

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION - - - - -	I
SUNDAY - - - - -	4
ADVENT - - - - -	8
CHRISTMAS - - - - -	11
NEW YEAR'S DAY - - - - -	15
THE EPIPHANY - - - - -	20
LENT - - - - -	25
ASH WEDNESDAY - - - - -	29
PASSION SUNDAY - - - - -	33
PALM SUNDAY - - - - -	37
HOLY WEEK—THE TENEBRÆ - - - - -	40
HOLY THURSDAY - - - - -	43
GOOD FRIDAY - - - - -	47
HOLY SATURDAY - - - - -	51
EASTER SUNDAY - - - - -	55
ASCENSION THURSDAY - - - - -	59
WHIT SUNDAY - - - - -	63
CORPUS CHRISTI - - - - -	68
THE PURIFICATION - - - - -	72
ST. PATRICK - - - - -	77
THE ANNUNCIATION - - - - -	82

CONTENTS

	PAGE
SS. PETER AND PAUL - - - - -	86
THE ASSUMPTION - - - - -	92
ALL SAINTS - - - - -	95
THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION - - - - -	98
THE HOLY INFANCY - - - - -	101
THE HOLY FAMILY - - - - -	105
ST. JOSEPH - - - - -	108
THE HOLY GHOST - - - - -	112
THE BLESSED VIRGIN - - - - -	116
THE SACRED HEART - - - - -	120
THE PRECIOUS BLOOD - - - - -	125
THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY - - - - -	129
THE SEVEN DOLOURS - - - - -	132
THE ROSARY - - - - -	136
THE SOULS IN PURGATORY - - - - -	139
THE HUMANITY OF OUR LORD - - - - -	143
EMBER DAYS - - - - -	146
STATIONS OF THE CROSS - - - - -	151
QUARANT ORE - - - - -	154
NOVENAS AND TRIDUUMS - - - - -	157
THE JUBILEE - - - - -	160
THE LAST SACRAMENTS, ETC. - - - - -	164
MISSIONS AND RETREATS - - - - -	169
THE CHURCHING OF WOMEN - - - - -	173
APPENDIX - - - - -	176
DECREES - - - - -	182
DON'TS - - - - -	198

SUNDAY.

'If the Lord's Day was not of Divine institution, it would be necessary to invent it as one of the surest means of maintaining order amongst men.'—*Anc. Leg.*

GOD Almighty in the beginning of the world appointed a Sabbath, or day of rest, to be kept once a week in memory of His having accomplished the creation of the world in six days, and His resting on the seventh; and also that man might not only give rest to his body, but especially to his soul. This is done by withdrawing from the cares and pleasures of life, and raising our thoughts to consider the eternal rest in the world to come, the means to secure it, and the evils to be avoided. Thus, the day of rest is a remembrance of God's power and goodness, and so an excellent means of increasing our love for Him, because we cannot fail to love Him Whom we know to be the most perfect Being, to Whom all creatures owe their existence, Who is our greatest benefactor. Later on, when the sanctification of the Sabbath was included in the Ten Commandments given on Mount Sinai, Almighty God prefixed the word

SUNDAY

5

remember, as time had shown how apt man was to forget Him and His service, by being too fond of the perishable goods and pleasures of this life.

The last day of the week was appointed to be kept holy in the Old Law, but the Church, the beloved spouse of Christ, chose Sunday in memory of our Saviour's resurrection and the descent of the Holy Ghost, both of which happened on that day. Hence it is called the Lord's Day.

We are obliged to hear Mass every Sunday, and to abstain from servile works which are not required by necessity or charity. We ought, also, to endeavour to be present at the other public devotions, such as Vespers, Sermon, Benediction, or Rosary. A part of the day might be profitably spent in reading pious books, such as the 'History of the Bible,' the 'Lives of the Saints,' the 'Imitation of Christ,' St. Liguori's 'Way of Salvation,' and the publications of the Catholic Truth Society, which may be found at most church doors. These will help us to enjoy that peace of heart which is found by those who retire from the noise and tumult of life to devote some time to their eternal interests.

There is a plenary indulgence granted in some countries to the faithful who receive Holy Communion worthily on the first Sunday of the month, and afterwards say a few Paters and Aves for the Pope's intentions.

Those who have more leisure and aptitude may further sanctify the Sunday by teaching catechism

in the church, collecting for the various charities, etc. A Sunday spent thus passes sweetly, having been truly sanctified by prayer and charity, and refreshed by family reunions, rest, and innocent joys. It is a guarantee of eternal rest in the kingdom of God.

'Grant I may ever, at the morning ray,
Open with prayer the consecrated Day;
Tune Thy great praise, and bid my soul arise,
And with the mounting sun ascend the skies;
As that advances, let my zeal improve,
And glow with ardour of consummate love;
Nor cease with eve, but with the setting sun
My endless worship shall be still begun.'

Example.—RUDOLPH DE LISLE. Born A.D.
1853.

If there was one specially marked characteristic about Rudolph from earliest boyhood, it was his absolute fearlessness, whether of danger, ridicule, or hardship, in the discharge of duty. Many striking instances of this better part of valour are given. Take one. There was a French man-of-war stationed not far from his ship in one of the harbours of the Pacific Ocean, and as there was Mass on board this ship, Rudolph thought it best to take his men there rather than go on shore. Leave was asked and obtained, so a quarter of an hour before the time, he arrived with his men. He himself was invited at once by the officers into the cabin, where they showed him every

politeness. But by and by, the quarter of an hour being expired, Rudolph looked at his watch, and said: 'Ah, I see 'tis Mass-time now.' These French officers were Catholics, but lived, as too many of the French in that station of life do, in total disregard of religion. So when Rudolph said 'It is Mass-time,' they replied, 'Mass! surely you are not going to Mass?' 'Yes, I am,' said Rudolph, and, at once taking leave, he went off and entered the place where Mass was said. About the time of the *Sanctus* one of the French officers slunk in. The next Sunday two or three came in; the Sunday after the whole of the officers attended Mass from the very commencement, and they continued to do so for the six weeks longer that the two men-of-war were within easy reach of each other.

ADVENT.

'If you desire to receive Jesus Christ you must search the foldings of your soul, that you may discover if any secret sin, which could wound the eyes of His Divine Majesty, lies hid in the depths of your conscience.'—ST. AUGUSTINE.

By Advent is meant the four weeks before Christmas, appointed by the Church to prepare us for the worthy celebration of our Saviour's birth. We should endeavour by prayer, the practice of virtues, fasting, and a good confession, to have Jesus formed anew in our hearts at this holy season. For this reason the Gospel read at Mass on the first Sunday treats of His coming at the Last Day. The Church seems to say to us, 'If you wish to behold without fear the arrival of that God Whom I announce to you, when He shall come as the supreme Judge of the living and the dead, prepare to receive Him now that He comes as a Saviour.'

On the Second Sunday of Advent the Church continues her instructions. The Gospel sets before us the Precursor, John the Baptist, point-

ADVENT

ing out in the person of Christ the Redeemer expected for four thousand years.

On the third Sunday the Baptist is again heard—'The voice of one crying in the desert: Make straight the ways of the Lord. Behold He cometh, and I am not worthy to loose the latchet of His shoe.*' He who uses these words is the greatest among the children of men. Oh! how holy is our Lord, and how careful we should be in preparing ourselves to receive Him!

We ought during this season to make use of frequent ejaculations inviting our Lord into our hearts. 'O Divine Infant Jesus, come to be born in my heart, to drive out sin and to plant Thy virtues there.'

'Great Judge of hearts, Thou dost discern
Our ills, and all our weakness know;
Again to Thee with tears we turn,
Again to us Thy mercy show.
And grant us, while by fasts we strive
This mortal body to control,
To fast from all the food of sin,
And so to purify the soul.'

Example.—ST. PHILIP NERI.

A young man named Spazzara, who lived in Rome, visited St. Philip Neri one day, and entered into long details about the study of law, which he had just commenced. He described the course

* John i. 27.

which he meant to pursue in order to obtain the degree of Doctor. 'And then?' demanded the Saint. 'Then,' replied the young man, much encouraged, 'I will plead causes, and I hope successfully.' 'And then?' added the Saint again. 'And then people will begin to speak of me, and I shall enjoy a reputation.' 'And then?' continued St. Philip, smiling. 'And then,' continued the young man, a little embarrassed, 'I shall live at my ease, and I shall be happy.' 'And what then?' 'Well, then—I shall die.' 'And then?' resumed the Saint, raising his voice. 'What shall you do when your own trial comes, when you, yourself, shall be the accused, Satan the accuser, and the Almighty your judge?' The young man, who little expected such a conclusion, hung his head and began to consider within himself. After this interview, he endeavoured, by consecrating his life to the service of God, to prepare seriously for the final judgment on which eternity depends.