

The Life of the Spirit

BLACKFRIARS

Vol. II.

APRIL, 1945.

No. 14.

Sacramentum Unitatis	...	...	St. Augustine	33
Liturgical Propaganda	...	...	L. C. Sheppard	38
The Study of Liturgy	...	...	Conrad Pepler, O.P.	42
The Redemption (c. VI)	...	...	Luis of Granada, O.P.	45
Reviews.	J. D. Crichton, Gerard Meath, O.P., etc.			

SACRAMENTUM UNITATIS

BY ST. AUGUSTINE:

TRACTATUS DE DOMINICA SANCTAE PASCHAE.

(VII: Ed. Dom Germain Morin).

(Translated by E. J. B. Fry).

You who are reborn into a new life and so are called babes; you most of all who in this way see what these things mean for you, listen. Listen too, you the faithful, who are used to seeing: it is good to commemorate lest oblivion obliterate. What you see on the Lord's table, as far as the appearance of the things themselves is concerned, you are used to seeing on your own tables: it is the same sight but not the same virtue. And you too are the very same men that you were: for you have not produced new looks for us. And yet you are new: you are old in bodily appearance but new in the grace of holiness, as this thing, too, is new. It is still, indeed, the bread and wine which you now see: the holy power has come and the bread will be the Body of Christ and the wine will be the Blood of Christ. The name of Christ does this, the grace of Christ does this, that it may seem that same thing that it seemed and yet may not have the same efficacy that it had. For before, if it were eaten, the stomach was filled up, now when it is eaten the mind is built up. Now just as we spoke to you on Saturday when you were baptised, or rather before you were baptised, about the sacrament of the font in which you were to be plunged and told you, which I believe you will not have forgotten, that this was, or rather is, the power of baptism: to be buried with Christ, the Apostle saying, *For we are buried together with Christ through baptism into death, that like as he rose from the dead, even so we also may walk in newness of life* (Rom. VI, 4); in the same way now it is not from our devising, nor our presuming, nor human reasoning but on the authority of the Apostle that we must set forth and instil into you what it is that you received or rather will soon have received. Behold, listen briefly to the Apostle, or rather to Christ through the Apostle, how he says about the Sacrament of the Lord's table:

We, being many, are one bread, one body. (I Cor. X, 17). See, that is all, but I hasten to say: weigh the words, do not count them. If you count the words it is brief enough; if you weigh, it is sublime. One loaf, he said. However many loaves may have been placed there, one loaf: however many loaves through the whole wide world may have been on the altars of Christ to-day, it is one loaf. But what is it, one loaf? He expounded briefly: *We, being many, are one bread.* This loaf is the Body of Christ, about which the Apostle says, addressing the Church: *Now you are the body of Christ and the members* (I. Cor. XII, 27). What you receive you are, by the grace by which you were redeemed; you give your consent when you reply *Amen*. This which you see is the Sacrament of unity.

2. Now that the Apostle has briefly instilled into us what it is, consider more carefully and see how it is made. How is a loaf made? By thrashing, by grinding, by kneading, by baking: in kneading it is cleansed, by baking it is knit together. Where is your thrashing? For you it was done in this: it was in fastings, in observances, in vigils, in exorcisms. You were ground when you were exorcised. Kneading is not done without water: you were baptised. Baking is trying, but useful. What then is the baking? The fire of temptation which this life is never without. But how is it useful? *The furnace trieth the potter's vessel and the temptation of affliction just men,* (Ecclesiasticus XXVII, 6). Now even as from the separate grains gathered into one and compounded together by the kneading one loaf is made, so from the concord of charity one Body of Christ is made. But what the Body of Christ possesses in the grains, that the Blood has in the drops: for the wine also comes from crushing and what was in many separately, flows together into one, and becomes wine. So in both the bread and the chalice is the mystery of unity.

3. Now for what you have heard at the Lord's table, *Dominus vobiscum*, this too we habitually say when we salute you from the apse, and whenever we pray we say this: for this is expedient for us, and the Lord should be always with us, for without him we are nothing. But see how you say at the altar of God what rang in your ears. Then, in a sense, we ask and urge you and say: *Sursum cor.*⁽¹⁾ Let it not be below: the heart rots on the earth; lift it up to heaven. But whither lift up the heart? What do you reply? Whither the heart? *Habemus ad Dominum.* But this lifting up of the heart is sometimes good, is sometimes bad. How is it bad? It is bad in those people of whom it was said: *Thou hast thrown them down when they were exalted.* Lifting up the heart, if it is not to the Lord, is not righteousness but pride; therefore when we have said, *Sursum cor*, because this lifting up of the heart can belong to pride, you reply,

(1) Always singular in St. Augustine.

Habemus ad Dominum. Therefore it is an honour, and not arrogance; and because this is an honour, that we have lifted up the heart to the Lord, have we ourselves done it? Could we ourselves, of our own strength? Have we lifted up the earth that we were to heaven? God forbid: he has done it, he has stooped down, he has held out his hand, he has stretched forth his grace, he has caused what was below to be on high. Therefore when we said, *Sursum cor* and you answered, *Habemus ad Dominum*, lest you should ascribe to yourselves that you have your heart on high, I added: *Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro.* These are short but great mysteries: we say short words, but great in desire. For you say this to yourselves quickly and without a codex, and without reading, and without long disputation. Bear in mind what you are, and in what you must persevere that you may be able to come to the promises of God.

Note: Texts are given in the Douai-Rheims version where St. Augustine's Latin is that of the Vulgate; where it differs his text is translated direct.

LITURGICAL PROPAGANDA

By

L. C. SHEPPARD.

A recent correspondence in a Catholic weekly newspaper on the subject of the vernacular in the public worship of the Church showed that there is some feeling on this topic among a certain section of the faithful. The correspondence was noteworthy for it brought out clearly two things which should prove useful in the future: the unsuitability of newspaper columns for the discussion of such a question, and the strange ideas that exist among many as to the proper function of the public worship of the Church in the spiritual life of the faithful—the strange ideas, be it said, were not confined to the laity.

I.

For some years now, throughout the West, we have been in the throes of what has come to be known as the Liturgical Movement; here in England we have, in many ways, felt its effects in lesser degree perhaps than in some other countries. On account of the war, which has brought about a great shifting of population, in many parts of the country one has been able to obtain a rough but certainly interesting estimate of the advance of the liturgical movement. In the majority of cases indeed that evidence has pointed to a lamentable lack of penetration of those ideas for which the movement stands, and the present time, of upheaval seems hardly propitious for their further intensive propagation.

On the other hand the actual state of ferment of ideas provides certainly a suitable moment for sowing useful seeds. If in the past there have been mistakes, and serious mistakes, in present-