Primacy Promised Peter, Therefore It Had To Be!

By George C. Thomas

After His Resurrection Christ bestowed on Peter a primacy of jurisdiction over the entire Church. With this assertion one can sum up the fruits of a search of Holy Writ and tradition made to answer the insane query, did Christ really bestow the primacy on Peter? Even writings of schismatics and heretics substantiate our declaration. The reasonableness of Catholic teaching in the matter is obvious, particularly in view of the fact that Christ made a promise of the primacy to Peter—and whatever He promised to do, He did.

An explanation of the assertion is found in St. John xxi, 15-17: ". . . Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, dost thou love Me more than these do?' He said to Him, 'Yes, Lord, thou knowest that I love Thee.' He said to Him, 'Feed My lambs.' He said to him a second time, 'Simon, son of John, dost thou love Me?' He said to Him, 'Yes, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee.' He said to him, 'Feed My lambs.' A third time He said to him, 'Simon, Son of John, dost thou love Me?' Peter was grieved because he said to him for the third time, 'Dost thou love Me?' And he said to Him, 'Lord, Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love Thee.' He said to him, 'Feed My Sheep.'"

Herein the Risen Christ clearly repeats His promise of the primacy to Peter, and St. John the Apostle made much of it as he recorded it for posterity.

MORE THAN OTHERS

Jesus calls Peter by his own name, Simon, and thus excludes all others in His questioning. "More than these do" finds the Savior wanting to know whether Peter loves Him more than do the other Apostles. Peter, realizing that Christ knows all things, in his answer makes Christ Himself the judge. Christ, of course, did not need to ask to know. He did ask, however, as a means of teaching Peter and the others the high degree of love He demanded of His Vicar on Earth. That the power to teach and govern was given Peter is found in Christ's words. "Feed My lambs" and "Feed My sheep." Though the wording differs, each passage places Peter in the role of shepherd, whose duties commonly included protecting and disciplining the flocks.

The nature of the power conferred on Peter, the primacy of jurisdiction, was a special prerogative attributed only to him and through him to the Popes. Thus taught many of the Fathers of the Church, to mention a few, Tertullian, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Leo the Great and St. Cyprian.

And, too, tradition honored Peter as the Keeper of the Keys, as is evidenced in the sculpturing, painting, and even architecture of early times. Monuments and pictures and inscriptions find Peter represented with the attributes of his primacy in a way that left no room for doubt.

Often Scripture recognizes Peter as the head of the other Apostles, and from his possession of the primacy of jurisdiction he is acknowledged to be to the universal Church that which a shepherd is to his sheep. What does this mean? Simply that a shepherd has supreme and absolutely independent power to feed and direct his flock. Peter, therefore, has the same power over the whole Church, even over the other Apostles, to teach and govern.

EVER NAMED FIRST

In Scripture Peter always is named first among the Apostles (Matt. x, 2-4; Mark iii, 16; Luke vi, 14; Acts i, 13) even when the order is changed. After Peter is given special honor not accorded the other Apostles: Christ lived in Peter's house (Luke iv, 38); He taught from Peter's boat (Luke v, 3); He commended to Peter principally the fishing of men (Luke v, 10); He prayed especially for Peter (Luke xxii, 32); after His Resurrection the Lord appeared to Peter separately (Luke xxiv, 34).

Following the Ascension of Christ, it is always Peter who presides and speaks in the name of all: in the election of Matthias (Acts i, 15); on Pentecost (Acts ii, 14); he is the first to work miracles (Acts iii, 6); he is the spokesman before the chief men and elders of the Jews (Acts iv, 8); he alone judges and punishes Ananias and Sapphira in the name of all (Acts v); he is the first to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts x); and he is the first to propose a definition in the Council of Jerusalem (Acts xv, 7 sq.).

Taken collectively, these circumstances serve to illustrate that Peter was given the primacy of jurisdiction, that his position was recognized by Christ and the Apostles including Peter himself. The consistency of these facts so overwhelmingly favors this admission that even some Anglicans infer from them that Peter retained the primacy in virtue of a divine ordinance or by divine right. And before the time of Photius the Greek Church unanimously taught the primacy of Peter's jurisdiction.—The Western Catholic.

Italian Prelates Are Appointed

VATICAN CITY (NC) — The nomination of Monsignor Antonio Lanza, professor of moral theology in the Lateran Seminary, to be Archbishop of Reggio-Calabria is announced in L'Osservatore Romano.

It also was announced that Monsignor Francesco Giberti, present Rector of the Seminary at Modena, had been named Bishop of Fidenza, and the Rev. Giuseppe Dellomo, Bishop of Acqui.

Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasures without contents.—Proverbs, 15, v. 16.

Housewives Put Idle Glass to Work

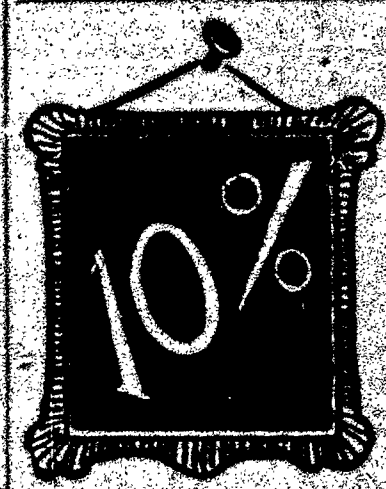
KEEP GLASS MOVING! The American housewife is asked to join in a nation-wide drive to keep glass containers and bottles in circulation, thus helping the output of additional glass for war purposes. These two American housewives here show that the return of such bottles is a two-fold patriotic gesture. They receive payment for the empties, and they know the bottles can be sterilized and reused by the nation's glass manufacturers.

ST. PATRICK'S (Elmira)

TICKET COMMITTEE NAMED

Co-chairmen Mrs. Frances Burns and Mrs. Harold Hedlock, in charge of tickets for the Society's annual Communion Breakfast to be held on Sunday, June

WRITE TO THOSE IN SERVICE



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The Misses Lenore Garvey, Rosemary Patterson, Mary Lynne O'Connor, Margaret Gaffey, May O'Laughlin, Mary Jane Dwyer, Dorothy O'Herron, Mary Creighton, Fred Conway.

Reception of First Communion will be on Sunday, June 6 at the 8 o'clock Mass.

Church Persecutions Said Based On Fear

VATICAN CITY, (NC-Radio) The Vatican Radio in a broadcast on "The Church, the Mother of Nations" stated that all parts of the Church are based on a fear of the Christian ideal and are aimed at incorporating him in the earthly order to suppress his spirit, personal with permanent and eternal.

But, the speaker stated, after twenty centuries persecutors have not learned that Christianity has fundamental importance in man's nature as irresistibly directing individual forces against which all efforts of its removal and destruction are doomed to fail.

Expect German Bishops In Rome

VATICAN CITY — (NC-Radio) Several German bishops are expected to be in Rome in the near future, at their ad limina visits to the Holy See.

ST. MARY'S (Elmira)

CONFIRMATION SET SUNDAY

About 150 children and adults will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on Sunday, June 6 at 4:45 P. M. Bishop James E. Kearney of Rochester will officiate and preach the sermon.

Card Party Aides

Final preparations expected to aide in arranging the card party to be held by the society on June 16, Thursday at 8 P. M. in the church hall are the Misses Mary Hope and Mary Ann Doris Dunne; Jean Kirsch, Peggy; Rita Donohue, Refreshments.

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