

## Friends at Court

### GLEANINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

- May 18, Sunday.—Trinity Sunday.  
 „ 19, Monday.—St. Peter Celestine, Pope and Confessor.  
 „ 20, Tuesday.—St. Bernardine of Siena, Confessor.  
 „ 21, Wednesday.—St. Felix of Cantalice, Confessor.  
 „ 22, Thursday.—Corpus Christi.  
 „ 23, Friday.—Of the Octave.  
 „ 24, Saturday.—Blessed Virgin Mary, Help of Christians.

St. Peter Celestine, Pope and Confessor.

St. Peter, a native of Southern Italy, spent the greater part of a very austere life in solitude. In his old age he found himself unexpectedly elected Pope. He endeavoured in vain to decline the proffered office, but at length yielded to the importunities of kings and cardinals. Considering, however, that through inexperience of the world he was unfitted for the government of the Church, he resigned the Pontificate after four months, with the object of spending the remainder of his days in the retirement of his monastery. He died about eighteen months after his resignation, A.D. 1296.

St. Bernardine of Siena, Confessor.

St. Bernardine, a native of the Republic of Siena, in Italy, gave early proof of solid piety, and particularly of a tender devotion to the Mother of God. His charity to the sick was not less remarkable than his patience in bearing his own infirmities. Having become a priest, it is incredible how much good he effected by his preaching in various parts of Italy—a result due not so much to his natural gifts as to the burning zeal which inspired his words. St. Bernardine died in 1444, in the sixty-fourth year of his age.

St. Felix of Cantalice, Confessor.

St. Felix was born at Cantalice, in the Papal States, in 1513. As a lay brother in the Capuchin Order, he gave a perfect example of humility, obedience, and mortification. He died in Rome at the age of 72.

### GRAINS OF GOLD

#### AT SEA.

Lord, Who art wonderful upon the deep,  
 Whose ways unknown are in the trackless sea,  
 Whose footsteps hidden in its mystery  
 (Where winds and waves in endless freedom sweep),  
 Whose watchful eye is never closed in sleep:  
 Thy sea-borne servants put their trust in Thee;  
 Bring them to havens where they fain would be,  
 Their outward and their homeward goings keep.

Lord, when life's billows rage tempestuously,  
 Amid the storms of sorrow, doubt, and fear,  
 Still, as of old, be Thou forever near;  
 From every peril set Thy loved ones free;  
 And when at last the harbor lights shine clear,  
 Show us the haven of Eternity.

—*Arc Maria.*

God planted us just where we grow, and blossom and fruit must be drawn, not from the meadow on the other side of the road, or from the mountain beyond the valley, but from the soil now about our roots, and the air and rain and sun above us playing on our leaves and branches.

As long as the vital bond of your friendship with God remains unbroken, the world, the flesh, and the devil will seek in vain to sway you from your moral steadfastness. It is only when you forget to converse with the Heart of Jesus that you run the risk of falling away from the first standing ground of your integrity.

## 'STAND FAST IN THE FAITH'

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

### THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS EXPLAINED: VI. FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE OFFERTORY

The Mass consists of two main parts. The first part extends from the prayers at the beginning to the Offertory, and is really a preparation for the sacrifice properly so called. In olden times it went by the name of the Mass of the Catechumens, for as these aspirants to Baptism were only initiated into the mysteries of faith by degrees, they were obliged to leave the church at the end of the Gospel. 'This regulation was a precaution in the case of the neophytes; it safeguarded with secrecy the things in the liturgy held most sacred by Christians living in a pagan atmosphere. For public sinners it was a form of penance.' The object of this introduction is to prepare the celebrant and the faithful for what follows, and this is done by chants (the 'Introit,' 'Gloria in Excelsis,' etc.), prayers (the 'Kyrie,' 'Collects,' etc.), and liturgical readings from Sacred Scripture (the Epistle and Gospel). The second part—once known as the Mass of the Faithful—is the Sacrificial Action, and consists of the three principal acts of Sacrifice—namely, the Offertory, Consecration, and Communion. The Creed comes at the junction between the two services. The word 'Mass,' it may be remarked in passing, comes from the Latin '*missa*,' which is a late form for '*missio*,' and originally meant 'dismissal.' At the end of the Gospel the deacon said to the catechumens, and at the end of the sacrifice to the faithful, '*Ite, missa est*,' 'Go, it is the dismissal.'

*Prayers at the foot of the Altar.* These prayers are: the Sign of the Cross; the 'Introibo' and the Psalm, 'Judica me'; the 'Confiteor'; and two prayers said as the priest goes up to the altar. They give expression to the celebrant's confidence in God, his humble sorrow and open confession of sin—all fit sentiments in one who is about to approach the altar of the all-holy God. The celebrant begins by making the *Sign of the Cross*, the faithful in the person of the server answering 'Amen,' 'So be it,' to express the desire that their prayers be heard. Then follows the *2nd Psalm*, in which the holy King David, persecuted by his son Absalom, puts his case before God and longs for the day when he may ascend to the temple of the Lord; the priest, too, remembering God's Holiness and Justice, and his own unworthiness, speaks humbly and yet lays his cause before his Maker in all confidence. Next, the *Confiteor, or Confession*. 'After the example of the tax-gatherer, whose prayer for mercy ascended to God's throne, the priest humbly bows down, for, in the presence of the Almighty, man is but dust and ashes. He knows that no living thing is of itself justified in the eyes of the Lord: he therefore confesses his guilt with sentiments of deep humility, thrice striking his breast, to symbolise the threefold source of sin—thought, word, and deed. Turning to Mary, the refuge of sinners, and to all God's dear Saints, he implores their aid, for the innocent in hands and clean of heart alone ascend into the mountain of the Lord, that is, to the sacred altar.' This confession of the priest is followed by that of the people. The words are spoken by the server, but the confession is made in the name of the faithful, whose character of offerers with the priest the liturgy of the Mass continually emphasises. The priest then recites two prayers in which he begs that the almighty and merciful God will grant him and the faithful pardon, absolution, and remission of their sins. Next, bowing down in humility, the priest says some *versicles from the 84th Psalm*, in which he earnestly asks God's grace and help for himself and the people. Then he greets the people with '*Dominus vobiscum*,' 'The Lord be with you,' that you may pray aright; they answer through the server '*Et cum spiritu tuo*,' 'And with your spirit,' whilst you offer up our prayers. This greeting, taken from the Old Testament and frequently used by