

Sunday Evening Devotions

The Cathedral was packed in the evening, when addresses were presented to his Excellency from the clergy and the laity. This ceremony took place after the recitation of the Holy Rosary.

His Lordship Bishop Brodie said:—This evening we have gathered to offer to his Excellency the Apostolic Delegate an expression of our love and loyalty to the Holy See. The clergy will read an address and extend their deep feelings of loyalty and the laity will also express sentiments of devoted attachment.

Your Excellency, it is my duty as Bishop of the diocese to assure you of the love and loyalty and attachment to the Holy See. I would be unworthy of the high office the Holy See has conferred upon me if I were not animated with these sentiments.

I would like your Excellency to understand that the diocese confided to my care is only a small one comprising a population of approximately 30,000; in the diocese there are 21 districts, the number of churches being 63; number of priests, secular 22, regular 28; religious, Brothers 11, nuns 296; boarding and high schools, 29; Home of Good Shepherd, 1; orphanages, 3. It is comparatively a small diocese, but great works have been done and I can speak of these works without any self-praise. This magnificent Cathedral is the legacy of the enthusiasm of the life of the late revered Bishop, Dr. Grimes, and the very stones of this building speak of his zeal and the generosity of a devoted and loyal people.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking your Excellency for your graciousness in paying us this visit and especially for the honor you are conferring upon the religious of this city and to assure your Excellency of their deep feeling of gratitude. Words cannot express to you our appreciation of the honor we enjoy. The religious give their lives to God and often under many disappointments and great hardships work for the cause of religion, seeking no reward; but they have a reward in receiving a personal visit from a representative of the Holy See. Were it not for the work done by our Brothers and nuns our children would not be instructed in their holy religion.

I would ask you to convey to the Holy See my deepest sentiments of loyalty and love and I assure your Excellency that the words used in the addresses of both clergy and laity are not empty sounding words but used to convey sentiments of heartfelt love to the Holy See and also personal gratitude to yourself who represent the Sovereign Pontiff in the Holy City of Rome.

Address from Clergy

The addresses, which were printed on parchment, were handsomely bound. Very Rev. Dean O'Donnell, Ashburton, and Very Rev. Father Graham, S.M., St. Bede's College, presented the address from the clergy. The address read as follows:—

Your Excellency,—This is but the second occasion in the history of New Zealand that an opportunity has arisen of welcoming to it a direct representative of the august Head of the Church. Your Excellency's predecessor, the first Apostolic Delegate to Australasia, did this diocese the honor of conferring Episcopal consecration on the present Bishop. As the clergy then sincerely and heartily bid him welcome, so the Bishop and clergy now greet your Excellency with the heartiest "Cead Mile Failte." We have been, and are, deeply grateful to his Holiness for having established the office of Apostolic Delegate in Australasia, thus in some sense abolishing the distance which physically separated us from the centre of unity. Though so separated we dare hope that our sentiments of reverence, obedience, and love towards the Vicar of Christ were and are no less deep and lasting than those of the inhabitants of the older European Catholic lands. We have sympathised with the griefs of the Father of Christendom sorrowing over the destruction of so many hundreds of thousands of the flock, as well as of so many ancient monuments of Catholic faith and piety in the late disastrous world war; at the same time we rejoice in those events which are calculated to bring pleasure and joy to the paternal heart of the Pope, not the least amongst which are the restoration of normal relations

between the Holy See and the eldest daughter of the Church—Catholic France, and especially the movement in favor of an equitable adjustment of the matters so long at issue between the Holy Father and the Government of his own beloved Italy. May we ask your Excellency to convey these our sentiments of veneration and love to our Most Holy Father. We trust that your stay in our midst will be a happy one, and that your taking counsel with the Hierarchy of New Zealand will be productive of an increased vitality in our holy religion in this new land. Conversant as your Excellency is with the great educational and charitable institutions which the piety of Catholics has during the ages reared in the old Catholic lands, we hope that the institutions of a similar nature which we are laboriously striving to bring into being here, may merit some notice and commendation from your Excellency. Whatever success may have been achieved in this direction is due under God to the self-sacrificing devotion of our zealous nuns and Brothers whose work we hope your Excellency may have opportunity for observing during your visit. Being almost entirely Irish either by birth or descent, we would dearly love to bespeak your Excellency's prayers for our dear native land in the crisis through which she is now passing. Once again, we bid your Excellency a heartfelt welcome to this diocese of Christchurch, and hoping that your Excellency's visit will be productive of pleasure to yourself and of benefit to the cause of Holy Church here, we beg your blessing upon ourselves and upon the flocks committed to our charge.

Address from Laity

Mr. H. H. Loughnan and Sir George Clifford presented the address from the laity. Representatives of different Catholic societies also occupied a place in the sanctuary during the reading and presentation. The address read as follows:—

Your Excellency,—We are deputed by the laity of the Diocese of Christchurch to offer you, on their behalf, a most cordial welcome on the occasion of your first visit to this diocese. We account it a privilege to be numbered amongst those whose spiritual welfare has been entrusted to your special charge. In your capacity of Apostolic Delegate we recognise in your person an embodiment of the paternal solicitude of the Vicar of Christ on earth, the universal shepherd, for every part, however small, however remote, of the flock committed to St. Peter and his successors by Our Divine Lord and Master. To that paternal solicitude we look, and never look in vain, for guidance and encouragement in the never-ending struggle against the paganising tendencies of the age in which we live. In our own days, even in this young country, we witness a recrudescence of these tendencies, taking the form, on the one hand, of a Godless and secular system of education, calculated to withdraw the rising generation from this saving influence of religion, and, on the other hand, of renewed and undisguised attacks on the sanctity of marriage and the Christian family ideal. For more than a generation the Catholics of New Zealand under the valiant leadership of the Catholic hierarchy, have provided and maintained, not without sacrifice, schools where our Catholic children are educated, not in secular knowledge only, but above and beyond all else, in the knowledge and love of God and His Church, and the exercise of Christian virtue. Nor has the Catholic Church failed at any time to make vigorous protest against a lamentable form of legislation which has given, and more recently, enlarged the fatal facilities of divorce. In these fundamental matters we find subject for congratulation that the Catholic Church is not left altogether alone in the struggle, and that our separated brethren have, in many places, shouldered their responsibilities and ranged themselves on the side of Christianity. Whilst evil influences are still at work, and the struggle goes on, the visit of your Excellency affords another proof that the vigilance of the universal Shepherd is not relaxed, and the flock is secure within the fold. We are buoyed up with the sure and certain hope, whatever storms now or hereafter may assail the Church, that, as with St. Peter's barque on the sea of Galilee, so with us, there will be "a great calm"—at the bidding of Him who said to us as well as His apostle, "My grace is sufficient for thee."