

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION, NO. 1

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Confession and Absolution, No. 1 by T. J. Capel

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BY

RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR CAPEL, D.D.

Domestic Prelate of His Holiness, Leo XIII, happily reigning,
Member of the Congregation of the Signatura,
Priest of the Archdiocese of Westminster.

"He hath placed in us the Ministry of Reconciliation."—2 Cor. v. 18.

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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Ready May 26th.

"THE POPE:" together with the Propaganda Question.

In preparation; to be ready shortly.

[NO. 1.]

CONFESSION

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ABSOLUTION

BY

Thomas John

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CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION.

IN the series of twenty-four conferences delivered in the Cathedral at Philadelphia, during this Lent, was one on "God's Conditions for Pardoning Sin." At the request of many, it is now published, but under the title of "Confession and Absolution." There have been made such modifications and additions as are necessitated by publication, and such others as will cover aspects of the question treated by me elsewhere in the United States.

The extracts from the Fathers which appear in the following pages are taken from the accurate and judicious collection known as "Faith of Catholics," a work in three volumes, well worthy the attention and study of those who, not having a library of the Fathers, or not conversant with the classical languages, are nevertheless anxious to know the evidence of the early Christian writers concerning the doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church.

T. J. CAPEL.

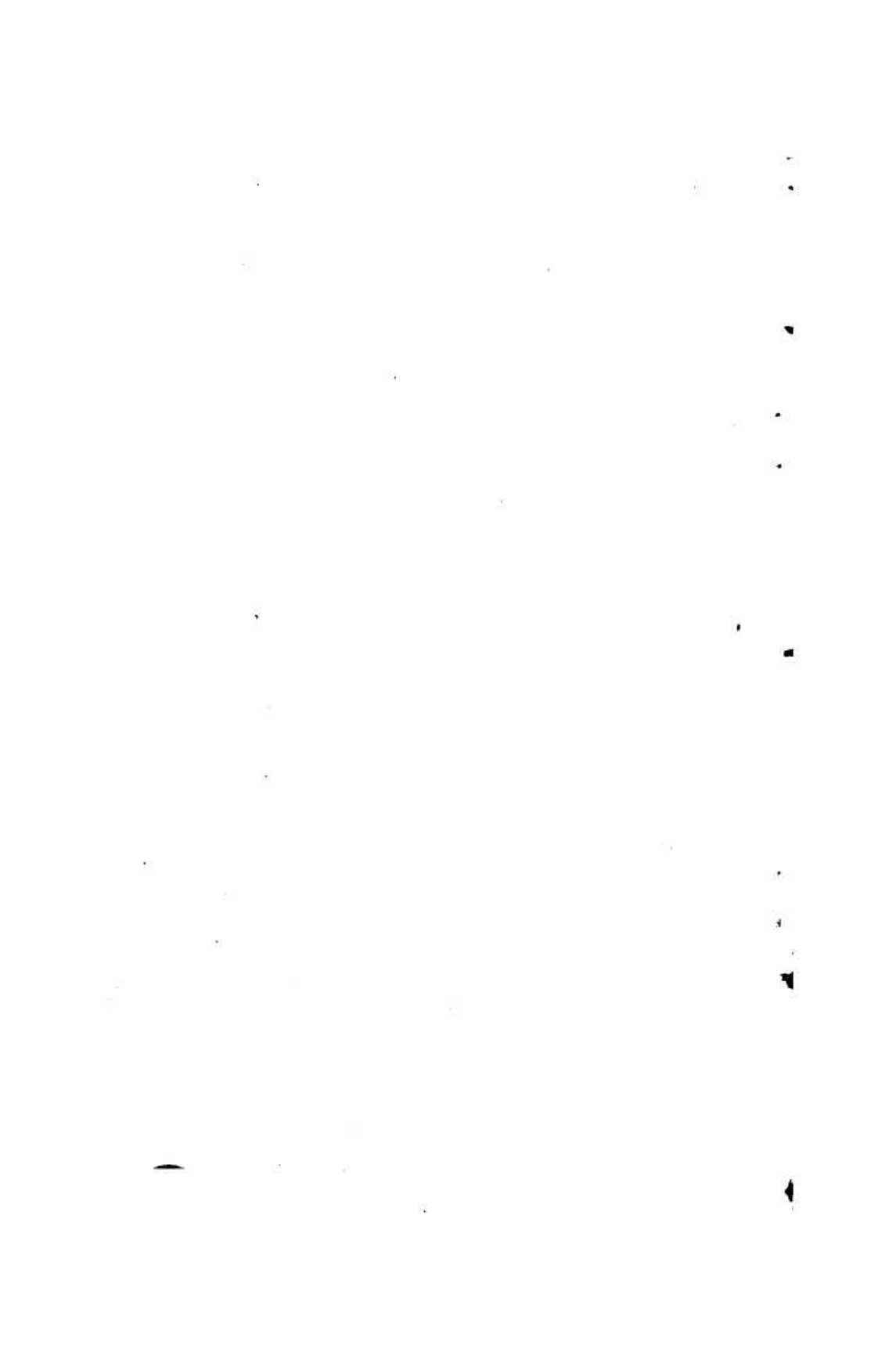
PHILADELPHIA :

Feast of Our Lady's Sorrows, 1884.

To this SECOND EDITION there have been added certain statements and passages, to meet sundry questions addressed to the Author on the subject of Confession and Absolution.

Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph, 1884.

Fac. N. 1. p. 7-23. 40



CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION.

TEXT: "God hath reconciled us to Himself by Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. For God indeed was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, and He hath placed in us the word of reconciliation; we are therefore ambassadors for Christ."—2 COR. v, 18.

NO more important question can be submitted for consideration to those who believe in the existence of God, in man's responsibility to his Creator, and in divine revelation, than what are God's conditions for pardoning sin committed after baptism. For however much men may doubt, deny, or dispute about religion, they can never impugn the fact that they are individually sinners. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;"¹ "in many things we all offend;"² even "the just man shall offend seven times."³

Good sense, as well as faith, tells us that having willingly committed or consented to any thought, word, or deed prohibited by God, or having knowingly and wilfully omitted any duty imposed by the divine law, then have we revolted against our God. And should this be done with full knowledge and deliberation in a matter deemed grave by the Lawgiver, or grave in its own nature, or rendered so by circumstances, then has there been a grievous transgression of our duty to God.

The moment we so act, are we and our crime abominable in the sight of the All Holy. "Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity;"⁴ and to the Lord "the wicked and his wickedness are hateful alike."⁵ Our sin instantly merits eternal punish-

¹ 1 John i, 8. ² James iii, 2. ³ Prov. xxiv, 16. ⁴ Ps. v, 6. ⁵ Wisd. xiv, 9.