

FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

[A WEEKLY INSTRUCTION FOR YOUNG AND OLD.]

Second Article: Mystery of the Holy Trinity.

8. By a mystery is generally meant a truth of whose existence we are certain, but which in itself we cannot understand, excepting in an imperfect manner. Thus, the light of day, the seed which is sown in the earth, the blade of grass, and the grain of sand which we tread on, all contain inexplicable secrets. They are mysteries of nature. There are, in like manner, mysteries of faith.

A mystery of faith is a revealed truth, which is so much exalted above human intelligence that man could never have soared to its heights unaided by the light of faith; and which, when he is thus enabled to know, he still remains incapable of understanding or explaining.

9. A mystery of faith is above human reason, without, however, being contrary to it. It is a fact of the supernatural order, of which, by faith, we know the existence, though without understanding it; just as in the order of nature we know many facts which we cannot explain. If there is a mystery about the creatures that surround us on every side, it is not astonishing that in the supernatural and invisible world, and especially in that which concerns the infinite abyss of the divine nature, there should be depths which we are unable to sound. Reason must submit with docility to the word of God; it would be culpable temerity to try to penetrate into the profound secrets contained therein. The mysteries of faith are like the sun, impenetrable in themselves: they give life and light to those who walk simply in their rays; but they blind the eyes that would audaciously try to scrutinise their splendor.

10. The mystery of the Blessed Trinity consists in the double fact of the plurality of Persons and the unity of nature in God. Here on earth each person has his own body and soul, constituting his own individual and incommunicable nature. In a family, father, mother, and child are three distinct persons, each possessing an individual nature; but in God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, though Three Persons, have only one and the same nature. We cannot see how this is possible, because we do not understand the terms Divine Nature and Divine Persons. We only know that the Nature is not the Person; which is sufficient to show us that there is no contradiction in the declaration that "the Three Divine Persons have but one and the same divine nature, and are only one God."

11. The common objection raised by infidelity, that "the Trinity is a contradiction, and that to admit it is to say that three are one," has no foundation. We deny, in the first place, the supposition; faith does not say that three are one, that the number three is the same thing as unity, and that three persons are one person. What faith teaches is that the Three Divine Persons are only one God, because They have only one and the same Divine Nature. This is a mysterious doctrine, it is true, and apparently strange, but it contains no real contradiction.

12. Though this great mystery surpasses the limits of our intelligence, and we are incapable of understanding it in this life, we find, nevertheless, in nature some emblems of the Holy Trinity which facilitate our conception of the dogma and make us feel its propriety. The human soul is a type of the Holy Trinity, endowed as it is with its three distinct faculties of memory, understanding, and will, with which it seems to be blended. Another is the sun, which gives light and heat, and is itself light and heat. The root, the stem, and the branches form but one tree. Three distinct sparks when amalgamated give one and the same light. We say in the Mass that God the Son is God of God, light of light. We may add to the foregoing figures of the Blessed Trinity which are spoken of by the fathers that of the triangle, or mysterious union of three angles, symbolising the Trinity. But indeed these imperfect figures or emblems fall very far short of explaining the depths of the mystery. We can only bow our weak intelligence before the Supreme Wisdom, and believe with all our hearts the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, as we believe all the other truths which God reveals to us, and say, "I believe, my God, because Thou hast revealed

it, and Thy Word is infallible; and in this faith I wish to live and die."

FAREWELL GATHERING AT GREYMOUTH

MISS AND MESSRS. M. AND P. FITZGERALD,
HONORED.

Last evening (says the *Grey River Argus* of the 21st ult.) there was a large gathering of the friends of Miss Fitzgerald and Messrs. M. and P. Fitzgerald at Columba Hall, the occasion being a largely attended farewell social tendered to them on the eve of their departure from Greymouth to take up their residence in Wellington. During an interval Mr. J. Greaney, addressing the gathering, referred to the loss the community was sustaining by the departure of the guests of the evening. Miss Fitzgerald, by her kindness and courtesy, had won the regard of all who were privileged to know her, while the Messrs. Fitzgerald were gentlemen whom to know was to respect and esteem. The speaker referred to the interest Mr. M. Fitzgerald had in past years shown in the welfare of the town and district, and felt sure that he would prosper in his new local. Mr. P. Fitzgerald had, by his musical ability as well as his fine personality and genial nature, made friends of all with whom he came into contact, and with his brother would be greatly missed by a very wide circle of acquaintances all over Westland. Wishing them every happiness and success in the future, the speaker called on Rev. Father Long to make the guests a number of presentations. Rev. Father Long said that while he had not the privilege of knowing their guests so long as most present, he yet knew them well enough to appreciate their worth. He could say that in parish matters their departure meant a real loss. He specially mentioned Mr. P. Fitzgerald's valuable and spontaneous work in organising excellent entertainments on many occasions for parish funds, he having in that way alone done yeoman service. As a vocalist he was second to none. Miss Fitzgerald and Mr. M. Fitzgerald would be missed most by those who knew them best, but the speaker felt sure they would speedily make many friends wherever they went. Father Long then, on behalf of their friends, presented to Miss Fitzgerald a well-filled purse, and to Messrs. M. and P. Fitzgerald each a wallet. Mr. M. Fitzgerald briefly but appropriately returned thanks to each and all for their handsome parting tributes, which were altogether beyond the deserts of the recipients. They naturally felt regret at the breaking of old associations and their departure from the genial West Coast, wherewith their family had been so long associated; but they would never forget the many fast friends whom, in leaving Greymouth, they were leaving behind them. Once again he heartily thanked them for the honor done his relatives and himself on the occasion. The social was continued till a late hour, when the lady friends of the guests dispensed a dainty supper. Songs were contributed during the evening by Miss Agnes McGrath and Mr. Pat. Fitzgerald.

AN APPEAL TO IRISH FAITH AND LOVE OF ST. PATRICK, RAETIHI

In the raging bush fire that swept this district in 1918 our little church (St. Patrick's) at Raetihi was burnt to the ground. We are now making an attempt to raise funds to replace that little church in a permanent material which will withstand the brunt of future fires as the Irish Faith has withstood the brunt of the fires of persecution. To us, who have the Faith from Ireland, the name of Patrick is sweet music to our ears. Here is a practical way to show our gratitude for our Irish Faith and our love for St. Patrick, by helping to raise a church worthy of our Faith and of our glorious Saint at Raetihi.

Send a brick (5/-) to-day for St. Patrick's Church, Raetihi. All donations acknowledged in the *Tablet*.
Address for donations—

FATHER GUINANE.

Onakune.

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