

V. Spiritual Life

B. Charity

180.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, April 17, 1875 (2)

[The Relationship of Faith and Charity]

A weekly Columbus paper called the *Gazette* asks us:

"If there can be no charity without faith, how can it be better than faith? Let's see the figuring on this problem."

Faith is adherence to the Church's teaching on God's authority, and from it we gain the knowledge of God's goodness.

Charity is the love of God above all things--according to His worth.

There can be no charity without faith, because we cannot love what we do not know. We cannot see any difficulty in a better thing being impossible without something else of less value.

A ripe apple is better than a green apple, but you could not have a ripe apple without a green one. The pleasure of eating is better than hunger, but you could not be gratified without the hunger. To make a fortune is better than to merely know how to make one; but you cannot make one without knowing how. To love God is better than merely to know Him, but you cannot love Him without knowing Him.

The following we quote entire. It is so naive and so sweetly pagan.

Another remark we take exceptions to. It is that we must love our neighbor for God's sake. Now, if we take a liking to a man, it isn't because Gov. Allen likes him. We would be simple enough to love our neighbor for Bill Allen's sake, no matter how great a Democrat we were. We believe, on the contrary that we should take our neighbor for what he is worth, and, holding that principle a just one which bids us be civil and kindly to all, should give only to those worthy of it, our respect and esteem; for how can we love besotted ignorance? If the Lord commands us to love our neighbor as ourself, let him be an upright, consistent, honest man, we can go halvers on it; but if he be a chicken-thief, a drunken brutal, rowdy, with no more mind above a debauch than a Hottentot, we cannot tender him so much unadulterated love. But, if the COLUMBIAN's statement is true, that we must love all fellow beings alike "for God's sake," we are given a command that the world will never obey in Church or out, as long as it stands.

It is true the law of charity is too high for fallen nature. But even fallen nature can see its justice and its beauty. To love is to prize, to wish well to. It is the height of common sense to prize anything at its true worth. But God's worth is immeasurable. Therefore, we ought "to love Him with our whole heart with our whole soul, with [all] our strength and all our mind," and, as a direct consequence, to love all beside Him for His sake.

It is true, "the world, in the Church or out of it," will never obey this command. But the world is set in opposition to Jesus Christ. God's chosen souls in the Church will obey it always. Jesus Christ loved us when we were no better than "chicken-thieves, drunken, brutal rowdies, with no more mind above a debauch than a Hottentot." Nay,

181 - No Charity without Faith

He loved the Hottentots and gave His life for them as well as for others.

We may not love "besotted ignorance," but we can love the besottedly ignorant, when we consider how noble is their nature in its resemblance to the Divine Trinity in its immortality, its capacity for union with the Supreme Good.

The Apostles and the religious of all ages have delighted [in] obeying this law of charity, in loving "the ignorant, the chicken-thieves, the rowdies," the galley-slaves, the Hottentots, the diseased, the deformed, the maimed, the outcasts of all kinds, as themselves, for the love of the common Master. It is hard to do this, but through grace it is possible.

"Da Amantem, et ipse intelligit."

181.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, April 3, 1875 (2)

[No Charity without Faith]

There can be faith without charity. The devils believe and tremble. Bad Catholics believe but sin, and often die in sin. Well-intentioned but easy-going persons believe, and cherish feuds, grow hot over quarrels, envy, backbite, and censure. But there can be no real charity without faith. Charity is the love of God in a supreme degree, and of our neighbor for God's sake. But no one can love God who does not know Him, and no one can know Him unless by faith. It is foolish to quarrel about faith, but it is not foolish to have faith. The foolishness lies in the quarreling, not in the faith. Some writers speak as if one could not believe in earnest without persecuting those who disbelieve. And the disgraceful cruelties practiced in former times, such as the burning of Servetus by John Calvin, at Geneva, and the intolerance practiced by the New England Puritans, under the pretext of religion, have been used again and again by infidels as an argument against faith in religion itself. There may be carelessness about what others think, indifference as to whether they go to destruction or are saved, without faith, but there cannot be any true charity.

182.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, January 16, 1875 (2)

Charity to our Neighbor

This is but the outburst of the heart that loves God infinitely; that has no desire outside of the Heart of Jesus toward all who are made to His image, and for whom He bore the cross. If you love your neighbor for God's sake, you will rejoice in his prosperity, and be sorry for his adversity. You will do your best to promote his temporal interests. You will encourage him when he is doing well, and rebuke and

182 - Charity to our Neighbor

entreat him when he is doing ill. You will take care of his reputation by speaking well of and excusing his faults, as you excuse your own. You will do your best to make his business prosperous, and sympathize with him in his losses. When he is hungry, or thirsty, or naked, or sick, or in prison, you will comfort him. When he is dead, you will bury him. If he is ignorant, you will instruct him. If he is in doubt, you will take pains to think over his difficulties and counsel him. If he is sorrowful, you will try to console him. If he errs, you will try to correct him. If he does you wrong, you will bear it patiently; and remember, in our prayers, the living and the dead. This is the precept which, being observed, fulfills the promise of "peace on earth to men of good will."

But charity without true faith is impossible. One can not live rightly, when he does not know rightly. There are many counterfeits of charity some good, some very bad, and numberless grades between the good and very bad.

Natural affection, good in itself, but not good enough to gain heaven, is a good counterfeit of true charity; so good, that if he who exercises [it] does not claim too much for it, it might pass in the world for the charity of Christ. The world calls it romance, meaning aimless sentiment throwing activity away without any hope of a return; and so it is the perversion of the heart's natural desire to give itself to its Creator. But philanthropy, the counterfeit of natural affection, is a very bad counterfeit of Divine charity. Those wretched shams who make a profession of benevolence and are ready to reform all governments and convert all heathens by collecting subscriptions, are the most miserable counterfeits of all.

There are the ones, however, who have the effrontery to compare their benevolent acts to the self-sacrificing devotion of Catholic religious! They give some of their cast-off garments to the Society for the Relief of the Poor, with a small annual subscription, and imagine there is some comparison between them and persons who give all they have and their lives, too, for the sake of charity!

The perfection of charity is the devotion to the will of God. It is not in the works unless the motive is there. It is the recognition of the divine Majesty in all the affairs of life; the willingness to succeed or fail; to be accounted able or imbecile, honorable or dishonorable, with equal cheerfulness, according as the honor of God is promoted thereby. This perfection is reached by few--the saints, known and unknown, in the Church. The height attained by ordinary Christians is not to do God's will in all things, but not to rebel against it, in any grave matter.

183.

Sermon, Book 2, No. 1

This sermon bears many similarities to Sermon 17 in Book 1, which is given as item 015.

Charity Sermon
The Last Judgment

At the close of the old ecclesiastical year, and the beginning of the new, the Church offers to our meditation the day of general Judgment. In the other festivals of the year she presents to our contemplation the Almighty God in the thousand aspects of His love and mercy towards [us]; today she calls upon us to view Him in the aspect of His inexorable justice. At Christmas we beheld our God coming in meekness and humility, to recall our erring race from the bondage of the world, the flesh and the devil by the example of his poverty, his mortification, and his lowliness. On Good Friday we saw Him nailed to the cross, for our salvation, and we kissed adoringly the sacred wounds whence issued to us the water of spiritual life; on Ascension day we viewed Him ascending into heaven, followed [by] the long train of holy souls, leading captivity captive into everlasting rest; on Corpus Christi we contemplated our God, in the last effort of his unutterable love, hiding His body and blood under the forms of bread and wine in order that He might be near to us and dwell amongst us forever, but today we behold him no longer clothed with the emblems of His humility, no longer with his arms outspread in invitation and entreaty for us to return to Him; no longer hanging on the cross amid deriding enemies; no longer resting in the Tabernacle, waiting to be visited and received by hearts at whose door He is knocking, but surrounded with the omnipotent power and uncreated glory that was His before He made the worlds. In the midst of His array of ten thousand Angels, with the generations of men from Adam, down to the last man, gathered crouching and trembling before Him, He is seated in His throne prepared to judge the living and the dead.

It is thus that we contemplate Him today.

It is an article of Catholic faith that besides the particular judgment which [each] soul undergoes on its separation from the body, this world will end in a day appointed for a general judgment of all men that have ever lived. God chooses this in order to vindicate His honor, in the presence of all, in order that a right estimate of the good and bad deeds of individuals be formed, when their consequences are all fully developed and in order that the closing up of all that is mutable and transitory and the setting in of the everlasting and immutable be marked by the manifestation on His part, and the acknowledgement on the part of all His creatures, of his adorable attributes of justice and mercy.

The place where this judgment will be held, as indicated by the prophet, is the

valley of Jehosaphat, in sight of the hill of Calvary, on which He died for the salvation of man.

The coming of the last day, although known to none but God, will be preceded by many signs in the material world. First there will be terrible earthquakes, wars and pestilences such as were never known before, which fill society with fright and confusion; next, signs shall appear in heaven, the stars disappearing from their places in space and leaving the nights strangely and unnaturally dark, then the sun will be darkened and the moon suddenly cease to give her light, leaving the nations with failing hearts, and fearful foreboding shrouded in rayless gloom. Then a fire will burst forth and, directed by God's power, will run over the surface of the earth, consume all the cities and houses and ships, its forests and grain, its jewels and gold, dry up its lakes and rivers and leave it a heap of cinders and ashes. Then, at last, the Trumpet of the Archangel will sound, that is, the command of God will be given, and in a twinkling the dead will rise, each in his own body, and appear in the valley. The world has been compared by a poet to a vast cemetery holding in its bosom the dead of a thousand generations, for one that walks living on its surface. Well this vast cemetery shall swarm with life, the ashes that were scattered ages ago shall be gathered together; bone shall be fitted to bone, joint to joint, and all the generations shall live again. They shall come from the four winds of heaven, from the sea in which they were buried by storms, from the bowels of the earth in which they were swallowed by earthquakes, from the grave in the quiet churchyard, where they were laid by mourning friends, from the pit into which they were thrust on the battle-field. They of old times and they of modern times shall meet together. The King shall stand cowering elbow to elbow with the peasant, the master will be of the same rank with the servant; the philosopher and the fool shall wait their turn side by side; all the children of Adam, of all colors, ranks, ages, sexes, qualities, mingled in one undistinguishable, shuddering mass, shall stand together in the valley, looking with sadness on the ashes of the desolated earth, and with trembling on the shining countenance of their Judge.

Brethren, you and I will be there together in that crowd. You and I will be there to see the desolation of the world, there to witness the vindication of God's justice, the triumphant assertion of His supreme dominion over all creatures, there to be put to shame for our own evil deeds. Our eyes shall see that great crowd of men and angels: our hearts shall sink with fear in the presence of God's awful majesty; in our flesh we shall see God. There we shall stand, how long hence I know not, together, on the verge of two lives, the one ended the other commencing, stripped of our wealth, learning, dignity, fame, leveled with the poorest, having preserved brought with us through the wreck of the now burnt up world only the burthen of the deeds we have done in the body, awaiting the decision that will settle without appeal whether we shall go to the right hand into an eternity of rest, or to the left into an eternity of pain. There we shall

stand, in the valley, Hell open beneath us, Heaven shining above, on one side the innumerable multitudes of men, before us in midair the cross planted, the throne set, the book opened, and the great Judge in the garments of His awful glory, seated to judge.

In that day of wrath, of calamity, of confusion and terror, what can give us a little confidence in that heartsinking that shall agonize us, a gleam of hope to lighten the terror with which that awful Presence shall overwhelm us? I fear we shall seek for it in vain, in the consciousness of having naught to be condemned. From the first moment when the light of reason dawned in us to the end of our lives, we ought to have spent all our times, all our influence, all our talents, every thought, word, and action in giving glory to God. Such will be the standard of our duties written there before our eyes in characters of living light. Then as we remember all the days of our life on earth, our time misspent in pursuit of money, or fame, or pleasure, our talents wasted or at best idle, our thoughts selfish, vain, ambitious, impure, and contrast what we have done with what we should have done, remorse will seize upon us and terror will take possession of us. We cannot make innocence our stay in the Day of Judgment, because we have lost our innocence. In what then shall we hope? Only in the cross, only in the mercy of Jesus Christ! But how shall we cling to the cross, how shall we hope in the mercy? How shall we expect to behold in His awful eye the beam of pity, and not the lightning flash of wrath? Ah! if in singling us out in the midst of the multitude, He can recognize in us those who in the days of His sorrow comforted Him, who in the person of His poor fed Him, clothed Him, visited Him, the sternness of his brow will relax, and a smile of benignity will illuminate His divine countenance. Charity to the poor is a virtue so dear to Him, that He has described it as the test by which He will judge all. Not that other virtues will not be examined besides charity, and other sins condemned besides hard-heartedness towards the poor; but charity will be the chief test; since salvation depends on the sincerity of our penance and that sincerity is proved by the love we bear to the poor of Christ. The awful question shall I be saved or lost will hinge on the other: was I liberal to the poor, or uncharitable. That this is no fancy of mine, but a simple, sober truth, is easily shown.

Some people may be startled that I call charity a duty. I am not sure but I do no disservice to the cause of the poor by appealing to your sense of duty, and not to your generosity in their behalf. If I were to describe their sufferings, and ask of you generosity to relieve them, you might probably give more freely, than when you feel yourselves under the cold constraint of duty. I shall be sorry for this; I shall be sorry that any poor family should struggle on in unrelieved want, that any poor widow, whose wasting strength is unequal to the task of clothing and feeding her fatherless little ones, should fail to see them assisted, through my want of prudence. But I have a duty to you as well as to the poor; and in showing you that the charity of today is not a

matter of choice but of duty, that what you give is not something over your duty, but what you are strictly bound to do, I plead your cause as well as that of the poor. Sorry as I should be to deprive the poor of assistance by my incompetency, I should be sorrier still to have you wait till the Day of Judgment to find out that almsgiving is a duty, through my human respect. Almsgiving is a duty. I beseech you, beloved friends, not to deceive yourselves and imagine that when you give today you are doing more than you are bound to do, something [you] may boast of.

Men shall not be judged for what they were not bound to do, nor condemned to Hell for not having performed works of supererogation. But our Lord has declared that to some He will say depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels, for I was hungry and you gave Me not to eat, thirsty and ye gave Me not to drink, sick and in prison and ye visited Me not, that is you gave nothing to My poor. Almsgiving, therefore, is no work of supererogation, but one of strict duty.

Reason itself, without the light of religion, can perceive this if not corrupted by the maxims of the world or blinded by interest and passion. We are children of the same father, bought by the blood of the same Redeemer, are stewards of the same Master, shall be brought before the same Judge. If therefore God, the great owner of all, has given to some the stewardship of much and to others has devised the goods of this life, it is most undoubtedly His will that the spirit of Charity should equalize the social condition, that the bond of brotherhood should be cemented among men by the spontaneous care which the rich and strong take of the weak and destitute. We were not born for the goods of this world; we are therefore bound to use them with moderation, and to use our abundance to relieve the destitution of others.

We live in an age of inconsistency and hypocrisy, an age of magnificent theories, and revolting practice. The world has borrowed the doctrines of the Church on the social condition and retained in its actions all its native selfishness and meanness.

Hence in theory the world preaches the equality of men; in practice it crouches to the rich and powerful and roughly tells the poor to remain in their own sphere. In theory it preaches universal charity to the laboring classes; in practice it makes them toil on from light till dark, from year's end to year's end, in damp mines and suffocating furnace rooms and pest-laden factories, for a pittance that scarcely supports life. In theory it professes wonderful tenderness towards the needy; in practice it treats the pauper as a criminal and shuts him out of society, in an almshouse. In theory the world denounces every species of servitude as injustice; in practice it exacts from its dependents a service as degrading and abject as the wildest caprice of tyranny can conceive. In theory it advocates fraternity and favors socialism; in practice it refuses alms and pays taxes, sends Jesus Christ hungry and naked from the door, and hands over its charity money to the sheriff.

Even the world was not this hypocritical, mean, and vile always. There have

been times in which the Church was the guardian of the poor and the dispenser of every nation's charity. In the times called "the Dark Ages" public opinion in matters of charity was but the expression of religion. Then by the side of the noble cathedral in which the thoughts of men were raised up to heaven by the grandeur of the edifice, the vast hospital was seen; and it was loved because the inmates were the poor, and there was no contumely, no rich man's mocking, to pain the hearts of its beneficiaries, because he who entered saw in the object which moved his pity another Christ and all who ministered thought they were sympathizing with the Redeemer. And though these holy ages have gone by for a time to teach mankind the folly and tyranny of human wisdom, we have yet surviving in us the spark of faith, that should light in us the flame of charity. We ought yet to feel a sympathy uniting us to the olden time, and as we pass through the ruins of other ages, we can still trace amongst them memorials which enable us to trace, though fancy cannot equal the grandeur of the structure ere the spoiler, in his vain attempts to exterminate the builders, expended his rage on the consecrated places which virtue hallowed as her own, and to which religion yet points with sorrowing but proud affection. Enough survives to animate us to the duty of charity, to invite us to imitate the zeal of our ancestors; and to you, beloved friends, a voice comes forth from the buried past, a voice which pierces through the silence of centuries, a voice which is heard in every Catholic heart, calling on you today to give glorious testimony to the charity which wrought such miracles of old, which hung such garlands on the shrines of faith, which covered with perennial flowers the institutions of religion--flowers whose fragrance is not yet extinct, and whose beauty gives a glow of brightness to the dark pages of European history.

You are here from many climes. Remember now what the land of your ancestors accomplished for the poor--recall to memory the monastery, the hospice now decayed, at which the traveler was refreshed, the sick restored to health; wander in spirit by the fountains where the poor were healed by the saints whose memory has consecrated their waters, to which the pious pilgrim yet resorts; and ask yourselves whether, with all these endearing recollections thronging upon you, you will be free from guilt in the day of Accounts if you do not now exclaim, by the memory of those past times of faith, by the tie of brotherhood that associates me with the man whose charity originated, those mighty institutions of charity, gorgeous in their very ruins, I will forget my selfishness, my cares for the future, today; and when I give with joy my offering to the poor, I will think that faith has conquered, that the monastery is restored, that the poor are again welcomed at the gates of the abbey, that all lives again in beauty as in the Catholic past, that the vision of sorrow has passed away forever, that the ruins are replaced by a thousand altars sparkling in peace and clouded with incense, and I will exalt in the thought the glory of the past with my alms associates as a glory that shall not pale even in the presence of the Sun of Justice, in a glory that effaces the spots of sin,

that goes on like the light of dawn from brightness to brightness, unfading forever!

Those were times in which whatever we said of their political the doctrine of the equality of men, the fraternity of our race was not expressed in cold words written in pamphlets and newspapers, but in the hearts of men; the sentiment of respect for and sympathy with the poor was not the hollow catchword of the demagogue, the sounding brass on which the sanguinary revolutionist beats the shrill tocsin of war and robbery and arson and terror, but the deep, sincere, heartfelt feeling of faith that made the rich renounce their possessions to feed the hungry, that caused kings and princes to doff their purple in order to wash the feet of the weary traveler, and to minister as servants to the wants of the children of poverty. In those days men would show their love for the poor by giving them money and service and not by taking up subscriptions from them to further a revolution in which they were leaders. Those were times when charity was charity, when it came pure from selfish taint, gushing from the depths of the faithful self-sacrificing heart, making the relief of the poor not a matter of political economy, not a measure required by public decency, but of duty, full of hope of an eternal reward. Those times, beloved friends, will rise in judgment against us in the last day if, recreant to the spirit of our fathers, we acquiesce in the world's doctrine that what we have is our own to spend on our pleasures, our luxuries, the gratification of our caprices, and what we give to the poor is a gratuitous bounty to be rid of importunity, to be in fashion with our neighbor. If, forgetful of the teachings of Faith, we spend our superabundance in building fine houses, in purchasing costly furniture, in dressing richly, and faring sumptuously, leaving, meanwhile, the poor to pine on in cold and hunger, we shall be confronted in the last day face to face with that host of men and women who have given not only their superfluity but their all to the poor, and will be covered with shame and confusion.

If, imbued with the maxims of fashion, we say that it is not becoming for one in our sphere to be seen in the dwellings of the unfortunate, that the contact with the diseased, whose suffering in garrets and shanties is more than our nerves can bear, thousands and tens of thousands of the old time more highly born, more delicately nurtured, than [we were], will step forth from the crowd and point to the poor they visited, to the sick they nursed in the hospitals, to prove our pretext vain and frivolous.

If we yield to the maxim so common nowadays, that the demands of charity are satisfied by poor-houses and city hospitals, where the poor are imprisoned and made to feel at every step that they are a burthen on the public, if we persuade ourselves that this cold ministration to material want, accompanied as it is by the crushing of self-respect, is all that is required of us, the founders of abbeys, the denizens of the monasteries, the confraternities of the hospitals, the popes and cardinals and kings who washed the feet of the poor and who served the table at which beggars were eating, the noble men and women like St. Elizabeth of Hungary and St. Camillus of Lellis, who

spent their lives in working among the sick and destitute, will rise up against [us] and declare, no, the heartless philanthropy that gives prison hospitality to the penniless traveler, that from the luxurious parlor sends a hireling to nurse the sick, that deals grudgingly out the contumelious bread bought by public taxes, is not enough to satisfy the heart that is filled with the charity of Jesus Christ. That Charity pants to be among the poor, to nurse them, relieve them, console them, to feel for them, bear with them, divide all with them even to the last penny, nay to sacrifice one's self for them, for the sake of their Redeemer and Lord Jesus Christ, and their words will pierce like arrows to our hearts when we remember the sensual, heartless, selfish, useless lives which, in despite of the teachings of our faith, we led.

Oh my brethren, what an impression will we have at the last day of the obligation to give alms, arising from the equality, the brotherhood of men! How will that proud feeling that now repels the beggar and makes us feel that we are almost of another nature from the poor and distressed be torn forever from our hearts! How will that love of money which makes us now withhold our alms, or give out a scanty sum, be violently removed from among our affections! We shall stand there side by side, all the children of Adam, all made by the same God, redeemed by the same Jesus, children of one family, all therefore entitled to the same respect, to the same affection; we shall feel that goods in whose possession we prided ourselves are burnt up with the world; the governments in whose dignities we sought distinction are forever destroyed; the learning we so respected in others and idolized in ourselves is shown to be folly; and that we are about to commence a new career, wrought out by our own free will from the perished goods of earth, in which we dwell during our trial time. Oh strange will it then seem to us that we should have clung with such tenacity to our property, our dignity, our respectability! that we could have turned from our doors a destitute brother or refused succor to our unfortunate kinsmen. Then those who now implore our charity shall stand by our sides, no longer keeping at a distance from us through respect, no longer bowing before us, and asking in God's name for relief, but equal to us in all respects, their poverty and sufferings having been ended as our wealth and comfort were destroyed, and when we look upon them, how we will wish to have divided with them our now perished goods. Do then today, beloved friends, what you will then wish you had done: give liberally and bountifully, nay sacrifice something of that which death will deprive and whose possession the Day of Judgment will cause you to regret.

Give what you give as a matter of duty, commanded by our Lord in his Gospel, prescribed by the law of charity and inculcated by the glorious examples of your Catholic ancestry. But while you give as a matter of duty, remember with consolation the reward of that duty Jesus Christ has promised, a kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world to those who shall have dealt merciful with His beloved poor,

in the last great day. Of course the fulfillment of every duty has annexed to it the promise of an eternal reward. Every prayer we breathe, every step we take for the love of God, every word we utter that suggests a good thought to our neighbors, is set down by the recording Angel, and in the Judgment Day will appear before us, and all men, a sweet consoling array. But our works of charity towards the poor will be foremost in the list to cheer us. The crown that angel hands shall bear us for our alms given to the poor will be brighter and more splendid by far than those which shall reward our other virtues. The reason of this is twofold: because charity is the virtue dearest to the heart of God, and therefore has a preeminent merit of its own, and because charity, like heat or light that pervade all, appropriates the merits of others.

Who that knows anything of the dealings of God and men does not know that God loves charity far above all other virtues? I came to put fire on the earth, said Jesus Christ, and that fire which he came to enkindle was the fire of charity. To teach us charity He lived a life of poverty and humiliation among the poor; to teach us charity He allowed Himself to be nailed to an ignominious cross, in order that we might see what sacrifice can be made to benefit those who were created to the image and likeness of the living God. To teach us charity He hid Himself under the Eucharistic form of bread and wine that we might see how love can be forgetful of itself in the vehement desire to do good to the beloved. To teach us charity He inspired His Apostles and saints with will and gave them the strength to brave the wrath of emperors, the ridicule of philosophers, the fury of mobs -- to do good to others. To teach us charity He has raised up in every age holy men and women, who, spurning the wealth and dignity and pleasures of time, have consecrated their lives to the service of the poor. He came to put fire on the earth. He kindled and it has been burning ever since; and its flame gleaming and flashing through the thick darkness of the world's impurities from a few holy hearts is all that the earth contains to delight the eye of God, is all that prevents Him allowing the upraised sword of His vengeance to fall and the awful judgment of the living and the dead to begin today. If charity, then, is the virtue dearest to the heart of God, how will He welcome to His bosom those who here on earth have practiced it with zeal. "Come ye blessed of my Father," He will say on the Day of Judgment to those who, according their means, have always succored the unfortunate. "Come inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. It was not in vain that I taught you the precept of charity, by word and by example. It was not in vain that I repeated to you that the poor are your brethren and entitled to your respect and love, not in vain that my ministers told you that the wealth of the world was given you to buy treasures in heaven through the hands of the poor. It was not in vain that I died on the cross to buy for you with my blood the grace to love your neighbor as yourself. You have done well. Fear not. There is no judgment for you, but only heaven. Put off your sadness, raise up your eyes, and see beyond the ranks on ranks of holy angels shining in

the light of heaven afar, those houses not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, there amid those floods of light that now dazzle your eyes, where there is no poverty, nor wrong, nor suffering nor temptation, nor want, nor sadness nor weeping, there in peace, in tranquility, in security, inebriated with torrents of delight, every desire content, every craving satisfied, in the midst of the citizens of heaven you shall reign forever.

"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry and you gave Me to eat, thirsty and you gave Me to drink, sick and in prison and ye visited Me." Oh, my brethren, shall these words be addressed to us in the last day? Jesus Christ is cold and hungry and sick and in prison in our midst, today.

He is cold in the person of the poor boy, just from old Ireland, whose ragged and filthy garments scarce protect his shivering limbs, and cause him to be turned out of the shops whose warmth he seeks, lest customers be driven away by disgust of his appearance. He is hungry in the person of the poor widow and of her little ones who, wan with fasting and haggard with vigils, after having sold the last trinket that reminded her of happier days to feed her orphans, is at last brought to the necessity of applying for relief to the Priest or to the Sisters. He is sick in the person of those who are lying in garrets and cellars, more consumed by neglect and cold, and bad air than disease, [who] are awaiting to see if after today they may not hope for a little help to buy medicine, that they may be again restored to health to struggle on.

Jesus Christ is in our midst, in the person of the miserable, abandoned, desolate, poor, cold, hungry, sick. Shall we clothe Him, feed Him, nurse Him into health? Beloved friends, it is for you to answer, by the generosity with which you give today, and to ensure for yourselves the reward of charity which is great beyond all conception because of the merit contained in charity itself.

But besides the immense merit contained in every act of charity, that virtue has the happy quality of appropriating without robbery the virtues of others. We are saved by grace. That grace is the fruit of prayer. We know from the doctrine of the Communion of Saints that the prayers of others for us are available for our salvation and we know that of all prayers none are of such avail as the prayers of the poor. Now by charity we secure to ourselves the prayers of the poor; and those prayers draw down upon us the grace of God. When we give to a public charity like the one of today the number of those benefited by it is immense, and consequently the prayers for our welfare are innumerable. We may not know who is the recipient of our bounty, or be known as benefactor by name; but in the Day of Judgment, we shall see with surprise a host of pleading our cause, and shall learn then for the first time that they were saved by our charity from want and hunger and perhaps crime.

The ills of poverty are not all seen. The hollow eye, the wan cheek, the careworn

brow, the feeble step, tell not the whole tale of misery; but the worst is in the unseen but terrible temptations, to which want subjects the heart. O how many honest men have been induced to unlawful pursuits, in order to secure what industry could not gain and charity did not offer! How many unfortunate women have engaged in their abandoned life, making a merchandize of soul and body, to obtain freedom from want and nakedness and starvation! How many may now be wavering in their adherence to virtue, who may be reassured in right by timely aid! And as the spiritual ills occasioned by extreme want are many though unknown, so the spiritual advantages of charity are beyond computation. How many souls will bless the hand that saved them, by ministering to their wants in the hour of need, from yielding to the temptation that was pressing them so sharply! The man, the family in want, his children, and their children, will invoke continual blessings on their unknown benefactor; and in the last day they will come forth to meet him and to stand between him and the wrath of the Judge and to implore for him mercy and pardon. Oh, what a joy to us then to see that we were not possessors of goods in vain! Here the goods we possess give us pleasure and those we give away we give with pain; there the goods we possessed will annoy us and those we parted with for God's sake will give us exceeding joy. For we shall then, when we behold ourselves stripped of everything, and awaiting the sentence of the Judge, understand the wisdom of that precept, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth where moth and rust corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven where moth and rust do not corrupt and where thieves break not through and steal." Then our treasures shall be the souls we have saved from sins by relieving them from the misery which would have been relieved through its incentive.

They shall stand out there and, detailing all the misery to which they were reduced, the sin they were about to commit, they ask of Jesus Christ not condemn their benefactors. They shall plead for us and their prayer shall be heard. Our charity shall make their merits ours. The fervor of their prayers shall redound to our benefit because our welfare will be the first object of their petitions. With what surprise we will learn in the Day of Judgment that we had strength to resist this or that temptation from the prayers of some unknown sufferer our alms had relieved. What astonishment shall fill us when we behold ourselves encountered by a troop of those who, in the days of their affliction, found relief in a part of the charity we carelessly bestowed. It is in your power to purchase the priceless prayers of the poor, today. The amount you give, however small, will gain for you the fervent "God bless him" of many a now desolate heart; and while you are in the midst of your cares and amusements and business, prayer will be ascending for you from [to] the throne of grace, and the mercy of God will be descending upon you from above.

One more consideration I have to offer.

184 - Give Because You Ought

But besides the consideration of duty, and the hopes of reward that urge us to the charity of today, there is another more obvious, and more [end of manuscript in mid-page]

184.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, February 7, 1878 (4)

[Give Because You Ought]

There is great harm in the notion adopted by all Protestants, and many Catholics, that money given to support religion is alms, that the altar, the sanctuary, and the priests are a pauper institution, subject to the benevolent instincts of everyone in the congregation. The harm done by this is two-fold: to the honor of religion and to the souls of those deluded by the false idea. Where a congregation supports religion simply through partiality for the priest, partiality that may arise from consanguinity or caprice, as well as from any solid reason, the mischief is often very great. As long as the priest does not have to cross anyone he will have candles and vestments in abundance. But as soon as he is obliged to stand up for justice against anybody's whim there is no one to aid him among them all. We have known instances in which people made personal presents of vestments, chalices and other sacred objects to clergymen; a practice not to be approved in its motives or in its results. The other evil is done to the souls of the donors in the loss of faith and merit occasioned by it. Persons giving thus may really give more than their due. But more or less they do not give because it is their due but because impulse moves them. Hence when they give, they do so without faith and without merit, and by degrees accustoming themselves to act from impulse, they lose their faith.

185.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, May 8, 1875 (3)

Charity and Benevolence

Charity is the love of God in a supreme degree, and of our neighbor for His sake. "Benevolence" means, vaguely, "kindly will." Charity is a Catholic word--benevolence a non-Catholic word. Charity presupposes faith in God; benevolence presupposes faith in one's self.

Charity is founded in lowly thoughts of self whereby all we can do for God and His poor seems little. Benevolence grows out of self-exaltation, whereby the least we do of kindness to others seems much.

Charity leads us to lavish our own on others; benevolence would spend other people's means in decorous provision for the destitute.

Charity builds hospitals and homes; benevolence poor houses and prisons.

186 - Thw Works of Charity

Charity makes a common feeling between rich and poor, impressing on both the lesson of the vanity of wealth, and shutting off pride in the one and envy in the other. Benevolence separates the unfortunate from the fortunate and sets them to seeing in each other oppressors and intruders, until the great become frivolous and the vulgar, communists.

There can be no perfect charity without unquestioning faith, but benevolence can exist where selfishness is supreme.

186.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, Sept. 25, 1875 (1)

[The Works of Charity]

The gold of charity gathers dross easily in the working day world. There are so many motives more natural and more easy than divine love, and they beset our hearts so tirelessly, that even our works "begun in the spirit" are too apt to "end in the flesh."

Priests and religious, whose lives are consecrated to works of charity, know the truth of this saying. They must provide for the honor of the Blessed Sacrament by fitting churches; must instruct the ignorant, shelter orphans, and aid the helpless of all classes; for God's sake. How easy they find it, as the work goes on, to put themselves, instead of Jesus Christ, as the motive for persevering in it.

The very difficulty of carrying out their projects makes them forget that there is only need of carrying them out as far as God wills and puts the means in their power. They grow eager and impatient and forget that the best part of their work is the doing of it, and not the success of it.

If means for building churches, hospitals, schools and asylums, were furnished miraculously, the builders would lose the reward of labor and the people themselves would take no interest in them, and reap no benefit from them.

In the end the only part of our worldly goods that will benefit us will be that part which the world told us we threw away in charities; the only work that will bring rest will be that work which we did without expectation of any kind of earthly reward.

Anxiety and trouble are the fruit of self-love,

True charity keeps us in the peace of God.

187.

Editorial, *The Catholic Columbian*, July 24, 1875 (4)

The Orphan Society

The Orphan's appeal to the Catholic heart has always been irresistible. But it has always needed men and women of exalted charity to bring the appeal home to the

Catholic heart, and to utilize, for the helpless ones, its fruits. St. Camillus de Lellis, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Phillip Neri, are well known types of a kind of charity, existing always in obscure persons in the Catholic Church, at all times and in all places. It is that golden charity, of too refined a cast to be counterfeited by any astuteness of hypocrisy or any vehemence of sentimentality, which consists in a supreme and boundless love for the Word made Flesh. It is that love for the crucified One, which makes the heart fly to all who resemble Him.

If the Orphan Society, lately established in the Cathedral congregation and elsewhere, is to fulfill its mission of charity, it must start out and continue in this spirit. True, people may be moved to aid the establishment of asylums, by the thought that their own children may one day need its shelter, or that they should not be behind their neighbors in any work of public utility, or by considerations even more worldly. But if there is to be permanency and God's blessing, there must be the spirit of Christ in the Orphan Society. Those who have means will remember they are only carrying out the designs of God in their regard by helping to feed and clothe these poor little helpless ones of Christ, and doing so with a liberal hand merit a glorious reward. Those who are not so well provided with this world's goods will remember that according to their means they are equally bound to assist their less fortunate brethren. "According to thy ability be merciful, if thou hast much give abundantly, if thou has little take care even to bestow, willingly, a little, for thus thou storest up for thyself a good reward against the day of necessity." (Job. iv. 8)

We are glad to see this spirit so well manifested in the Society organized at the Cathedral a few Sundays since. We are glad to see all our professional and business men, in fact all the prominent men of the congregation, encouraging the good work by becoming members of the Orphan Society. We are glad to see so long a list of other persons, who though not possessed of means, nevertheless are always ready and generous when an appeal is made to their charity. Their example is edifying--they will not lose their reward.

The prospects of the society are encouraging. Last week forty new names were added to the roll, and many who have not yet come forward are expected to follow the good example of their neighbors. And let us hope the matter will not end here. The example given by the society organized in the Cathedral congregation can be imitated elsewhere, and all should feel it their duty to lend a helping hand in behalf of our little orphans--to relieve Jesus Christ in His poor members and for His sake. This is charity worthy of a Catholic, worthy of the Church of Jesus Christ.

188 - Charity to the Poor

188.

Sermon, Book 2, No. 5

On the basis of its comments on slavery, apparently in this country, this probably was written before 1861. We know Father Rosecrans was in Pittsburgh early in 1856 and again in June, 1862.

Lecture in Pittsburgh (Unfinished)

Charity to the Poor

It affords me sincere pleasure to cooperate with the members of the society of St. Vincent of Paul in their work of charity towards the poor. I honor very highly scientific, literary, and art associations; but far more highly those charitable associations in which there is neither secrecy of action nor partiality of beneficence. Knowledge and art are good, but charity is better. Those who band together for the purpose of studying, admiring, and praising God's works in the true and beautiful of nature and art challenge my respect; but those who are leagued to honor God's image by works of mercy to his poor command my services. Therefore when called upon to cooperate with you, I have cheerfully complied with your request. Like St. Peter of old, silver and gold I have none; but what I have I give to you.

In the acts of the Martyrs it is related of St. Lawrence, who managed the temporalities of the Roman Church in the time of Pope Sixtus I, that he was notified by the authorities of the intention of the government to seize on the treasures under his charge, and was commanded to gather them together and deliver them up at a specified time and place. Accordingly, he gathered together all the poor, lame, blind, leprous, helpless from old age or infancy, who had been depending on his alms, and when the officer entered at the appointed time saying where are the treasures, he pointed to helpless and stricken group saying, behold the treasures of the Church! That scene and that saying describe the whole spirit of the Church and are a compendium of the history of her struggles through the ages of her life. Her founder "came to seek and save what was lost;" and she has been for 1800 years, and is still following up the search. She has taught the law to great ones and fed the mighty with her sacraments. Her cross has shone in the coronet of kings, the treasures of the rich have been lavished on her altars, and the leaders of armies have kissed the hand of her pontiffs in submission. But her heart was never in the pomp and splendor, and ever, amid the bustle of display and ceremony, it went out with yearning to the alleys, the huts, the byways, the hospitals after her jewels--God's poor.

To get at the force of this truth, let me ask you to consider what the Church has done for the poor, first by her teaching and secondly by her action. To say the truth, the distinction between teaching and acting is not over exact. For with the church, in the

beginning to teach was to brave and suffer persecution, and so to act; and to act as she did in later times through a thousand orders of mercy was to teach charity and brotherhood beyond the power of language. But I use the division in order, under the head of teaching to show how the Church revolutionized the notions of society in favor of the poor in the beginning, and under the head of action to point out the societies of self-sacrificing men and women which illustrate so grandly the practicability of the precept dearest to the heart of Christ, "Love one another."

I

Her Doctrine

By the poor, who are spoken of as directly benefitted by Catholic teaching, I do not mean all that subsist by the labor of their hands. These, though poor, have yet much to give back to the champions of their rights. They have strong arms and brave hearts, and in many countries, votes, and so are not destitute of human aid. But God's poor are those whom disease, physical or mental misfortune, or injustice have not only rendered helpless but stripped also of the means of evincing -- the power of feeling gratitude towards their benefactors. Such are infants abandoned by their parents, the very aged, the blind, the lame, the sick, the idiotic, the deranged, the orphan, the poor and ignorant, and slaves. These are like the man who, going to Jericho from Jerusalem, fell among thieves. However it may have happened, they have not the power to note the priest and Levites that pass by on the other side of the way, or to thank the good Samaritan who carries them to the place of repose and succor; and therefore the Church's aid to them is prompted purely by her love for the Redeemer.

There was an end to domineering and pride when the strong and rich found out that they were of one blood and one destiny with the feeble and poor. There was an end to dreary repining, and gnawing envy, when the lowly learned that in all that pertains to substantial worth and happiness they were the equals of the lofty. The powerful could no longer oppress, beat, defraud, buy and sell the weak, under the plea that such treatment was fitting for the baseborn; and kings and rulers were constrained to acknowledge their subjects as bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh toward whom their action must be what they would wish for themselves were positions reversed. Thus humanity, not caste, or color, or strength, or aught else admonitions, became the tie that bound heart to heart, and the humble, the stricken, the diseased, the helplessly young or old were never shoved aside as having no claim upon the goods of earth, and never could be outcasts.

To appreciate the revolution of ideas wrought by the Church in favor of the poor, you must call to mind that the cause of popular rights was not always what is now the one most in favor. Indeed in pagan society ancient or modern it was in exceeding disfavor. The theory of life among Gentiles was that you live for yourself and your neighbor lives for the state, or commonwealth. From the time of Cain and Abel, the

crafty and strong have not hesitated to domineer over the simple and weak. But the downward progress of society from Adam to Christ wrought this difference of sentiment that whereas Cain, called to account for injustice, answered, "Am I my brother's keeper," the later oppressor would answer, "He was but a dog and not my brother." As corruption deepened the sentiment of brotherhood was weakened and finally extinguished, and with it, as St. Paul testifies, natural affection. As in their belief this visible life is all man, the difference of high and low, rulers and ruled, were not the stamps of the gold, but the gold itself, were substantial differences dividing destinies, and so races. Hence the only bond of union that could exist between one man and another was the use that one might be to the other. So Plato in his theory of government taught that of infants the deformed should be put to death, the decrepit [and] the disabled hopelessly should be destroyed because they are worse than useless to the commonwealth. The doctrine of caste was universally received. The haughtiness of the highborn when they held the motto expressed by Horace *Odi profanum vulgus et arceo* -- I hate and hold aloof the common herds -- was not considered pride but justice, and the poor never dreamed of claiming equality with their lords. In the contests of the senators and tribunes of Rome, the tribunes ask but permission for the common people to have corn at their own rates, always acknowledging whether in petition or mutiny the superiority of the other class. Shakespeare's delineation of the feeling is graphic:

"They said they were an-hungry; sigh'd forth proverbs, That hunger broke stone walls, that dogs must eat, That meat was made for mouths, that the gods sent not Corn for the rich men only: with these shreds They vented their complainings; which being answer'd, And a petition granted them, a strange one--To break the heart of generosity, And make bold power look pale--they threw their caps As they would hang them on the horns o' the moon, Shouting their emulation." [*Coriolanus*, Act I, Scene I]

And again in the speech of Coriolanus when the tribunes were goading him: "My nobler friends, I crave their pardons, for the mutable, rank-scented many let them regard me as I do not flatter, and Therein behold themselves: I say again, In soothing them, we nourish 'gainst our senate The cockle of rebellion, insolence, sedition, Which we ourselves have plough'd for, sowed, and scattered, By mingling them with us, the honor'd number..." [Act III, Scene I]

The doctrine of caste once admitted, the poor have no claim on the sympathy of the rich. They may eat of the crumbs that fall from his table, or share the half picked bones with his dogs. They may appeal to his generosity but cannot ask him to do to them as he would wish to be succored were he poor and they rich, for nature no longer makes the whole world kin. And therein, it seems to me, lies the chief sting of poverty, in the feeling of desolation that seizes one who finds himself treated as an outcast. Our joys and sorrows are what we think them to be. The soldier for example, endures hunger thirst, fatigue, cold, heat, pain, all the woes of poverty. Yet his step is light, his

eye bright, his heart merry, because he has companions, country, sympathy. But when these are endured hopelessly, and the poor victim feels that no one cares for him, the anguish is [no] longer in the limbs and frame but enters the soul.

The Church met this evil squarely, by repudiating the doctrine of caste, and declaring the equality of men. It was no vague theory she proclaimed, but a great, clearly defined, settled doctrine, a distinct and vital part of the system revealed by God to man. The cross is the compendium of all Christian doctrine. Now if all were redeemed by the cross then all were alike under the sin of Adam. Thus all were of one blood. The king and the subject, the rich and the poor, the slaveholder and slave, the white and black, are all of the same family and destined to a common end. That the goods of this earth are unequally distributed only shows that the goods of this earth are not essential to the happiness of men. Happiness is not to be expected in this life. The existence God gave us has two states, the one the complement of the other, each meaningless without the other. The judgment stands between. Here we have free will to work with, and talents to work on. At the judgment we square accounts and work no more forever. Our work is to conform our actions, affection and thoughts with the eternal law of justice, whose details are developed in the Church's teachings. Our talents are the goods of grace, nature, and fortune allotted to us by the Providence of God and the equality consists not in the division of these but in equal accountability and the eternal retribution.

So it comes, that spiritual graces, lofty descent, health, comely proportions, wealth, rank, learning, influence in the world, are not reasons why the head should be puffed up because, besides being the gifts of God, they disappear in the grave and the heart is left alone to render account of their use. Physical deformity, base blood, sickness, poverty, obscurity, are not reasons for repining for they flee like shadows when the light of eternity dawns. Is a man a ruler? Why then he must keep a right royal watch lest pride or vanity or avarice or voluptuousness seduce him to commit the injustice from which he is not restrained by absence of opportunity, temptation, and power.

Is he poor? Why then lacking the power, he will be relieved of the temptation to do wrong, and without going in search he has opportunities to practice denial and subjection to God's will.

Thus in the sincere acceptance of Christianity pride is driven from the palaces of kings and envy from the hearts of the poor.

This doctrine of human destiny and brotherhood was the germ of that mighty change of ideas that has taken place in society since the time when the high and low were considered two distinct races, and the present when equality is admitted in theory by those even who deny it in practice.

Certain popular speakers and writers, trying to account for the happy condition

of the laboring classes in this country in the way most pleasing to their prejudices, have given vogue to the theory that free institutions such as ours are a perfection, reached after 6000 years of progress by society; that the world had been oppressed and struggling until the American Revolution, and then all at once (4th of July 1776) entered on a new career of freedom. But the truth is that new era was entered on long before our war of independence. Freedom, the equal rights of all, was fought for not through a seven years' war, but through a war of three centuries. The Greeks and Romans scoffed at it as delirium in the beginning. None but a lunatic they thought would assert the brotherhood of the Athenian and Egyptian, or identity of blood between the Roman Patrician and each one of his twenty and fifty thousand slaves. But the Christian Church asserted it, and the people began to believe it. Then the passions of the proud began to be alarmed. Of what use is to be ruler if we may not do as we please, of what use to be rich if riches are a trust? Of what use to own slaves if we must respect them as brethren? So war to the knife was declared by the rich, philosophy, fashion, political power, superstition, interest of the age, against the Galilean. His disciples were dragged before kings for a testimony. And from the dungeons, the criminals' bench, the rack, the amphitheater, the wheel, the scaffold, they preached the right of every man to his own soul, the equality of all before the tribunal of God. The Galilean triumphed at last; and when the Roman Empire crumbled, and was buried in its own corruption, the doctrine of caste went into disrepute in the civilized world, and was never after broached until England, alienated from the Church, heard of the divine right of kings and some Americans, led astray by pride, began to speak of the traffic in human flesh as an ordinance of God. The doctrine of equal rights now so popular among us is not an effect of progress, but an outgrowth of Catholic faith, and the fact that it is held strongly by thousands not Catholics only illustrates the weakness of the human mind, which can accept a proposition with enthusiasm and deny its logical conclusions most vehemently.

But the Church added to this another doctrine of far greater advantage to the poor. If they were merely equal to the rich, then they might be told to take care of themselves, as the rich do. But the Son of God hallowed their state by choosing it for his own, and gave dignity to their persons by making them represent his own. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of My brethren ye have done it unto Me."

To the believer, all that he can do for Christ is little. He loved us before we loved Him. He gave Himself all to us in the stable for our brother, in the Sacrament for our food, on the cross our redemption, in heaven our reward. What shall we render unto the Lord for all that He hath rendered unto us?

So we have at hand the means of showing our love. In the garrets and cellars, in the alleys and hovels He is waiting, hungry to be fed, naked to be clothed, sick to be visited.

The squalid rags under which that poor beggar shivers [are] as good as the

purple garment in which He was mocked. That repulsive face is no more disfigured than was His by the thorns and blows and scourging. The outcast is no longer an outcast but becomes by his very desolation the figure and representative of the Redeemer. St. Martin, yet a youthful soldier, met a beggar who asked for clothing. He cut his military cloak in two parts with his sword and gave half to the mendicant. That night he saw Christ standing majestically in the midst of His court of ten thousand angels with the half cloak upon His shoulders and heard Him answer their wondering looks in a voice of great sweetness, "Martin, yet a catechumen, clad me with this garment." St. Gregory the great Pope used to entertain daily twelve strangers. He washed their feet kneeling, and waited on them at table. "So, says the chronicler of his life, the blessed Angels, yea and the Lord of Angels were frequently his guests."

The infidel may pass by the destitute with cold disregard, the sentimental will soon weary of practical benevolence. But the believer in Christ will gather up the poor into the shelter so long as his faith remains. Are they exposed infants? He remembers the Babe in the manger of Bethlehem, and with the wise men offers gifts. Are they orphans? The asylum is the cottage at Nazareth where Jesus was subject to them. Are they houseless? The Son of Man had not whereon to lay his Head. Are they shamed by the world and desolate? The Redeemer was the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people. Are they sick? He too went fainting and exhausted up the hill of Calvary to redeem us. Are they in prison? God judge their guilt, the true heart sees only their misery, and in it the prisoner of Caiaphas and Annas and Herod and Pilate.

Thus the Church appeals in behalf of the friendship to those able to succor, not only by the right of equality, and the hope of gaining a hundred fold, but also by the hopes of Heaven and a Redeemer's love.

on 1

The Church's doctrines are no idle theories. She never says, like the philanthropists who talk of sacrificing all for humanity but never befriend any human being, "be ye warmed," without building a fire or, "be ye clothed," without furnishing the garments. From the beginning she taught the doctrine of human equality. The history of her legislation running through more than 1600 years does not record a single instance in which she swerved wide from the path of justice through fear or affection for either kings or mobs. She has been sternly tried and has defied every pressure. An old cry against her was that she deposed kings through the popes. Why not? If a poor man is a bigamist, a thief, a counterfeiter, a robber, he is punished and the people say, "Amen." If a king was a poisoner, a murderer, an oppressor of the poor, a debaser of the public money, a repudiator of the marriage tie, a defrauder of the orphan, why should the pope fear to say so? We do not owe so much to kings that we should need to be so jealous of the treatment they receive when they repudiate justice. The popes have deposed kings; but never except when rigor towards the ruler was mercy to the people.

In the breaking up of the old empire, when all Europe was a cluster of robber camps and bold plunderers, laying the foundations of noble lines, were giving a new form to the old doctrine "caste," she opposed with all the power of her influence and the terrors of her anathema the lawless violence of those ruthless oppressors. She shut out from participation of her treasures and from a right to Christian burial pirates on the high seas, robbers of unarmed travelers, abductors of helpless females, the disturbers of peaceful laborers in fields or vineyards or in mills and manufactories. Her legislation put an end to slavery in Europe. Not that she ever sent forth a fiat that broke all chains at once. But she made so many openings to freedom for the slave, she insisted so strongly with St. Paul in his letter to Philemon, on his being treated as a dear brother in Christ, that slavery became unprofitable and unpleasant.

People talk now-a-days about the relative happiness of slave laborers and free laborers when justice is done, when both are properly treated. Why, my friends, where masters are disposed to treat their slaves as brethren in Christ, to do to them as they would be done by, they are already prepared to set them free. If they cannot. It is my solemn conviction that the injustice of slavery is the charm that attaches human passion to it, that nothing else but the power it gives to gratify the pride of dominion, the greed for money, the lust for impure pleasure, can ever make sweet to man the ownership of human flesh.

When the Redeemer explained to his disciples the indissoluble nature of the marriage tie and the consequent tremendous responsibilities of the married state, they answered [if] it be so then it is better not to marry. In like manner when the Church explained to masters their duties to their slaves, when She told them those men, women, and children belong not to you as cattle but as brethren, you may have their labor but not their souls, you may not keep them in ignorance of God and their duties, you may not sell the husband from the wife or the child from the parent, you may not treat them harshly to gratify your whims, you may not make them suffer from over work or hunger or exposure beyond their endurance, you may not use their bodies for your avarice or your lust; they answered, if such be the case it is expedient not to hold slaves, let them be free. And so throughout all Europe they did go free except only the great northern Empire whose Christianity, cut off from Rome the centre of unity and life, was but a sapless though stately branch, not giving but receiving shape from the passions and interests that surrounded it.

And when slavery was reestablished on this continent you are familiar with the fact that the wrong was done in South America by reckless Spaniards who defied the Church's discipline and in North America by English who rejected both her discipline and faith. The Church abhors slavery, and outlaws from her pale those who engage in the slave trade.

As to the slave, so to all other classes of the helpless, the Church lent her active

and untiring aid. The Redeemer sanctified poverty by choosing to be poor. The Church never forgot the lesson, but in every age has fostered and encouraged the numberless religious orders, whose members vow amongst the rest never to own property while they live. The English people go into ecstasies over the benevolence of John Howard. But John Howard only about half did, what for ages had been a common occurrence for Catholics of either sex to do thoroughly, namely, renounce all to follow Christ. Thus the poor had always an unanswerable argument that poverty is endurable since it was the free choice of the most gifted in talents and fortune.

Whatever may be said against the so called Dark Ages, this much is certainly to their credit, that the poor were never forsaken on account of their poverty.

In most of the charters of the old abbeys, provision is made binding them to support the poor of their neighborhood, to distribute food and clothing to all who might beg them, and never to deny shelter. In those times there was a monastery in every parish; and faith, the only power stronger than brute force in that rude time, made them sacred spots which it was not lawful for the strifes and passions of the world to enter. In each monastery a certain number of brothers were set apart to wait upon guests. They were to receive all indiscriminately and if they made distinction at all it was in favor of the poor. They were to give food and drink and bed to the healthy, medicine and attendance to the sick and wounded, asking no questions. And each guest could tarry at his own good pleasure.

So without fear of rebuff, without any feeling of humiliation, the poor could always seek the shelter of the abbey roof, and share the food of the abbey table; and throughout Christendom there was this unfailing provision for the common necessities of the poor, shelter, clothing, and food.

But the door of the Church for Christ and her disposition to find Him in His helpless poor made her ingenious in parceling out the wants of the indigent and organizing means for the relief of each.

In the twelfth century many Christians were captive slaves in the power of the Mahometans. Hardly a family in Europe but had a vacant seat, or a household which the sombre picture of father or brother far away among the Moors did not darken. The charity of Christ pressed; and in response arose the order of Trinitarians for the Redemption of slaves, whose members added to the three ordinary vows of religion, a fourth binding them to spend the energies of their lives in the work of ransoming Christian slaves.

A plague arrives in Rome. The people are terror-struck and flee, with savage selfishness leaving those whom the disease has touched to languish and died unattended. St. Camillus of Lellis who has long been serving the sick in the Hospital of the Incurables takes advantage of this and, appealing to the devotion of his time, soon establishes the order of Regular Hospital Clerics whose fourth vow is to nurse the sick,

especially those stricken with plague.

In Spain the horrible disease of leprosy became frightfully common and, avoided by the people, the stricken ones are left to suffer and starve in desolation. The[n] St. John of God founds and spreads all over Spain his order of hospitallers whose chief duty is to minister to lepers. Later still the charge of hospitals has been committed to the care of women, Sisters of Mercy or of Charity; and under their gentle ministrations, the fever-tossed stranger, the wounded soldier, have been made to forget that their home is far away and those of their blood not near them.

So Catholic charity has built homes for orphans, and the little ones of Christ, under the care of those who are mothers to them for His sake, are saved from ever feeling the anguish of bereavement.

Foundling Hospitals

Poor schools

Houses of the Good Shepherd

189.

Sermon, Book 1, No. 4

Forgiveness of Enemies

Forgiveness of enemies is a part of the law of charity. To be saved we must love God sincerely, and whatever is according to His image. But a man does not cease to be in God's image by offending us. Therefore we must love our enemies in order to obtain salvation. Many disregard this precept, of whom some repudiate it in theory and practice and others neglect it in practice alone.

Those who maintain in theory the hatred of enemies, do so by arguing that it is their duty to make their rights respected, and that a spirit of retaliation is necessary to this; that it is unmanly and mean spirited to forgive and that they will lose the esteem of society by fulfilling the precept of Christ. Let us examine these arguments one by one.

The first reason alleged to justify a vindictive spirit is that it is the duty of every one to exact respect for his rights, and that unless a man resents affronts put upon him he cannot effect this. But forgiveness of enemies does not prevent any one from maintaining his rights. When we are cheated or calumniated we need not mix up a desire of vengeance with our defense or vindication. We are not obliged to sit still under calumny or succumb to fraud or submit to oppression. It is perfectly lawful to convict the calumniator, to outwit the cheat and to foil the oppressor by prudence, address and strength. But in so doing we must be actuated by the love of right, and not by the desire of retaliation. Jesus Christ refuted the calumnies of his enemies, until he saw they were determined on his death, and that farther speaking would be fruitless yielding to human impatience. St. Peter defended himself and his associates from the

charge of intemperance, on the day of Pentecost; but he did so without rancor, or a spirit of recrimination. St. Paul silenced his calumniators by recounting the wonderful gifts which God had bestowed upon him; but in terms so modest as to show that truth and not vainglory was the object he had in view.

Some of the greatest writers of the Church wrote their best works in refutation of false charges against themselves and their fellow Catholics. The Crusaders, under the sanction of the Church, used force to repel force for five successive centuries.

All Catholic theologians agree that there are limits to the authority of the civil power; and that where its abuse [?] is manifest and organized, resistance is duty. But resistance must be actuated by a love of justice and not by lust of power or thirst for revenge or greed of gain. So far as our own convenience is concerned, we should be willing to give the other cheek to the smiter. But the love of what is right and regard for God's honor will lead us to defend ourselves against any insult or injury whereby our capacity for doing our duty towards ourselves or others might be impaired. We may resort to law to protect ourselves against fraud, to the resources of our talents and prudence to refute slanders, to our physical strength to repel violence. We may defend our rights to the last, provided we do not retaliate on those who would wrong us.

Another maxim of the world opposed to this law of Christ is that to forgive is mean spirited and unmanly. Some hold it as a principle of honor that when a man insults you, you are solemnly bound either to stab or shoot him or get stabbed or shot yourself. Now Christ exacts nothing of us that is mean or unmanly. Religion perfects nature and ennobles it; but in nothing lowers or degrades it. If any one is naturally kind, loving, magnanimous, courageous, faith does but direct and sanctify these qualities, and with the white robe of baptismal innocence on his soul he is kind, loving, magnanimous, courageous still.

Meanness and baseness consist in putting up with insult and injustice through fear or sloth. But as we have seen, the Christian does not submit to the wrong in forgiving the wrong. But while refraining from vengeance he shows the sublimest courage. There is a courage in resisting the fierce impulse to retaliate, and a courage loftier still in disregarding the scoffs of men who will misrepresent his motives and ascribe to fear what was due to principle. It certainly requires some courage for a man to stand up and be shot at; but it requires infinitely more for him to brave the frowns and scoffs and hootings of the mob for the sake of right. The general who remains calm and self-possessed with the roar and hurry of battle around him, while the air is filled with bursting shells and whistling bullets, shows an admirable fearlessness; but he who is unmoved by the scorn, the jibes, the scoffing, the misrepresentations of society, supported only by the approbation of God, displays a courage that is divine.

There is one fear of such a one losing the respect of society. He may incur its hatred and feel its vengeance, but he will be the object of its contempt. The world is

courageous enough, nay overbearing and tyrannical, towards those who fear it; but it crouches and fawns before those who despise it.

The saints renounced and trampled on it, and it hated them, persecuted them while they lived; but when they were dead, it fell before their shrines and worshipped. Henry the second King of England going barefoot and in sackcloth to the tomb of Thomas á Becket whose brains had been scattered by his satellites, over the sanctuary of the Canterbury Cathedral, a few months before is a fair type of what the world can dare and how it can grovel. No man can lose the respect of the world by adhering to right. The passion of revenge therefore is without excuse. Vindictiveness is not necessary to the defense of rights, and it is in the way of him who boldly aims at the respect of the world.

Theoretically then, the hatred of enemies is indefensible.

The great mass of Christians, however, admit in theory the duty of forgiveness, though multitudes of them fail most lamentably in its practice. There are few who have not enemies and I fear that genuine forgiveness such as is necessary to salvation is exceedingly rare. To hate is undoubtedly mortal sin. He that loveth not abideth in death, says the Apostle, and it is to be feared that many souls are abiding in death which think themselves full of life. For if in our conduct and conversations we scarcely show charity towards our friends, how can we hope that we feel as we ought towards our enemies. If we have so little consideration towards those of our own domestic and social circle, if we are so ready to mark their defects, to publish their failings, to cavil at their virtues, to suspect their motives, to magnify their faults and disparage the good they do, how can we expect to be clean of enmity towards those who proclaim themselves our foes?

Look around you, and see how fearfully Christian communities are deformed by enmity and strife, to say nothing of those contentions which are the baleful heritage of religious error, what a multitude still of divisions and distractions and hatred. Hatreds arising from difference of race, from family traditions, from rivalry in trade and profession, from sudden and unmeaning quarrels, from difference of worthless opinion, hatreds manifesting themselves by the knife, the poison, the pistol, by slander and calumny, by injury of property, business, character, in the newspapers, in the market places, at the street corners, and in private circles. If the words of Christ are true, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples if ye love one another," are we, with our abusive newspapers, our scheming business circles, our gossiping, scandal-retailing private parties, a Christian community?

Yet the multitude of sinners does not excuse the sin; if all the world prevaricates, all the world will abide in death. But many deceive themselves in their hatreds and imagine [themselves to be] actuated by motives far different from their real ones. Sometimes they call it zeal, and when the call for fire to come down from heaven to

consume those they hate, when they sharpen the sword of persecution, or put new venom on the shafts of slander, they imagine themselves to be doing the work of God, and congratulate themselves on the unflinching character of their value.

Sometimes they call it necessity of business, and while crushing a rival feel great satisfaction at their success in life. Sometimes they call it a regard for family or professional honor or personal dignity. As far as they are concerned personally they forgive their enemy, but they must not demean themselves or disgrace their association by yielding friendship to such as he. Occasionally they call it love of peace and allege as a reason for not being reconciled to their enemy that if they associate together new quarrels will be sure to arise. But hatred, call it by what name you will, is still the same, horrible, hideous mortal sin that drives God out of the soul, that tramples on the blood of Christ, defies the wrath of God and kills the soul.

The command of Christ is plain and unmistakable. "I say unto you, 'Love your enemies.'"

The love must be sincere, so as to bear the scrutiny of the All-seeing. In the Lord's Prayer we pray God to forgive us as we forgive others, and that petition coming from a heart in which hatred lies lurking is an imprecation. In the last day there will be judgment without mercy to those who have not shown mercy; that is those who have not forgiven will lack forgiveness. And rightly. For consider in itself the deformity of this sin, independently of the disobedience contained in it. He who seeks vengeance makes himself God in two [ways:] first, he takes himself as the measure of goodness and declares that men are to be rewarded or punished according as they are pleasing or displeasing to him. He forgets that... [two blank lines]

Second, he assumes God's office of judge, and acts as though he could search hearts, discern motives, weigh temptations, and pronounce sentence upon action; with satanic pride he seats himself upon the throne of God, treats his fellow servants as if he were their master, judges as if he were the omniscient. And what adds to the malice of this insolence is that he himself needs mercy and has had it offered.

To many this precept of interior forgiveness is a hard saying. "I can by great effort restrain my hand from tearing and my tongue from cursing this man who has cheated, outwitted, betrayed, robbed, insulted or oppressed me. But how can I restore the feelings of my soul and the hot blood back to the heart, when I hear his name or see him pass triumphing through the streets? How can the heart yet writhing under the memory of wrong melt into love? Is not this too much for human nature? Yes. It is too much for human nature, but not too much for the grace of Christ. It is too much for men immersed in schemes of temporal ambition who have all the petty vanities, the low aims, the unbridled passions of men worldlings; but it is not too much for him who has fixed his hopes on Eternity, who has in earnest renounced the world. It is not too much for him who loves Jesus Christ mocked, scourged, crowned with thorns, crucified. Such

190 - Edifying Facts

a one cannot be reached by human malice. His Enemies--

[four blank lines]

We must be men of faith.

190.

Editorial, *The Catholic Telegraph and Advocate*, August 7, 1858 (2)

Edifying Facts.

There is a French periodical bearing this title published in Lyons every month. The title is suggestive, and the work of the editors, one that does honor to a Christian. The magazine is made up of accounts of retreats, novenas, missionary labors, remarkable conversions, instances of charity, on the part of the faithful, and is often extremely interesting. It is an attempt of fervent piety, to give to the things that savor not of earth the same interest, and importance as men attach to the events of the political, scientific and literary world. In sober truth, a well attended novena, a good retreat, nay, any act of piety, however small, is more worth recording than a change of ministry, a political revolution, a new work of fiction or a new discovery in science; because things that are of God have a permanent influence, while the effect of events, called more exciting, is transient.

The work of the editors of a journal devoted to the publication of edifying facts contrasts nobly with the work of ordinary editors. The ordinary editor seeks for facts the very opposite of edifying. The "local" of the daily must hunt up scandal, in order to make his services valuable to his employer. He must go to the station houses, to the police court, to the bar-rooms, and gambling houses of the city, in order to hear accounts of thefts, murders, and arsons. He must listen to the small talk of neighborhoods, discuss family difficulties, and make himself familiar with all that is bad in his locality. His living is made, by the hunting up of infamies. In all that he publishes, there is scarcely anything to suggest a good thought, to strengthen a noble resolution, to show an example of virtue of any kind. How much better, how much more Christian it is to employ one's self in finding out the edifying rather than the scandalous facts of any neighborhood! How much better to be employed in publishing instances of charity, examples of piety, accounts of good works, than to be recording examples of crime!

If the principle of dwelling upon edifying facts, could be carried into social life, much sin might be avoided. Persons, calling themselves Christians, make little scruple of using the character of their neighbors as a topic in their ordinary conversations. And in speaking of their neighbors, they are not careful to seek for "edifying facts" upon which to dwell, but rather for facts or fancies that encourage themselves in wrong, or soothe them in sin.

190 - Edifying Facts

Why cannot Christians be Christians? Why cannot the rule of charity,--never speak of any one, unless you have something good to say of him,--be universal among them?