
Why We Pray For Conversions.

A misconception held by many non-Catholics (and by some ill-informed Catholics as well) is that when we pray for conversions we have in mind the enhancement of the temporal glory of the Catholic Church, that we are applying to religion the good old American passion for "the largest in the world," "the greatest in captivity," or something of that sort.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. It is true, of course, that in Apologetics the universality of the Church is a legitimate proof of her divinity; and a proof of her universality is the fact that she is spread all over the world and has more adherents than any other religion (Buddhism, Mohammedism, and other oriental religions are split into more sects than Protestantism). But the Church is ever mindful of Christ's reply to Pilate, "My Kingdom is not of this world;" and her first anxiety is for the salvation of souls - individual souls.

No one knows better than the Catholic Church that outside of her fold myriads will be saved because, in good faith, they follow their consciences and have sorrow - based on the love of God - for any mortal sins they may have committed, plus at least an implicit desire for Baptism. But the fact that these souls are saved in this extraordinary way does not excuse her from carrying out her divine commission to "preach the Gospel to every creature," does not excuse her from trying to give these people the advantages of the ordinary way of salvation.

Sometimes a student makes a statement like this: "My mother is a good Methodist, and I am sure she will go to heaven, because she is the best mother God ever made. I would never think of praying for her conversion; I wouldn't want to disturb her good faith."

That is a cruel attitude. Simply because she is a good woman must she be content to be fed only with "the crumbs that fall from the table?" Must she be satisfied with one Sacrament (and that a doubtful one, for Methodists generally no longer regard Baptism as a Sacrament in the sense in which Christ instituted it to forgive sins) instead of the full seven? Is it kind of her son, to whom Holy Communion means everything, to deprive her soul of the nourishment that is in Christ's Body and Blood?

If her soul is beautiful now, how much more beautiful could it not be made with the full benefits of Christ's Precious Blood as it is applied through the Church! Don't make the mistake of regarding Holy Communion only as a Medicine for the weak: It is Food for the strong. Do you suppose that Our Lord deprived His Blessed Mother of Holy Communion simply because she was "full of grace?" Our Lord came to call, "not the just, but sinners to repentance;" but to the just He gave the means of perfection, and the Church has always produced Saints through the application of these means.

The Church never ceased to admire, and to hold up for the emulation of her children, the holy lives led by so many good people outside her fold. But neither does she ever cease to regret that they are not of the fold, that they are not of the "One Fold and One Shepherd." Therefore she prays, as Christ prayed, for Church Unity. She cannot, of course, sacrifice any of the doctrines which Christ entrusted to her, to arrive at any "irreducible minimum of doctrine" through which Protestants seek the Union of Christendom: she can teach only what Christ told her to teach. But she prays, and all good Catholics pray with her, for the conversion of all who hear not her voice.

PRAYERS: The deceased mother of Harold Hatch, '27; a deceased neighbor of a student. Ill - a relative of Jim Swords; two friends of students. Five special intentions.
LOST AND FOUND ARTICLES should be reported to the Lost and Found Department, in the Main Building. Several wallets have been lost lately; Paul Lesko lost one a few days ago. Wallets should be returned, even if they are found empty. They are often keepsakes.