

Friends at Court

GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

- April 28, Sunday.—Third Sunday after Easter. St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church.
- „ 29, Monday.—St. Peter, Martyr.
- „ 30, Tuesday.—St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin.
- May 1, Wednesday.—SS. Philip and James, Apostles.
- „ 2, Thursday.—St. Athanasius, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor.
- „ 3, Friday.—The Finding of the Holy Cross.
- „ 4, Saturday.—St. Monica, Widow.

St. Peter, Martyr.

St. Peter was born at Verona, in Italy. At the age of 15 he was received into the Dominican Order by the great St. Dominic. To a profound humility he joined exceptional talents. He was very successful as a preacher, and in particular brought about the conversion of many Manichaean heretics, a sect which was still very numerous in the neighborhood of Milan. He met his death at the hands of some sectarians, who, remaining obstinate in their heresy, were enraged at his successful efforts to propagate the genuine teaching of Christ. A.D. 1252.

St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin.

Siena, in Italy, has the honor of having been the birthplace of this great saint. From her earliest years St. Catherine cultivated a spirit of perfect union with God, and even when engaged in the most distracting occupations succeeded in keeping herself no less sensible of His presence than if she had no exterior employment. She was indefatigable in her efforts to bring souls to God, and her words and example, and even the very sight of her emaciated but saintly countenance, were the cause of many conversions. She seemed to have a special grace for effecting the reconciliation of enemies. Her powerful influence in this direction was exercised, not only in the case of private individuals, but also in reconciling States that were at variance, and in obtaining the submission and pardon of rebellious cities which had incurred the censures of the Holy See. But the most important service she rendered to the Church was the restoration of the Sovereign Pontiff to his episcopal city, after a residence of nearly seventy years at Avignon, in France, an end being thus put to the innumerable evils resulting to the Church from the prolonged absence of the Vicar of Christ from Rome. St. Catherine died in 1380, at the age of 47, and was buried in Rome, in the Church of the Minerva, where her remains are still preserved.

GRAINS OF GOLD

A MORNING OFFERING.

Oh, Lord! before I start this day,
I make my offering, and pray
That you'll receive it; and help me
To love and serve no one but Thee.

So now I offer unto You,
Each deed and action that I do,
Each thought I have and word I say,
To sing your praises all the day.

Our deeds may be immortal though our names may perish.

Nature is lavish in the production of everything but great men.

Glory can safely be despised by those only who have fairly won it.

People's dislikes are always more characteristic of them than their likes.

It is a good plan to believe only half you hear, and then forget most of that.

What you do is important, what your inner life is determines your destiny.

Many a man prides himself on his judgment when he is merely a good guesser.

It needs more courage to fight the bothers and the worries and the humdrum of life than to meet its great emergencies.

'STAND FAST IN THE FAITH'

(A Weekly Instruction specially written for the N.Z. Tablet by 'GHIMEL'.)

1. THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

'Christ is risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep: for by a man came death, and by a Man the resurrection of the dead' (I. Cor. xv., 20-21).

If Christ is risen again in a human body, it is possible for a human body to rise again. So argues St. Paul against the Greeks of his day, who thought the idea of resurrection evidently impossible. If the risen Christ is the Head of the Church, His Mystical Body, then the members of that Body must rise with Him, its Head. So runs the argument for the actuality of our resurrection, when the present teaching is connected with the doctrine about Christ's Headship laid down in chaps. vi., 15 and xii., 27. This message of hope for our future marks off Christianity from Paganism, ancient and modern.

The greatest geniuses among the Pagans of olden time, with perhaps one exception, had no certainty in the matter of a future life: when they did not openly deny it and reject it as a fable, they thought it only a beautiful dream. Our latter-day Pagans—and their name is legion—look upon life as a riddle, and sadly conclude that there is nothing after death, and that death itself is a mighty illusion. Dr. Barry, in his brilliant book, *Heralds of Revolt* (p. 233), thus sums up this pessimistic creed:—'A little moment of promise and passion, great fears, irremediable losses; and then, the sea swallows down what the earth has brought forth. Seed-time and harvest return, return for ever; but there is no garner of life. Endless generations, no immortality. The spiritual creed, relying on which men have dared and done noble things for thousands of years, has at length, these writers tell us, been shattered, dissolved, explained away, by science running out into nescience, like a stream losing itself in mid Atlantic. . . . All alike is illusion, death as well as life, good and evil, pleasure and pain, love, righteousness, remorse, penitence, and beyond all other things, hope.' Therefore, *Resigne-toi, mon cœur; dors ton sommeil de brute* (Be content, sad heart; sleep the sleep of the brute). We may set over against this sad and hopeless outlook on a blank future, the simple and yet sublime teachings of Catholic philosophy and theology about the destiny of soul and of body: (a) Reason teaches us that the soul of man is by nature imperishable or immortal. God, of course, could take away its existence, but apart from such a positive act, one of the properties incident to its nature as such is immortality: it was made by its Creator in such a way as to survive the dissolution that takes place at death, to exist always.

(b) Reason and faith combine to teach that as a matter of fact the soul will survive the body, and, what is more, that this life of the soul after what we call death will never end, the human soul is immortal.

(c) Faith bids us believe that at the Last Day the bodies of men, good and bad, will be raised up from the dead, and re-united to their souls. The ultimate ground for such a belief is to be found in the fact that God in the beginning placed man in a supernatural state, and after man had lost the privileges of this state by his sin, renewed them in Christ, Who came 'to restore all things'; one of these privileges is the final deliverance of the body from the power of death. Faith teaches us so much: does reason throw no light on the future of our bodies, as it does on that of our souls? What we know even by light of reason of the nature of the soul on the one hand, and of God's wisdom, justice, holiness, and goodness on the other, assures us that the soul will live on; is it also reasonable to think that the separation of soul and body at death will not be endless, that there will be a reunion, and that consequently the body will be raised up again? Some philosophers answer in the negative: St. Thomas answers in the affirmative, and gives these convincing reasons: (1) The souls of men are immortal. But the soul is naturally united with the body, being essentially the form [that is, the animating principle] of the body. Therefore it is against the nature of the soul to be without the body. But nothing that is against nature