

FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

[A WEEKLY INSTRUCTION FOR YOUNG AND OLD.]

THE BLESSED TRINITY.

We have considered the nature and the attributes of God, and seen that the divine nature and the divinity are one—that God is one and single in nature. He is not, however, one and single in person, for there are Three Divine Persons. This is the dogma and the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity, which is clearly revealed to us in Scripture. "Baptise," Our Lord says, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The Blessed Trinity is the first, the most sublime, and the most profound of all our mysteries. We will first make an exposition of our faith on this subject; and secondly, suggest certain considerations concerning the mystery itself.

First Article: Doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

1. Faith teaches us that God is a Trinity; that is, that in one and the same divine essence, or divine nature, there are Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. These Three Persons are numerically distinct from each other, but perfectly equal, having all but one and the same nature and substance. They are, in other words, consubstantial.

2. The Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity are eternal, existing from all eternity each in the manner proper to Himself. God the Father exists without birth or origin; God the Son draws His origin from the Father by means of birth—He is "born of the Father"; and God the Holy Ghost draws His origin by procession—He proceeds from the Father and the Son as from a single principle.

3. The attributes of the divine essence are common to the whole Trinity. Power, wisdom, and holiness belong equally to each of the Three Persons; and, in the same way, all the exterior works of the universe—the creation, redemption, and sanctification of the world and of souls—are likewise the common work of the Three Divine Persons. The Sacred Scripture, however, attributes power and creation in a more especial manner to the Father, wisdom and redemption to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost holiness and sanctification. This way of speaking is called appropriation. It is founded on the personal attributes of the Divine Persons, and is extended moreover to other attributes and other works.

4. The redemption belongs to the Son, not only by appropriation, but also by personal execution. The Blessed Trinity willed to save the human race, and the Second Person, God the Son, came down from heaven, and was made man by taking to His Divine Person our human nature. In this nature, which He had made His own, He died on the Cross, an expiatory victim for the whole human race. For this reason He is called the God made man, the Man-God, the Mediator, the Redeemer, the Author, by His Passion, of our salvation.

5. The Three Divine Persons manifested themselves at the same time at the baptism of Jesus Christ. God the Son was then visible as man, the Holy Ghost appeared in the form of a dove, and the Father announced His presence by the voice which was heard, saying of Our Lord, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

6. By the coming, descent, or mission is signified the relations which the Three Divine Persons have with man on earth. Such relations may be either visible or invisible. Thus God the Son was sent by His Father to save the world; God the Holy Ghost was sent by the Father and the Son on the day of Pentecost to sanctify the Church; God the Father was not sent, but He came to render testimony to Jesus Christ. These are the visible missions or comings of the Blessed Trinity. The invisible coming, or mission, takes place when the Divine Persons begin to work in our souls in a special manner, which happens when we receive Baptism, Confirmation, the Holy Communion, and the other Sacraments; also in the Mass and in prayer. The Divine Persons—at such times descend into well-disposed souls, purifying them and establishing their abode in them, as in a living temple. This ineffable union of souls with the Blessed Trinity is revealed to us in the words of Christ: "He who loves Me will keep My word; and the Father will love him, and we will come to Him

and take up our abode within Him" (John xiv. 23).

7. The names of the Persons of the Blessed Trinity are expressive of their individual attributes, and are therefore incommunicable. There is but one Father, one Son, and one Holy Ghost. God the Son is called also the Word, also Wisdom, and the Substantial Image of the Father; God the Holy Ghost is called Charity, Love, the Union of the Father and the Son, the Paraclete or Consoler, the Gift of the Most High, the Giver of Gifts. All this doctrine concerning the Blessed Trinity must necessarily have been revealed to us by faith; our own reason being incapable of discovering it, because it contains what is called a mystery.

N.Z. CATHOLIC FEDERATION

CHRISTCHURCH DIOCESAN COUNCIL.

The annual meeting of the Christchurch Diocesan Council of the Catholic Federation was held on the 20th ult. in the Hibernian Hall, Christchurch (writes our travelling correspondent). In the unavoidable absence of the president (Rev. Dr. Kennedy) Mr. J. R. Hayward vice-president) presided. Among those present were Very Rev. C. Graham, S.M., M.A. (Rector of St. Bede's College), Rev. Fathers T. Hanrahan, Adm., Kerley, S.M., and O'Connor. The report showed that the year's operations had been most successful. The enthusiasm shown in the organisation throughout the diocese was proved by the returns sent forward by the various parish committees, only one failing to come to hand in time for the meeting. Mr. F. J. Doolan's resignation from the position of diocesan secretary owing to his removal to Wellington, was received with regret, his valuable work in connection with Federation matters being well known and appreciated not alone in the diocese but throughout the Dominion. A strong and energetic committee was elected for the ensuing year, and already there is every indication that all previous records as regards membership will be exceeded.

CONVENT OF MERCY, GREYMOUTH

A very pleasant function took place at the Convent of Mercy, Greymouth, on Saturday, July 30, when the parents, friends, and school companions of Misses Marjorie Fletcher and Borgia McSherry assembled in the convent schoolroom to witness the presentation of the Trinity College exhibitions. The proceedings opened with a "Welcome" chorus, sung by the pupils. This was followed by a pianoforte trio, "Qui Vive?" played by three Trinity College exhibitors—Misses Doreen Daly, Marjorie Fletcher, and Borgia McSherry. The following musical programme was then rendered:—Instrumental selection, "Serenade" (Schubert), played by Misses Vera Hannan, Mary Phelan, Doris Lalor, Marjorie Fletcher, Annie Hudd, and Ethel Wallace (violins); vocal solo, "When the Heart is Young," Mrs. Clarence Moss; instrumental selection, "Lisette" (Papini) played by Misses Vera Hannan, Mary Phelan, Doris Lalor, Marjorie Fletcher, Annie Hudd, Ethel Wallace (violins); vocal solo, "Angus MacDonald," Mrs. Stoop; violin duet, "Canzonetta," Misses Vera Hannan, Doris Lalor, M. Phelan, and M. Fletcher; vocal solo, "To the Angels," Mrs. W. Fletcher; vocal duet, "A.B.C.," Misses Bernadine Gilbert and Vera Ryan; pianoforte duet, "Golden Bells," Misses Marjorie Fletcher and Borgia McSherry; chorus, "Hail to Our Dear School To-day," pupils. At the conclusion of the programme, Rev. Father Long (the local secretary for Trinity College, London) said that it gave him great pleasure to present the exhibitions. He congratulated the winners, who, he said, had received all their education in music and school-work at the convent, Greymouth. After referring to the educational value and refining influence of music, Father Long presented Miss Marjorie Fletcher with nine guineas and Miss Borgia McSherry with six guineas. Mr. J. Fletcher responded for himself and Mr. McSherry. Mr. Fletcher said he was very pleased to have the opportunity of publicly thanking the Sisters of Mercy, Greymouth, for all the kindness and attention shown to his daughters. He concluded by wishing the Sisters a continuance of success in all the works undertaken by them for the promotion of education in Greymouth.

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