kindreds of the Gentiles shall adore in His sight, for the Kingdom is the Lord’s, and he shall have dominion over the nations.”—Ps. xxi, 28.

The inspired Psalmist does in this short sentence foreshadow the organic character and the glorious mission of Christ’s Kingdom, the Church.

I.

It is of paramount importance that a clear idea be obtained of the nature of this Church of Christ. Of the sacred writers, one only, St. Paul, defines the Church. Writing to the Colossians the Apostle says: “He (Christ) is the *Head of the body, the Church,*” and in the same Epistle: “I fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ in my flesh for *His Body which is the Church.*”¹ To the Ephesians he writes still more explicitly: “He hath put all things under his feet, and hath made Him *Head over all the Church which is His Body* and the fullness of him who is filled all in all.”² In each instance St. Paul writes in the Greek language, which has not the figurative expression *Body*; nor is *Body* used therein ambiguously as it is in English. The Apostle whenever he so

(1) Colossians, i, 18 and 24. (2) Eph. i, 23.



defines the Church, invariably selects the word *σῶμα* which is never used in Greek to express mere association, or aggregation, but usually implies the superadded idea of an organism. The full meaning of St. Paul will be realized in the passage given above from the Ephesians, where Christ is described as the "Head" in which *κεφαλή* is used, as the context shows, not merely in the sense of chief, but as the source of life to this Organism, His Mystical Body.

What the Apostle so accurately defines, he as vividly describes, and always in the same sense. Having stated the purposes for which the Church exists, St. Paul continues: "But performing the truth in charity we may in all things grow up in Him who is the *Head* Christ: from whom the whole *Body* compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, making increase of the *Body* unto the edifying itself in charity."¹

"No man," says the same Apostle, "ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as Christ doth the Church; for we are members of his body, of His flesh, and of His bones."² And therefore to the Galatians is he able to write: "For as many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female. For you are all ONE in Christ Jesus."³ And in similar strain does St. Paul address the Romans: "For as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office: So we being many are one *Body* in Christ, and each one members one of another."⁴ And to the Corinthians does he express

(1) Eph. iv, 15. (2) Eph. v, 29. (3) Gal. iii, 27. (4) Rom. xii, 4.

this even more explicitly: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body whereas they are many, yet are one body; so also in Christ. For in one spirit were we all baptized into one *Body*. . . . God hath tempered the body together, giving the more abundant honor to that which wanted it, that there might be no schism in the body, but the members might be mutually careful one for another. And if one member suffer anything all the members suffer with it; or if one of the members glory all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the *Body* of Christ and members of member. And God indeed hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then the graces of healings, helps, governments, kinds of tongues, interpretations of speeches."¹

These plain declarations of St. Paul show that he regarded the Church as a Visible and Organic Body, divinely constituted with organs having their special functions, and receiving life through the Head, Christ. The minute description given in the fourth chapter of the Ephesians puts this beyond doubt.

The Apostle therein begins by a very precise statement of the unity which obtains: "ONE BODY, and One Spirit; as you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all." He then enumerates the several parts of the Organism: "And some He gave to be apostles, and some prophets, and others evangelists, and others pastors and teachers." He specifies the purpose for which the power is conferred: (1) "for the perfecting of

(1) 1 Cor. xii, 12-28.

the saints," (2) "for the work of the ministry," (3) "for the edifying (i. e., building up) of the *Body* of Christ." And this is to be continued "till we all meet in the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man unto the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ," in order that we may not be "children tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, in the wickedness of men, in craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive."¹

From these descriptions and definitions of St. Paul we may turn to the deeds of Jesus Christ the Head of the Church.

After He had gathered about Him a certain number of disciples He chose from among them twelve, whom he sent forth by two and two to preach the Kingdom of God and heal the sick. "Go not, said the Master, into the way of the Gentiles, and into the cities of the Samaritans enter not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."² Later other seventy are appointed, and "He sent them two and two before his face into every city and place whither He Himself was to come."³ Of the twelve, Simon who is called Peter, was chosen to be the Rock on which the Church was to be built; to him exclusively were given the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven;⁴ he received *separately* and in its *plenitude* that power of binding and loosing which subsequently was given to the twelve *collectively*; he was selected especially to be the Confirmer of the faith of all his brethren;⁵ and to him alone was given the fullness of authority to feed the lambs and the sheep—the whole Flock of Christ. Thus was the unalterable Constitution of the Church formed. All

(1) Eph. iv, 11-14. (2) Matt. x, 5. (3) Luke x, 1.

(4) Matt. xvi, 18, 19. (5) Luke xxvii, 31.

teaching power was in Jesus Christ, the Head, who imparted it to the Apostolic College, reserving special offices to Peter, the Visible Head.

It is well to bear in mind the distinction of meaning in the word "Head" as applied to Christ, and as applied to Peter. From the invisible Head Christ, does the Mystical Body receive its spiritual life, imparting feeling and motion to the members. Peter is constituted by Christ visible Head, to be the spring, origin and source of external communion and government in the Visible Church. So that "IN him," as St. Augustine has it, "being one, He forms the Church—*in quo uno (Petro) format Ecclesiam;*" to which St. Jerome's words may be added: "For this reason out of the twelve one is selected, that by the appointment of a Head, the occasion of schism may be taken away."

To these teachers did Jesus before ascending to heaven make known the whole of that doctrine which He had received of His Father, and in doing this He completed and closed His Revelation made to man. He made the Apostles participators in His power of signs and wonders; co-operators with Him in pardoning sin by baptism and the sacrament of reconciliation; to them He imparted the power to consecrate: "Do this in commemoration of me." And as the Father had sent Him, so did He send them to preach His Gospel.

This "*Ecclesia docens*" or teaching body was thus fitted with divine powers for the Ministry of the Gospel, and was duly commissioned by divine authority to "go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Yet these teachers were commanded by Jesus at the moment of His Ascension that "they should not

depart from Jerusalem, but should wait for the promise of the Father which you have heard, said He, by my mouth." And he continued: "It is not for you to know the times or moments which the Father hath put in His own power; but you shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth."¹

The promise herein referred to was made at the last supper in these words: "And I will ask the Father and He shall give you another Paraclete (Comforter), that he *may abide with you forever*; the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not nor knoweth him; but you shall know Him, because He shall abide with you, and shall be in you. * * * * The Paraclete (the Comforter), the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He will *teach you all things*, and *bring all things* to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you. * * * * When the Paraclete (the Comforter) shall come, whom I will send you from the Father, He *shall give testimony of me*. * * * * It is expedient for you that I go; for if I go not the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go I will send Him to you. And when He shall come, He will convince the world of sin, and of justice, and of judgment. * * * * When He, the Spirit of Truth, shall come, He will *teach you all truth*, for *He shall not speak of Himself*, but what things soever He shall hear, He shall speak; and the things that are to come He will shew you."²

It is plain the promise refers to a *new* office which would be superadded to that which the Holy Ghost al-

(1) Acts i, 7.

(2) John xiv, 16-26; xvi, 7 and 13.

ready holds. He was the inspirer of Prophets. He is the Sanctifier of Men. But the promise declares him to be from that time and forever the vivifier of the body of Christ.

The promise thus made was fulfilled ten days after the ascension: "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them cloven tongues as it were of fire; and it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak."¹

So was born the Church of the living God: Pentecost day is her birthday. Her organization was conceived and fashioned by *divine* wisdom; She receives a *divine* life; She has to fulfill a *divine* mission; She is possessed of *divine* power; She is the appointed guardian of the *divine* revelation. From that moment and henceforth to the consummation of ages is this Human-divine Society to have a continuous life in this world. No power of earth or of hell can destroy it, for Jesus is its invisible Head, the Holy Spirit its invisible and active principle of life, and God's power is pledged that "against it the gates of hell shall not prevail."

Indestructible because of the divine element within, yet composed without of human beings, it bears exteriorly the manifestations of man's weakness. Hence is the Kingdom of heaven likened to ten Virgins, five of whom were foolish; to a net wherein are the clean and the unclean; to a Marriage feast at which all have not on a marriage garment. In other words, in the outward visible body of the Church the good and the bad

(1) Acts ii, 2-4.

will ever be commingled till the harvest come. But this destroys not her divine life no more than sickly or delicate flesh destroys the life of the human being. In the language of Origen we affirm that "the Sacred Scriptures assert the whole Church of God to be the body of Christ, endowed with life by the Son of God. Of this Body, which is to be regarded as a whole, the members are individual believers. For as the soul gives life and motion to the body, which of itself could have no living motion, so the Word, giving a right motion and energy, moves the whole Body, the Church and each one of its members."¹

On Pentecost night this Visible Human-divine Society having perfect organization was commensurate with Christianity. None other save itself had the doctrine of Christ; it alone was the duly appointed Organ for teaching Revelation to men and for dispensing the Mysteries of God. Or as Klee well puts it, "the Church considered internally—*natura naturans*—is Christianity. Christianity considered externally—*natura naturata*—is the Church. The Church and Christianity are Christ in us, and we in Christ. The creature is therefore a Mystical Body, animated by the Spirit of Christ."² This is the Kingdom of Christ, the City seated on a Mountain, the Pillar and Ground of Truth, the Temple and Church of the living God, the Bride of the Lamb.

The law of her growth is fixed by God; it is by incorporation, not by accretion. Of the food taken by the human body, are blood, bone and tissue made; these by assimilation expand or augment the already existing members. So the Mystic Body of Christ

(1) Origen c. Celfum, VI, 48. (2) Klee, Hist. Christ. Dog. C. on Church.

absorbs by holy baptism the souls of men receiving them by ones or in numbers. But these additions increase without altering the organization; they are assimilated to the Body of the Church. Thus is preserved the *identity* of her being, although the individuals composing the visible body are ever varying by death and by spiritual birth. As truly as man, notwithstanding the varying change of the particles of his body, is able to say Ego of every-day life, so too can the Church, the Spouse of Christ, speak of her unchanging quasi-personality.

With the growth of her disciples, there was necessarily a growth of her ministers, the *ecclesia docens*; but here again it is by a fixed law. "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how can they preach unless they be sent?"¹ As the Father sent the Son to preach the Gospel, so did the Son send the Apostles; they, in turn, sent others, bishops and priests and deacons, commissioned with the same divine authority to preach and fulfill the Ministry. Accordingly, St. John, speaking of himself and other pastors, could say: "We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us, he that is not of God heareth not us; in this we know the Spirit of truth and the Spirit of error."² And St. Paul in like manner says: "We are ambassadors for Christ, God, as it were, exhorting by us."³ To the chief pastors at Ephesus does St. Paul address these words: "Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God."⁴ And the Apostles, act-

(1) Romans, x, 14. (2) 1 John, iv, 6. (3) 2 Cor. v, 19. (4) Acts, xx, 28.

ing in their corporate capacity, could proclaim their decree in the name of themselves and of the Holy Ghost.

Knowing that they were possessed of this divine authority in virtue of which Christ had said: "He that heareth you heareth me; he that despiseth you despiseth me;" the pastors were able to speak as men having power, and to exact subjection to their teaching and government in things spiritual. Their Master's words were in their minds: "Whosoever shall not hear you or receive your words, when you depart out of that city, shake off the dust from your feet; verily, I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city." Hence could St. Paul say: "Remember your Prelates, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow,"¹ and again: "Obey your Prelates and be subject to them, for they watch as being to render an account of your souls."¹

It will be remarked that in appointing these pastors there was (1) "imposition of hands;" and (2) "the being sent."² For instance, when the seven deacons were chosen they "were placed in the presence of the apostles, and they praying imposed hands on them."³ Appointed at first stewards of the Church, and distributors of her goods, a part of their office was attendance on the Priests at the divine offices. Later, as we learn, of the seven Stephen was sent to preach; and Philip both preached and baptized.

The "imposition of hands" is the sacrament of Orders, and in common with the other sacraments its effect is conferred direct by God. For this reason, could St. Paul write to Timothy: "I admonish thee

(1) Heb. xiii, 7 and 17. (2) Acts xiii. (3) Acts vi, 6.

that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee by the imposition of hands." But the "commission," or "being sent," is derived direct from the Apostles. It specifies where, how and when the divine authority is to be exercised by the individual pastor. "For this cause," writes St. Paul to Titus, "I left thee at Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and shouldst ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee."¹ These two powers are distinguished as the power of Order, the power of Jurisdiction. Both are of God: the one comes direct through the sacrament of Orders; the other indirectly from God through the Church by appointment. In the early church they were often conferred simultaneously; still they were looked upon as distinct operations. The power of Jurisdiction is not necessarily attached to Orders, though for some acts, such as absolution from sin, both are necessary. The Apostles and the Seventy, who were sent out at first two and two, had jurisdiction, but not orders. A man may be a bishop and yet not be a bishop of a diocese. On the other hand, a duly and canonically confirmed Bishop Elect possesses jurisdiction without the Episcopal power to confirm and to ordain; a deposed bishop is still possessed of his Episcopal power derived from consecration, but he is deprived of jurisdiction or cure of souls, His ordinations would be valid; his absolutions null and void. And thus it would be possible for an organized body of Christians to have valid orders, to hold almost all Catholic doctrines, to offer the great Sacrifice of the Christian Dispensation, and yet be no part of the Church. This was, as a matter of fact, the posi-

(1) Titus, i, 5.

tion of the Novatians and Donatists against whom St. Cyprian and St. Augustin struggled.

The power of Order gives capacity; the power of Jurisdiction permits the use of authority. The distinction between 'can' and 'may,' the former expressing *inherent*, the latter *dependent* power—affords a good illustration of the subject. The dispenser of the power of order is but an instrument; the grantor of the power of jurisdiction exercises authority and dominion. The first coming directly from Christ is abiding and unchangeable. It is conferred in equal measure on each priest or bishop. The second not coming immediately, but through the Church from Christ to individuals, is conferred in varying proportions as may be deemed expedient for the good of souls.

In the instances mentioned above, Timothy and Titus had neither more nor less of Episcopal character than had any of the Apostles: as bishops they were equal. But the Apostles had universal jurisdiction directly from Christ. Timothy and Titus received their commission from the Apostles; it was restricted to the Church at Ephesus, and to the Church in Crete; it was neither sovereign nor independent.

Timothy and Titus were consecrated bishops, but the Episcopate of Authority, of which they were appointed participators, was one, indivisible, sovereign, and independent. It was given first in its fullness to Peter *separately*; later the power of binding and loosing was given *collectively* to the Apostolic College. Thus did Jesus Christ establish two indestructible elements in the organization of the Church:

(1.) The Apostolate, consisting in universal jurisdiction derived directly from Christ.

(2.) The one Episcopate, founded immediately by

Christ, and exercising corporate jurisdiction in the whole world.

The first resides in the successor of St. Peter, who is therefore the Supreme Governor, the Supreme Teacher of the Church, with whom there must be communion in order to be in the Visible Organic Body, the Fold of Christ.

The second resides in the Body of Bishops, conjointly, who thus together represent the Apostolic College, each bishop not having a share of the Episcopate, but a part in the solidarity of the Episcopate. The Episcopal jurisdiction is plainly subordinate to the Apostolate. To have part in this Episcopate the individual must be appointed by the Head of the Church; or by the Head with the Episcopate.

In this way has every bishop proper and ordinary jurisdiction in his diocese, and yet is not sovereign and independent. Therefore not by delegated or vicarious power, but by the Holy Ghost, do Bishops rule in the Church of God, as the successors not of individual Apostles, but of the Apostolic College. As Cardinal Hergenrother has it in *Church and State*, vol. I, p. 177: "The Episcopal power of jurisdiction is therefore not derived 'immediately from Christ,' in so far it exists in individuals; it has been established by Christ, but is not conferred immediately by Him upon individual bishops; it is imparted to them by the Head of the Church, or bishops He has authorized. Thus the Unity of the Episcopate, so much insisted on by the Fathers, is fully upheld; the Holy See is head, root, spring, and origin of the spiritual authority."

St. Thomas Aquinas, the Prince of Theologians, who died in 1274, that is, two centuries previous to the so-

called Reformation, expresses with much precision the distinction between Order and Jurisdiction. (2, 2, 30, n. 2.)

“Although schismatics have the power of Order, yet they are deprived of the authority of Jurisdiction.

“Spiritual power is twofold—the one Sacramental, the other Jurisdictional. Sacramental is that which is conferred by some consecration. But all consecrations of the Church are permanent, so long as the matter remains which is consecrated, this even in things inanimate—an altar once consecrated cannot be reconsecrated unless it be afterwards broken. And, therefore, this power remains as to its essence in a man who has received it by consecration so long as he lives, whether he fall into schism or heresy. But as inferior power ought not to be brought into action unless it be moved by superior power, as is seen in nature, it follows that those (who fall into schism or heresy) lose the use of the power, and it is not lawful for them to use it. If, nevertheless, they do so, their power produces its effect in sacraments, for in these man is but the instrument of God. Hence the effects of sacraments are not prevented on account of any guilt in the minister of the sacraments.

“But Jurisdictional Power is that which is conferred by the simple concession of man; such power does not inhere permanently; whence such power does not remain with schismatics and heretics; they, therefore, are unable to absolve, to excommunicate, to grant indulgences, and the like. Should they do so, the acts would be null.

“When, therefore, it is said that schismatics and heretics have not spiritual power, it is to be understood of Jurisdiction; but if Power of Order be

referred to, then is not meant its essence, but its legitimate use."

To this clear statement of St. Thomas may be added the still more explicit teaching of Suarez on the way of receiving Papal and Episcopal jurisdiction.

"The pontifical power is, as it were, the primal example of all spiritual power of jurisdiction; for no one will deny that that is a true power of active jurisdiction—nay, in that order is the highest that can exist in mere man. Now, that power is *not* given to the Pontiff by any consecration, but by *election* and the bare grant of God; for when He said to Peter 'Feed My Sheep,' He impressed on him no new consecration or character, but gave him a mere power of jurisdiction. So, too, the Pope, *when rightly elected*, is immediately true Pope as to such power, and as to that receives no consecration; nay, if not already a bishop or a priest, he must be afterwards consecrated or even ordained, and, nevertheless, in the meantime, he can exercise *all acts of mere external jurisdiction*. Therefore, in the same manner, the proper power of jurisdiction is granted to other bishops by *election* or *simple concession*, not by consecration, for the principle is the same, not only because the episcopal power is but a certain participation of the papal power, but likewise because, as in the appointment of the Pope, to apply to him, matter (for the exercise of his jurisdiction) is nothing else but to give to him a true and new power over it, so when a See is given to one bishop consecrated before, matter (for jurisdiction) is applied to him no otherwise than that certain persons become his subjects, which before they were not; nor do they become his subjects save by giving him a

new power as a superior altogether distinct from the power of order or from consecration. Lastly, because, just as acts of pontifical jurisdiction, as such, are *not* acts of *order* or *consecration*, nor *flow from it*, so neither are acts of episcopal jurisdiction." (De Leg. iv, 4.)

By the existence of the one Episcopate is secured the living cohesion of the Church, consisting, "first, of its *unicity*, by which there is not and cannot be a plurality of Christian or co-ordinate churches; secondly, of its *oneness*, according to which the Church, in all its members and parts, forms one entire connected whole."¹ It is not a large crystal, constructed of smaller crystals, but a living organism. The parable of the Mustard Seed and the Metaphor of the Vine admirably illustrate the point. "I am the vine, you the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, beareth much fruit; for without me you can do nothing. If anyone remaineth not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch and shall wither."

These principles show how utterly untenable is the Branch Theory of the High Church Party. The Body is *one*; the Episcopate is *one*; Christianity in its very essence is *one*; therefore all the branches must be in one and the same trunk, drawing one and the same divine sap of truth and authority from one and the same root.

It is not amiss to be reminded when speaking of the "Greek branch" that it is not one but many. The Russian, the Hellenic, the Austro-Carlowitzan, the Cypriot, the Monte-Negran, are so many independent National Churches. On the other hand, Armenians, Copts, Abyssinians, Nestorians and Photians are

(1) Klee on the Church, p. 6.

parted by doctrinal or liturgical differences and antipathies which seem incurable.

While Anglicans have been laboring for Corporate Reunion, the Greeks have been steadily disintegrating and forming national religious corporations. In this they have but followed the way of all Schismatics and Heretics.

The authority to be Teachers of the Body of Christ, implies proclaiming the Gospel taught by Christ. He said of Himself that He came to teach not His own doctrine but the doctrine of Him that sent Him. And again, whatever the Father had made known to him did he communicate to the apostles. The Spirit of God was to bring to their minds all things whatsoever He had taught them.

These doctrines and these alone were they to teach ; even were "an angel from heaven" to bring any other he was to be anathematized. As there is but One Lord and one baptism, so is there but one faith, says St. Paul. And writing to the Romans:¹ "Now I beseech you, brethren, to mark them who make dissensions and offenses contrary to the doctrines which you have learned, and to avoid them."

St. Jude writes his Epistle "to beseech the faithful to contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints," and in the strongest language condemns the wickedness of those who corrupt this true faith by false doctrine. And St. Paul is able to say: "We have received not the spirit of this world, but the spirit of God: that we may know the things that are given us from God: which things also we speak not in the leavened words of human wisdom, but in the doctrine of the spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."²

(1) Romans xvi, 17. (2) Cor. ii, 12.

Indeed, this is the very *raison d'être* of the Church: to dispense the mysteries of God; to conserve in all its purity the deposit of faith; to proclaim it with divine and therefore infallible or unerring authority to all the sons of men. She is the sole divine interpreter and judge of the body of revelation. Hence, when considerable discussion arose at Antioch between the Jewish and Gentile converts concerning the obligation of being circumcised according to the law of Moses, it was determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of the other side should go up to Jerusalem. And on their arrival "the Apostles and ancients came together to consider of this matter." The question was fully discussed, and finally the decree was drawn in these words: "It hath seemed good TO THE HOLY GHOST AND TO US to lay no further burden on you than these necessary things: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which things keeping yourselves you shall do well. Fare ye well."¹ The decree was then sent to the brethren

(1) Acts xv, 28.

ren of the Gentiles that are at Antioch, and in Syria and Silica, by the hands of Judas and Silas, chief men among the brethren who accompanied Barnabas and Paul. These who had been sent received *jurisdiction* to announce by word of mouth the same things.

In making this decision there was made no addition to the faith; the true interpretation of the Revelation already given was alone proclaimed; and this not by the wisdom of the Apostles, but by the influence of the Holy Ghost whom they declared to be with them. And so it has ever been: the decisions concerning the Divine personality of Jesus Christ, the procession of

the Holy Spirit, the two natures of the Son of God, are not revelations nor additions to the Christian Religion; they are but explicit declarations of what that Faith contains; they do but disclose in detail the Truths of Revelation. These are only the unfoldings of that Faith delivered in its completeness to the Church by Christ, and perfected by the Holy Ghost.

It will be remarked that Judas and Silas were to confirm *by word of mouth* the decision. This was at first the way in which Christianity was propagated. The Church sent forth her ministers, who preached the faith. She therefore had an existence antecedent to the written Gospels; she had numbers of children who lived and believed before a word of the New Testament was written. Her authoritative voice decided when it did come whether it was inspired, and her living teachings and decisions constituted its true interpretation. Six years elapsed before the earliest Gospel, that of St. Matthew, was written; some sixty-three years had passed by when the Gospel of St. John made its appearance; and four centuries had elapsed before the Canon of Scripture was settled by Holy Church. Her teaching was *viva voce*; and the inspired books of the New Testament were addressed to those who were already Christians, and who had received "the faith once delivered to the Saints." In other words the Christian religion was propagated by LIVING TRADITION.

Scarcely was the Church born before there were found those who rebelled against her authority and her doctrine. Such revolt in either case severed individuals from the communion of the Church. They took with them fragments of Christian teaching. Their revolt was considered the greatest of crimes. It is numbered

among the sins which exclude from the Kingdom of Heaven. Perhaps no stronger condemnations can be found in the New Testament and the very earliest Christian writers, than those directed against *schism* which is rebellion against the authority of the Church, and *heresy* which destroys the oneness of faith. "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, avoid: knowing that he that is such an one is subverted and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment."¹ So does St. Paul instruct Titus. The same Apostle writing to the Galatians², groups these crimes with "murders, fornication," and other works of the flesh. And the tender Apostle of love, St. John, says: "For many seducers are gone out into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh; this is a seducer and an anti-Christ. Look to yourselves that you lose not the things which you have wrought; but that you may receive a full reward. Whosoever receiveth and continueth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God; he that continueth in the doctrine, he hath both the Father and the Son. If any man come to you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into the house, nor say to him God speed you. For he that saith to him God speed you, communicateth with his wicked works."¹

St. Clement, whose name St. Paul says is written in the book of life, writes to the Corinthians: "Wherefore are there contentions, and swellings, and dissensions, and schisms and war among you? Have we not one God and one Christ, and one Spirit of Grace poured out upon us, and one calling in Christ? Wherefore do we rend and tear in pieces the members of Christ, and raise a sedition against our own body, and

(1) Titus iii., 10. (2) Gal. v. 19. (3) John vii, 2.

come to such a height of folly as to forget that we are members one of another?"¹

St. Irenæus, disciple of St. Polycarp, whose master was the Apostle St. John, writes: "He will also judge those who cause schisms—men destitute of the love of God, and who have in view their own interest, but not the oneness of the Church; and who, on account of slight and exaggerated causes, rend and divide, and, as far as in them lies, destroy the great and glorious Body of Christ; men who have peace on their lips but war in their actions; who truly strain at a gnat but swallow a camel. But no correction can be effected by them, so great as is the perniciousness of schism."²

The same Apostolic Father says: "The Church, though spread over the whole world, to the earth's boundaries, having received, both from the Apostles and their disciples, the faith in one God, the Father Almighty, * * * and in one Christ Jesus, that Son of God who was made flesh for our salvation, and in the Holy Spirit, * * * having, as I have said, received that preaching and this Faith, the Church, though spread over the whole world, guards (it) sedulously, as though dwelling in one house; and these truths she uniformly holds as having but one soul and one and the same heart; and these she proclaims and teaches; and hands down uniformly, as though she had but one mouth. For though, throughout the world, the languages are various, still the force of the tradition is one and the same. And neither do the Churches founded in Germany, nor those of Spain, in Gaul, in the East, in Egypt, in Africa, nor in the regions in the

(1) John vii, 2. The citations from the early Christian writers are throughout taken from "The Faith of Catholics." (2) Adv. Hoer. Bk. iv, c. 33.

middle of the earth, believe or deliver a different faith ; but as God's handiwork, the sun, is one and the same throughout the universe, so the preaching of the truth shines everywhere, and enlightens all men that wish to come to the knowledge of the truth. Nor does he, who amongst the rulers in the Churches is more powerful in word, deliver a different doctrine from the above (for no one is above his teacher), nor does he who is weak in speech weaken the tradition. For the Faith being one and the same, neither he who has ability to say much concerning it hath anything over, nor he that speaketh little anything lack." ¹

St. Cyprian, A. D. 251, writes, in his treatise on the Unity of the Church : "The Enemy has made heresies and schisms wherewith to subvert faith, to corrupt truth, and rend unity. Those whom he cannot detain in the blindness of the old way he compasses and deceives by misleading them on their new journey. He snatches men from out of the Church itself. * * *

"He who holds not this unity of the Church, does he think that he holds the faith? He who strives against and resists the Church, he who abandons the Chair of Peter, upon whom the Church was founded, does he feel confident that he is in the Church? * * *

"He is an alien, he is an outcast, he is an enemy. He can no longer have God for a Father who has not the Church for a mother." "If any one was able to escape who was without the ark of Noah, then can he escape who is out of the doors beyond the Church. * * *

"There is one God and one Christ, and His Church is one, and the faith one, and a people one, joined into

(1) Serm. John xvii, 20.

a solid oneness of body by a cementing concord. Unity cannot be sundered, nor can one body be divided by the dissolution of its structure, nor be cast piecemeal abroad with vitals torn and lacerated. Whatever is parted from the womb cannot live and breathe in its separated state ; it loses its principle of life."

Such then is the nature, the constitution, the principle of life, and the law of growth of that Body of Christ divinely appointed to be the Sole Guardian and Teacher of the Christian Revelation. A living Divine Organism whose unity is to be the criterion of the mission of Jesus, and a visible mark whereby his disciples might be known: "And not for them only, do I pray, but for them also who *through their word* shall believe in me ; that they all may be one, as thou Father in me and I in thee ; that they also may be one in us ; that the *world may believe* that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given to them ; that *they may be one*, as we also are one." ¹

Fashioned during our Lord's public life, as to its external organization ; born, with its divine internal principle of life, on Pentecost day, the Church is ever to live, sitting in the midst of the nations, day by day instructing and training souls in the way of salvation. Thus is her Life to be *indefectible*, her Voice *infallible*, and her Presence *visible*.

In glowing terms does the late Archbishop Spalding state what her life has been during the past eighteen centuries and a half. "The Church has triumphantly stood the test of Gamaliel. ² Empires have arisen,

(1) John xvii, 20, and xiii, 35.

(2) Opposing the persecution raised by the Jews, he said of the Christian Church: "If this work or design be of men, it will fall to nothing; but if it be of God, you are not able to destroy it, lest, perhaps, you are found to oppose God." Acts v, 38.

flourished for a time, and then crumbled into ruin, along her pathway in history. Dynasties have changed and been extinguished; thrones have tottered and fallen; sceptres have been broken; crowns have mouldered into dust; but she has survived all; and she still stands up erect and vigorous in the world, not an antique, but a living and breathing existence, having a vitality not sickly, not waning, but superabundant; not only living herself, but bountifully bestowing of her exuberant life upon the nations of the earth, and giving without losing any of it herself; even as the sun giveth forth its light and heat, without impairing his own exhaustless store. She lives, and she will live, all days even to the consummation of the world. She lives, the only divine and immortal institution of the earth. Christ is Head, and Christ is God, and He stands pledged that she shall share in his own immortality. Christ is Her Bridegroom, and she is His chosen Bride, without spot, without wrinkle, all glorious and undefiled; a divine and blooming Bride, who knows no old age and feels no decay, doomed to death, but fated not to die. She has walked the world patiently and longingly, bearing her crown of thorns like her heavenly Bridegroom; She has been often scourged through it as He was; but like Him, She bears a charmed life, and cannot be conquered by death. Immortality is written upon her brow, and She will wear the Wreath for ever more, in spite of the world, the devil, and the flesh! A pilgrim of faith and love with her home in the heavens, She asks only a free passage through this world; and her Omnipotent Bridegroom will see that She obtains it, whether men will it or not.”¹

(1) Introduction to Darras's General History of the Church.

II.

The Redemption is limited to no one people. The Precious Blood was shed for all the sons of men. And through its infinite merit every man receives grace sufficient to work out his salvation. To Jesus, our Redeemer, was given the nations as an inheritance. "Thou art my son," says the inspired Royal Prophet, "Ask of me and I will give thee the Gentiles for thy inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." And Isaias announces: "A child is born to us. * * * He shall be called Wonderful, God the Mighty. His empire shall be multiplied. He shall sit upon the throne of David to establish it and strengthen it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth and forever."¹ The prophet Daniel says: "In the days of those Kingdoms, the God of heaven will set up a Kingdom that shall never be destroyed and His Kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people: and it shall break in pieces and shall consume all these Kingdoms, and itself shall stand forever."² And the Evangelical Prophet declares, "And in the last days the mountain of the House of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it."³ And Micheas says: "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of mountains and high above the hills, and people shall flow to it. And many nations shall come in haste and say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the House of the God of Jacob."⁴ And the last of the Prophets foretells: "From the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is

(1) Isaias ix, 6, 7. (2) Dan. ii, 35-44. (3) Isaias ii, 2. (4) Mich. xiv, 1.

great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation, for my name is great among the Gentiles saith the Lord of Hosts.”¹

So spoke the language of prophecy in clearer and clearer notes as the time approached for the coming of the Saviour. His own presence is announced in almost the same words by the Angel Gabriel: “Thou shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God shall give unto him the Throne of David his father, and He shall reign in the house of Jacob forever, and of his Kingdom there shall be no end.”²

And as Lactantius wrote fourteen centuries ago: “From all this it is manifest, that all the prophets foretold of Christ, that the time would come that being born in the flesh of the family of David, he would build up to God an everlasting temple called the Church, and would summon all nations to the true religion of God. This is the faithful house, this is the immortal temple, wherein if a man sacrifice not, he shall not have the reward of immortality. Of which great and everlasting temple, since Christ was the builder, the same must needs have therein an everlasting priesthood; nor can any one come, except through Him who built the temple, to the entrance of the temple and to the sight of God.”³

After having spent three and a half years in laying the foundations of the Kingdom, Jesus sent those whom he had selected and appointed to extend and rule it. “All power is given to me in Heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye *all nations*, bap-

(1) Mal. i, 11. (2) Luke i, 31-33.

(3) Divin. Inst., lib. iv, c. 14.

tizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe *all things* whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you *all days* even to the consummation of the world." ¹ Thus was it they were to "go into the *whole world* and preach the gospel to *every creature*."² And as our Lord said to them: "You shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the *uttermost parts* of the earth."³

These Scripture statements bear ample evidence that the Church, the Kingdom of Christ, is to be (1) universal in time or duration, (2) universal in extension, (3) universal in doctrine. These constitute the Catholicity of the Church.

The Universality in time flows from the *identity* of life of the quasi-personality of the Church from the moment of birth onwards throughout time. So that of necessity it can only appertain to the Human-Divine Creature that was born on Pentecost-day, to which perpetual duration is promised.

The Universality in extension is the consequence of the Church's *mission* to teach all nations. That for which she has to labor to the end of time is to bring all men to the light of truth. And were this accomplished she would have an actual total and absolute physical universality. But she needs time for growth, and unceasing labor to effect conversion, and thus extend over the whole world, while conserving her living union in all her parts and organs. On Pentecost evening she was Catholic, though probably she numbered only some three thousand five hundred souls. They were all converts from Judaism, but they joined not a national movement, they had become members

(1) Matt. xxvii, 18-20. (2) Mark xvi. 1-5. (3) Acts i, 6.

of an organization which, *in posse*, though not *in esse*, was world-wide.

The Universality in doctrine follows from the Church being the *depository and guardian* of the whole of that Gospel or Deposit of Faith which was in Jesus Christ, and which He committed exclusively to the Human-Divine Creature born on Pentecost day, "to be preserved throughout the ages in its unity and integrity, in its completeness and its purity."¹

The members of the Church received a name for the first time at Antioch, where, the Scripture nar- rates, they were called "Christian." This may have been done in derision by the Jews or Romans, or it may have been the name chosen by the disciples them- selves. The outer world called the children of the Church Nazarenes, Galilæans, Jesseans, Therapeutæ; and in the writings of the first Fathers are they spoken of as the Believers, the Saints, the Elect. But of all their titles that of *Catholic* was applied to them from the earliest period, and has remained to them as an exclusive and inalienable name.

Long before the formal symbols of the Councils of Nice and Constantinople—"I believe in the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church"—had the name Cath- olic been used.

Before the Apostles died, their sound had gone forth to the furthest parts of the earth, and the Church had extended far and wide throughout the Roman Em- pire, from the very household of Cæsar wherein the bonds of St. Paul were manifest in all the palace.² And Tertullian, whose death is put at the latest, A. D. 240, is able to write: "Men cry out that the State is

(1) Humphrey, "Other Gospels," p. 62. (2) Phil. iv, 22, and i, 13.

beset, that the Christians are in their fields, in their forts, in their islands. They mourn, as for a loss, that every sex, age, condition, and now even rank, is gone over to this sect.”¹

It is not surprising, therefore, that the name *Catholic* should, of all others, have been applied to them, and that they themselves should have embedded it in their Creeds. Those without saw the Christian Body made up of all nations and of all grades of men. Those within knew they were members of a kingdom which is to be world-wide, and never ending on earth; they felt themselves possessors of a religion designed for the whole man and for the entire human race. So Catholic Church was synonymous with the Christian people; and the Catholic Faith meant the true or orthodox Gospel.

The word appears for the first time, so far as can be ascertained, in a passage of a letter of St. Ignatius, a disciple of the Evangelist, St. John, and second successor of the Apostle St. Peter in the See of Antioch. “Where the Bishop is, there let the multitude of believers be; even where Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church.” And this same writer, in the Introduction to the Martyrdom of St. Polycarp, writes: “The Church of God which dwelleth in Smyrna, to the Church of God which dwelleth in Philomelium and all the districts in every place of the Holy and Catholic Church, mercy, peace and love from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.” In the body of the piece occurs twice the same phrase: “After he had done praying, having made mention of all with whom he had ever met, great and small, noble and obscure, and after the whole Catholic Church throughout the world” (n. 8),

(1) Apol. n. i, p. 2.

“He Christ is both the Governor of our bodies and the Shepherd of the Catholic Church throughout the world (n. 19). This document is written about A. D. 147.”¹

St. Irenæus, who was born about 140 in Asia Minor, became Bishop of Lyons in 178, and was martyred in 202, he writes in his work against Heresies: “When they believed not, last of all He sent His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, whom, when the wicked husbandmen had slain, they cast him out of the vineyard. Wherefore did the Lord God deliver it, now no longer fenced in, but opened unto *the whole world*, to other husbandmen, who gave in the fruits in their season; the tower of election being *everywhere* exalted and beautiful. For *everywhere* is the Church distinctly visible, and *everywhere* is there a wine press dug; for *everywhere* are those who receive the Spirit.”²

“In the acts of the Martyrs, Baronius gives the following most interesting interrogatory of the year 254: “Polemon the judge interrogates the martyrs. What is your name? Pisonius says: Christian. Of what Church? Pisonius replies: Of the Catholic. . . . What are you called? She answered: Theodora and a Christian. Polemon: If she is Christian, of what Church? But she responds: Of the Catholic.”

St. Cyril of Jerusalem in his Catechetical Discourses, delivered in the year 347, says: “When you go to any city do not ask merely for the House of God or for the Church merely, for all heretics pretend to have this; but ask which is the Catholic Church, for this title belongs to our Holy Mother alone.”³

And again: “The faith which we rehearse contains

(1) Faith of Catholics, Vol. I, p. 288; other extracts from same.

(2) Ibid. (3) Cat. Dis. xviii, 27.

in order the following: 'And into one baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, and into one holy Catholic Church.' . . . Now it is called Catholic, because it is throughout the whole world, from one end of the earth to the other; and because it teaches universally (catholically) and completely all the doctrines which ought to come to men's knowledge concerning things both visible and invisible, heavenly and earthly; and because it subjugates unto godliness (or to the true religion) the whole race of men, both governors and governed, learned and unlearned, and because it universally treats and heals every sort of sins committed by soul and body, and possesses in itself every form of virtue which is named, both in deeds and words, and every kind of spiritual gifts. And it is rightly called Church, because it calls forth and assembles together all men."

Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, the Father of Ecclesiastical History, who lived from about 270 till 340, writes: "The false accusations invented by our Pagan enemies quickly disappeared self-refuted, whilst fresh sects sprang up anew upon sects; the first always passing away, and corrupted, in a variety of ways, into other views of many modes and forms. But the splendor and solemnity and sincerity and liberty of the Catholic and alone true church—a church always holding uniformly to the same things—still went on increasing and magnifying."

St. Pacian, Bishop of Barcelona, fifteen centuries ago wrote a short treatise on the name "Catholic." Therein does he use these words: "My brother, fret not yourself; Christian is my name, but Catholic my surname. That names me, this describes me; by this

I am approved; by that designated. And if at last we must give an account of the word Catholic, and express it from the Greek by a Latin interpretation, "Catholic is everywhere one, or as the more learned think, obedience in all"—all the commandments of God. . . . Therefore he who is a Catholic, the same is obedient to what is right. He who is obedient, the same is a Christian. And thus the Catholic is a Christian. Wherefore our people, when named Catholic, are separated by this appellation from the heretical name. But if also the word Catholic means 'everywhere one' as those first think, David indicates this very thing when he says: 'The Queen stood in a gilded clothing, surrounded with variety (Ps. xlv, 10), that is one amidst all.' . . . Amidst all, she is one, and one over all. If thou askest the reason of the name, it is manifest."

And not to weary with extracts, the following will suffice from the great St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, in Africa, who died in 430, and who, in common with the other Fathers cited, belong to what the High Church party call the "Undivided Church." "In the Catholic Church, not to mention that most sound wisdom, to the knowledge of which a few spiritual men attain in this life so as to know it, in a very small measure indeed, for they are but men, but still to know it without doubtfulness—for not quickness of understanding, but simplicity in believing, that make the rest of masses most safe—not to mention therefore this wisdom which you Manichees do not believe to be in the Catholic Church, many other reasons there are which most justly keep me in her bosom. The agreement of peoples and nations keeps me; an authority

begun with miracles, nourished with hope, increased with charity, strengthened by antiquity, keeps me; the succession of priests from the chair itself of the Apostle Peter—unto whom the Lord after his resurrection committed His sheep to be fed—down even to the present bishop, keeps me; finally, the name itself of the Catholic Church keeps me—a name which in the midst of so many heresies, this Church alone has not without cause so held possession of, as that, though all heretics would fain have themselves called ‘Catholics,’ yet to the inquiry of any stranger ‘where is the meeting of the Catholic Church held?’ no heretic would dare point out his own basilica or house. Those, therefore, so numerous and so powerful ties of the Christian name, ties most dear, justly keep a believing man in the Catholic Church, even though through the slowness of our understanding or the deservings of our lives, truth show not herself as yet in her clearest light. Whereas, amongst you, where are none of these things to invite and keep me; there is only the loud promise of truth.”

Wondrous delineation of the great Bishop of Hippo; though written fifteen centuries ago, it is as fresh in its truthfulness as if it were but of yesterday. Newman’s words do but re-echo the touching words of St. Augustine: “There is one, and only one religion such (i. e. having priests and sacrifices, and mystical rites, and the monastic rule, and care for the souls of the dead, and the profession of an ancient faith, coming through all ages from the Apostles): it is known everywhere; every poor boy in the street knows the name of it; there never was a time, since it first was, that its name was not known and known to the mul-

titude. It is called *Catholicism*, a world-wide name, and incommunicable; attached to us from the first; accorded to us by our enemies; in vain attempted, never stolen from us by our rivals."¹ Both writers must have had in mind the inspired passage of the prophet Isaias: "My spirit that is in thee, and my words that I have put into thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever."²

III.

The Mother and Mistress of Churches, admitted by all, is the Holy Roman Catholic Church. From her all others came. She, therefore, is that Church of Christ born on Pentecost day.

In the nineteenth century, in the days in which we live, the Roman Church is *One*: (1) All her members, though of all tongues and political parties, and forms of government, are united in closest communion under the Visible Head, who, together with the *one* Episcopate held by the successors of the Apostolic College—the bishops dispersed through the whole communion, whom the Holy Ghost appoints—rule and govern this Body Politic, this living Organization. (2) There is *one* and the same principle of faith, namely, divine authority and testimony for *one* body of doctrines held by her pastors and people individually and collectively. (3) There is *one* sacramental system and worship, receiving the same explanation and producing the same effects, in the possession of all her children.

The Roman Church is *Holy*, (1) Because her doc-

(1) Occ. Serm. p. 216. (2) Cap. lix, 21.

trine is in itself holy, ever inviting men to ascend higher and higher in virtue. (2) She is *holy* because she has begotten a mighty army of heroic saints, and martyrs, and virgins. On every soil has she planted and founded institutions created and directed by those who, wishing to be perfect, gave up home and wealth to labor for their Master in suffering humanity. (3) She is *holy* because consumed by the desire to enkindle the fire of divine love on earth; she is instant in season and out of season in preaching the gospel to those who are in sin or in darkness. The glory of converting Pagan nations is hers. This no Protestant sect, backed by illimited wealth or the greatest political power, has ever been able to accomplish.

The Roman Church is *Catholic*: (1) Because she is of no one nation: her constitution and her teaching are fitted to all peoples and forms of government. (2) Because her principle of faith is applicable to all, young and old, learned and unlearned. (3) Because her continuity and identity of existence from Pentecost day till now can be plainly traced. (4) Because she alone has the whole of Revelation—the Faith once delivered to the saints. Circumstances have obliged her to formulate the Faith in Dogmatic Decisions and Creeds so as to bear witness to what is contained in the *deposit* of faith; but such authoritative declarations are no additions to the Faith, they do but enwrap what it contains and explicitly expose its separate doctrines. (5) Because she admits of no rival; she is ever aggressive, condemning schism and heresy; by friend and by foe she is known as THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

The tide of indifference, of agnosticism, of infidelity, of socialism, of civil disorder, is rapidly rising. God's

Church can alone stem it. Numbers and influence and wealth, co-operating with the Spouse of Christ, can help to do great things to aid in saving humanity from the growing ills. She is the Church of your Baptism, to whom you owe allegiance and obedience; for the saving waters of regeneration are the portal to but one Church. They made you not members of Protestantism, but children of the Church of God, over whom she has authority. To you, then, allow me to address, in sincerest affection, the earnest Apostolic words of Pius IX, of glorious memory:

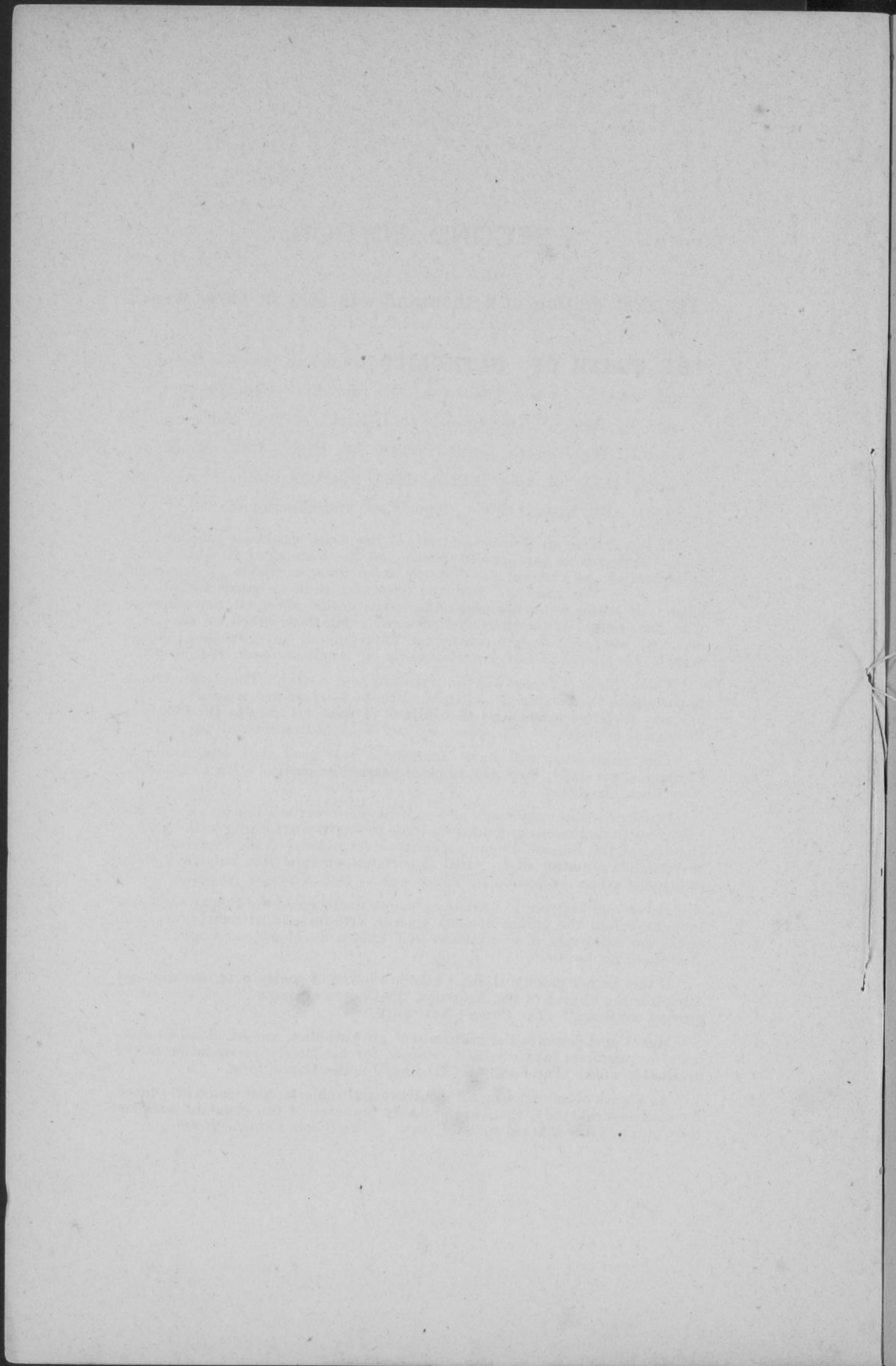
“ We conjure and beseech you, with all the warmth of our zeal, and in all charity, to consider and seriously examine whether you follow the path marked out for you by Jesus Christ our Lord, which leads to eternal salvation. No one can deny or doubt that Jesus Christ himself, in order to apply the fruit of His redemption to all generations of men, built His only Church in this world on Peter; that is to say, the Church, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic; and that He gave to it all the necessary power, that the deposit of faith might be preserved whole and inviolable, and that the same faith might be taught to all peoples, kindreds and nations; that through baptism all men might become members of this Mystical Body, and that the new life of grace, without which no one can ever merit and attain to life eternal, might always be preserved and perfected in them; and that this same Church, which is His Mystical Body, might always remain in its own nature, firm and immovable to the end of time; that it might flourish and supply to all its children all the means of salvation.

“ Now, whoever will carefully examine and reflect

upon the condition of the various religious societies, divided among themselves, and separated from the Catholic Church, which, from the days of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles, has never ceased to exercise, by its lawful pastors, and still continues to exercise the divine power committed to it by this same Lord; cannot fail to satisfy himself that neither any one of these societies by itself, nor all of them together, can in any manner constitute and be that One Catholic Church which our Lord built and established, and willed should continue; and that they cannot in any way be said to be branches or parts of that Church, since they are visibly cut off from Catholic unity.

“For, whereas such societies are destitute of that living authority established by God, which especially teaches men what is of faith, and what the rules of morals, and directs and guides them in all those things which pertain to eternal salvation; so they have continually varied in their doctrines, and this change and variation is ceaselessly going on among them.

“Every one must perfectly understand, and clearly and evidently see, that such a state of things is directly opposed to the nature of the Church instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ; for in that Church truth must always continue firm and ever inaccessible to all change, as a deposit given to that Church to be guided in its integrity, for the guardianship of which the presence and aid of the Holy Ghost have been promised to the Church forever.”



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