

Adorer needed 9:30
this morning.

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
March 13, 1931

Way of the Cross
7:00 and 7:30

Setting An Editor Right on Faith. III.

Has the imagination no part, then, in religion? Certainly it has. It would ill behoove a Catholic to deny it, in view of the magnificent traditions of the Catholic Church in the fields of sacred music, of painting, of sculpture, of poetry and inspirational literature, of architecture, of liturgy. Man is composed of matter as well as spirit, and he is a social being. Some at least of his intellectual convictions he must externalize in response to emotional impulses, and his social duties to God must have external expression. Hence we define religion as "the sum of all the ties that bind us to God."

But the part of the emotions must always be subordinate to, and regulated by, the intellectual truths of faith. Stained-glass windows and prayerful arches assist the mind in its contemplation of God; statues of martyrs strengthen the will in forming resolutions; the splendid solemnity of well-ordered liturgy aids the soul in worship because it aids the imagination in picturing the majesty of God. But behind every emotional appeal of the Church there must be a truth of faith, which regulates and limits its use. "Illogical" emotion, high or low, the Church condemns. To cite a recent instance, not long ago Cardinal O'Connell forbade visits to the grave of Fr. Power, pending ecclesiastical investigation of the cures alleged to have been performed there.

The emotions must be held in check because the impulses they give, while fundamentally for our good, are blind. They must be judged by the intellect, which determines whether, and to what extent, they should be executed by the will. Unrestrained emotion gives us such debauches as the "Holy Rollers;" emotions governed by the intellect and the will have produced the masterpieces of Dante and Michelangelo and Palestrina.

The Catholic chaplain at Oxford, Father Ronald Knox, a lineal descendant of the founder of Scotch Presbyterianism, enumerates in "The Belief of Catholics" six truths "which no Catholic, upon a moment's reflection, could accept on the authority of the Church and on that ground alone." They are:

- "1. The existence of God.
- "2. The fact that He has made a revelation to the world in Jesus Christ.
- "3. The Life (in its broad outlines), the Death, and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- "4. The fact that our Lord founded a Church.
- "5. The fact that He bequeathed to that Church His own teaching office, with the guarantee (naturally) that it should not err in teaching.
- "6. The consequent intellectual duty of believing what the Church believes."

It is in this field of the groundwork of faith that the Catholic exercises private judgment, not in the field of interpreting what Christ taught. The intellect, unaided by the will, can reach moral certitude on these points; the will must then enter into the acceptance of the truths beyond reason (not contrary to it, however), which are the mysteries, properly so-called - the Blessed Trinity, the Hypostatic Union of two natures in the One Person of the Word, Transubstantiation, and the like. And it is only along the lines of this intellectual conviction that the Catholic may give play to his emotions in the field of religion.

And now we can see why it is that there can be no conflict between true faith and true science. It is not that they lie in separate fields, but that GOD IS AUTHOR OF BOTH.

PRAYERS: George McKee is seriously ill with pneumonia; Richard Delany is still suffering from the complications which came of his pneumonia. Victor Astone asks prayers for a sick relative. Four special intentions.