

# THE CITY SET ON A HILL.

By ALBERT P. HOLDEN.

THAT life has a purpose is a fact obvious to all. For without a purpose life would become a mere existence. The people we admire, as for example, the heroes of history and fiction, gained our admiration because they held ever before them the ideals they strove to attain. No one admires the man who is content to drift aimlessly through life. Such persons, it is felt, are unworthy of our attention and are treated with a feeling little short of contempt.

The greater the person, the higher the ideals we expect them to strive after. If then, it is expected of the ordinary man that he should have some purpose in life, what do we expect of Him, Whom even unbelievers recognise as 'the most perfect of the sons of men'? Can't we expect that Christ should have had some great purpose in life? But, as we saw in the last booklet, Whom do you say I am? He was more than the perfect man, He was really and truly God. Can we not then expect that if God considered it worthwhile to become man, He did so for some definite reason?

We are not left in doubt as to what was the purpose which the Son of God came to accomplish. He came to release men from the bondage of sin. Before He was born, the angel foretold His mission : "She (the Blessed Virgin) —shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." (Mt. I. 21). He, himself, proclaims His mission: "The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost" (Mt. XVIII. 11). Again: "The, Son of Man is come to give His Life, a redemption for man." (Mt. XX. 28). Christ came as the Light of the World to enlighten the darkness of mankind, and that darkness was sin.

But He came, not only to destroy sin, but to give man life in a higher and nobler sense.. "I am come," He exclaims, "that they may have life and have it more abundantly." (Jn. X. 10). For three years He went amongst the people preaching and giving to them the fulfilment and completion of the Old Testament. He gave them a new revelation which was, henceforth, to be the true religion and their way of salvation. He brought to them the means of release from the bonds of sin and the means to secure spiritual perfection and eternal happiness in the world to come.

During that teaching He promised, and it was God who made that promise, that this would be a religion which would last until the end of time, and which would embrace all nations. It was not to be confined solely to the people with whom He came into contact, but to be the guiding principle of men's lives until the end of the world.

Therefore, we can understand, in some way, the problem which confronted Jesus Christ. He had to find a means, by which for all time to come, His teachings should remain in their entirety and without corruption. For He, true God, had promised that heaven and earth should pass away but His word would remain. Also He had to find a means by which His word should be spread to the uttermost parts of the earth. A mighty problem, and one which no man, no matter how great, could hope to solve. But Christ was more than man. He was God, infinite in wisdom and power. So He had at his command resources capable of performing a task which was impossible to mere nature.

How did Christ set about solving this problem? In the other booklets we have used our reason, as far as it would take us, in examining the fundamental truths of religion. When we had reached the limit of reason, we used the aid given to us by Revelation. So now, we shall adopt the same procedure to find out what means Christ took to spread abroad and preserve intact His teachings. We have already proved that the New Testament is a true historical record of actual persons and events. It is in the Gospels that we find the record of Christ's life and His work, and it is there that we can find reference to the means He adopted.

## Human Instruments.

Christ did not teach all men, but a few. These He sent into the world to teach His doctrines: "He made that twelve should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach." (Mk. XVI. i6). They were to be His ambassadors, teaching in His name, and with His authority. To them He said : "He ,that heareth you, heareth me, and He that despiseth you, despiseth Me." (Lk. X. 16). They were to have all His authority : "As the Father has sent Me so also do I send you." (Jn. X.X. 21). This chosen band dwelt in the closest intimacy with Him. For three years He trained them to carry out the

work for which they were destined. Before leaving He said to them "All things whatsoever I have heard of My Father, I have made known to you." (Jn. XV. 15), and as a safeguard in their tremendous mission, He promises them : "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 have said to you." (Jn. XIV. 26.)

Not by the written word did Christ intend His teachings to be disseminated. True, no doubt, since He was God, He could have devised a means of preparing a written formula by which His teachings could have been preserved in their integrity. Though He could have done so, He did not adopt this method. No, He commanded that these followers should propagate His teachings by the spoken word, for He bade them to go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature (Mk. XVI. 15).

On a little reflection this is not strange. For, since God took on Himself human nature, we naturally expect Him to act in a way consonant with that nature. When men wish to solve a problem similar to the one which confronted Christ, they adopt the same means that He did. No body of Law, for example, is left to be interpreted by the individual. Such a procedure would result in chaos. No, a body of men are appointed to administer and interpret the laws. So too in every walk of life, be it business, pleasure or sport, societies are formed as the best means of attaining the required end.

Founded a Society.

So, in choosing out the twelve and giving them their mission, Christ founded a society, which He called His Church. For a society may be defined as: 'a union of intelligent beings entered into for the purpose of attaining a common good by united efforts, under the guidance of adequate authority'. We see, then, that in every society there are four essentials. There must be : 1, a number of intelligent beings ; 2, a common object ; 3, united effort ; 4, common and adequate authority binding them together. Examine any society, no matter its purpose, and these four essentials are present. It must, of its very nature, contain them, otherwise it is not a society.

Now, the Church which Christ founded was in a true sense a society. After that first Pentecost Sunday it faced the world as a visible organisation. It contained in itself all the four essentials. As we have seen above, Christ singled out the twelve Apostles and sent them out to teach. Thus the first condition—'a number of intelligent beings'—is fulfilled. These men had one common object, the salvation and sanctification of souls. They were to carry on the work which Christ had started. They and He were united in one purpose ; "As the Father hath sent Me, so also, I send you." (Jn. XX. 21.) "They had united effort and a common means to attain that end ; the teaching of Christ, obedience to His Commands and the observance of the precepts which He had taught. Finally, the members were bound together under the guidance of common and adequate authority. The Apostles were not to act independently of one another, but to govern by collective authority under the leadership of Peter. Christ did not intend each Apostle to have a separate Church and following. No, for He founded but one Church. Throughout the Gospels Christ refers to His Church, never once does He mention Churches. He explicitly states : "Upon this rock (i.e., Peter) I will build My Church" (Mt. XVI. 18). He does not say Churches. He also says that there shall be one fold and one shepherd (Jn. X. 16). Many times he likens it to a sheepfold, a kingdom, a city, thus showing unity of government. The Apostles understand and teach this unity of government. "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." (Eph. IV. 3-6).

Hence we see that the Church was in a real and true sense a visible society. This and the fact that Christ founded only one Church are of utmost importance. For many people argue that Christ did not found a visible society but a somewhat vague and invisible union of all who profess belief in Him. They maintain that all Christians, though they confess a conflicting medley of beliefs, so long as they believe in Christ are following the path of salvation intended by Christ: They will not realize that He, God Himself, definitely stated that He had founded one, visible Church which was to be the one ark of salvation for all.

### Christ the Founder.

He who bestows on a society its four essentials is the founder of that society. It was Christ who gave to the Church those four essentials. Therefore, He is its founder. None other than He called together the twelve Apostles and the remainder of the disciples. Though others were admitted to the society by Baptism, it was He, though invisible, Who was its principal minister. A common object, the salvation of souls, was that of Christ who gave to the Apostles this work to do. The means by which this work was to be done, the doctrines to be believed and the precepts and rites to be observed, came directly from Him. Finally, the Apostles did not appoint themselves, nor were they appointed by the people. It was Christ who chose them and gave them, in His name, the right to demand and exact obedience. They were to teach in His name, with His authority. In a word, they were to be His representatives.

So far then, we have established this fact : Christ, in order that His Mission should continue until the end of time and be available for all men, founded one, visible society, His Church.

Christ founded but one Church. Any normal person reading the New Testament is bound to come to this conclusion. Yet, in the world today are a countless number of religious bodies each claiming to be that Church which God founded. They contradict one another in the interpretation of His teaching. Many deny beliefs professed by others, and yet they all claim to teach what He taught. That they cannot all be right is a self-evident fact. One of them must be, since He promised that the Society which He founded would exist, under His guidance, until the end of time. How then, are we to find this one, true Church?

We have already proved the New Testament to be a trustworthy historical record, and since it is in the Gospels that we find record of the founding Of the Church, we can also examine them to see if Christ gave to His Church any special attributes which would enable it to be easily found amongst the rival claimants. Nay, we feel convinced that He must have characterized His Church in a special way, for He, true God, foretold that many, other societies would arise, profess to teach in His name and mislead many. Therefore, in order to ensure that men could easily find the true way of salvation we can, naturally, expect Him to endow His Church with visible and easy means of identification. Did he do so?

### The Church Imperishable.

First of all, Christ instituted the Church for the salvation of all men. Therefore, it must exist and preserve its special powers and characteristics until the end of time. If it should lose any of these qualifications it would not be able to do the work Christ intended ; in fact, it would cease to be His Church. Hence, the true Church must be Imperishable. There can be no doubt on this point, for Christ distinctly conferred this attribute on His Church : "Upon this rock I will build My Church, and, the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Mt. XVI. 18). The Church is an impregnable fortress built on a rock against which death, destruction and the powers of enemies shall beat in vain. There is no force either from within or without that can cause it to crumble or fall. When He founded the Church, Christ sent the Apostles to teach all men, to govern and sanctify them, and He, who was God, promised to be with them all days even to the end of the world. (Mt. XXVIII. 20). Until the end of time He would be with His Church protecting it from every evil. "I will ask the Father and He will give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever. (Jn. XIV. 16). He compares the Church to a field in which the wheat and the cockle grow side by side until the harvest, which He explains is the end of the world. So the Church must continue unchanged to the end. These promises made by Christ to the Society which He founded, guarantee that it shall remain imperishable until the end of the world, teaching, governing and sanctifying men.

### The Church a Visible Society.

When the Church was founded it was established as a visible society—that is, a society which could be plainly perceived by men as an organised body consisting of teachers and taught, rulers and subjects, joined together in public worship and profession of beliefs. There can be nothing vague about it. Does He not liken it to a City set on a Hill? Further, He demands submission to its authority under pain of eternal damnation : "Going therefore, teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the. Holy Ghost . . . He that believeth and is baptised shall

be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." (Mt. XVIII; Mk. XVI. 16.) Again, Christ says: "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican." (Mt. XVIII 147.) No one could be obliged, under pain of eternal damnation, to hear and believe the teachings of the Church unless there were some means of recognising it as the true Church given authority to teach and govern.

Throughout the New Testament the Church is depicted as an external, visible society that may be known to all. It is a kingdom, a city, a house, a field. It is also the fold in which all the sheep and lambs find shelter. So, that we see that Christ's Church is not, as is so often argued, an undefined union of believers. On the contrary, it is a visible, defined society that all may recognise. In Christ's own words, it is a City set on a Hill.

So far we have established the fact that the Church is an imperishable, visible society. If this is so, then it must have certain visible characteristics, so distinctive that they cannot be found in any other society. The next step is to examine the nature of these characteristics.

### The Church United.

The Church of Christ must be one. By this we, mean that it cannot be subject to division of any kind with regard to things essential. No material bonds can bind men together in a society. This must be done by moral bonds which unite the soul of men through the intellect and the will. Intellects are united by the acceptance of a common doctrine, wills are joined by submission to a common authority. The very existence of a society depends on this two-fold unity, unity of government which all accept, and unity of doctrine proposed to, and accepted by, all. Following directly from this comes a third. Internal acts naturally tend to show themselves outwardly. Hence, the internal acts of a man as a member of a society, his submission to its authority and acceptance of its teachings, will be expressed by external acts.

If we apply these principles to the Church we readily see that it must have: unity of government, unity of doctrines taught and believed, and unity of external acts symbolizing its doctrines and government. This latter we call unity of worship.

That Christ intended His Church to be united is obvious from His own words. Before His death, He prayed that it might possess the most perfect unity, that which existed between Himself and, His Heavenly Father : "I pray for them who also through their (The Apostles') word shall believe in Me, that they may all be one, as Thou, Father in Me and I in Thee; that they may be made one in Us : that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me. And the glory which Thou hast given to Me, I have given to them : that they may be one, as we also are one. I in them and Thou in Me : that they may be made perfect in one; and the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast also loved Me." (Jn. XVII. 20-23). The unity of the Church is to be so evident, and so unique, that it is to afford a proof of the divine authority of Christ.

It is to be that three-fold unity of government, faith and worship. First, unity of Government. This means that there must be one supreme authority to which all the members are subject. This, in reality, is a self-evident fact. In any society whatsoever, there must of necessity be one supreme authority. Sacred Scripture constantly represents the Church as a City, a kingdom, a house. In this form it was instituted and must continue, for as Christ said "Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation and house upon house shall fall." (Lk. XI. 17.) And again, "Every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." (Mt. XII. 25). Therefore, since the Church is to continue until the end of time, it must do so as a united kingdom. The Apostles insisted on this indivisibility of the Church. St. Paul's Epistles are full of references to this unity which must, of necessity, exist in the Church since it is the Body of Christ. As in the body there is but one governing will, so too in the Church there is but one governing authority.

Secondly, unity of faith. This means unity of doctrines taught and their acceptance by those to whom they are taught. Christ commanded His Apostles : "Teach ye all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Mt. XXVIII. 19-20). He also promised the Spirit of Truth to bring to their minds all that He had taught. (Jn: XIV. 16.) The Church was to teach all the doctrines entrusted to Her ; teach them to all men and for all time. This was to be made possible by the unceasing guidance of the Holy Spirit. She cannot teach contradictory doctrines in

different places or at different times. No, she must teach all truth as it is revealed to her, or as she becomes conscious of it. St Paul emphatically lays down this principle to his followers : Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a Gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you let him be anathema. I say to you again : if anyone preach a Gospel besides that which you have received, let him be anathema." (Gal. I. 8-12.) Because, as he explains in another Epistle, there is : "One Lord, one faith and one Baptism." (Ephes. IV. 5.)

Thirdly, unity of worship. This follows directly from what we have seen above. Worship is nothing more than an external, practical manifestation of faith. The members are one in faith, therefore, they must be one in worship. Their unity of belief precludes the possibility of disagreement as to the way in which God is to be worshipped and man sanctified. All men are to enter the Church by the same Baptism. (Mt. XXVIII. 19.) All must partake of the same Eucharistic Bread. (Jn. VI. 54.)

Hence, besides being Imperishable and Visible, the true Church of Christ is distinguished by its three-fold unity of government, faith and worship.

### The Church Holy.

Since Christ, was the Founder of the Church, for that very reason it must be Holy. Christ was infinitely holy ; therefore, it follows that His Church must possess that Holiness in an eminent degree. For as St. Paul says : "Christ loved the Church and delivered Himself up for it that He might sanctify it . . . that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Ephes. V. 25-27.) The sole reason for the existence of the Church is to produce sanctity in Her members and lead them to eternal life. Since this is so, it means that she must be holy in Her doctrines and Her members.

The doctrine which she teaches is not Her own, it is of divine origin. God, Himself, taught it. God, who was infinite holiness, commanded that this teaching should be given to all men. He, said to His Apostles : "Go ye into the whole world and teach the Gospel . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Mt. XXVIII. 20.) All the ideals He had taught, He summed up in one "Be ye perfect, as also your Heavenly Father is perfect."

Christ never said that all the members of His Church would be holy. In fact, He explained there would always be a mixture of good and bad in the Church. He compared it to a field of wheat oversown with cockle. Yet, it still, remains a wheat-field, until the time of the harvest. It is a net cast into the sea; it catches both good and bad fish which shall be separated only on the shores of eternity. Still, the good shall always predominate, it can never fail. For she has been guaranteed by Christ to be the good tree that bringeth forth good fruit. Since she is the bride of Christ, to use the comparison familiar to St. Paul, she must be adorned with sanctity befitting her Divine Spouse. She should also bring forth children worthy of such a union, children eminent for sanctity.

Furthermore, this sanctity must be an outstanding characteristic. She must prove Her Holiness in the way in which Christ proved His. To prove His Divine Mission and Holiness, Christ performed miracles. Therefore, it is to be expected that the sanction of miracles should attend the preaching and ministry of the Church. As a matter of fact, Christ promised this power, for when He sent out His Apostles, He said : "And these signs shall follow them that believe ; in My name they shall cast out devils: they shall speak with new tongues: they shall take up serpents: and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them : they shall lay their hands on the sick and they shall recover." (Mt. XVI. 17-18.) And we know the Apostles wrought miracles to prove their mission and confirm their teaching.

We have, therefore, another characteristic of the true Church. It must be holy as Christ its founder was holy.

### The Church Universal.

Anyone who admits that Christ founded a Church to save all men must at the same time agree that He intended it to become universal and endure for all time. This universality was distinctly indicated by Christ when He said to His Apostles: "Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature." (Mark; XVI. 15.) And again : "The Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to all nations." (Mt. XXIV. 14.) Therefore,

we see that the true Church of Christ must be Catholic or universal. That is, She must embrace all races and classes of men, for the command was to preach the Gospel to every creature. Not only that, but it must be universal in point of time. It was manifestly impossible for the Apostles themselves to teach all nations. That work was to go on until the end of time. For did not Christ promise His Divine Guidance until the end of the world? Further, this catholicity must be a characteristic of its teaching. For Christ commanded that She should teach all things whatsoever He had commanded. Therefore, the true Church must be Catholic or universal in place, time and doctrine.

#### The Church Apostolic.

Christ instituted but one Church through the ministry of the Apostles. To none other did He give any authority to organise a Church in His name. Therefore, the Church must be that identical Church established by Him, and therefore, Apostolic, i.e., founded upon the Apostles. Again, Christ committed the teaching of His doctrines to the Apostles and promised them His guidance to the end of time. Since Christ was God, He could not fail in these promises. Therefore, the teaching of the true Church must be that handed down from the Apostles. Again, the authority of the Church was vested in the Apostles alone. Consequently, it can be obtained only by lawful succession from those upon whom Christ personally conferred it, the Apostles. In other words, the Church must be Apostolic in Her ministry by means of an unbroken succession reaching back to the Apostles.

#### The Church Infallible.

Finally, the Church founded by Christ must be infallible. That is, she cannot err in teaching and interpreting, as of faith, the truths which He delivered into Her custody. Christ commanded that all men must accept the teaching of the Church under pain of eternal damnation. Therefore, He must in justice, provide against the possibility of men being led into error by following the teachings of that Church. Again, is it possible that Christ, eternal truth, could allow a single error to be proclaimed to the whole world in His name? Yet, this would be the case if the Church teaching in His name and with His authority were not protected from error.

That this prerogative of infallibility was to belong to the Church was distinctly promised by Christ. Did He not say that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it? In other words, nothing shall ever, assail the impregnable position of truth held by the Church. Further, when giving the Apostles their mission, He said : "All power is given to Me in Heaven and on earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world:" (Mt. XXVIII. 16-18.) In these words Christ conferred upon the Apostles unlimited authority to teach. They had to teach all nations all truths, for all time. It is evident that Christ is conferring a most extraordinary power. For He states that such a thing is possible only because He has all power in Heaven and on earth. He was giving them the authority to teach all nations and to demand, in His name, submission under pain of eternal damnation. In order that they should be immune from error He promises them His own abiding presence until the end of time. On the night before He died, He again promises this infallibility to His Church : "And. I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, that He may abide with you for ever . . . but the Paraclete, 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 have said to you. . . . I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now, but when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will teach you all truth." (Jn. XIV. 16-17. ; XVI. 12-13.)

The Holy Ghost is to abide for ever with the Apostles and their successors, and lead them into all truth and preserve them therein. In other words, the Holy Ghost shall preserve the Apostles and their successors free from all error. He shall render them infallible. Christ had commanded His Apostles to teach 'all things whatsoever I have commanded', now He promises them the Holy Ghost to keep these same truths ever before their minds, that they might teach, them without possibility of error. 'He will bring all things to your mind whatsoever I have said to you.' Could infallibility have been promised in clearer or more emphatic words?

### Applying the Tests.

We have seen, so far, that Christ founded one, visible Church to continue His Work in the world. In order that all men, learned or unlearned, rich or poor, prince or peasant, might find it, He gave to it certain unique characteristics which can be possessed by it and none other. What these are we have seen above. As the duly accredited custodian and exponent of the revelation delivered by Jesus Christ, we have to look for a Church which has the following characteristics :-

- (1) It must be His Church. It must point to Him and none other as its founder.
- (2) It must be visibly and organically one Body, holding one faith, under one government and united in one worship.
- (3) It must be holy by teaching a Holy Doctrine, offering to all the means of holiness, and distinguished by the eminent holiness of so many thousands of her children.
- (4) It must be world-wide in aspiration and fact. This universality must cover place, time and doctrine.
- (5) It must hold the doctrines and traditions of the Apostles and trace back, in unbroken lines, the succession of its ministry from them.
- (6) It must claim infallibility in matters of revelation, speaking with the authority of the Spirit of Truth.

Any Church, claiming, to be that one, true Church founded by Christ and unable to fulfil all the above conditions is clearly claiming a position to which it has no right. It now remains to apply these tests. It would be impossible to examine every Christian sect which makes that claim. It is not, however, necessary. For the first condition—'it must be His Church'—eliminates all but one. Of all the multitudes of religious bodies, the Catholic Church and the Catholic Church alone can, and does, point directly to Christ as its founder. No other can. It is a fact of history. For twenty centuries she has made that claim and no one has ever been able to discredit it. Of any Church, except Her alone, a founder can be named who came after the time of Christ, and the point of time after that of Christ can be given as the date of its foundation. Therefore, it is to this Church, which shelters within its fold more than half of the Christian world, that we must apply these tests.

The first point we have already dealt with. Take any history book and no other can be pointed to as the founder of the Church than Christ Himself.

That the Catholic Church possesses absolute unity of faith is obvious to anyone who will examine Her creeds, her decrees, her catechisms and books of instruction in which the same doctrines are laid down for each and every member of the Church throughout the world. Prince and peasant, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, priest and layman, hear and believe the teaching of Christ in all its integrity, clearly and plainly spoken even as He spoke it. There is no watering down of Christ's doctrine to suit individuals or nations. There cannot be, since these doctrines were not instituted by the Church but by God, Himself, and the Church is but their guardian in the world. She has not the authority to change them. History shows that rather than betray the principles given into her keeping, by her Divine Master, she has been compelled to allow whole nations to shut themselves out of the true fold, as, -for example, happened at the Reformation. She could not compromise on her teaching when principles laid down by Christ were assailed, with the result that rather than submit to her God-given authority they cut themselves off from communion with her. The world may call her arrogant and unbending, but that is because they do not understand her true position.

For twenty centuries She has triumphantly preached all things whatsoever Christ commanded. Therein lies the miracle of her unity, that she, while teaching what is hard to believe, while prescribing what is hard to practise, while rejecting all compromise in faith or morals, yet she holds together four hundred million souls of diverse races and nationalities in willing submission.

If there is any one characteristic of the Catholic Church more widely known than any other, it is her unity of government. So well known is it, that Catholics are often unjustly accused of blind obedience to the Church. This unity of government is preserved by the exercise of one, supreme authority to which all give willing obedience in things spiritual. The people are subject to their priests, the priests to their bishops, and all to the Pope, who is the centre of authority and apostolic unity. All laws for the universal Church are enacted by that one supreme authority. Every part of the Church is in communion with every other part under the direction of the chief pastor, the Pope, just as the members of the body are

united under one head. That must be so, since it is the form of government that Christ established for His Church.

Throughout the whole world, wherever the Catholic Church is, there is the same worship. Her Sacraments and the Sacrifice of the Mass are everywhere the same.. The highest and the lowest receive the self-same sacraments and take part in the same Holy Sacrifice. She is as absolute in regard to worship as she is in regard to faith. She will allow no alteration to her Sacraments. They are the means, given to her by Christ, for the sanctification of mankind. It is her duty to see that they are applied as He intended.

Therefore, we see that the Catholic Church possesses in a unique degree the three-fold unity required of the true Church of Christ. Others may argue and modify their doctrines to suit personal caprice or changing times, but She, the Pillar and Ground of Truth, steadfastly and fearlessly preaches to a hostile world all the doctrines of Her Divine Founder.

The pages of history bear witness to the eminent holiness of the Catholic Church. From the time of St. Stephen, the first martyr, until the present day, stretches a glorious line of martyrs and saints of every age and walk of life. From the time of the first missionaries, the Apostles, until now, men and women have cheerfully given up home comforts, their parents, and all that they held dear, in order that they might give to others that burning love of Christ which filled their hearts. Eminent sanctity shines forth in the daily lives of the many religious orders, who from love of God, cheerfully give up their lives to His service in hospitals, orphanages and other charitable institutions, and in the lives of those Contemplative Orders who devote their lives to unceasing prayer for the benefit of the whole world. They are the spiritual dynamo supplying the driving force to millions upon millions of souls. The history of civilization is a history of the leavening power of the Catholic Church. Her holiness triumphed over the paganism of the Romans, it tamed the fierce barbarians of the north, and built up the present structure of Christian civilization in Europe. . This structure which is at present being undermined by the growth of Neo-paganism, can be saved only by a return to those doctrines laid down by Christ, and taught fearlessly by His Church. The present unrest in the world is due to the fact that men have drifted away from the holy doctrine of Christ as preserved and preached by His representatives.

The cause of this sanctity is not far to seek. Every doctrine and precept is intended and eminently fitted to lead men to the practice of virtue and a life of holiness. This becomes more evident when it is realized that Her members are always holy in exact proportion to their faithfulness to Her teachings and precepts. But these cannot be anything else but holy, for they are those of Christ.

The outstanding sanctity of the Church is proved by a series of miracles reaching back to the time of Christ. Even today miracles are performed in the Church and performed under conditions that make them a confirmation of her doctrine and practices. The miracles performed at Lourdes, well authenticated by medical evidence, even, of unbelievers, are but one example of the many which take place in the Church. There is nothing strange in this fact of miracles, for Christ promised this gift to His Church, and it is His Guarantee of Her eminent holiness.

Therefore, we see that the Catholic Church possesses in a degree, which none other can have, the eminent holiness which must characterise the true Church. She is holy because she teaches a holy doctrine, offers to all the means of holiness and is distinguished by the eminent holiness of many thousands of Her children.

The Universality or Catholicity of the Catholic Church is admitted by all. Wherever the name of Christ is known and revered there also is the Catholic Church known. For this reason she is known as the Catholic Church. She is not confined to one nation or one people. She is not, and cannot be, a merely national church. Her mission is now, as it was at her foundation, to preach the Gospel to every creature. All her members in every country are united in the same Church. Besides being universal with regard to place, She is as universal in point of time. She has existed from the first moment of Christ's foundation until, the present day. There is no break in her continuity. At no point in the history of Christianity is the Catholic Church absent. Furthermore, this Catholicity applies to her doctrine. Faithfully She carries out the command of Christ and teaches all that He commanded. She does not, and cannot, compromise on faith and morals in order to win public opinion, which is as inconsistent as the weather.

It is a historical fact, admitted by all, that no other See in the world but Rome is linked in unbroken succession to the days of an apostle. The Apostolic unity was centred, by Christ, in Saint Peter. He was the rock, he held the keys, he it was

who received Christ's own office of Good Shepherd. This authority has been held by his successors, the Popes, and is held by one of them today. As at the time of the Apostles, they formed one body under the leadership of Saint Peter, so too the same form of government holds authority in the Church today. Christ ordained that His Church should be governed, for all time, by St. Peter and his successors. Now, alone of all religious bodies, the Catholic Church can show that she is governed by the lawful successors of St. Peter. Therefore; She alone is Christ's true Church. Also, since She derives Her authority from the Apostles', She teaches the doctrines and traditions given to them by Christ.

Finally, the Catholic Church alone of all the multitude of religious bodies, dares to claim that, since She is teaching in the name of Christ, she cannot fall into error in defining the truth of which She is the Guardian. Since Christ promised this prerogative to His Church, the true Church must make that claim. Yet, alone in the world She claims that Divine Infallibility from error. Others dare not, and cannot, make that claim. Their very history is a denial of this Divine Guarantee of Christ. Time after time they amend their doctrines to fit in with changing times, and not one of them dares to declare that in her teaching she is immune from error. This claim to infallibility is, of itself, a sufficient proof that the Catholic Church is the true Church.

What we have seen may be summed up very briefly. Christ founded a Church. He promised that it would exist until the end of time. Therefore, it is in existence today. In order that it might easily be identified, He gave to it distinguishing characteristics. No church can be His unless it possesses all these marks. In the Catholic Church, alone, are they fully realized.. Therefore, She is the true Church commissioned to carry the Gospel and the means of salvation to all nations until the end of time. She has received power and authority to fulfil this mission, and all men are obliged to accept Her teachings and submit to Her authority under pain of eternal damnation : "He that believeth not shall be condemned."

#### Objections Answered.

Many times we are told that the Catholic Church was the true Church of Christ until the time of the Reformation, but then She had become so corrupt that She had lost Her original purity and so ceased to be the true Church. The reformed Church, it is claimed, took her place. It is not the place here to consider the causes of the Reformation. What we are concerned with is the allegation that Christ's Church failed at that time. We have seen, and it is admitted by all, that Christ did found one Church and gave to it imperishable characteristics: He promised that that Church should not fail. He, who was God, promised that the Church which He founded should exist under His Guidance and be taught by the Holy Spirit, who should teach Her all truth. To make the claim that She failed is to assert that Christ failed. There is no middle course. Either Christ meant what He said when He promised Imperishability to His Church, or He did not. He guaranteed that His Church would never fail. Therefore, at no time in Her history could She do so. When people say that, at the Reformation, the Catholic Church failed they are asserting that Christ did not keep His Promise of Divine Guidance. This is equivalent to claiming that Christ was not God, and logically they must repudiate the whole of Christianity and Christ's teachings.

Moreover, the reformed Church, though claiming to have taken the place of Christ's Church, does not fulfil the essential marks necessary for the true Church. Besides, itself, repudiating all claim to infallibility, it denies the right of any church to make that claim. It neither holds the doctrines or traditions of the Apostles, nor can it claim Apostolic succession for its ministry. A purely national church, it can make no claim to universality of place, time or doctrine. Its history is a contradiction to any claim to unity of government, faith or worship. The eminent holiness essential to the true Church cannot be claimed by it. Though it is not claimed that its members are not holy, their personal holiness is due to the results of parts of the teachings of the true Church being maintained after the Reformation. Neither is its sanctity attested by the divine approval of miracles.

No, the Catholic Church exists in the world today as the divinely accredited custodian of revelation. She is the mother of whom we are justly proud. Holy Mother Church is our name for Her, because She is in a real and true sense our Mother. From the cradle to the grave She closely guides our footsteps in the path of Our Divine Lord so that in following Her teachings we may, ultimately, be one with Him, and She also is one with Him, her Divine Founder

Nihil Obstat :

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