

a word, by the Catholic priesthood in all its fullness and extension. So, the priest, like Christ, is the divinely appointed teacher of saving truth.

The Catholic Church and Science.

But boastful arrogant modern so-called science steps forth and would fain usurp the place and role of Christ and His priests. Contemporary unbelief, in the guise of science—pseudo-science—says to a deluded world: "In our enlightened days we need no teacher, no Saviour; science is the master and guide; science unlocks all necessary knowledge and affords a secure and sufficient foundation for morality. Before the rise of science, a teacher was needed, and Jesus was rightly welcomed by humanity, but now no place is left for him in the world of man, in the march of human enlightenment and progress; his reign is over."

Now, God forbid that I should utter one word against true science. Undoubtedly science, within its own legitimate sphere, deserves and obtains all praise from the Catholic Church, the mouth-piece of Christ, and numbers of the most eminent scientists, for instance, such men as the late Pasteur, are devout Catholics. And no wonder; for science is organised knowledge, the knowledge of the phenomena and laws of nature. But there its function ends; not a step further is allowed in the name of science. Science is not religion, and never can take religion's place. On the awful questions ever fretting the human mind, "whence come we, whither go we?" science is absolutely and dismally silent. These tremendous questions die without an answer, nay, without an echo, upon the shores of the unknown. So says Tindall, so says Spencer, so says Haeckel. So runs science, so speaks science in presence of the great problems which reason and conscience refuse to deem insoluble. Some years ago science promised to remove all mystery from the universe; but science has dismally failed to keep its promise, and in this respect, as Brunetière first proclaimed, "Science is bankrupt."

The Meaning of Morality.

Moreover, science affords no rational basis for morality, no sufficient sanction for right-doing. What does morality mean? It means the suppression and control of the lower, the animal appetites in man, and their subjection to a higher life; morality means the establishment of the reign of righteousness, and, for that purpose, demands that interest and pleasure be sacrificed without regret or hesitation upon the altar of duty. So strong are men's passions, so violent is their protest against all restraint, that they will have their way, unless it be shown beyond all doubt that the satisfaction which they crave is clearly prohibited, and unless powerful motives are urged why the wrong should be shunned and the right followed. What will science do for the man in the fierce conflict of his passions? What will Spencer's "Unknown" do to help him? or Harrison's appeal to "humanity"? or Haeckel's resort to "Universal matter"? Will you appeal to the individual's own good which is ultimately found in righteousness? But the hapless man, in the stress

of fierce and prolonged temptations, will scorn to overlook a certain present for the sake of an uncertain and shadowy future. Therefore, morality is secure only in a world where reigns an ever-present living Avenger of evil and a Rewarder of good. Morality is secure only when based on a religion which is pure and elevated in its teaching, as is the religion of Christ. Turn, then, to Him for light and strength. The needs and ills of humanity are ever existent. Material conditions may change, and are constantly changing—in no age more than our own. Steam and electricity, aeroplanes, and wireless telegraphy, may have annihilated distance, may have made earth's treasures tributary to our industry, and increased a hundred-fold our sway over nature. But with all this, the mind within us ceases not its questionings, and the heart in us still quivers beneath the wild storm of passion. If material progress has brought any change in us, it is to make the mind more fretful and earnest in its enquiries, and the battle of virtue more fierce. To-day, more than ever, humanity needs Christ and His teaching, His grace, and His sacraments. Fortunately, Christ and His work remain for ever. "Heaven and earth"—He says—"shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away, and behold, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world."

The Truths of Christ.

So the priest teaches truths, saving truths, the truths to be professed and practised unto life eternal.

Again, Christ during His life *forgave sin*; and so the priest in the sacred tribunal of penance. St. John Baptist said of Christ, "Behold the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sins of the world." Christ forgave the paralytic: "Be of good heart, son"—He said to him—"thy sins are forgiven." "And behold some of the bystanding scribes said within themselves, He blasphemeth; who can forgive sin but God alone? And Jesus, seeing their thoughts, said, why think you these things in your heart? Which is easier to say to the sick of the palsy: thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say: arise, take up thy bed and walk. But that you may know that the Son of Man—Jesus in his *manhood*—hath power on earth—not merely in Heaven—to forgive sin; He saith to the sick of the palsy, I say to thee, arise, take up thy bed and go into thy house. And immediately he arose, and took up his bed and went his way in sight of all, so that all wondered and glorified God, that gave such power to men."

Christ forgave the sinner Magdalen, St. Peter, and the repentant woman taken in adultery, and the good thief on the cross, and doubtless many other sinners. And this He did in His manhood. Knowing that sin would always be in this wicked world, He established a sacrament for its constant forgiveness, and so the priest, though only a man, continues the work of Christ in Christ's Mystic Body, the Church. And oh! what a display of God's infinite mercy is here! What a marvellous power is given to man, frail sinful man, a power not shared by the Angels!!

The Sacrifice of Calvary.

Furthermore, Christ sacrificed Himself upon the Cross of Calvary for the salvation of mankind, and, at His last supper, He instituted the unbloody sacrifice of the Mass, which equals in dignity and efficacy that of the Cross. Taking bread and wine into His venerable hands, He changed by His omnipotence into His own living body and blood, truly, really, and substantially present under the form and appearances of bread and wine. And He commanded His Apostles to do likewise, thereby making them priests, invested with His own mysterious power, to offer up to God, throughout all ages till His second coming, the most August Sacrifice, the most perfect worship of God possible to man in this world, the only Divine worship that really counts, a sacrifice the same essentially as that of the Cross, having the same High Priest and the same Victim, Jesus Christ, but differing accidentally, inasmuch as it is invisible, without shedding of blood, and offered by Christ Himself through the ministry of His priests, using His words and His power. Oh, how great a marvel is the Mass! It is a fourfold sacrifice of propitiation, thanksgiving, praise, and prayer, giving every time it is offered, more glory to God than all the praises of the Angels and Saints in Heaven for all eternity. For it is the sacrifice of a God to a God by the hands of a God, using for that purpose the will and the hands of a frail sinful man. It is that perfect sacrifice, that "clean oblation," foretold magnificently by the prophet Malachy, "For from the rising of the sun to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation. For My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts." (Mal. i., ii.) If only *one* Mass is so holy, so mighty and efficacious to stay the uplifted hand of Divine justice over a depraved world, what must be said of the innumerable Masses celebrated all over the globe, by thousands and thousands of priests for ages and ages unto the very end of time? Consider this for a moment, and think that he who now stands before you, in his long career of priesthood, has said over twenty thousand Masses. What glory in Heaven, what glory on earth, and what a responsibility!!

Finally, Christ *conferred grace and sanctification*; and so do the priests, by the instrumentality of the sacraments. Christ conferred grace by Himself, the Author of all grace; but His priests do so as ministers of the seven sacraments, which are like seven full streams issuing from the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, to apply His infinite merits, and bestow the treasures of His grace upon mankind. The sacraments are adapted to every stage and need of life, and the priests are the dispensers, according to the Apostle of "the mysteries of God." A volume would be insufficient to fitly develop this rich theme of the sacraments instituted by Christ and intrusted to His priests.

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