

Morning Office of the day begins. A prophecy, a prayer, a lesson, and tract are sung, and then follows the history of the Passion according to St. John, which is sung in the same way as St. Matthew's Passion on Palm Sunday. After the Passion, the celebrant offers up solemn prayers for the Church and Pope, for all Christians and catechumens, for all who are in trouble or danger, and for the conversion of heretics, schismatics, Jews, and pagans. Before each prayer, the deacon sings 'Electamus genua,' and the subdeacon replies, 'Levate.' Before the prayer for the Jews, however, the genuflection is omitted, as the Jews genuflected when mocking our Lord. After this series of intercessory prayers come the unveiling and afterwards the Adoration of the Cross by the celebrant, clergy, and laity. The phrase 'Adoration of the Cross' has been in use from the earliest times and it is found in the most ancient monuments of Christian liturgy. The Ambrosian Missal contains four prayers for the ceremony, of which the third is 'A Prayer at the Adoration of the Cross,' and the fourth 'A Prayer after the Adoration of the Cross.' In the Antiphonarium of St. Gregory, we have an 'Antiphon at the Adoration of the Cross.' By the act of adoration we do not pay to the cross the homage due to God alone; we merely manifest the sentiment of profound respect and veneration which every Christian must feel in the presence of the symbol of our redemption.

After the adoration of the cross the clergy go in procession to the chapel of repose, singing the hymn 'Vexilla Regis.' The celebrant takes the consecrated Host, carries it back in procession to the altar, and commences the Mass of the 'Preenacted,' so called because the Blessed Sacrament is not consecrated during the Mass, and the celebrant consumes the Host consecrated on the previous day. The Church has deemed it right not to celebrate the unbloody sacrifice on the day which she has set apart to commemorate the bloody sacrifice offered on Calvary. Hence during the Mass everything relating to the sacrifice and consecration is omitted. The celebrant having returned to the altar, merely incenses the Blessed Sacrament, recites the 'Pater Noster,' elevates the sacred Host for the adoration of the faithful, says the last of the prayers before the Communion, and the 'Domine non sum dignus,' and receives the Blessed Sacrament. He then retires from the altar, and Vespers are recited. In the evening the office of 'Tenebrae' is recited as on the previous day.

HOLY SATURDAY.

The first ceremony of this day begins early in the morning with the blessing of the new fire, which takes place at the principal door of the church. During the blessing the priest begs of God to infuse into the hearts of the faithful the light and grace of the Holy Ghost, to enlighten them as the new fire is destined to enlighten the church unceasingly night and day. He also blesses the five grains of incense which represent the five wounds of our Divine Lord, from which flowed His precious Blood to wash away the sins of the world. A procession is then formed and moves into the church, a triple candle being gradually lighted from the new fire during the procession, to signify the faith of the Apostles, which was revived by the successive apparitions of Christ, and which gave them courage to spread throughout the world the light of the Christian revelation. Whilst the deacon sings the incomparable chant, 'Exultet,' he places the five grains of incense in the Paschal Candle, which, with the lamps of the church, is immediately afterwards lighted. The lighting of the Paschal Candle represents the resurrection of Christ, while the lighting of the lamps is a symbol of the resurrection of the human race from the sepulchre of sin, which was brought about by the death of Christ. After the reading of several prophecies and prayers the baptismal font is blessed.

The water in the font is scattered towards the four quarters of the world, to indicate the Catholicity of the Church and the world-wide efficacy of her sacraments; the priest breathes on the water in the form of a cross and plunges the Paschal Candle three times into the water, for the Spirit of God is to hallow it, and the power of Christ is to descend upon it; and lastly, a few drops of the oil of catechumens and of the chrism are poured, to signify the union of Christ our anointed King with His people. On the way back from the font the Litanies of the Saints are begun, they are continued while the sacred ministers lie prostrate before the altar, and, as they end, the altar is decked with flowers and the Mass is begun in white vestments. At the 'Gloria' the organ sounds and bells are rung, and the joyful strains of the 'Alleluia' peal forth after the Epistle. The Vespers of the day are inserted in the Mass after the Communion. The kiss of peace is omitted in the Mass on Holy Saturday, because in the ancient rite the faithful kissed each other in the church as day was breaking with the words, 'The Lord is risen'; and there was a natural objection to anticipate the ceremony in the Mass at midnight. The 'Agnus Dei,' which was introduced by Pope Sergius towards the end of the seventh century, was never added to this Mass. The Communion and Post-Communion are replaced by Vespers, and there is no Offertory.

EASTER SUNDAY.

Easter is the feast of our Lord's resurrection. The word Easter is derived from that of the Saxon goddess Eastre, the same deity whom the Germans proper called Ostara, and honored as the divinity of the dawn. The German nations called the great Church-feast which fell at the beginning of spring Easter, and the name continued among us, like such names as Thursday, long after the heathen goddess had been forgotten. All Christians, except those of the German family, call the feast of Christ's resurrection by some modification of *pasha*, the term which the Church herself uses in her liturgy. This term is of Jewish origin, and therefore we must begin with a few words on the feast of Passover, from which the Christian feast is in a certain sense derived. Passover is a literal translation of the Hebrew name for the feast or pasch of the New Testament and of Christian writers. It is certain that Christ observed the Passover the night before He died, that He made it the occasion of instituting the Eucharist, and that He, in

His Passion, was the true paschal lamb prefigured by the lamb of the old Hebrew feast. Thus St. John calls special attention to the fact that not a bone of our Lord was broken on the cross; and St. Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, argues that Christ is the true paschal lamb, and the life of Christians is to be a perpetual feast of thanksgiving for the deliverance they have obtained by Christ's blood. As the Jews removed leaven from their houses at the time of Passover, so Christians are to purge away once for all the leaven of malice and wickedness.

Easter is, as St. Leo calls it, the 'feast of feasts,' the greatest of Christian solemnities. Down to the twelfth century each day in Easter week was a holiday of obligation. At present this is the case only with the first three days, and now in most countries even Easter Monday and Tuesday are only days of devotion. All movable feasts are calculated from Easter. The joyful character of the time is marked in the services of the Church—e.g., by the chanting of the 'Vidi Aquam' instead of the 'Asperges' before Mass; by the constant repetition of the 'Alleluia' in Mass and office all through the paschal season—i.e., until Trinity Sunday. On Easter Sunday the office is very short, because in old times the services were prolonged far into the night of Holy Saturday, so that little time was left for the matins and lauds of Easter Sunday. The short office is continued during the week, probably because the first day determined the office for the days that followed, and because there would have been a special inconvenience in changing it in a week when so many neophytes had just been baptised and were taking part for the first time in the full service of the Church.

Diocesan News.

ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON.

(From our own correspondent.)

March 23.

His Grace the Archbishop returned from Rotorua to-day.

St. Patrick's Day was celebrated in Palmerston North in a most fitting manner. Numbers of communicants thronged the altar rails at the eight o'clock Mass. Solemn High Mass was sung at 11 o'clock by the Rev. Father Tymons, who preached a touching and impressive sermon on the glories of the Irish Church. His listeners will not forget for many a day the beautiful words of the preacher. They seemed to stir up the religious and patriotic feelings of the congregation and the heart of many a poor exile thrilled with honest pride as the preacher dilated on the loyalty and fidelity of the Irish people to the Holy See. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament was kept up during the day. Procession and Benediction brought the day to a close.

At a special general meeting of the Marist Brothers' Old Boys' Association final arrangements were made for the publication of a magazine. The Rev. Father Goggan occupied the chair. After discussion it was decided to call the paper 'The Catholic Magazine,' Mr E. Fitzgibbon was appointed editor, and Messrs J. M. O'Reilly and P. S. Foley sub-editors. The magazine will be issued every quarter, the first appearing next month. The usual weekly meeting was held on the following Thursday, when original papers were contributed on the following subjects:—'Importance of study,' 'A short sketch of the writers of the century,' 'The influence of early associations on the formation of character,' 'The Coronation Oath,' and 'Single Tax.' The papers were able and interesting, and evoked considerable discussion. The meeting night has been altered from Thursday to Monday for the convenience of members.

Solemn High Mass was celebrated in St. Joseph's Church by the Very Rev. Father Keogh on the Feast of St. Patrick. Father Clancy was deacon, Father Bowden subdeacon, Father Herbert acting as master of ceremonies. The choir was very ably assisted by Miss Rowe, who sang the soprano, and Mr Meredith, who took the bass solos in Haydn's Imperial Mass. Miss McDonald was the alto soloist, and Mr Rowe the tenor. In the evening the church was packed, when the Very Rev. Father Keogh preached his first sermon in New Zealand. Judged by the clearness, conciseness, and eloquence of his initial effort, Father Keogh is indeed a most valuable acquisition to the large body of our able preachers in this Colony. The subject of the sermon was 'Faith,' and in it special reference was made to the great faith of the glorious Apostle of Ireland and the Irish people. The Very Rev. Father Keogh gave the Benediction, and was assisted by Fathers Clancy and Bowden as deacon and subdeacon respectively.

The Hibernian Society are to be congratulated on the success which attended their Saint Patrick's Day Celebration Sports meeting and Irish Concert held last Saturday. The large attendance of the public at each was proof of the wisdom of holding them on that day in spite of the fact that the holiday was observed by the Government and City Council on the following Monday. In the morning a procession of the members headed by the Wellington Garrison Band marched through the principal streets to the Basin Reserve. Nothing resembling a hitch occurred throughout the day and the officers are to be congratulated on the punctuality shown in getting off the various events. Among the visitors on the ground during the afternoon was the Right Hon. R. J. Seddon (one of the patrons of the celebration) who was accompanied by Mrs. and Miss Seddon.

The Irish national concert, which was held in the Opera House on Saturday evening, the 16th inst., was in every way as successful as those held in former years to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. The programme of music was of an unusually high standard of excellence, and every item, both vocal and instrumental, was encored. Miss Katie Connell, who is about to proceed Home to study under the best musical masters of the day, contributed with great feeling 'She is far from the land,' and for an encore repeated part of the song. Later on 'The meeting of the waters' was excellently sung