

THE POSITION OF THOSE OUTSIDE THE CHURCH WHO ARE
SINCERELY SEEKING THE TRUTH.

Summary.

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CHAPTER IX

TEMPTATIONS AGAINST FAITH

Introduction.

In the next chapter we shall see how our own acts and omissions may lead to our not living the Faith and may lead to our being tempted against Faith, *i.e.*, tempted to doubt. In this chapter we are dealing especially with temptations against Faith for which we are in no way or very slightly responsible.

For temptations caused by our own fault we shall indicate in the next chapter both the causes and their remedies. But the present chapter also will be helpful in the case of those who are actually under the stress of temptation caused by their own carelessness.

§ I.

THE FACT OF TEMPTATION AGAINST THE FAITH WITHOUT ANY FAULT.

We must all meet temptation of some kind, and this without any fault of our own. There are few who have not to face involuntary temptations against chastity (at some time of life at least). To conquer these we require: (a) God's grace, got by prayer; (b) prompt rejection without parley; determined course of will in this rejection; (c) contrary acts, *e.g.*, love of God—renewal of the vow of chastity if we have taken it. If we neglect these means we are exposed to fall sooner or later.

Some souls are tried by temptation against Faith. To conquer these we require to treat them as we treat temptations against Purity—(a) Prayer for grace; (b) prompt rejection without parley; (c) contrary acts—acts of Faith.

It will be useful at this stage to recall the difference between a difficulty and a doubt. As Cardinal Newman has said, ten thousand difficulties do not make a single doubt. A difficulty is not a doubt. It does not necessarily cause a temptation to doubt.

Difficulties come from the mind. Doubts come from the will. A difficulty arises from an embarrassment of the mind e.g., we feel unable to reconcile two truths taught by Faith—we are in presence of a mystery. A doubt comes from a reluctance to submit to divine authority, e.g., when one is unwilling to accept the evidence given by God that He is speaking to us—we want to select our own evidence.

A difficulty is removed by fuller instruction, or by recalling and considering the infinity of God's wisdom and truthfulness, as against our own limitations in every mental power. A doubt, or rather a temptation to doubt, is removed by humble acts of Faith, by the expressions of our desire to submit our mind and will to our Creator and Father and lover; this means submitting to the Holy Catholic Church which is His representative.

§ II.

GENERAL ANALYSIS OF TEMPTATIONS AGAINST FAITH.

We can now examine more closely some other reasons, besides the diminution of grace, why the sins we have mentioned lead to temptations against the Faith, i.e., temptations to doubt one of the truths of the Faith. The study will guide us in our care of the Faith and in our resistance to temptations.

To understand how temptation usually attacks us we must recall again the nature of the act of Faith, and first, we must keep in mind the powers or faculties of the soul which are involved in the act of Faith or its preliminaries.

The Faculties of the Soul.

To study the act of Faith and temptations against the Faith we require some knowledge of the powers or faculties of the soul. We should distinguish the higher powers and the lower powers.

The higher powers are two: intellect (mind, understanding) by which we know and by which we judge; will (heart) by which we choose and by which we direct our activities.

The lower powers spoken of as the sensitive or emotional powers include especially the sense memory (a store of sense impressions) and the imagination (the picture making power).

"Supernatural."

The word "supernatural" means above nature. It is used by the Church to mean something above all created natures. From this it follows:—

What is supernatural cannot be attained to by any natural power. It cannot be merited by any act of man—since the act by which we merit must have some proportion to the thing merited. It cannot be due to man as a completion of his nature.

Sanctifying grace and the infused Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity are supernatural in the full sense of the term. The act of Faith is an act of the mind adhering to a doctrine, that is, believing a doctrine, simply because God has declared the doctrine to be true. It is on account of God's supreme authority, His supreme truthfulness, that we believe what He says. We recognise that as God's creatures we should acknowledge His supreme dominion over us and our total dependence on Him. As God's creatures we are desirous of honouring Him, of paying Him our homage, especially the homage of our understanding which is our most exalted faculty. Now we pay God the homage of our understanding when we believe on His word the mysteries which He reveals, i.e., which He declares are true. In the act of Faith we believe what God has revealed not because we are convinced by internal arguments as we are convinced that two sides of a triangle are greater than the third. But simply because God has spoken and, under the influence of grace, we wish to submit to His word and so to honour Him. In other words, we hold firmly to a doctrine which we believe because we will to believe. It is the will that commands the intellect to believe. Hence our will must be right with God—this is a necessary preliminary, and anything that turns our will away from God makes it less inclined to command the intellect.

On the other hand our intellect must be unharmed so as to be able to judge correctly that God has certainly spoken. Anything that impedes this judgement makes the act of Faith more difficult.

Temptation usually acts on our will and intellect by the medium of our sensitive nature, i.e., our imagination (our picture making power), our passions.

We can now consider: (1) temptation in general; (2) how temptation leads to the sin of disbelief by which the gift of Faith is lost.

(1) *Temptation in General.*

All sin is committed by an act of the will. The act of the will is preceded by an act of the intelligence which judges an evil act to be worth doing. This false judgement of the mind is the result of the imagination and the passions which when excited impede the calm operation of the intellect and hence prevent a calm convinced judgement. They also impede the act of the will. How the imagination (our picture making faculty) and our passions have this double power we shall now explain.

It is well known that the memory, imagination and passions if excited may impede the correct operation of the mind. Consider this example. A man fancies he is insulted—he gets excited, a vivid picture of the insult is kept before him by his imagination, intensified by the devil; this impedes his reason from judging correctly and estimating accurately the importance or unimportance of the insult. He judges it to be serious. His false judgement prepares the way for his will to desire revenge.

Temptation always acts on the imagination and passions. This is only the old doctrine of St. Gregory the Great and St. Francis de Sales¹ who tell us that the three stages of sin are suggestion, delectation and consent. Delectation is a disturbance of our sensitive nature, of our imagination or of our passions.²

St. Thomas explains in detail³ how our imagination and

our passions can influence our will. He tells us that the imagination and the passions act on the will indirectly:—

- (i) in as much as they absorb the vital energy to such an extent that the will is left feeble;
- (ii) in as much as they impede the balanced judgement of the intellect, which judgement should direct the will.

(2) *Temptations against Faith.*

Let us apply the above to temptations against Faith—both voluntary in cause and involuntary. Our reading and conversation, our pride, our worldliness (all voluntary), or the acts of the demon (involuntary), influence our imagination and our passions. For instance, one vivid picture is kept before us to the exclusion of others, e.g., a picture of the difficulty of a particular doctrine. The mind's operation is thus made more difficult—the picture stands in the way of the certain judgement that God is speaking by His Church.

If the heart (the will) is united to God, by His grace, it directs the intellect to look away from the picture so as to judge correctly, and commands it to believe.

If the heart (the will) is not closely united to God it may not direct the intelligence to attend to the reasonableness of belief on the authority of God and may not command its adhesion.

Hence the sin of unbelief.

Abundant grace would have helped to prevent this—hence its necessity, hence the necessity of constant prayer for the grace we need to protect our Faith by exercising our Faith.

§ III.

HOW TEMPTATIONS ARISE.

To understand something of the nature of these temptations and the remedies they require we must recall that, as we have so often said, the act of Faith is an act of the mind accepting and adhering to a doctrine not because we can prove it but because we have God's word for it. The mind adheres to the doctrine at the command of the will—we believe because we will to believe.

¹ Cf. "Devout Life," Part IV, Ch. 3.

² It is well to note that spiritual passions also may exist in the soul, e.g. pride and hatred.

³ S. Th., I. II., q. 77.

Both mind and will therefore are operating in the act of Faith.

We will to accept the doctrine because through God's grace we wish to honour God by the submission of our mind. Hence the final condition for keeping the Faith is the childlike disposition of the soul before our Father in heaven.

Our imagination or picture-making power can impede to a certain extent the acts of the mind and will, and hence can make our act of Faith more difficult.

The devil has a certain power over our imagination and our passions. We all know how he can make the mental picture of a sinful pleasure haunt us. If we allow ourselves to ponder on the picture which the devil presents, our imagination makes the picture more intense, our mind may judge wrongly that the sinful pleasure is worth loving and the will may be swept into sinful desire.

In temptation against Faith, the devil brings up a picture in our imagination of the difficulty of some doctrine of Faith. If, through carelessness, we let our imagination ponder on the picture, it will become more and more intense. Our vital force will be so absorbed in this vivid operation that the action of our mind and will may be seriously hampered. Then our mind (forgetting God's infinite wisdom and its own limitation) may be inclined to judge the difficulty to be insurmountable. And then the will may no longer firmly command the intellect to submit to God's word. We have here a temptation to refuse to submit to God by paying Him the homage of our understanding.

This explanation shows us why we should treat temptations against Faith as we do those against purity.

But it also shows us how the mind and will strengthened by grace can remain firm, even if the devil be permitted to develop and make vivid the mental picture of the difficulty, while we try to pay no attention to it and repeat with full will our acts of Faith or turn our mind to other matters.

We can also understand from the above that if God permits it for our greater merit, the devil may so cloud our consciousness that we are no longer aware of the reality of our Faith, of our firmness in adhering to God's word, or the firm command

of the will thus directing the mind to submit to God. Hence we have the distress of the Saints and of ordinary good Christians in the time of temptation against Faith. They have the Faith but they do not know that they have it.

§ IV.

THE FAITH OF THE SAINTS WAS TRIED.

Temptations against Faith are found in the Saints and in saintly persons. We shall study the temptations of the following:—

Cardinal Wiseman,
Cardinal Vaughan,
The Little Flower, St. Thérèse of Lisieux,
St. Alphonsus Liguori,
St. Vincent de Paul,
St. Chantal.

In these cases: the heart, the will, was all right, it was united to God's will with filial piety. The mind, commanded by the will, really adhered to truth. But the light in their consciousness was partially obscured, their imagination was so strongly impressed by some difficulty that the consciousness of their own Faith was not clear.

We shall see, in our study, what the Saints did. They asked God for help, they turned away without delay, and then these Saints humbled themselves and repeated: "I believe, O Lord, help thou my unbelief"—they made acts of Faith.

Here we can see, in practice, the method of meeting temptations against Faith.

Cardinal Wiseman's Temptation.

Cardinal Wiseman was rector of the English College in Rome in 1828 at the age of 26, and was vice-rector before that. He was tempted against the Faith for two years 1827-1829 and was in great aridity until 1834. During this time he composed his "Horæ Siraicæ" on the Eastern languages, which gave him a European reputation.

He was a man of the greatest piety. During the trial (as he himself records) he felt there was no one near who would understand him.

Writing of this trial twenty years later, in 1848, Cardinal Wiseman said:—"During the actual struggle, the simple submission of Faith is the only remedy. Thoughts against Faith must be treated at the time like temptations against any other virtue—put away—although in cooler moments they may be safely analysed and unravelled."¹

Cardinal Vaughan's Temptation.

Cardinal Vaughan was tempted in the last years of his holy life, differing thus from Cardinal Wiseman who was tried in his early years.

His spiritual director writes:—"He listened humbly and with the docility of a child to the words of his director. He prayed most fervently, although his soul was dry and his mind still dark. Most of all he found comfort and strength in clasping his crucifix and imprinting kisses on it, and in loving invocation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph and his favourite saints."²

The Temptation of the Little Flower.

St. Therese of the Child Jesus was severely tempted against Faith. The trial lasted a year or more. "It seems to me," she says, "that out of the darkness I hear the mocking voice of the unbeliever: 'You dream of a land of light and fragrance, you dream that the Creator of these wonders will be yours for ever Nay, rejoice in death which will give you not what you hope for but a darker night still, the night of utter nothingness.' 'I fear that to write more were to blaspheme.' 'When I sing of the happiness of heaven and the eternal possession of God, I do not feel any joy therein, I sing only of what I wish to believe.'"³

Note the last words. We believe because we wish to believe. The words show she was believing.

Her remedy—"I have made more acts of Faith in this last year than during all the rest of my life"

¹ "Life and Times of Cardinal Wiseman," by Wilfrid Ward, p. 65.
² "Life of Cardinal Vaughan," by Stoddart-Cox, Vol. II, pp. 484-5.
³ "Autobiography" (trans. Taylor), pp. 150 ff.

"Without once looking him in the face, I turn my back on the foe; then I hasten to my Saviour and vow that I am ready to shed my blood in witness of my belief in Heaven."

On the advice of a very enlightened religious, she wrote the entire Credo with her blood in a small volume containing the four Gospels which she carried near her heart until the day of her death.⁴

The Temptation of St. Alphonsus.

St. Alphonsus is a doctor of the Church. He too was tempted against Faith. His trial lasted a year and a half, 1784-1785. He was then 88 years old.

Fr. Tannoia, a contemporary of the Saint for 40 years, says in his life:—"Thick darkness clouded his mind, and an ocean of iniquity terrified his heart. In everything he saw only sin and a risk of offending God; he who had guided thousands of souls, who had comforted them in sorrow, enlightened them in doubt, and driven away their fears, was now the sport of the devil's temptations and deceits to such a degree that peace and serenity departed from him. He had trials of all kinds—rebellion of the senses, thoughts of vanity, of presumption, of unbelief."

Father Mazzini, life-long friend of the Saint, says:—"Doubts assailed him on every one of the truths of the creed, and as his obscured conscience no longer distinguished between temptation and consent, he felt that faith was dying out in his soul. Then he used to cling desperately to the truth, multiplying acts of Faith and exclaiming: 'I believe O Lord—yes I do believe and I wish to live and die a child of the Church.'"⁵

Note how the Saint multiplied his acts of Faith.

The Temptation of St. Vincent de Paul.

St. Vincent de Paul was severely tried by temptations against Faith. The trial lasted for four years and was a veritable martyrdom. He resisted the temptation by making acts

⁴ Life by Lavelle, p. 188. Cf. also "The Cause of Beatification of St. Therese Martin," by the Vicar-Pastorale, p. 25.
⁵ Life, by Darbo, Vol. II, p. 202.

of Faith. This he did by pressing against his heart a piece of paper on which he had written the Credo. He had made a compact with Our Lord that every time he did this (and he did it frequently) he meant by this action and this movement of his hand to renounce the temptations. Although he said no word with his lips, he raised his heart to God at the same moment.¹

The Temptation of St. Jane Chantal.

St. Chantal was one of the Saints most severely tried by temptations against Faith. The evidence of this appears from the writings of St. Francis de Sales and St. Vincent de Paul who were her directors. St. Francis de Sales directed her from 1604-1622. St. Vincent de Paul from 1622-1641. The letters of St. Francis de Sales show forth both the severity of her temptation and the guidance she received for overcoming it. The following solemn testimony of St. Vincent de Paul agrees with the words of St. Francis.

The Testimony of St. Vincent de Paul on St. Chantal.

"We, Vincent de Paul, unworthy Superior-General of the Congregation of the Mission, certify that about twenty years ago God gave us the grace of becoming acquainted with the deceased, our worthy Mother de Chantal . . . it always seemed to me that she was perfect in all kinds of virtue, and especially that she was full of faith, although she had been tried all her life by contrary thoughts; although she apparently enjoyed that peace and tranquility of mind possessed by souls who have reached a high degree of perfection, yet she suffered from such interior trials that she said to me, and on several occasions wrote to me, that her mind was so filled with all sorts of temptations and abominations, that her constant practice was to turn away from the sight of her inner state, as she was not able to bear the sight of a soul so horrible as to seem to her to be a picture of hell; and that, although she suffered in this way, her

¹ See "Life of St. Vincent de Paul," by Bishop Abelly (Vol. III, Ch. II), for the details. Cf. "La Vie Spirituelle," Dec., '27, p. 267. Article by Fr. Gungor-Lagrangé.

countenance never lost its serenity, nor did she relax in the fidelity that God required of her in the practice of the Christian and religious virtues."²

Letters of St. Francis de Sales giving advice to St. Chantal in her temptations.

"In the third place you ask me for remedies against the temptations regarding Faith which the wicked spirit suggests to you. In this temptation you must take up the position that should be taken in temptations of the Flesh: do not argue neither much nor little . . . You must make no answer; do not pretend to hear what the enemy says, let him make as much noise as he likes at the door. 'All right,' you may say 'but he continues to annoy me, and the noise he makes prevents those inside from hearing one another.' It is all the same—patience. You must cast yourself down before God and remain there at His feet: He will understand by that humble confidence that you are His and that you want His help. But above everything keep yourself well shut in and open not the door at all either to see who it is or to drive the nuisance away. At last he will get tired of crying out and will leave you in peace. . . . And meanwhile it is an excellent sign when the enemy beats and blusters at the door; for it is a sign that he has not got what he wants. If he had it, he would not cry out any more, he would enter and stay. Take note of this, so as not to fall into scruple . . .

"After this remedy I give you another. Temptations against Faith go straight to the understanding, to make it parley, and think, and dream about them. Do you know what you must do while the enemy is occupied trying to escalate the intelligence? Sally out by the gate of the will, and make a good attack on him. That is, when a temptation against Faith comes to engage you: e.g.,—'how can this be? but if this, but if that?'—instead of disputing with the enemy by argument, let your affective part rush forth vehemently upon him, and even joining the exterior voice to the interior, cry: 'Ah! traitor. Ah! wretch, thou hast left the church of the angels, and wishest me to leave the

² "St. Vincent de Paul and Mental Prayer," by J. Leonard, C.M., p. 115.

church of the Saints! Disloyal, faithless, perfidious one, thou didst present to the first woman the apple of perdition, and thou wastest me to eat of it! Get behind me, Satan! . . . I know not if I make myself understood. I mean to say that we must fight back with affections and not with reasons; with the passions of the heart and not with considerations of the mind. It is true that in these times of temptations the poor will is quite dry; but so much the better: its acts will be so much the more terrible to the enemy, who, seeing that instead of retarding your progress he gives you an opportunity of exercising a thousand virtuous affections, and particularly the protestation of faith, will leave you at last."¹

Here are indications of the long duration of these temptations.

Letters of St. Francis de Sales.—(1612). He encourages St. Chantal in her trials on matters of faith and recalls how the Blessed Virgin Mary at the foot of the cross was in darkness and could not see her Saviour and even shared His dereliction.

1608. "Usez fort de diversion—Turn yourself away strongly on these occasions by positive acts of love of God and of confidence in His grace."

1606. "Against all these new assaults and temptations to infidelity or to doubt against Faith, keep yourself quiet and follow exactly the instructions you have received—you will have nothing to fear. Take care not to dispute or argue and also not to let yourself be disturbed or anxious."

1606. "You must not dispute (argue) but humble yourself. Neither speculate with your mind but strengthen your will."

1605. "The temptations against Faith have come back to you and you make no answer to them, they press upon you and you make no answer. This is very good my child; but you think too much of them, you fear them too much. They would do you no harm without that."²

¹ "Letters to Persons in the World," pp. 151 ff.

² Op. cit. For other letters referring to this temptation, cf. Paris Edition (1882), pp. 21, 29, 304, 309, 312, 323, 356, 382, 406, 418, 477, 374, 381, 384, 388, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410.

³ Cf. also "Letters of St. Chantal," Note pp. 347, 348, which give evidence that her intense trials and darkness lasted from 1604-1612, i.e., nearly to her death in 1641.

Practical Conclusions for Helping Ourselves.

We may sum up the teaching of the Saints regarding the treatment of temptations against Faith thus:—

1. Pray for help—Faith is a gift; its preservation is a gift.
2. Turn away promptly—do not examine.
3. Make acts of faith—"I believe Lord, help Thou my unbelief."

N.B.—The time of temptation is not the time to enlighten the mind. We should strengthen the will—it is the will which commands the act of Faith. We keep the will steady by keeping before us the motives that we know move us: e.g., God is our Father, we should trust Him.

We may recall some very general views that will help the soul to more peace in considering the motive: e.g., we must expect mysteries in Religion.

We can consider these two points.

God is our Father. The evidence of His fatherly love is seen in the Incarnation, and in the Passion: "God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son."¹

It is reasonable to trust Him and we should trust Him in difficulties, because of these things which are clear: His Incarnation and Passion are clear.

We must become as little children. We must recognise our finite nature. A child fears to go out in the night, he fears the shadows. The father does not stop to explain laws of light causing the shadows. He says: Put your hand in mine, and come on. The child knows his father's wisdom and love. He obeys although he cannot dispel his fears, he tries to forget them.² The logic of the child is perfect. His act is most reasonable.

Mysteries and Difficulties in Religion.

1. We must expect mysteries in religion. They are all around us in nature—all the more, therefore, in religion. Hence we must not wonder at the obscurities in religion.

¹ St. John II, 16.

² See for details, "As I have Loved You," Ch. III.

2. We are finite and hence cannot penetrate all mysteries—God is infinite.

3. Mysteries are a confirmation of the divinity of our religion. What comes from man can always be grasped and penetrated more or less.

4. Difficulties are not necessarily temptations. Difficulties are not doubts—ten thousand difficulties do not make a single doubt. Consider this example: A gnometer (by a badly but cleverly constructed figure) "proves" a part of a line equal to the whole. The proof seems sound; we can detect no flaw; nevertheless we are still quite convinced that the part of a line is always less than the whole. Here there is a difficulty but no doubt.

5. The Saints were tempted.

To help others in their difficulties or temptations about Faith.

In the acute stage, counsel them to follow the practice of the Saints which we have just examined. When the acute stage is passed, it is often useful to present some general considerations in addition to those given above, which may help the person to react against the impression which has been made on the memory and imagination.

Some of the following points may be useful.

1. Divine Revelation does not let us see nor understand the truth as God sees it. God alone comprehends or knows it fully in all its aspects; we now know in a dark manner.

2. A creature is incapable of perfect knowledge of divine things.

3. The perfection of the knowledge of which we are capable is ordinarily only acquired by serious and continual efforts. This is true of other studies.

4. God wishes us to merit heaven by accepting His word as a proof of a doctrine: "Blessed are they that have not seen and have believed."

5. We must not expect here below either the complete possession of truth—we are now "in umbris et imaginibus"—or the joy of a faith that has never known a trial.

6. Consider the following:—

- (a) The numbers of educated men who enter the Church.
- (b) The advance of the Church in Europe during recent times. (See note on next page).
- (c) How many enter the Church at death, yet no one leaves at death.
- (d) It is more reasonable to suppose that we are unable to solve a particular difficulty than to suppose our Religion, with its mass of interwoven proofs, is false; e.g., the unity of the Church; the Church continually produces Saints; the stability of the Church; the miracles that continually take place (Lourdes etc.); the glorious harmony of Catholic Doctrine.

7. Thanksgiving for the gift of Faith, frequent acts of gratitude for being a child of the Church, are a great protection in times of darkness. This implies a supreme act of belief. Thank God for our Holy Faith.

In conclusion—when we try to help others in temptations against Faith we should keep in mind the following points:—

- 1. A temptation is different from a difficulty or a doubt—temptation comes from a difficulty and leads to a doubt.
- 2. Do not expect that the soul should be at once pacified—learn to be patient.
- 3. Do not say too much at a time.
- 4. Do not try to make a vague difficulty precise.
- 5. Do not try to solve all little points—keep to general considerations.
- 6. Pray and do penance for the tempted—Faith is always a gift.¹

¹ Cf. Hogan—"Catholic Studies," p. 143 B.

NOTE:—The following statistics reveal the arresting fact that in England an average of over 11,000 converts a year have entered the Catholic Church during the past decade.

Year	No. of conversions
1929	12,372
1931	12,075
1932	11,980
1933	12,262
1934	12,288
1935	12,206
1936	12,210
1937	11,648
1938	10,617
1939	10,651
1940	11,049

HOW THE SAINTS CONQUERED TEMPTATIONS AGAINST FAITH.

Summary.

INTRODUCTION.

- I. Fact of Temptations against Faith—without any fault.
- II. A general analysis of temptations against Faith.
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 - (a) God our Father.
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- VI. To Help Others in their temptations.

CHAPTER X

HOW THE GIFT OF THE FAITH MAY BE LOST

§ I.

FAITH ONCE LOST IS SELDOM REGAINED.

The Gift of Faith, as has been said in Chapter I, includes—first, the virtue of Faith, that is, the permanent power in the soul, which under the influence of actual grace, enables us to make acts of Faith which are pleasing to God—and, second, it includes also, the series of actual graces and other helps (internal and external) which facilitate acts of Faith. Acts of Faith are, we may say, *connatural* to one who has the gift of Faith, and the influence of actual grace makes them very easy.

The Gift of Faith may be lost. This is an undoubted fact. It is also a fact that once lost the Gift of Faith is seldom regained. God gives it once easily. It is most precious. If we lose it, no doubt it may be got again, but, the dispositions of heart that prepare the soul for this new grace are not easily acquired. Hence it is that Faith is seldom regained. St. Paul puts this very clearly. "It is impossible," he says, "for those who were once illumined (the Gift of Faith) have tasted also the Heavenly Gift (Most Holy Sacrament), and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost (Confirmation and Grace), have moreover tasted the good word of God (instruction) and the powers of the world to come (Heaven and Hell), and are fallen away, to be renewed again to penance, crucifying again to themselves the Son of God and making Him a mockery."¹ "Impossible" here means, very difficult, morally impossible, impossible without a miracle of grace.²

To help us understand better these words of St. Paul, we should keep in mind that Faith is always a gift of God; but

¹ Heb. vi. 4-6.

² Cf. Archbishop Sheehan's "Apologia" Chap. XIV.

it is a gift that God gives a second time to those only who ask it with humility and perseverance. Here indeed is the difficulty of recovering a lost faith. Humble and persevering petition is not easy for those who have lost the Faith. We can say it is almost impossible for them because humble and persevering petition means going back on and reversing their own pride and independence of mind, which independence was the cause of their refusal to submit to God and believe His word. In other words, this new act of Faith, this new paying to God the homage of their understanding means acknowledging that the little Catholic child was right while they were wrong. All this is difficult. It needs an extraordinary grace of childlike humility through which they cast themselves at God's feet and recognise their absolute dependence on Him for their present life and continued existence.

St. Paul in his last Epistle says of himself: "I have kept the Faith."¹ In the mind of the Apostle it was something to have kept the Faith.

How is the Faith lost? The virtue of Faith is lost by a single sin of unbelief. Once we deliberately refuse to believe a single doctrine of the Catholic Faith (even in thought only) we have lost the Faith; once we refuse to submit our mind to God, once we refuse to accept the solemn teaching of the Church, we have lost the Faith. Hence we can realise that there are some Catholics who have lost the Faith, and still remain externally members of the Church.

The sin of unbelief is preceded by temptations to doubt. These temptations are of two kinds. Some of them come from the devil without any fault of ours. The Saints (e.g., the Little Flower and St. Chantal) were thus tempted. We have dealt with these in the previous chapter. Other temptations are due to our own sins or at least to our own impudence. We have done something which has put difficulties in the way of our act of Faith and which has diminished our power of resisting temptation by diminishing the influence which the truths of Faith have in our lives. To know how this diminution is brought about is of vital importance, for

the loss of Faith means the loss of Heaven—"he that believeth not shall be condemned." The diminution of the influence of the truths of Faith is caused by certain faults—acts and omissions. In the present chapter we shall study these faults and we shall indicate how we can protect and strengthen our faith against them. It is manifest that we are here considering a most practical point for the defence of our Gift of Faith.²

§ II.

PARTICULAR FAULTS, NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE, THAT MAY LEAD TO THE LOSS OF FAITH.

The value of the Gift of Faith should make us fear the faults that may lead to the loss of Faith. In such a vital matter we should take no risks. Of all these faults we can say:

(1) They are directly against the friendship and loyalty we should have towards the Lord Jesus and His Church. They are directly against the gratitude and devotion we owe to the Lord Jesus who has given us the Gift of Faith. It is on account of this special disloyalty that sins lead to the diminutions of actual grace. And the absence of this grace makes our act of Faith less easy.

(2) These faults tend to destroy the childlike spirit which is a characteristic of our act of Faith. They are directly contrary to this childlike docility. These faults are either negative—omissions, neglect—or positive acts.

Negative faults—omissions that may undermine the influence on our life of the truths of Faith are of two kinds.

First, the fault of not exercising our Faith, i.e., of not making explicit or implicit acts of Faith. It is manifest that living without reference to the truths of Faith is a disloyalty to the Church which gave us the Gift of Faith.

In particular we must name the following omissions which involve a neglect of loyalty and gratitude and hence have a

¹ The diminution of the influence on our lives of the truths of Faith is the very opposite of the increase of influence which is seen in the just man who lives by faith. This we shall explain in Chapter XI.

¹ II. Tim. iv. 7.

definite effect on the heart, drawing it away from God and preparing the way for the loss of Faith. This neglect of loyalty and gratitude is found in those who live without intercourse with God, who neglect prayer and the Sacraments and who live a life of pleasure-seeking—especially an impure life. It is easy to see how these influence the heart and alienate it from God.

All these sins have the same character of disloyalty and ingratitude to God. Hence they are followed by a diminution of the actual graces which keep us in the exercise of our Faith and thus preserve it. They are also directly opposed to the childlike spirit without which, as Our Lord says, we cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Secondly, the influence of the truths of Faith will be undermined by our neglecting to protect ourselves against the influence of the world around us.

NOTE: Before the negligent soul is tried by temptation against Faith caused or occasioned by its own acts or omissions, there is a period more or less long in which it does not exercise the Faith frequently by implicit acts of Faith; it does not live the Faith.² In consequence, the supernatural world becomes, by degrees, dim and shadowy. A period of life lived thus weakens the soul, it makes it unfit for resisting temptation. The devil knows this, and he may keep back for a long time actual temptations to doubt, knowing that the weaker the soul is the more certain is its fall when temptation comes.

In this chapter, as indicated already, we are concerned with the causes that prepare the way for temptations against the Faith. They open the door for temptation to doubt, by undermining the influence in our lives of the virtue of Faith.

Positive faults—repeated acts or dispositions.

These faults may be divided according to the faculty which they seem to influence more immediately:

- (a) Those that fill the memory with false impressions and thus get hold on our sensitive nature.

- (b) Those that pervert the will (the heart).
- (c) Those that impede the action of the mind.

In studying these faults we should always keep in mind the following:—

- (1) The first effect of all these faults is the diminution of the influence on our lives of the truths of Faith. This prepares the way for temptations against Faith and finally for the loss of Faith.
- (2) These faults prepare the way for temptations in two ways:—
 - (1) They diminish the help of actual grace, which we need to exercise our virtue of Faith by explicit or even implicit acts of Faith such as prayer.
 - (2) They diminish the perfection of our childlike spirit in regard to God Our Father. This childlike spirit is as we have seen characteristic of anyone who makes frequent acts of Faith, explicit or implicit.

A.

FAULTS THAT STAIN OUR SENSITIVE NATURE, OUR MEMORY, OUR IMAGINATION.

In the first place we shall consider the faults, the sins and other imprudences, which influence directly our memory, our imagination and our sensitive nature. These fill our memory and imagination with false impressions that produce in us a prejudice against some point of the Faith; this prejudice makes it difficult for our mind to judge correctly and to see clearly that God has indeed testified to the truth of the Catholic Church, which therefore speaks to us with His authority.

The first of these sins is indiscriminate reading and discussions on matters relating to religion. The second is the frequenting of non-Catholic society. The third is a mixed marriage.

1. Indiscriminate Reading and Discussion.

The Church forbids indiscriminate reading and discussion with

² See Chap. XI.

non-Catholics, not because any real difficulty can be found against the Faith, which has not been related many times; but because it is a disloyalty to Christ, Our Friend, our Saviour, Our Lover, Our God, to be frequenting the company of those who are his enemies and who try to draw us from His love and service. In reading we are keeping company with the author. Would a mother permit her child to frequent the company of those who tried to draw away her child from the love it should have for its father? Now, God is our Father and the Church (the Bride of Christ) is our Mother. Further, the Church forbids indiscriminate reading and discussion because her sometimes ill-instructed and not too virtuous children may have their memories and imaginations saturated by some false impression which will make the correct use of their reason difficult, and will draw their hearts away from God. A loving mother will forbid her children to frequent the company of those who calumniate and attack the character of their father; not because she fears anything will be proved against him, but she fears lest her child's memory and imagination might be stained and hence his reason impeded and his will and heart alienated.

We can examine all this in some detail and see more clearly how wise and reasonable is the law of the Church on reading and discussion.

Indiscriminate reading.

"Beware of false prophets," says Christ, "they come to you in sheep's clothing." This is a solemn warning. A prophet is a teacher. A book is a teacher. A bad book may be attractive—the charm of style is the sheep's clothing. The warning of Christ applies, in our days, especially to books.

To realise the danger of indiscriminate reading consider the following:—

(1) Your limited knowledge of religion. A medical man has five years professional study. A priest has at least six years professional study.

(2) The power of a clever barrister to present a bad case to an ignorant jurymen. You are not experts in theology,

while many of the enemies of the Church are clever, and the devil helps them.

(3) The natural law which binds us to preserve our Faith is supported by a law of the Church, which forbids the reading of dangerous books.

(4) Compare the Church's Law with the following:—

The law limiting the sale of poisons to qualified persons.

The appointment of a public analyst to secure pure food and pure water.

The locking up in an asylum of all who attempt suicide.

General Warning against Indiscriminate Reading.

It is a fact that cannot be denied that very many literary works are prejudicial to the Faith. Their tendency is to weaken it imperceptibly. The naturalistic philosophy, irreligious views, materialistic outlook contained in them is so subtle as not to be noticed. It is like a poison that is imbibed in very small doses. But its presence in the mind of the readers of such works will be detected later on when a situation arises for them to which they should apply the truths of the Faith, e.g., on the occasion of a tempting offer of worldly gain, through a mixed marriage, a cleverly concealed but dishonest financial transaction, an illicit friendship, etc. It will be seen that owing to false teaching assimilated through indiscriminate reading the "pearl of great price" will be sacrificed for mere temporal advantage. And the result? Like unto Hymeneus and Alexander of old, they run serious risk of "making shipwreck concerning the Faith."¹

Law of the Church and Dangers to Faith from Indiscriminate Reading.

From what has been said it should be obvious to any loyal Catholic that the Church in her restrictive legislation concerning certain books acts as a wise mother. With maternal solicitude she warns her children against two dangerous classes of publications—those that are subversive of Faith and those that are opposed to Catholic teaching regarding good morals, which teaching is based upon the Faith and upon the law of

¹ 1 Tim. i. 19, 20.

God. It is a grave duty for every Catholic to obey the laws of the Church forbidding the reading of certain kinds of books.¹ Apart from these enactments of positive law binding on all, it is the bounden duty of every Catholic to avoid all reading that would constitute a danger for the individual in question.

It is not hard to see the justification of this. Even though a person may feel himself firmly established in the Faith it is not lawful to take risks. And such risks are inevitable. The reading, especially when habitual, of books that either by subtle suggestion, ridicule or positive erroneous pleading, advocate principles opposed to the Faith cannot fail to saturate the mind, so assimilative of ideas, with the seeds of unbelief. Our Lord issued a solemn warning against false prophets—"Beware of false prophets."² Who are they in our days? They are legion in number. They are to be met with in the cinema, on the stage, on the radio, in factories and workshops but above all in books and newspapers. These "ravaging wolves" come very often in the "clothing of sheep." They do not directly and openly attack the Catholic Faith and morals, but they do so indirectly and in a very effective way. This is how the harm is done:

These well-appointed teachers subtly undermine the faith and morals of a Catholic by quietly ignoring their vital importance in daily life. They do not openly deny the existence of God, but they exclude Him from the field of everyday life. Again they do not professedly deny the Four Last Things which are the only true scale of values but they ignore that scale and implicitly offer another scale. According to the teaching of Our Lord the one thing that matters is to secure the salvation of one's soul, to seek the Kingdom of God; according to the implied teaching of the pagan writer, journalist or dramatist, all that really matters is to make money, to get the most out of life by having a good time, to eat, drink and make merry like the hedonist of old.

In this matter of safeguarding our Catholic Faith and morals, no one should presume to say that his Faith is so strong and

his morals so firmly established as to be proof against all attack, no matter how subtly or systematically directed. Neither good intentions nor experience in life can render anyone absolutely immune to painful surprises. It may be taken as a practical rule of guidance that indulgence in evil reading will end in spiritual disaster. This is what usually happens. Owing to the inherent weakness of human nature temptations are sure to arise. Moral lapses will follow. Then the false ideas and ideals that have been imperceptibly absorbed in the reading will be appealed to in order to justify or palliate the lapses. A certain French writer has acutely remarked: "We must live as we think, lest we end by thinking as we live."

Hence it follows that the only effective antidote to bad books is to think rightly. This involves filling the mind with what is positively good—the truth of Jesus Christ, such as is found in Catholic literature. The reading of Catholic books frees our minds and hearts on the things that matter—God—the soul—human life as conceived by God. In that way alone shall the followers of Christ keep the "mind of Christ," and so see and judge of things in their proper supernatural perspective.

Indiscriminate discussion.

(1) A person who asks you for information on the teaching of the Church and honestly desires to know should be answered; and you should be able to answer. You are not required to prove the doctrine from Scriptures.

(2) A person who wishes to discuss religion simply for the sake of argument or for the purpose of confounding you should not be answered.

(a) These discussions do no good. The Code of Church Law forbids public discussions without permission.

(b) You perhaps have not made the studies required for defending your religion. It is one thing to be able to know the teaching of the Church, another to be able to defend it.³

¹ See Canon 1754, 1790 of Code of Canon Law.

² Matt. 23, 13.

³ The Catholic Evidence Guild prepares Catholics for discussion.

Hence be firm in refusing. Say that you do not discuss religious matters and that if he wants information you can direct him to a priest.

The danger of discussion for those whose opportunities have not permitted them to make a very profound study of their religion, is due to the fact that they may find themselves in the hands of a very clever man who misrepresents things and whose errors their limited knowledge is not able to detect. Look what a clever barrister can do when he has a bad case to defend, how he can put interpretations on the facts, misrepresent their different importances, and in the end completely persuade those that are ignorant.

The illustrations we have given show clearly the imprudence and the disloyalty to Our Lord manifested by indiscriminate reading and discussion. From this follows the diminution of the actual graces which we need to exercise our Faith.

The illustrations also show how opposed are these acts to the childlike spirit Our Lord asks even of adults.

II. Non-Catholic Society.

The frequenting of non-Catholic society is often a great source of the loss of Faith. It leads easily to indiscriminate reading (books are spoken of or lent) and to discussion. It operates, like reading, by filling our memory and imagination with false impressions. These are numerous, and hence the final impression made is deep. The mind draws its materials from the memory. Hence we have wrong judgements, *i.e.*, our mind is impeded by the influence of the memory and the imagination. A Catholic should be very prudent in the selecting of non-Catholic doctors and lawyers. Non-Catholic advice may be given through ignorance of the details of the Catholic doctrine and spirit. Frequenting the company of, and making friends with, those who are not friends of Our Lord, who are not childlike and docile before Him, is an evident disloyalty to Our Saviour and Our God, and hence a cause of the diminution of our graces. It leads to a spirit which is the very opposite of the spirit of a child before the Father in Heaven.

III. A Mixed Marriage.

A mixed marriage is one of the causes of the loss of Faith. A mixed marriage, like all the above sins, is a disloyalty to God, Who has given us the Faith without any merit of ours. Hence it is hated by the Church.

It deprives us of the abundance of grace which follows those who are guided by the Church. It surrounds us with an un catholic atmosphere which may easily influence our memory and imagination, and hence impede the correct operation of our mind, and damage the outworks of our Faith.¹

B.

FAULTS THAT ALIENATE OUR HEARTS (OUR WILLS).

In the second place there are the sins which tend to draw the heart, the will, to earth and away from God. The most deadly of these sins is the sin of *pride*. Pride leads many to the loss of Faith. We have spoken of pride as an obstacle to the grace of Faith for those outside the Church.² We must now show its danger for those who have the Faith.

N.B. It is our will that commands our intellect to believe—we believe because we wish to believe, and we wish to believe because we wish to honour God by submitting to His Word. Hence anything that turns our will away from God makes our act of Faith more difficult. In the act of Faith we believe a doctrine which we do not see and which we cannot prove, simply because God says it is true. This involves humility. We bend down our mind before the authority of God. We pay God the homage of our understanding. We acknowledge we are creatures and that therefore we are limited. We acknowledge that we are children of Our Father in Heaven, and we wish to please Him. This is humility.

Pride is the opposite of humility. The proud man trusts his own mental powers in an inordinate way. He forgets his own mental limitations. He is inclined to accept only what he can see and what he can prove. He rebels easily against

¹ Cf. Appendix I.

² Chapter VIII.

accepting truth from another. He easily shuts his eyes to the evidence that God is speaking through the Church. *Hence pride leads easily to the loss of Faith.* The loss of Faith through pride appears especially in those who criticise the Church, who criticise her laws, who criticise the actions and words of those appointed to speak and act in her name.¹ *Many lose the Faith through this sin of criticising.* In this sin they make themselves the judges of the words of the Bride of Christ. Like to the sin of criticism of the Church is the sin committed by marked want of reverence for sacred things. These sins in addition to their own malice generally involve the sin of scandal, and scandal of a serious kind. It is easy to see that complacency in our own superiority—pride—is at the root of all these sins.

The loss of Faith through pride follows frequently from positive disregard of the laws of the Church. And in particular the laws which forbid having anything to do with spiritualistic practices, or joining banned societies, or sending children to non-catholic schools. These sins easily lead to the loss of Faith.

In all this it is our will that is wrong. We do not want to submit. Submission means accepting our inferiority, our dependence. Our pride resists this.

C.

A FAULT THAT IMPEDES THE OPERATION OF THE MIND.

In the third place culpable ignorance is a cause of the loss of Faith. This is a special kind of disloyalty to God because man's first duty is to know God. Ignorance evidently impedes the correct judgement of the intelligence especially when our imagination (our picture-making power) is impressed by a difficulty. Ignorance is culpable when it is due to indolence in not acquiring knowledge when we can and should. It shows a want of esteem for the Gift of Faith and this is a disloyalty to God Who has given us the Faith. Hence it leads to a diminution of Grace.

¹ We should pass over the faults or defects of the clergy, through reverence for God, as we pass over the defects of our parents. "And do ye all things without murmurings." (Phil. II. 14.)

Culpable ignorance which may injure our Faith is of various kinds.

- (I) Ignorance of the motive of credibility, *i.e.*, the proofs that God has testified to the Divine Authority of the Church.
- (II) Ignorance which does not distinguish in dogma what one must believe and what one may believe.
- (III) Ignorance which confounds what is essential and what is accessory in worship, *e.g.*, prayer is essential; certain prayers are accessory. Devotion is essential; certain devotions are accessory.
- (IV) In moral matters, likewise, ignorance confounds interior personal reform, which is essential, with certain external works, which are only a means unless commanded explicitly.

§ III.

THE MEANS OF PROTECTING AND STRENGTHENING OUR FAITH WHEN THE INFLUENCE OF THE TRUTHS OF FAITH HAS BEEN UNDERMINED.

In the day of God's Mercy a soul brings home to itself; that Faith is a gift of God; that it may be lost; that certain sins and imprudences lead to the loss of Faith, which loss means damnation, unless prevented by a rare miracle of grace; and that we ourselves have been imprudent and very much so. When we by God's Mercy realise all this, we must in the first place ask God to protect the precious gift he has given us (even if we were never seriously tempted).

To awaken in our soul a sincere gratitude for the gift of Faith we could re-read Chapter V of this book. Then we have two things to do:—

A. We must avoid what is dangerous to Faith.

The first and most obvious duty is to cut out of our life the causes of temptation that we have just explained in § II of this chapter. Hence summarising the opposite of what we have said: We must avoid (i) anything that would imply

disloyalty to Our Lord; (ii) whatever could be opposed to the childlike spirit which is so necessary. We must cut out of our lives all dangerous reading or indiscriminate discussion on religion. We must, asking God's help, be as firm as a rock in our refusal so to read and discuss. We must give up as far as possible our intimate intercourse with non-catholics—"What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul?" In the case of a mixed marriage the Catholic party must resist strongly the subtle non-Catholic influence which inevitably has to be met.² Such, in outline, is the way we should protect our Faith.

B. We want take the means of strengthening our Faith.

It is not enough to avoid what may injure our Faith—sins of disloyalty—we must strive to strengthen our Faith. A person in a pestiferous air uses disinfectants and also strengthens his general health.

(a) Our Faith is strengthened by the virtue being more deeply rooted into us, and by the abundance of actual graces enlightening the mind and attracting the heart. God alone can give these. Hence the importance of receiving the sacraments frequently and of fidelity in prayer.

(b) Our Faith is also strengthened indirectly by deliberate acts of Faith which give us certain facility in the acts—Faith is strengthened by exercising our Faith (see Chapter XI).

(c) Since Faith supposes reason although it is above reason, we can indirectly protect our Faith by strengthening its supports—

- (i) by increasing our knowledge of God and divine things. Hence the importance of spiritual reading—in particular, reading about the Church of God;
- (ii) by keeping our will united to God's Will, humble and reverent before Him. Our will can then (by grace) easily command the enlightened mind to submit to the word of the Church;

- (iii) by filling our memory and imagination (through reading) with the grandeur of the Faith and the glorious work of the Church, the Bride of the Lamb, the Mystical Body of Christ, in its constant struggle to save souls.

In so doing we prevent our imagination being caught by the passing glamour of the world. This world around us may be the cause of temptation in two special ways.

Consider first the following danger to Faith from the imagination—our picture-making power.

I. The world may fill our imagination so completely that religion is crowded out. The world is big—its struggles, its interests, its glories, its vicissitudes, all the impetuous rush of life are absorbing. Its overpowering presence tends to thrust out the next world, dwarf the invisible things of Faith. In a word "the danger of sight and sense," leading to the danger of our imagination being filled with the things of this world, and thus filling our hearts with love of these visible things leaving no room for God—this danger is very real.

II. The remedy, as we have said, consists in filling our imagination with the things of God. Imagination must get its proper food. Hence the importance of a knowledge of the grandeur of the Church, her liturgy, her saints. Hence the use of pictures and statues, of the crucifix and of all that gives food to our imagination.

Consider then another special danger to the Faith.

This is the danger that comes from the good people we see outside the Church. By this we are tempted to underrate the Gift of Faith. Against this danger, as noted above, we should, in the first place, endeavour to fill our imagination with the magnificence of the sanctity of the Church as seen in the never-ceasing heroic supernatural sanctity of her Saints. This will prevent our being dazzled by the natural good we may see in those outside the Church. We should read about the Church and about the Saints.³ Secondly we should keep in mind that a reasonable creature in the presence of the

¹ Matt. xvi. 26.

² See Appendix I to this Chapter.

³ Read "You are the Body of Christ." (Bless, Oates.)

Infinite Creator Who keeps him in existence should be in a disposition of reverence, and should recognise his absolute dependence. It is true that he is dependent; hence he should submit his mind by taking the word of his Creator. This act of Faith is first of all good works, and no other good work is of any avail if the creature refuses the submission of the mind. "Without Faith," says St. Paul, "it is impossible to please God."¹ The rational creature must also conform his will to the Divine Will by Charity. Such conformity is the means of moving our will to believe. St. Paul says: "If I have all Faith—if I deliver all my goods to feed the poor—if (by my soul) I deliver my body to be burned and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."² Hence, all that seems good is not profitable to salvation; it is not acceptable to God.

Cardinal Newman, who lived until mid-life with good people outside the Church, writes of them:—

"In spite of so much good that is in them, in spite of their sense of duty, their tenderness of conscience on many points, their benevolence, their uprightness, their generosity, they are under the dominion (I must say it) of a proud fiend; they have this stout spirit within them, they determine to be their own masters in the matter of thought, about which they know so little; they consider their own reason better than anyone's else; they will not admit that anyone comes from God who contradicts their own view of truth."³

APPENDIX I

MIXED MARRIAGE.

Introduction.

A mixed marriage is one of the causes of the loss of Faith. The best preservative from the spiritual misfortune of a mixed marriage is to have a docile spirit of obedience to Holy Church, Who hates them. This obedience will be easy if we know something of the reason why the Church hates them.

The Holy Scripture.

Mixed marriages have been hated by God from the very beginning; this is clear from the words of the Holy Ghost in the Old Testament. Mixed marriages were forbidden to the chosen people of Israel: "Neither shall thou make marriage with them (those outside of Israel). Thou shalt not give thy daughter to his son, nor take his daughter for thy son. For she will turn away thy son from following me that he may serve strange gods."⁴

NOTE:—The reason given by the Scripture is the danger of perversion. This danger is always real on account of the strong and tender affections that unite husband and wife.

Solomon, the wisest of men fell into idolatry on account of his love for a pagan wife.⁵

The Voice of the Church.

The Church was instituted by Our Lord to speak and teach in His name and the test of the real Catholic spirit is obedience to the Church. Listen now to the teaching of the Church on mixed marriages. Her Teaching is found first in her laws.

The Code of Canon Law is very clear.

Can. 1060. The Church most severely (*severissime*) prohibits mixed marriages and this prohibition extends to all countries (*ubique prohibet*). And the text adds this: Where there is danger of perversion for the Catholic party or for the children, mixed marriages are forbidden by the Divine Law itself.

Can. 1102. In mixed marriages all sacred rites are prohibited. However, if it can be foreseen that from this prohibition evils of a very serious nature (*malis gravibus*) will arise, the Ordinary may permit one or other of the accustomed ceremonies. The celebration of the Holy Sacrifice is never permitted. The ring is not blessed.

Can. 1109. Marriages between Catholics and non-catholics must be celebrated outside the Church.

Can. 1054. Ordinaries and all others in charge of souls shall do all in their power to prevent mixed marriages.

¹ Heb. xi. 6.

² I Cor. xiii. 2, 3.

³ Discourses to Mixed Congregations, p. 17.

⁴ Deut. xv. 3, 4.

⁵ III Kings, xi. 4.

By the same Author

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