

## Twenty-sixth Sunday after Pentecost

### *Avoidance of Indifferentism*

*"His enemy came and sowed seeds among the wheat" (Matt., 13:25)*

One of the most harmful influences in our land today, appropriately typified by the weeds sowed among the wheat--for it is spread among Catholics by those who are opposed to the Church--is the spirit of indifferentism. This is the theory that religious differences are of little consequence. Often we hear the statement that it makes little difference what religion a person professes and practices, as long as he leads a good life. Catholics can never subscribe to this statement. God has established one religion for all mankind, and Christ rounded only one Church which He demands that all men shall enter as a means to eternal salvation. Consequently, it is vitally important to know and to accept the one true religion and to enter the one true Church. Now, historical evidence clearly proves that this is the Catholic religion and the Catholic Church.

Because of this logical attitude, no Catholic can ever approve of such sayings, as: "It doesn't make any difference what religion we practice .... We are all going to heaven by different roads .... It's deeds, not creeds that count, etc." When a Catholic is asked to give his views on this matter he should declare clearly and firmly that he believes that the Catholic Church is the only true Church, and that all are commanded by God to join it. However, he should add, there are surely non-Catholics who are not aware of this obligation through no fault of their own, and that such persons can be saved, if they love God with their whole heart and soul and intend to fulfil His will as they see it, for in their good intention is contained implicitly the desire to join the one true Church.

Because he believes that the Catholic religion is the only true religion, the loyal Catholic may never take an active part in public non-Catholic religious ceremonies. Such a procedure would be utterly inconsistent with his belief. However, in certain circumstances a Catholic may be present at a non-Catholic religious ceremony without taking any active part--for example, at the wedding or the funeral of a dear friend.

If a Catholic explains his stand on this matter calmly and courteously, most non-Catholics will understand and even admire his conscientious opposition to the spirit of indifferentism. Some may be offended and charge him with bigotry and narrow-mindedness; but a fervent Catholic will bear this reproach as one of the crosses which Christ promised to His faithful followers.

### **Practical Application**

Never be afraid to profess openly your Catholic faith, and your belief that the Catholic Church is the one true Church of Jesus Christ.