

# Attributes of Church Fulfill God's Promise

By Edwin Riedon

Christ established His Church for the salvation of all, and in His infinite wisdom, gave to His fold all the means necessary to accomplish its end. In fashioning His earthly king-

dom to be the guide to lead men to eternal happiness He endowed it with three chief qualities or attributes that must necessarily characterize the Church whose origin is Divine. They are authority, infallibility, and indefectibility.

The Church has been assigned the task of carrying on Christ's mission. This is to teach God's truths to men, to sanctify them, and to govern the faithful in spiritual matters. The authority to govern and to teach is clearly contained in Christ's words when He commissioned the Apostles: "Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt. xxviii, 19). The promise of indefectibility and infallibility is found in these words: "Behold I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world" (Matt. xxviii, 20).

By the authority of the Church is meant that the Pope and the Bishops, as the lawful successors of the Apostles, have the power from Christ Himself to teach, to sanctify, and to govern. Our Lord's words leave no doubt that He conferred such powers on the Apostles. It is also clear that this mission entrusted to them by Christ was to extend until the end of time, and that the threefold office of the Apostles, according to the appointment of Christ, was to pass over from the Apostles to their successors, the Pope and the Bishops, and to continue in them, without interruption, "even unto the consummation of the world."

The authority to teach springs from the very nature of the Church, which was founded to make Christ's Gospel known to every creature. By the power to sanctify the Church is able to help men to be united with God. Because it is a Divinely established society, it must have the power to govern its members in spiritual matters.

Infallibility is the second gift the Divine Founder bestowed on the Church. This attribute signifies that the Church, by the special assistance of the Holy Spirit, cannot err when it teaches or believes a doctrine of the faith or morals. The Church teaches infallibly when it defines through the Pope and Bishops united in General Council or through the Pope alone as the teacher of all Christians a doctrine of faith or morals to be held by all the faithful. New doctrines are not invented. A defined doctrine is always one handed down from Apostolic times.

It is Christ who promises that His Church, the true Church, cannot err. "And I will ask the Father and He will give you another Advocate to dwell with you forever, the Spirit of Truth" (John xiv, 16, 17). "But when He, the spirit of Truth, has come, He will

teach all truth" (John xvi, 13). To St. Peter, and to his successors in the primacy, Christ conferred the office of teaching infallibly the brethren—the other Bishops and all believers in general—in the faith, when He said to Peter: "Simon, listen, Satan has desired to leave you that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee that thy faith may not fail; and as thou hast loved them that are with thee, I have strengthened thy brethren" (Luke xii, 31).

The obligation to hear Christ is as great as if Christ Himself were speaking directly to us. "He who believed and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not shall be condemned" (Mark xvi, 16). "But if he refused to hear even the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican" (Matt. xviii, 17). God cannot force man to have a fallible authority, a Church that might lead man into error, for man's attainment of his final end depends that he follow the path of truth, which leads to the all-truth God.

The Church, as Christ founded it, will last until the end of time because its mission is to save all men. Its doctrine, sacraments, and its social organization will continue forever just as they were handed down by His Divine Founder, for Christ pledged the Apostles that the Spirit of Truth would abide with it forever, and that the gates of hell would never prevail against His Church. The Church, it is true, has in the course of ages undergone such disciplinary changes as were demanded for the good of the members, but there has not been and there never will be the slightest change in its essential constitution.—The Western Catholic.

## Abbey in Belgium Destroyed By Fire

LONDON.—The Franciscan Abbey at Averbode, Belgium, has been destroyed by fire, according to a Vatican Radio broadcast, heard here. It was stated that the Abbey was completely burned, though fire engines attended from Liege and Antwerp. The church and the printing works were saved, however.

## Head Football Coach

Atchison, Kan. — Lee Deutch, probably the greatest football player ever to play for St. Benedict's College, has been appointed head football coach of St. Rita's High School, Chicago. He will retain his position as basketball coach, and he will also be athletic director at St. Rita's, the largest boys' high school in the midwest.

## Archbishop Forecasts Sunday Requiem Masses in London

LONDON.—Bishop of the diocese announced in a broadcast message on Sunday that the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev. William Godolphin, Archbishop of Canterbury, will be the principal officiant, to be held on Sunday, May 5, following the 1:30 Mass at the Black Vault Chapel.

## Mexican Youth Map Parochial Congress

MEXICO CITY.—The Mexican Catholic Youth of Elmore, with the cooperation of the Rev. Bishop of Elmore, will sponsor a Parochial Congress to mark the silver jubilee of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Elmore, Mich., on Oct. 12, 1947.

The Mexican National Shrine, Elmore, Mich., will be the site of the congress. The congress will be held at the Shrine, Mich., on Oct. 12, 1947.

## ST. PATRICK'S (Elmira)

### Holy Mass Broken Mass

Masses have been broken for the eleventh annual Communion Festival of the St. Patrick's Holy Name Society, at which the Most Rev. Joseph Walsh, Bishop of Rochester, N. Y., will be the principal officiant, to be held on Sunday, May 5, following the 1:30 Mass at the Black Vault Chapel.

Present at the opening Mass will be the Rev. William J. Hagen, Rev. John A. Murphy, Spiritual Director, President Leo Hagen, Vice-President Fred Schilling, Treasurer, Charles O'Brien, Secretary Raymond Hagen, general chairman for the festival, George Finner, and Sacristan D. C. Kelly. The high school orchestra will play.

Special committee: Rev. William J. Hagen, Rev. John A. Murphy, Major Charles O'Brien, Dr. William Palmer, Eugene P. Brennan, John J. Hagen, Capt. John Walsh. Reception Committee: Raymond Hagen, Dr. Francis O'Brien, Martin Hagen, Edward Hagen, John Hagen, Fred Hagen, John Hagen, Dr. Louis Hagen.

Token Committee: Chairman, Henry Hagen, St. John Hagen, Edward Hagen, Charles Hagen, Joseph Hagen, Raymond Hagen, Herbert Hagen, Dr. W. C. Hagen, Fred Hagen, James Hagen, George Hagen, Fred Hagen, Raymond Hagen, Edward Hagen, John Hagen, W. H. Hagen, Albert Hagen.

### Leave For Haiti

ROCHESTER, N. Y.—Miss Rose Hagen, a member of the Order of the Holy Name and member of the teaching staff at St. Charles Oratory, has been called to Haiti, where she will assist in establishing a new branch of the community. She will be with the help of other staff members by June.

### At Home In Army

ROCHESTER.—Miss Rose Hagen, a member of the Order of the Holy Name and member of the teaching staff at St. Charles Oratory, has been called to Haiti, where she will assist in establishing a new branch of the community. She will be with the help of other staff members by June.

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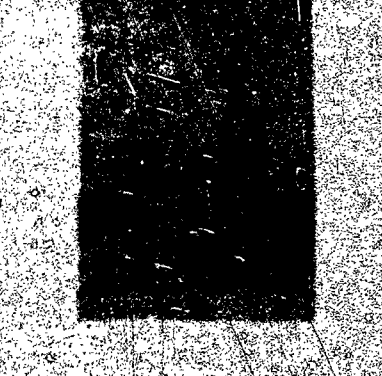
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