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Miscellanea

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Miscellanea.

Raising the Average Attendance at Holy Communion.

It is a well-known fact that the attendance at the Lord's Supper in our Church is too low, the average being below the figure set by Luther in his well-known saying about the necessity of partaking of the Holy Communion at least some four times a year. This fact was the subject of a paper at a recent conference, and we here offer the gist of the remarks.

1. It is self-evident that we must constantly and unremittingly set forth the glorious promises of Christ as pertaining to the proper use of the Sacrament. This is done, as a matter of fact, in the regular catechumen classes and should be done as frequently as possible when the text permits of the exposition and application, especially on Maundy Thursday and in confessional addresses. It is by no means out of place to devote a special series of sermons to the consideration of the blessings connected with the Eucharist, so that all our members from time to time receive detailed instruction concerning its benefits. Talks before the various church organizations, the young people's societies, the ladies' aid, the men's club, etc., will likewise be of some help in keeping the Sacrament before the minds of our people.

2. It is very important that the so-called announcement, or registration, for the Holy Communion be utilized by every pastor. Under no circumstances should it become a perfunctory taking of names with a few words of stereotyped well-wishing. In this connection it may be said that one may well use cards announcing the celebration of the Eucharist, with a well-worded invitation to all communicant members. Direct reminders sent by mail have proved their value in many congregations.

3. Above all, we ought to have the celebration of the Lord's Supper far more frequently, in keeping with its blessed purpose. If we do not give our members the opportunity to receive the Sacrament frequently, we need not be surprised if they do not come often. In large congregations we ought to celebrate the Holy Communion every Sunday and, where the number of communicants exceeds 400, at least twice a month.

4. It is necessary that we stress the importance of the Lord's Supper also by admonishing those who are lax in attendance. Non-attendance at the Holy Supper is certainly as serious as non-attendance at church services, and few pastors would neglect the admonition of those who make it a practise to stay away from church. If Matt. 18 were applied in time, the laxity of many communicants would never become a habit. And we should not think of recommending such a lax member to a sister congregation until matters have been adjusted.

P. E. K.

Two New "Saints."

Under date of January 29 the Associated Press reports from the Vatican City: "Preparations are under way for the canonization as saints of Sir Thomas More, Chancellor of England, and John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, beheaded by King Henry VIII of England for refusing to recog-

nize the legality of his divorce from Catherine and his marriage with Anne Boleyn." On February 10, in St. Peter's Cathedral, in the presence of Pope Pius, "decretals were read recognizing the martyrdom of Cardinal John Fisher and Sir Thomas More" (*Chicago Tribune* Press Service). There are a few things that make this impending canonization, which will take place the latter part of May, peculiarly interesting. In the first place, it should be settled definitely why these two men were beheaded. According to the above dispatches the cause was their opposition to the king's divorce and remarriage,* and so this canonization will be a symbolical reaffirmation of Catholicism's irrevocable opposition to divorce; "it is said in Vatican circles that the canonization of the two is in one way a form of the expression of the Church's wishes to emphasize what it thinks of divorce in modern society." This will sound better in England than the cause given by Hilaire Belloc (in his *Shorter History of England*, 1934) and by the *Commonweal* (February 22, 1935): refusal to "take the Oath of Supremacy," "refusal to recognize him (King Henry VIII) as head of the Church in England." That should be authentic expression of official Catholic opinion. Belloc appears to be the historical mouthpiece of Catholicism in England to-day; and the *Commonweal* in the same number reports that the Catholic Action Medal was conferred on the editor, Michael Williams, on February 3, for distinctive service to the Church; and Pope Pius XI said: "*Approbamus et applaudimus.*" "Thus the distinction may fairly claim to carry with it genuine ecclesiastical endorsement." The *Chicago Tribune* adds: "The decretals are a step further toward the canonization of the two Englishmen whose names will be later added to the calendar of saints as another gesture of the Vatican toward Catholics in England." One wonders how the Protestant majority of England views this "gesture," a renewed condemnation of the King's supremacy in the Church in England; above all, what were the thoughts of Sir Eric Drummond, British ambassador to Italy, and Sir Charles Wingfield, British envoy to the Holy See, who were present at the ceremonies, when the Holy Father spoke as follows: "I turn my eyes toward that country, and I repeat the wish, which is not only a prayer, but a prophecy of the divine Redeemer, that there be but one flock and one pastor." (*Commonweal*.) Moreover, one wonders whether it is altogether forgotten in Catholic circles that Sir Thomas More on the occasion of the publication of King Henry's *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum* "thought that the king had gone too far in asserting divine institution for the primacy of the papal see" (Fisher, *Political History of England*) and told the king so. More would trust neither the Pope nor King Henry as absolute head of the Church. And do English churchmen remember that More later on changed his mind and in a speech, after being condemned to death, declared that the act of Parliament (Act of Supremacy) was repugnant to the laws of God and the Holy Church, a violation of the Magna Carta and the coronation oath; nor could the realm of England refuse obedience to the See of Rome any more than a child could refuse obedience to its natural father. Nor should Lutherans and other Protestants forget that More in his writings against Luther used language so coarse and obscene that even Grisar (who surely did not love

* So Lucas, *Renaissance and Reformation*, p. 542.

Luther) refused to translate it; he says (Luther, II, 195): "Die Stelle sei im lateinischen Originaltext, der ihr allein ansteht, der Anmerkung vorbehalten." And finally, if More is now to be a "saint," we may surely without fear of challenge on the part of Catholics quote his *Utopia* as an authentic picture of his times.—As for Fisher, it is said that he fell a victim to one of the rather rough practical jokes of Henry. Fisher was imprisoned in the Tower; the Pope, to aid him in regaining his liberty, made him a cardinal—surely even Henry would not dare to lay his hand on a prince of the Church! But the Pope had as yet no idea of what Henry could dare to do; Henry declared that rather than have the cardinal's hat brought from Rome to England for Fisher's head, he would send Fisher's head from England to Rome for the cardinal's hat. T. H.

„Zur Jakobusfrage, Gal. 1, 19.“

Unter dieser Überschrift behandelt Hugo Koch-München in Heft 2/3 1934 der „Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft“ die etwas schwierige Konstruktion der Stelle, in der man eine unüberwindliche Schwierigkeit für die Annahme gefunden hat, daß der dort erwähnte Jakobus nicht mit Jakobus minor zu identifizieren sei. Es handelt sich um die Partikeln *ei µν*, die Luther übersetzt hat „ohne“, nämlich Jakobum, des Herrn Bruder. Der Verfasser legt die Schwierigkeit so dar: „Bei den katholischen Schriftklärern, die im Herrnbruder Jakobus den Apostel Jakobus, den Sohn des Alphäus (Nopas), erblicken, ist dies ganz selbstverständlich. Aber auch die protestantischen Theologen bevorzugen diese Anschauung, und die Ansicht des vor kurzem heimgegangenen Zahn, der nach dem Vorgang von Grotius das *ei µν* im Sinne von ‚sondern‘ faßt und den Herrnbruder von den Aposteln in jedem Sinne ausgenommen findet, ist so gut wie ganz aufgegeben. Neuestens bezeichnet M. de la Garenne die Stelle geradezu als ‚entscheidend‘ dafür, daß der Herrnbruder zu den Aposteln gehört habe. Ist sie dies wirklich?“

Der Verfasser geht dann ausführlich auf den fraglichen Ausdruck ein, wobei er besonders auch die Stellen Matth. 12, 4; Luk. 4, 25—27; Matth. 5, 13; 17, 8; 13, 32; Joh. 13, 10; Apost. 27, 22; Röm. 14, 14; Gal. 1, 6. 7; 2, 16 heranzieht, um zu beweisen, daß der Ausdruck mit „sondern“ wiederzugeben ist. Seine Stellung erhärtet Koch dann weiter mit Zitaten aus den LXX, aus Cyprian und aus Novatian. Das Resultat seiner Untersuchung faßt er zusammen in der Aussage: „Da müßte also der Satz übersetzt werden: einen zweiten von den Aposteln sah ich nicht, sondern (nur noch) Jakobus, den Herrnbruder. . . . Auch zu den Aposteln im weiteren Sinne will Paulus den Herrnbruder nicht rechnen, da es sich in den Ausführungen des Galaterbriefes offenkundig um Altapostel im strengen Sinne handelt. Und Aufgabe der Apostel im engeren und weiteren Sinne war es, predigend zu reisen und Gemeinden zu gründen, aber nicht irgendwo sesshaft zu bleiben, wie das beim Herrnbruder Jakobus in Jerusalem zeitweilig der Fall war.“ (Bgl. Bd. V, 108 ff.) P. E. R.