

THE POWER OF PETER

ALL THE POWERS OF THE APOSTLES WERE BESTOWED ON HIM.

To His Successors Have Been Transmitted the Privileges Incident to His Office. Cardinal Gibbons' Sermon in Honor of the Golden Jubilee.

Cardinal Gibbons preached at the Baltimore cathedral in honor of the pope's golden jubilee as follows: "There are," said he, "few doctrines more clearly and forcibly laid down in the New Testament than the primacy of Peter. Every power and prerogative which was conferred upon the apostles were also bestowed upon him, and he received many privileges which were not accorded to the others. He was promised the keys of the kingdom of heaven; upon him the church was to be built; Christ prayed for him especially that he might receive strength; he is instructed to feed the lambs and sheep of the flock of Christ.

"As the church was destined to continue after Peter's time and last forever, it follows that all the official prerogatives incident to his office which were conferred upon Peter were to be transmitted to his successor, just as the powers conferred by the constitution upon President Washington are vested in the present incumbent of the presidential chair.

"I propose to group together a few salient historical facts to show that the bishop of Rome has always claimed and exercised supremacy of honor and jurisdiction in the church.

"First take the case of appeals. An appeal is never made from a superior to an inferior court or to a court of concurrent jurisdiction, but is taken from an inferior to a superior court. We appeal from the federal courts in Maryland to the supreme court at Washington. From the earliest days of the church it has been the custom for the see of Rome to receive cases of appeals from the most important and patriarchal sees.

"The people of Corinth were not only in the days of St. Paul, but later on, of a turbulent character. They referred their controversies to Pope Clement, the third in succession after Peter, and that pontiff sent the Corinthians a letter of admonition, of reproof and of exhortation. So great was the reverence of the Corinthians for Clement that it was customary to read the epistle in the churches of Corinth for 100 years afterward. Why did not the Corinthians refer this case to Ephesus, which was nearer to them than Rome, and over which John, the beloved disciple, still presided? Manifestly because the supreme jurisdiction was attached not to the man, but to the see.

"Another argument may be taken from the conversion of nations to Christianity. It is a remarkable fact that every nation hitherto converted to Christianity has received the light of faith from missionaries expressly commissioned by the holy see or in open and manifest communion with the chair of Peter. Ireland was converted by St. Patrick, who was commissioned by Pope Celestine. Scotland's apostle was commissioned by the same pontiff. England's apostle is acknowledged to be St. Augustine, who was sent to that country by Pope Gregory the Great. France claims St. Remigius as her apostle, and he was in communion with the see of Rome. The apostle of Germany and Bavaria was St. Boniface, an Englishman, who in his native country was known as St. Winfrid, and so on through other nations of Europe.

"It may be asked whether I make the same claim in regard to North American and South American Christian people. Most assuredly I do, because all the civilized peoples of America are descended from the various countries of Europe, which received the light of faith through the apostolic supervision of the holy see. Thus we see that the name of the sovereign pontiff is indelibly imprinted upon the pages of ecclesiastical history. The bishop of Rome stands forth as the grand commander in chief, towering over the other chiefs in the grand army of the Lord.

"Are councils to be held for the enactment of laws, the bishop of Rome convenes them, presides over their deliberations and sanctions their acts by his authority. Are new nations to be converted, the bishop of Rome sends forth missionaries clothed with his authority and his blessing. Are new errors to be condemned, all eyes look to Rome, and when Rome speaks the question is ended. You might as well shut out the air from the daily walks of life as to exclude the legislative and dominant action of the sovereign pontiff from the affairs of the church. The history of the United States with the presidents left out would be more intelligible than the history of the church and, for all that, of Christian civilization, to the exclusion of the pontiffs of Rome.

"But I may be told that the supreme authority of the Roman pontiff has been questioned. Most assuredly it has been questioned by her own rebellious children of the church, who chafed under the salutary decisions of the Roman pontiff. Doctrine is not the less forcible because it happens to be denied. Every article of the Apostolic Creed has been called in question; still the doctrine remains.

"A yearning has gone forth from many hearts for a union of Christendom. With this yearning I am in cordial sympathy and gladly would I surrender my life for the consummation of this great blessing. If all Christians in America were united in the same faith and charity, they would be invincible and would present a formidable and successful front against atheism, agnosticism and infidelity, for Americans are a practically earnest and energetic people, and with the grace of God would bring the world under subjection to the gospel of Christ.

"If the scattered hosts of Christendom were reunited, then we could say with the prophet: 'How beautiful are thy tabernacles, O Jacob, and thy tents, O Israel.' But the only basis of union is that established by Christ—the recognition of the pope as the visible head of

the church. May the day be hastened when the word of Christ will be fulfilled, 'Other sheep I have that are not of this fold, and them also shall I bring in, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.'

"Let us pray for the great pontiff who has just celebrated the golden jubilee of his episcopate; a pontiff who scans with eagle eye the political and moral horizon; a pontiff who has left the impress of his character on almost every country in the world; who has his finger on the pulse of the nations and is in sympathy with the legitimate aspirations of mankind; a pontiff who has a special affection for our own country and for our political institutions. May God spare him to the church for years to come, and when he has finished his course and laid down his life may he receive from the heavenly Prince of Pastors the crown of unfading glory!"

Hawaii's Catholicity.

If Hawaii is annexed to the United States, it will add a new vicariate apostolic to the church in the United States, and a new religious order swell the lists of those already represented here. The missions in these islands are in charge of the fathers of the congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary of Pious, with its headquarters in Paris.

The present vicar apostolic of the islands is Right Rev. G. P. Roper, who was consecrated at the cathedral of San Francisco Sept. 25 of last year by Archbishop Riordan. His official residence is at Honolulu. The vicariate contains 100 places of worship. The church there is supported almost entirely by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, as the class of Catholics here are of the very poorest kind.

There are no very rich Catholics on the islands except Portuguese, who, with native Hawaiians, compose the entire Catholic population. The best known mission to Americans is Molokai, the scene of the lamented Father Damien's heroic labors and of his noble death.

There are between 11,000 and 14,000 Portuguese on the islands, who were brought there to work on plantations, and most of these are Catholics. Services with rare exceptions are held in the churches, and sermons are mostly delivered in the native or in the Portuguese languages, there being, as appears from the above quotation, but very few English speaking Catholics in the vicariate.

The population numbers about 60,000, of whom less than 35,000 are natives. Over 15,000 Chinese and more than 12,000 Japanese reside in the islands. Of whites the strongest contingent is that of the Portuguese. There are also 1,923 Americans, 1,444 British, 1,084 Germans and a comparatively small representation of other nations.—Catholic Review.

The Angelus in Spain.

The angelus in Spain has thus been beautifully described by a Protestant traveler: "At sunrise a large, soft toned bell is thrice tolled from the tower of the cathedral summoning all the inhabitants, wherever they are or however occupied, to devote a few moments to the performance of a short prayer in honor of the blessed Virgin, called the 'Angelus Domini.' At midday and again at the close of the evening the bell thrice tolls again.

"To a foreigner it is curious and not uninteresting to observe the sudden and fervent attention which is paid in the streets, within and without doors, in the Alameda, on the river, by everybody, high and low, the idler and the laborer, infancy and old age, to this solemn sound. The loiterers in the promenade are suddenly stopped, and each group repeats within its own circle the consoling prayer. The politician breaks off his argument; the young men are abashed in their gay discourse and take off their hats; the carriages are all drawn up; all the worldly business and amusements are forgotten for three minutes till the cheerful tinkling of lighter bells announces that the orison is over."

The Grave of St. Peter.

Signor Lanciani, after weighing all the circumstances of the time, including the barbaric invasions, is of the belief that the founder of the Roman Catholic church was buried beneath where now rises the great dome reared by Michael Angelo, and that his body still remains there. Over the golden lid of the coffin was placed a cross of pure gold given by Constantine and weighing 150 pounds. If the cross is there, the body must also be there undisturbed. This he regards as the decisive test, and he then reminds us that in 1594, while the floor was being leveled above the confessional, the ground gave way, and Gaetano della Porta "saw through the opening what nobody had beheld since the time of Sergius II—the grave of St. Peter and upon it the golden cross of Constantine." Pope Clement VIII also went down and by the light of a torch beheld the cross and its inscription.

Catholics at Gettysburg.

Dr. Abbott, pastor of Plymouth church, Brooklyn, in a recent sermon very ably refuted the charge that Catholics are enemies of the republic by saying that "at Gettysburg, in the crucial moment of that critical battle, a regiment made up of Roman Catholics was ordered to a charge. There were five minutes before the charge was to be made, and in that five minutes the Roman Catholic chaplain offered one short prayer and gave absolution to the regiment. Then came the command, 'Charge!' and the whole Roman Catholic regiment rushed on to death. Who has shown more love for America than that Roman Catholic regiment?"

A Faithful Friend.

A faithful friend is a strong defense, and he that hath found him hath found a treasure. Nothing can be compared to a faithful friend, and no weight of gold and silver is able to counterbalance the goodness of his fidelity. A faithful friend is the medicine of life and immortality, and they that fear the Lord shall find him. He that feareth God shall likewise have good friendship, because according to him shall his friend be.—Ecclesi.

CHURCH VESTMENTS.

WHAT THEY ARE AND REASONS FOR WEARING THEM.

The Cassock, the Beretta, the Surplice and the Six Altar Vestments Used by the Bishops and Priests—The Different Colors and Their Meaning.

The wearing of vestments comes to us from the old law, for God ordered Moses to consecrate Aaron and his sons and to clothe them in holy vestments, in garments of glory and of beauty, that, washed and purified, as the law required, they might fulfill the high dignity of priests of the Most High, and Moses for 40 days exercised them in these old ceremonies, in the use of sacerdotal vestments, and the ornaments and linens made by Mary, the sister of Moses, for the use of the services of the ancient tabernacle. But some came down to us from the apostles, and these signify the mysteries relating to the incarnation.

The bishop or priest then puts off his usual garments and clothes himself with holy vestments, and each one of them has a meaning and brings to the mind a truth. Putting on his sandals, he remembers the incarnation of the Son of God, and how he walked the earth with the two natures—the divine and human. The amice, the white cloth on his head and over the shoulders, tells him how to guard his thoughts and tongue, on his breast a clean heart "to renew a right spirit within my bowels," he is then covered with a white garment, the alb, signifying that his soul is white with innocence and free from sin; he binds up his loins like the prophet of old, telling of chastity; the stole is then placed around his neck, meaning that he carries the yoke of obedience; he puts on the tunic of the subdeacon to tell of heavenly thoughts; the salmote of the deacon, telling of religion and of mortification; the gloves say he will not seek his own glory; the ring to show he is wedded to his diocese—that is, to the church as to his spouse; the chasuble of the priest to show that he is clothed with charity; the maniple on his left hand to signify that what sins he may fall into he will wipe out with penance.

Thus the six vestments of the priest or bishop—the amice, the alb, the girdle, maniple, stole and chasuble—signify the six powers that he received on the day of his ordination or consecration and exercise in the church—that is, to say mass, to bless, to command to preach, to baptize and to absolve from sin, as well as to confirm and ordain, which alone belongs to the bishop.

Clothed then with virtue, they are an example for the people, for "let thy priests be clothed with justice, then let thy saints rejoice," says the royal psalmist.

We have spoken of the antiquity and origin of these vestments. Let us now speak of each separately.

First, there is the cassock. You will see the priest dressed in a robe black and long reaching to the ground. That is the cassock (from the ancient word meaning a cover or house), covering the whole person from head to foot. It reminds us of the seamless garment worn by Christ, and that "the priest is another Christ." It is like the garments worn today by the men of the deserts, telling us of the antiquity of the church and how she keeps unchanged, her customs coming down from the highest antiquity. This garment is black, because it is the color of death, for the priest is dead to the world and to all things but God, for we are buried together with him by baptism unto death.

The collar is white. Around the neck it reminds us that as the soldier wears a collar to make him straight, so he "labors as a good soldier of Christ Jesus." The 3-cornered cap worn by the clergy is called the beretta. Its four corners tell of the four quarters of the world; its three corners on top tell of the trinity, which the wearer is sent to preach to the four quarters of the world. Next comes the surplice. This is the white garment worn by the clergy when not officiating solemnly. It is called a surplice, from the Latin word signifying, over a fur robe, for the cassock over which it is worn is made of wool, for we are told "at all times let thy garments be white." It signifies cleanness of heart of those who minister at God's altar.

When a priest celebrates the holy sacrifice, after having purified his hands he takes a white cloth called the amice, places it on his head and then lets it fall on his shoulders. The use of this garment comes down to us from the most ancient times, from the ephod, signifying in Hebrew a priestly garment, for by command of God it was worn by Aaron, the high priest of the tabernacle. The priest places it on his head, for he is like the angel—"coming down from heaven clothed with a cloud and a rainbow on his head." It signifies the cloth with which the Jews covered the head of our Redeemer the night before he suffered.

He puts on the alb. This garment is made of white linen, for St. John says "the fine linen are the justifications of saints." The alb by its whiteness signifies the purity of soul required to say mass. This alb tells us of the garment of derision and of mockery with which Herod clothed our Lord during his passion.

The alb is tied up with a girdle, which signifies purity. Thus bound, the celebrant is like unto Jesus, whom St. John saw, "one like to the Son of Man clothed with a garment down to the feet and gird around the paps with a golden girdle." It tells us of the rope with which they bound our Saviour to the pillar at the scourging during his passion.

On his left arm he puts the maniple. In warm countries of the east, during the first ages of the church, the ministers at the altar carried a little cloth on their left arm as a handkerchief, till at length it became a vestment. It signifies the difficulty with which we work for God, according to the words of David, "My soul hath slumbered through heaviness." It recalls to us the cord with which they tied the sacred hands of our Redeemer when the Jews took Jesus and bound him.

Next he puts on the stole. The stole is placed upon the neck, for as a yoke is placed upon the neck it means the light yoke of Christ, as the bishop says when he places it on the neck on the day of ordination, "Receive the yoke of Christ, for his yoke is sweet and his burden light." The stole is a sign of spiritual authority and power in spiritual things. It recalls to us the bonds with which they bound the Saviour of mankind to the scourging pillar.

The chasuble is the last vestment he puts on. It signifies charity. It speaks to us of that charity without which we are nothing, and therefore is used over all the other vestments, because charity is above all other virtues. It hangs on both sides, in front and in the back, for charity is of two kinds: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." It tells us also of the purple cape that they put on our Lord when they mocked him as a false king. The vestments vary in color according to the feast of the day. There are five colors—white, black, red, green and violet. These come to us from the colors of the vestments of the tabernacle.

As the earth is clothed with lilies, roses, green herbs, dead branches and earth, so the church clothes her ministers with those colors according to the truths she wishes to teach her children. White signifies joy, holiness, innocence and purity, and therefore is used on the feasts of our Lord and the Blessed Virgin Mary, as well as on the feasts of confessors, virgins and angels.

Black is the color of death, for that reason when our friends are dead our mothers and sisters clothe themselves in mourning. At funeral and masses for the dead the priest wears black vestments to show that the church mourns for her children on their departure from this life.

Red is the color of blood, and for that reason priests put on red vestments when they celebrate a feast of a martyr who shed his blood for the faith and the church. Red is used also on Pentecost Sunday, to remind the people of the red fiery tongues with which the Holy Ghost descended on the apostles. When there is no feast assigned in the "Ordo," mass is said on Sundays with green vestments, because, as the whole earth is covered with green plants, thus the green signifies the perpetual and everlasting youth in the church. Green is the color of hope, and the church desires to remind her children that we all live in the "hope of eternal life."

Purple is used in Lent and Advent and on all occasions of penance to tell the people to do penance for their sins, and because purple is the royal mourning color. Ofttimes gold is used, or imitation of gold, on feasts of joy, and this use comes from the tabernacle, as may be seen in the book of Exodus.

Such are the vestments, the significance and meaning of the different colors worn by priests of the Roman Catholic church.—Catholic Union.

A Brave Priest.

Some of the honor of the Dahomey campaign accrues to the brave priest, the Pere Daborede, who, in his quality of army chaplain, faced the enemy's shot with an intrepidity equal to that of the bravest soldier. A French officer just returned from Dahomey relates that on one occasion when the French soldiers were firing on their knees, concealed by brushwood, the Pere Daborede insisted on standing upright. This was that he might scan in every direction and see who were struck by the balls of the Dahomeyans.

When constantly urged by officers and soldiers to withdraw from spots of danger, he would never do so. When told that he would meet his death, his reply was, "We shall see." With the skirts of his soutane tightly tucked up around him, his was the task to bear away the wounded as they fell and to administer the last sacraments to the dying. An ovation awaited him at Abomey, where Catholics, Protestants and Jews alike received him with open arms.—Exchange.

The Deathless Church.

The perpetuity of the church is a fact that accords with the laws of all life. In every organism there is a substantial principle which remains the same so long as life persists, which displays its activity by continual adjustment to the environment and co-ordinates the several functions of various organs. Likewise, in the church, there is an unchangeable body of truth and of moral laws, but in maintaining this the church in all that is not essential adapts her action to the varying conditions of mankind, they helping, not hindering, true progress. To co-operate with this spirit in the church by a charity that is steadfast in duty, yet broad in sympathy, is the life work of every Christian and the main lesson taught by the festival of Christmas.—Dr. Pace.

A Statue For the Hero of Molokai.

A statue of Father Damien, the hero of Molokai, is being executed by the Belgian sculptor Mennier for the University of Louvain. It will be erected in the autumn of the present year in the Place de l'Universite. Father Damien was a native of Tremloo, a little village not far from Louvain.

Pity Him Above All.

Lives there whom pain hath evermore passed by And sorrow shunned with an averted eye? Him do thou pity, him above the rest, Him of all hapless mortals most unblest. —William Watson.

Catholic Notes.

Rev. James F. Langhlin, D. D., chancellor of the archdiocese of Philadelphia, has been elected, president of the Catholic summer school.

The recipient of the pontiff's gift of the "golden rose" this year will be, according to a statement from Paris, the Archduchess Marguerite, a niece of the emperor of Austria.

The daughter of the late General George B. McClellan has become a Catholic and is to marry Paul Desprez of the French legation in Washington at St. Joseph's church, Paris, about Easter time.

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