

Catholic Action

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Ours is an age of changes so great that they almost border on revolution. Reform movements seem to be the order of the day. But among them there is one which has held the stage for over nineteen hundred years, the sum total of whose activities has been aptly termed by His Holiness, Pius the Tenth, Catholic Action. This has been defined as, "the participation and collaboration of the laity in the work of the Apostolic Hierarchy." This definition, brief though it is, contains the secret of the power of the Church in the never-ending battle against the traitors within and enemies without. Within the fold she fights the waywardness of rebellious Catholics whose sins public and private have ever been obstacles to the spread of the faith; the indifference of many Catholics to the work of the Church both at home and abroad; the ignorance which prevents a large number of Catholics from appreciating the true worth of the beauties of their faith; and finally, that paganism which is pervading our modern civilization, corrupting christian ideals and principles in every walk of life.

Even among our own division of Christ's Army, the Catholics of Prince Edward Island, these faults can be found. Is there any one of us who has not sinned publicly or privately? Is there any one of us who is not aware of the evil consequences of such sins? We can but answer "No." One of the worst of these consequences of sin is scandal; especially when the party scandalized is a non-Catholic. This is one of the greatest obstacles to conversions and to the spread of the faith.

Let us again appeal to experience to show how indifferent many Catholics are to the work of the Church. Consider the comparatively small number who answer promptly to the calls of our Parish Priests to do church work. No matter how often and varied the requests may be, that same few are always ready in their charity to help. What is the attitude of the rest? "He didn't mean me," "Let someone else go," and other such expressions are voiced only too often.

Where does the ignorance come in you may ask. Ask your Parish Priest about some of his experiences.

Ask some of your friends how much they know about the doctrine, discipline, history, or work of the Church, and judge accordingly. We are not afraid to say, even though we are ashamed of the fact, that there are some Catholic children growing up in our midst without even an Our Father on their innocent lips. Where does one lay the blame for this, except to ignorance of the faith and of its infinite value ?

What of Paganism ? Although one might be inclined to think that this is non-existent on our Island, yet after some consideration, we will see that it is only too prevalent. When we examine business transactions which so often know no law except that of greed, the abundant literature which advocates ideas contrary to Christian philosophy and teaching, and motion pictures which portray vice as a virtue and virtue as something to be ridiculed, what can we infer but that even now paganism has found a place among us ? These are but a few of the things which are undermining our island civilisation and which must be rooted out by concerted Catholic Action.

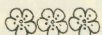
It was once commanded to overcome evil by good. Never could this command be more appropriately applied than to-day. In order to begin our campaign, one thing is absolutely necessary and that is self-sanctification. If we have not that, we are but as "sounding brass and tinkling cymbals," and our teaching, example and activities are of no avail. We must cure ourselves before attempting to cure others.

True sanctification of all Catholics is the major aim of Catholic Action. Well it may be, because through it alone will this waywardness be exterminated. How can this be accomplished ? We find the answer in this: by making our religion not only a Sunday matter but a part of our everyday lives, by good example, and by using a little persuasive pressure on delinquents. In this way will the spirit of indifference be conquered not only in ourselves but also in others.

Ignorance and paganism can be eradicated by sanctification with the aid of christian education. Those of us who have the opportunity to receive an education have the duty to educate others to think in a Catholic manner, to be Catholic-minded, so that they will perceive the paganistic tendencies of our civilisation and will be able to wage a fierce offensive against them.

There is at present a very decided lack of Catholic literature in the homes. To educate we must have literature. Then why not make it a part of the drive to place a Catholic paper in every Catholic home? People must be brought to a realisation of the ideals of the Church. How can they if they have not access to this very important source of such knowledge?

One thing which must be remembered is this: Catholic Action ceases to be Catholic Action when the laity fail to co-operate with the clergy. We must then be alert to follow the commands of the clergy, and especially those of the Bishop, who, as successor to the Apostles and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has already outlined the course of Catholic Action to be followed in this Diocese. Let us therefore, realise our duty, play our part, live up to the confidence placed in us, and thus become worthy exponents of "the participation and collaboration of the laity with the Apostolic Hierarchy."



Our doubts are traitors,
And make us lose the good we oft might win
By fearing to attempt.

—*Shakespeare*

Up! Up! my friend, and quit your books,
Or surely you'll grow double;
Up! Up! my friend, and clear your looks!
Why all this toil and trouble?

—*Wordsworth*

That best portion of a good man's life,—
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love.

—*Wordsworth*

