

Twenty-seventh Sunday after Pentecost

The Propagation of the Faith

"I will utter things hidden since the foundation of the world" (Matt., 13:35)

The chief work of Jesus Christ during the three years of His public life was preaching, to spread the knowledge of divine faith to all men. After His ascension this work devolved on the Church. Not only priests and bishops are bound to carry on this work, but the laity too are supposed to take part. This they can do particularly by joining the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith was established more than a century ago in France for the purpose of helping missionaries in foreign lands, occupied with the apostolic task of bringing the light of faith to those who have never heard of Christ. In the years that have passed since its foundation this Society has rendered immeasurable aid to hundreds of thousands of brave missionaries in all parts of the world.

This Society emphasises the important truth that the task of bringing the message of the Gospel to our fellow men and of maintaining missionary activities for those who enter the Church devolves on all the members of the Catholic Church. Our Lord's desire that there be one fold and one shepherd should urge all to a fervent and energetic effort to bring to all men the knowledge and the love of the one true Church.

What can the laity do toward the propagation of the faith? In the first place, they can pray that the Catholic faith may flourish throughout the world. Every devout Catholic will receive Holy Communion at least once a year for the special intention that the light of the Gospel may soon illumine every portion of the earth, enlightening the millions of souls who are still wandering in the darkness of unbelief.

Second, Catholics can assist the Society of the Propagation of the Faith by financial contributions. The money needed for this work must come from the faithful. Even one who gives only a dollar annually becomes a member of the Society for that year; and if every lay Catholic gave that much, the work would be financed sufficiently.

Today the conditions of the world are hostile to the work of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Atheism and materialism are being fostered by the powerful forces of Communism, that hates the Catholic Church so bitterly. The burden of supporting the Society rests mainly on American Catholics, since the Catholics of Europe are impoverished.

Practical Application

Consider it your duty, as a mark of your gratitude for the gift of faith, to take an active part in the propagation of the faith both by prayer and by financial contributions.