

**APPROACH TO THE HOLY
ALTAR; FROM "MANUAL
OF PRAYER" AND
"PRACTICE OF DIVINE LOVE"**

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Approach to the Holy Altar; From "Manual of Prayer" and "Practice of Divine Love" by Thomas Ken

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THOMAS KEN

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ALTAR; FROM "MANUAL
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APPROACH
TO THE
HOLY ALTAR;

BY
BISHOP KEN.

From his
"Manual of Prayer," and "Practice of
Divine Love."

SECOND EDITION.



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ADDRESS

TO YOUNG COMMUNICANTS.

HOLY Bishop Ken was an eminent teacher, by precept and example, of Divine Love,—of Love to God and man. His heart seemed to be “lightened with celestial fire.” He was ever breathing out prayer and praise, and rejoicing in acts of beneficence to all around him. A short account of his life and character would show forth the power of heavenly Grace on those who seek, and love the Lord Jesus Christ, and follow after righteousness. But this is not the proper moment to speak the praise of man. Let us rather contemplate our adorable Saviour, Whose Death we are about to commemorate:—Whilst we make our “Approach to the

Holy Altar," all other thoughts should be hushed.

In an age, however, like the present, when your Faith is assailed on all sides by new doctrines, not grounded on the warranty of Scripture, it may strengthen your principles to be assured that every word of this book is from the pen of an orthodox Bishop, and Confessor to the Truth.

Amidst many great changes in this kingdom, at the sacrifice of all his worldly interests,—even to the loss of his Bishoprick,—in persecution, in imprisonment, and not without danger of being driven into exile, Ken remained immoveably steadfast to the English Church, which he loved above all things on Earth. He withstood two Kings in defence of her primitive doctrines. Whatever he taught,—all that he wrote,—he “humbly submitted to her judgment, conformably to whose Articles he desired all good Christians to interpret it.” He exhorted the people “to adhere to the Written Word, and to persevere in the Faith, taught in the Church of England, whose doctrine

for Catholic and soundness he preferred to all the Communities, and Churches of Christians in the world."—He foretold that, "*whatever it suffered, it should after a short trial emerge, to the confusion of her adversaries, and the Glory of God.*"

*Evelyn's
Diary,
vol. 1,
p. 637.*

Learn from his example to be patient and hopeful, meek and courageous, steadfast and unchangeable under all difficult questionings. Take comfort from his last declaration, "*As for my Religion, I die in the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Faith, professed by the whole Church before the disunion of East and West: more particularly I die in the Communion of the Church of England, as it stands distinguished from all Papal and Puritan innovations, and as it adheres to the Doctrine of the Cross.*"

He never for a moment doubted that he is a true and a pure Member of the "HOLY CATHOLIC (or Universal) CHURCH, which is made up of the Collection of all particular Churches," United in one Body,—Jesus Christ Himself being the Head. This Holy Catholic Church inherits His own rich promise, that "at the Name of

Eph. i. 22.

Phil. ii. 10.

Matr. xxviii.

19.

Jesus every knee should bow,"—confirmed by His own gracious command, "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "It is Holy, like its Author; Holy by the original design of its Institution; Holy by Baptismal Dedication; Holy in all its Administrations, which tend to produce holiness: and, though there will be always a mixture of good and bad in it in this world, yet it has always many real Saints in it."

"It is Catholic in respect of time, comprehending all ages to the world's end to which it is to endure; Catholic in respect of all places out of which Believers are to be gathered; Catholic in respect of All-saving Faith, of which the Apostles' Creed contains the substance, which shall in it always be taught; Catholic in respect of all Graces which shall in it be practised, and Catholic in respect of that Catholic War it is to wage against all its Ghostly enemies, for which it is called "Militant."*

* *Practice of Divine Love*, Ed. 1686, p. 47, 48.

To this CATHOLIC CHURCH the Christian Faith was, *once for all*, delivered clearly by our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Gospel unalterably revealed, as the living testimony of God's will: as such it was preached by the Apostles, and their Successors; as such it was solemnly confirmed by the early Patriarchs, and Bishops of all Christendom, assembled in Universal Councils. And, "If any man shall *add unto these things*, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall *take away from the words of the book* of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen."

Rev. xxii.
18, 20.

Notwithstanding these awful words of God, many Churches have unhappily "*added*" to the Christian Faith, or "*taken away*" from it. After a while false doctrines sprung up: error and superstition obscured the light of the Truth. The Roman Bishops amidst the ignorance and

superstition of dark ages prepared for Europe an Ecclesiastical thralldom, which afterwards required many centuries to shake off. England became one of its victims. But by the mercy of God she obtained her joyful release in the time of the Reformation. The purity of the Apostolic Faith, *which she had previously enjoyed*, was restored to her. And now, for three Centuries, sometimes nearly overwhelmed by violence from without, and much grievous defection within, she has preserved the Sacred Deposit, as it was delivered by our Lord to the Apostles,—and by them, in its fulness, transmitted to the Church for all time. She renounced, and does for ever renounce, the false worship, and other Roman novelties, superadded to the Gospel. At the same time she has always rejected the opposite errors of other Churches, who, being hurried into contrary extremes by an exaggerated zeal against the Papal system, rejected the Apostolic Constitution, and discipline of the Fathers.

This statement is not inconsistent with