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# The Catholic Journal

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## FABIOLA

Or The Church of the Catacombs,  
By His Eminence Cardinal Wiseman

(Published by Special Request.)

### CHAPTER IX.

#### MEETINGS

"For six years," replied the other, with a faltering voice, "her once eloquent tongue has been paralysed, and she has not uttered a single word."

Sebastian was silent for a moment; then suddenly he threw out his arms, and stretched them forth as the Christians always did in prayer, and raised his eyes to heaven; then burst forth in these words—

"O God! Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the beginning of this work is Thine; let its accomplishment be Thine alone. Put forth Thy power, for it is needed; intrust it for once to the weakest and poorest of instruments. Let me, though most unworthy, so wield the sword of Thy victorious Cross as that the spirits of darkness may fly before it, and Thy salvation may embrace us all! Zee, look up once more to me."

All were hushed in silence, when Sebastian, after a moment's silent prayer, with his right hand made over her mouth the sign of the cross, saying, "Zee, speak; dost thou believe?"

"I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," she replied in a clear and firm voice, and fell upon Sebastian's feet.

It was almost a shriek that Nicostatus uttered, as he threw himself on his knees, and bathed Sebastian's right hand with tears.

The victory was complete. Every one was gained, and immediate steps were taken to prevent discovery. The person responsible for the prisoners could take them where he wished; and Nicostatus transferred them all, with Tranquillinus and his wife, to the full liberty of his house. Sebastian lost no time in putting them under the care of the holy priest Polycarp, of the title of St. Pastor. It was a case so peculiar, and requiring such concealment, and the times were so threatening, and all new irritations had so much to be avoided, that the instruction was hurried, and continued night and day, so that baptism was quickly administered.

The new Christian flock was encouraged and consoled by a fresh wonder. Tranquillinus, who was suffering severely from the gout, was restored to instant and complete health by baptism. Chromatius was the Prefect of the city, to whom Nicostatus was liable for his prisoners, and this officer could not long conceal from him what had happened. It was indeed a matter of life or death to them all, but, strengthened now by faith, they were prepared for either. Chromatius was a man of upright character, and not fond of persecution, and listened with interest to the account of what had occurred. But when he heard of Tranquillinus' cure, he was greatly struck. He was himself a victim of the same disease, and suffered agonies of pain. "If," he said, "what you relate be true, and if I can have personal experience of this healing power, I certainly will not resist its evidence."

Sebastian was sent for. To have administered baptism without faith preceding, as an experiment of its healing virtue, would have been a superstition. Sebastian took another course, which will be later described, and Chromatius completely recovered. He received baptism soon after, with his son Tibertius.

It was clearly impossible for him to continue in his office, and he had accordingly resigned it to the emperor. Tertullus, the father of the hopeful Corvinus, and Perfect of the Praetorium, had been named his successor; so the reader will perceive that the events just related from the Acts of St. Sebastian had occurred a little before our narrative begins, for in an early chapter we spoke of Corvinus' father as already Prefect of the city.

Let us now come down again to the evening in which Sebastian and Pancreas met most of the persons above enumerated in the officer's chamber.

Many of them resided in or about the palace; and besides them were present Castulus, who held a high situation at court, and his wife Irene. Several previous meetings had been held, to decide upon some plan for securing the complete instruction of the converts, and for withdrawing from observation so many persons, whose change of life and retirement from office would excite wonder and inquiry. Sebastian had obtained permission from the emperor for Chromatius to retire to a country-house in Campania, and it had been arranged that a considerable number of the neophytes should join him there, and,

forming one household, should go on with religious instruction, and unite in common offices of piety. The season was come when everybody retired to the country, and the emperor himself was going to the coast of Naples, and thence would take a journey in southern Italy. It was therefore a favourable moment for carrying out the preconcerted plan. Indeed, the Pope, we are told, on the Sunday following the conversion, celebrated the divine mysteries in the house of Nicostatus, and proposed this withdrawal from the city.

At this meeting details were arranged; different parties were to start in the course of the following days by various roads, some direct by the Apennines, some along the Latin, others round by Tibur and a mountain road through Arpinum, but all were to meet at the villa, not far from Capua. Through the whole discussion of these somewhat tedious arrangements, Torquatus, one of the former prisoners, converted by Sebastian's visit, showed himself forward, impatient, and impetuous. He found fault with every plan, seemed discontented with the directions given him, spoke almost contemptuously of this flight from danger, as he called it, and boasted that, for his part, he was ready to go into the Forum on the morrow and overthrow any altar or, confront any judge as a Christian. Everything was said and done to soothe and even to cool him, and it was felt to be most important that he should be taken with the rest into the country. He insisted, however, upon going his own way.

Only one more point remained to be decided; it was, who should head the little colony and direct its operations? Here was renewed a contest of love between the holy priest Polycarp and Sebastian, each wishing to remain in Rome, and have the first chance of martyrdom. But now the difference was cut short by a letter brought in from the Pope, addressed to his "Beloved son Polycarp, priest of the title of St. Pastor," in which he commanded him to accompany the converts, and leave Sebastian to the arduous duty of encouraging confessors and protecting Christians in Rome. To hear was to obey, and the meeting broke up with a prayer of thanksgiving.

Sebastian, after bidding affectionate farewell to his friends, insisted upon accompanying Pancreas home. As they were leaving the room, the latter remarked, "Sebastian, I do not like that Torquatus. I fear he will give us trouble."

"To tell the truth," answered the soldier, "I would rather he were different; but we must remember that he is a neophyte, and will improve in time, and by grace."

As they passed into the entrance court of the palace, they heard a babel of uncouth sounds, with coarse laughter and occasional yells, proceeding from the adjoining yard, in which were the quarters of the Mauritanian archers. A fire seemed to be blazing in the midst of it, for the smoke and sparks rose above the surrounding porticoes. Sebastian accosted the sentinel in the court where they were, and asked, "Friend, what is going on there among our neighbours?"

"The black slave," he replied, "who is their priestess, and who is betrothed to their captain, if she can purchase her freedom, has come in for some midnight rites, and this horrid turmoil takes place every time she comes."

"Indeed!" said Pancreas, "and can you tell me what is the religion these Africans follow?"

"I do not know, sir," replied the legionary, "unless they be what are called Christians."

"What makes you think so?"

"Why, I have heard that the Christians meet by night, and sing detestable songs, and commit all sorts of crimes, and cook and eat the flesh of a child murdered for the purpose—just what might seem to be going on here."

"Good night, comrade," said Sebastian; and then exclaimed, as they were issuing from the vestibule, "Is it not strange, Pancreas, that, in spite of all our efforts, we who are conscious that we worship only the One living God in spirit and truth, who know what care we take to keep ourselves undefiled by sin, and who would die rather than speak an unclean word, should yet, after three hundred years, be confounded by the people with the followers of the most degraded superstitions, and have our worship ranked with the very idolatry which abhorred all things we abhor? How long, O Lord! how long!"

"So long," said Pancreas, pausing on the steps outside the vestibule, and looking at the now-declining moon, "so long as we shall continue to walk in this pale light, and until the sun of Justice shall rise upon our country."

His beauty, and enrich it with His splendour. Sebastian, tell me, whence do you best like to see the sun rise?"

"The most lovely sunrise I have ever seen," replied the soldier, as if humoring his companion's fanciful question, "was from the top of the Laticlavian mountain, by the temple of Jupiter. The sun rose behind the mountain, and projected its huge shadow like a pyramid over the plain, and far upon the sea; then, as it rose higher, this lessened and withdrew, and every moment some new object caught the light, first the galleys and ships upon the water, then the shore with its dancing waves; and by degrees one white edifice after the other sparkled in the fresh beams, till at last majestic Rome itself, with its towering pinnacles, basked in the effulgence of day. It was a glorious sight, indeed; such as could not have been witnessed or imagined by those below."

"Just what I should have expected," Sebastian, "observed Pancreas; and so will it be, when that more brilliant sun rises fully upon this benighted country. How beautiful will it then be to hold the shades retiring, and each moment one and another of the charms, as yet concealed, of our holy faith and worship starting into light, till the imperial city itself shines forth a holy type of the city of God. Will they who live in those times see these beauties, and worthily value them? Or will they look only at the narrow space around them, and hold their hands before their eyes, to shade them from the sudden glare? I know not, dear Sebastian, but I hope that you and I will look down upon that grand spectacle, from where alone it can be duly appreciated, from a mountain higher than Jupiter's, be he Alban or be he Olympian—dwelling on that holy mount, whereon stands the Lamb from whose feet flow the streams of life."

They continued their walk in silence through the brilliantly lighted streets; and when they had reached Lucina's house, and had affectionately bid one another good-night, Pancreas seemed to hesitate a moment, and then said—

"Sebastian, you said something this evening, which I should much like to have explained."

"What was it?"

"When you were contending with Polycarp, about going into Campania, or remaining in Rome, you promised that if you stayed you would be most cautious, and not expose yourself to unnecessary risks; then you added, that there was one purpose in your mind which would effectually restrain you; but that when that was accomplished, you would find it difficult to check your longing ardour to give your life for Christ."

"And why, Pancreas, do you desire to know this foolish thought of mine?"

"Because I own I am really curious to learn what can be the object, high enough to check in you the aspiration, after what I know you consider to be the very highest of a Christian's aim."

"I am sorry, my dear boy, that it is not in my power to tell you now. But you shall know it some time."

"Do you promise me?"

"Yes, most solemnly. God bless you!"

### CHAPTER XI.

#### A TALK WITH THE READER.

We will take advantage of the holiday which Rome is enjoying, sending out its inhabitants to the neighbouring hills, or to the whole line of sea-coast from Genoa to Paestum, for amusement on land and water; and, in a merely didactic way, endeavour to communicate to our reader some information, which may throw light on what we have already written, and prepare him for what will follow.

From the very compressed form in which the early history of the Church is generally studied, and from the unchronological arrangement of the saints' biographies, as we usually read them, we may easily be led to an erroneous idea of the state of our first Christian ancestors. This may happen in two different ways.

We may come to imagine, that during the first three centuries the Church was suffering unreprieved, under active persecution; that the faithful worshippers in fear and trembling, and almost lived, in the catacombs; the bare existence, with scarcely an opportunity for outward development or inward organisation, none for splendour, was all that religion could enjoy; that, in fine, it was a period of conflict and of tribulation, without an interval of peace or consolation. On the other hand, we may suppose, that those three centuries were divided into epochs by ten distinct persecutions, some of longer and some of shorter duration, but

definitely separated from one another by breathing times of complete rest.

(To be continued.)

## Five Minute Sermon

Ask in the Name of Jesus and It shall be Granted.

Christ promised the apostles, and all Christians, that His Eternal Father would grant them all graces when they ask for them in His name.

We know who Christ is, and what His merits are. He is the object of the complacency of the Father; He is the Mediator between God and man; He is upon Whom glory has been bestowed in preference to all creatures because of His obedience and by His death He has merited the mercy, the adoption, and the benediction of the Father; and He has made us His brethren, His members, and co-heirs of His glory. The granting therefore of what we may ask of the Father in the name of Jesus will always be considered by Him as an act of mercy and grace towards us, and as an act of justice in regard to the infinite merits of Christ. Remember, however, that our prayer cannot be said to have been made in the name of Jesus when we ask for things that are not according to the spirit of Christ, and not expedient for our eternal welfare.

We should learn to grow in faith and in Christian hope; we should learn to pray in such a manner that our progress may be pleasing to the Eternal Father, so that we may obtain those graces for which we pray through Jesus Christ, in Jesus Christ, and with Jesus Christ.

### Forty Hours Devotion.

The devotion of the "Forty Hours" will be held in the churches of the diocese of Rochester as follows:—  
May 8—Westport; Immaculate Conception, Rochester; Ovid; Honeyoye Flat; Holy Family, Rochester; St. Patrick's, Elmira.

### Weekly Church Calendar.

Sunday May 8—Gospel, St. John, xvi, 28-30—Apparition of St. Michael.  
Monday 9—St. Gregory, Nazianzen, bishop, confessor and doctor.  
Tuesday 10—St. Antoninus, archbishop and confessor.  
Wednesday 11—St. Francis Jerome, confessor.  
Thursday 12—The Ascension.  
Friday 13—St. John the Silent, bishop and confessor.  
Saturday 14—St. Boniface, martyr.

### Railroad Notes.

Nickel Plate Road's new tourist sleeping cars. If you expect to take advantage of the low collector rates to the Pacific Coast, write R. E. Payne, General Agent, 291 Main St., Buffalo, N. Y. for particulars regarding their splendid tourist sleeping cars. They afford a comfortable journey at a very low cost.

Special home-seekers' excursions via the Nickel Plate Road. Extremely low rates to all points in the West and Southwest. First and third Tuesday of each month to April, 1904. Good return limit. Full particulars of local agents or write R. E. Payne, Genl. Agt. Buffalo, N. Y.

Sound reasons for the Nickel Plate Road's popularity. In making a long railway journey, the two principal points to be considered are Cost and Comfort. The first of these is the least, and the second the greatest. If you select the Nickel Plate Road, for the rates to whatever point you wish to reach are always the lowest via that line. And the degree of comfort is greatest, not only on account of an excellent roadbed and the highest standard of equipment but from the fact that your welfare is personally looked after throughout the journey.

If you contemplate a trip to any part of the West, full information as to rates, service, etc., will be cheerfully furnished on application to R. E. Payne, General Agent, 291 Main St., Buffalo, N. Y.

\$62.00 to Los Angeles and San Francisco and return via the Nickel Plate Road. Tickets on sale April 22nd to May 1st inclusive. Good returning until June 30th, 1904. Stop off privileges. For full particulars see local agents, or write R. E. Payne, general agent, 291 Main St., Buffalo, N. Y.

Take the Nickel Plate Road for the St. Louis Fair. Lowest rates and many unusual privileges. Special \$15.00 rate on certain dates. Full information on application to local agents or R. E. Payne, general agent, 291 Main St., Buffalo, N. Y.

The Journal office is now located at No. 22 Cortland Street, where we will be pleased to have you call.

## REV. DR. STANG

He Is to Be Bishop of the New Fall River Diocese.

His Holiness Pope Pius X. has, according to a dispatch from Rome, ratified the decision of the Congregation of the Propaganda to divide the diocese of Providence, R. I., and to erect a new diocese at Fall River, Mass., with the Rev. William Stang, pastor of St. Edward's church of the city of Providence, as bishop.

Rev. William Stang, D.D., suggested by the Congregation of the Propaganda at Rome as bishop of the proposed new diocese of Fall River, is a native of Germany, born in the province of Baden in 1854. He was educated in the German gymnasium, finishing a course at philosophy and theology at the Catholic university at Louvain, Belgium. He was ordained there in 1878, and shortly after came to Providence, being placed at the St. Peter and Paul's cathedral under the late Bishop Hendricken.

In 1884, he was given charge of St. Ann's parish in Cranston, but a little later returned to the cathedral, where he remained until 1895. That year he returned to the Catholic college at Louvain as vice rector and professor of theology. In 1898, he came back to Providence, where he organized and became the head of the diocesan apostolate, a missionary band, which position he now holds. For the past three years, he has been the pastor of St. Edward's parish.

Dr. Stang has long been considered one of the best informed clergymen on Church matters, and he is a man of superb and broad education. He has been an indefatigable worker ever since he was settled in the Providence diocese, and very many people will regret to have him depart—Providence Dispatch.

### The Bench in Catholic Ireland.

The death of The MacDermott, K. C., has aroused public attention in Ireland to the extent to which, so far as the law is concerned, Irish Catholics are handicapped in competition with Irish non-Catholics. The MacDermott should have occupied the bench, and would undoubtedly have done so but for his Catholic creed. The acknowledged leader of the Irish bar, it was expected when the Unionists secured their majority in 1890 that they would free themselves from the bad traditions of the system of legal appointments that prevailed in Ireland. But the influence of the place hunting supporters of the government in the north of Ireland was too strong. The bench in Catholic Ireland is, therefore, as practically a monopoly for Protestants. Lord Russell of Killowen, the late lord chief justice of England, considered early in his career, whether he should, as a lawyer, remain in his own land, but his knowledge of the manner in which legal posts are filled in Ireland, decided him to come to England. Writing to a friend at that time, he declared that he left Ireland because there would be no future for him there, inasmuch as he was a Catholic and a lover of his country. He was wise—London Catholic Times.

### The Pope's Favorite.

One recalls those moving speeches which, as cardinal, Pius X. delivered, weeping in the conclave, setting forth all his imperfections (his aim even, and the disadvantages of his career from barefooted boyhood), but which really secured him the throne, and the stories of him which every one knows in Lombardy and Venetia. For no ecclesiastic can have been more widely known than he. A pupil of one of the priestly circles, the thought after panegyrist of great occasions, when bishop and patriarch, no wonder that he was hailed by a voice in Rome when he took possession of his title as cardinal. "No one has spoken so well in this cardinal." As country assistant, then parish priest, professor in the seminary of Treviso, canon, chancellor of the diocese, great hierarch of Mantua, the successor of St. Mark, every one seems to know him, and no one has any memory that is not pleasant—W. J. D. Croke in Century.

### Knighted of Columbus.

The ball which closed the convention of the Knights of Columbus at Syracuse Wednesday night, was a most brilliant one and was attended by 2,000 people. A large party attended from this city and speak in high praise of the affair. The hall was decorated with electric lights to the number of 1,600 and presented a very pretty appearance.

### Get the Vogt Piano Chart.

Without knowledge of music you can learn piano playing in twenty minutes. Also greatly help to advanced pupils. Call at once as Mrs. Vogt intends to leave the city. Studio No. 112 Cox Building, first floor. Mrs. Mary Vogt, inventor, also proprietor of the vocalizer. Open evenings.

Low rates West via The Nickel Plate Road. Special one way Colonist tickets to points throughout the West and Southwest, on sale first and third Tuesday each month to April, 1904. If going West this winter, see local agents or write R. E. Payne, Genl. Agt. 291 Main St., Buffalo, N. Y.

### One of the Great

season was held at the New Fall River Diocese. Wednesday morning, the Rev. Frank Touhey of Cranston, Doughterty of Cranston, at the wedding breakfast at the home of the bride.

Thomas Murray, Kathleen Murray, and several other guests, were present. The evening was given by Rev. William Stang, D.D., as bishop.

William Stang, D.D., was ordained in 1878, and was a member of the church of the Rev. Father, Regener, of Cranston.

Mrs. Mary Backman, wife of Rev. Stang, was also present. The Rev. Stang, D.D., was also present.

The many friends of the Rev. Stang, D.D., were also present. The Rev. Stang, D.D., was also present.

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