

many of the old Basilicas were converted into Christian temples, and new churches were erected in every part of the Roman Empire. In the pages of Eusebius, the oldest of our ecclesiastical historians, we find elaborate accounts of the construction and dedication of such churches. In Jerusalem, in Constantinople, in Rome, everywhere throughout the Empire, it was the gladness of joy, he tells us, to see

Christian Temples Arise on Every Side.

Under former emperors, he adds, persecution deprived Christians of every place and opportunity for public worship. But under Constantine all these impediments were removed, and nothing was so much spoken of as the spacious churches that were rising on every side to enable Christians to celebrate the mysteries of their faith with becoming solemnity. According as the number of the faithful was increased, and the influence of the Church was making itself felt more and more in the conversion of nations, and in the civilization of rude and barbarous peoples, the very highest efforts of the human mind were employed in embodying in sensible forms the truths of faith, and the facts of revelation for the adornment of the material temple, and for the instruction of the unlearned. The painter and the sculptor were schoolmasters as well as artists in those early days. And thus it came to pass that each of the great cathedrals of Christendom was made to enshrine the patient toil, the artistic genius, and the enlightened faith of successive generations. As an evidence of that Faith in minute as well as in prominent things, the occasion of the conversion of the elder Pugin, the greatest of modern Gothic architects, may be mentioned. In examining some of the old English cathedrals for the purposes of his art, he discovered in the most hidden recesses to which the eye of no ordinary observer could ever penetrate, that the same care and the same attention to details had been bestowed by the builders as were devoted to the parts that were most open to public view. He concluded that the builders of these cathedrals must be men of genuine faith, and must have reflected the faith of their age when it was felt that what was offered to God must be complete in every part, open and secluded, and when men looked for their enduring reward not to man but to God. He therefore determined to embrace the religion which studded England with such noble cathedrals, and which inspired the builders with such practical Faith. As then your undertaking involves sacrifice, and as sacrifice for God's glory is founded on Faith, it seems appropriate that I would speak to you to-night of some of the characteristics of faith. The more intelligent and real your Faith is, the more zealously will you labor for the accomplishment of the great work to which you have put your hands.

What then is Faith?

It is the firm and undoubting assent which we give on the authority of God's word, to whatever he has been pleased to reveal to us. For an act of faith two things are required: (1) We must believe that God has spoken, and (2) we must believe that God's word is infallibly true. About the infallibility of God's word no Christian can have any doubt. We most firmly believe that God can neither Himself be deceived, nor can He deceive us. If, therefore, we know that He has made any revelation to us, faith enables and inclines us to receive that revelation with firm and undoubting assent. That God has revealed a large body of truth, we know chiefly on the authority of His Church. She is, as the apostle says, the 'pillar and ground of truth.' She is at once the depositary and the organ of God's revealed truth. That is He has committed to her custody the body of doctrine which is contained both in the Old and New Testament. And He has also made her the interpreter of that doctrine. On the authority of the Church, therefore, we know that God has revealed certain truths regarding His own nature and attributes, the worship that is due to Him, and our own future destiny. But the assent to the revealed truths rests ultimately on the infallible authority of God Himself. If we compare the knowledge we have by faith with the knowledge we have from other sources, we shall easily understand the certainty and importance of faith compared with any other source of knowledge.

Apart from Divine Revelation

there are three other sources from which our knowledge comes: (1) from the use of our senses; (2) from the exercise of our reason, and (3) from the testimony of our fellow men. Usually our senses are very liable to deception, and though if all the senses combine in testifying to a fact which properly falls under their observation, they give certain testimony, still such testimony differs entirely from the testimony of faith, both as regards its objects and the motive on which we accept it. (2) Much of our knowledge comes to us from the exercise of our reason. We can derive various conclusions from the stock of knowledge which our senses supply, and thus largely increase our general store. But still such extended knowledge differs not only in its subject matter, but in its certainty from what faith supplies. We may wrongly apprehend the facts from which we reason, or our reasoning itself may be at fault in deriving wrong conclusions from ascertained facts. (3) Again a large body of our knowledge comes to us from the testimony of our fellow men. They tell us of things we ourselves have not seen, of places we have not visited, of events we have not witnessed, and according to the trust we repose in them, and the probability that they are not themselves deceived nor willing to deceive us, we accept what they relate as true. But still the testimony of our fellow men is usually confined to facts belonging to the natural order; can seldom produce absolute certainty, and never the absolute certainty of faith. By faith then we believe, first of all, what is impervious to our senses, our reason, and the testimony of our fellow men, and, secondly, the motive of our faith is the veracity of God Himself. This is what the apostle means when he tells us that faith is 'the argument of things that do not appear' and 'the substance of things to be hoped for.' It is

faith that assures us of such things as 'the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor hath it entered into the mind of man to conceive.' It is likewise the privilege of faith to give substance to our hopes with regard to the happiness of the future life. Without faith we could have at most but a longing desire and uncertain expectation. But by faith we have a certain assurance that beyond this world there is a kingdom of bliss in which all who, like the apostle, 'have fought the good fight,' finished their course and kept the faith will receive the 'crown of justice.'

Now that absolute and undoubting belief in God's word and promise is

The First Condition He Requires

from those who come into His service. Hence it is that the same Apostle says that 'without faith it is impossible to please God, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and is a rewarder to them that seek Him.' Hence, too, the Holy Council of Trent declares that faith is 'the root and foundation of justification.' We are bound to know, serve, and love God, but this we cannot do without first believing in Him and accepting His revelation, that is without faith.

Without the true faith men may be kind, just, charitable, and eminent for many natural virtues, but such natural virtues will never save any one. These natural virtues may and will be rewarded in this life by some earthly blessings, but not by the supernatural reward of heavenly happiness. It is in this sense that St. Augustine says that God gave the empire of the world to the Romans as a reward for their natural virtues. But that reward, like every natural reward, ended with this life.

From the necessity of faith we may judge how admirable are its fruits. It is not a mere intellectual belief that God requires of us. It is a living, practical, operative faith that worketh by charity. And in proportion as the truths of faith are realised clearly, vividly, and thoroughly, in the same proportion will a man's life correspond with his faith. St. Paul devotes a whole chapter, the eleventh of his Epistle to the Hebrews to a demonstration of the efficacy and fruits of faith even under the Old Law. He refers to the faith of Abel which made his sacrifice acceptable to God rather than that of Cain; of Noah in building the ark in obedience to God's word; of Abraham leaving his country and going into the land to which God called him, and in being prepared to offer in sacrifice his only son if God had desired it; of Moses in 'choosing rather to be afflicted with the people of God than to have the pleasure of sin for a time.' Time, he says, would fail him to tell of others 'of whom the world was not worthy, who for justice sake wandered in deserts, in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth.' All these, he says, were 'approved by the testimony of faith.' No one need stray with a lamp to guide his feet. No one need fall who has a strong staff to support him. No servant will linger at his work when he recognises that his master's eye is upon him. But faith is the lamp given us by God to light our way to heaven. It is the strong staff he has put into our hands to support us in our weakness. It is the secret monitor that warns us that the all-seeing eye of God is always upon us. We are told that Abraham walked before God and was perfect; that is he constantly kept before his mind that he was always in the presence of the Almighty, and hence he served God perfectly. It is your faith that animates you to undertake the building of a Cathedral that will be worthy of your religion and your diocese. Let no one say: It will be too large, too grand, too expensive. You may trust to your zealous and considerate Bishop that he will not lay on you a burden you cannot bear. But within these limits be not afraid. Be not wanting in generosity when God's glory is concerned. Imitate in some measure His generosity towards you. See how He has blessed your country. Consider with what profusion He has dowered your land. Look to these eternal mountains and recognise His power and strength of which they are the emblems. Observe your plains and placid lakes and find an image of His repose and happiness. Think of the mineral wealth He has locked up in your mountains and be assured of His providence. Count, if you can, the trees of the forest, the flowers of the fields, and the fruits of the gardens, all of which are His gifts, and then put a limit on your generosity and say, this much He deserves from me and no more. Remember as David did that you are about to build a house not for man, but for God. That house will be the Cathedral of the diocese, the See of the Bishop. It will enshrine all that is most holy and precious in your religion. Build a house for God such that men passing by and seeing it will not need to ask what manner of house is that? Build a house that will be a testimony of your faith, an earnest of your hope, and a pledge of your love of God. Build a house and offer it to God, and leave it to your children as a substantial part of their inheritance. Build a house and have it consecrated to the service of religion, and believe that if the glory of God does not fill it visibly, as it once filled the Temple of Solomon, the sacramental grace of God will occupy it not on one occasion only, but from day to day, as long as it lasts, that the eyes of His mercy will be open, and the ears of His compassion attentive to everyone that will pray in that consecrated place. I beg to congratulate all—Bishop, priests, and people—on the work you have undertaken to-day, and I pray that with God's blessing that work may proceed and prosper.

Bishop Grimes, in a short address, thanked the visiting prelates and clergy for having come to assist in the ceremonies of that day, and also all who contributed in various ways to make the proceedings so successful. He announced that over £2000 had been laid on the foundation stone that day, and the sum, he believed, was a record for the Colony for any such function.

Mr. E. McNamara then gave a fine rendering of 'Les Rameaux,' and the solemnities were closed by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.