

**IS ONE RELIGION  
AS GOOD  
AS ANOTHER?**

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Is one religion as good as another? by John MacLaughlin

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**JOHN MACLAUGHLIN**

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# IS ONE RELIGION AS GOOD AS ANOTHER?

BY THE  
REV. JOHN MACLAUGHLIN.

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"Ovidendum est quis in radice cum toto orbe manserit, quis foras  
exierit."—*LIB. I. CXV. ST. OPTATUS.*

"In radice manemus, et in toto orbe terrarum cum omnibus  
sumus."—*ST. OPTATUS CXXVIII.*

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15th THOUSAND.

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✠ CAROLUS,  
*Archiepiscopus Glasguen.*

COMMEMORAT. S. PAULI APOSTOLI,  
30 Jun., 1887.

## DEDICATION.

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TO THE

Right Honourable Lord Howard of Glossop.

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DEAR LORD HOWARD,

Ever since there was the idea of asking your Lordship's acceptance of this little book, there has been in my mind a constantly deepening conviction that it could not be more appropriately dedicated than to the son of the man who, noble in soul as well as by birth, consecrated the energies of his life to the furtherance of the Church's interests.

The many good and great works achieved by your venerated father in the service of religion have not been forgotten; they are still fresh in the memories of the faithful of these countries and of the colonies, and, I may add, of the faithful throughout the world. Few will fail to remember that his all-absorbing idea, for a long period of his most useful life, was the securing for poor Catholic boys and girls a thorough religious education, the saving of our waifs and strays from the danger of perversion, and the extending of the multiform influence of the Catholic Church through the length and breadth of the land.

I am cognizant of your Lordship's praiseworthy desire to resemble him in all this; and while I am aware that you keep entirely aloof from the politics of the day, I am aware at the same time of your noble determination to walk in the path of Christian zeal which he so gloriously traced out for you.

You are the inheritor of his name and of his titles; and, what is still more to be valued, you have inherited his strong, lively, generous faith.

Under these circumstances, I deem it an honour to be permitted to connect the following pages with the illustrious name you bear.

Although the little work is scarcely worthy of your acceptance, yet I rejoice that the privilege of being allowed to dedicate it to you affords me the occasion of marking my respectful regard for your Lordship personally, and of signifying my appreciation of your father's memorable works in behalf of the true Faith.

That privilege gives me more—(I grieve over the sad event which forces me to add this)—it gives me the opportunity of expressing publicly my sincerest sympathy in your Lordship's recent heavy loss, and of placing on public record my very deep respect for the memory of your departed wife, whom to know was to esteem and to revere.

With sentiments of the most heartfelt condolence I intend this little volume to be "In Memoriam"—to be in memory of her who has been taken from us, but whose name will live long fragrant with the odour of the many works of charity and benevolence done by her during her brief but fruitful career.

It was your hand that led her to the altar of the true faith; through your influence she became an earnest and fervent member of Holy Mother Church, and died happily in her bosom.

May those who read what I here write, breathe a prayer for the happy repose of the soul of one who has deserved prayers so well.

I have the honour to be,

DEAR LORD HOWARD,

Your Lordship's obedient and obliged Servant,

JOHN MacLAUGHLIN.

FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI,

June 9, 1887.



## ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE SUBJECT.

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IT is not without much misgiving that I offer this little book to the public. I am quite sensible of its many defects ; and were it not that many friends have strongly recommended its publication, I should hardly have the courage to let it appear.

If my tiny effort, however, insignificant though it be, have no other effect except that of inducing some able and learned ecclesiastic to take up the subject, and to deal with it fully and exhaustively, I shall not deem the time I have given to it unprofitably spent.

A portion of the book consists of a development of sermons or lectures delivered—on occasions separated by long intervals—on the points of doctrine which are treated in several of the chapters. The main part of it, however, was written in what I might term “snatches” between missions ; and as those missions followed each other in pretty close succession, it was seldom that I had more than a week or a fortnight of

consecutive time (rarely even so much) to devote to the work of writing.

I have not aimed at style: my chief object has been to bring to the point at issue arguments which might be found solid, clear, conclusive, and convincing.

To prevent it extending beyond the intended limits, I have, in the Second Part, in which I speak of the signs and tokens of truth, treated only two of the Notes of the Church,—that is, Unity and Universality. For a similar reason I have not thought it advisable to bring out even these two in all their bearings. I have introduced *only* those features or phases of them which are *necessary* and *sufficient* to distinguish the one true Church from the countless false ones.

The arguments put forward apply to Christians of all denominations who believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures. Some of them may reach the position even of those who, while they do not pretend to take the Bible for their guide, nevertheless profess as much belief in a Divine revelation of some kind as saves them from the imputation of utter unbelief or extreme Rationalism.

As the title indicates, my scope is to show that all religions are not equally right, that one only can be right, that all the rest must be wrong; and, having done this, then to point out that one

which *alone* is right among the multitudinous claimants.

I cannot finish this Preface without expressing my most grateful acknowledgments to several illustrious personages and many kind and clever friends who have shown a deep interest in this tiny volume, ever since the intention of publishing it was first mentioned.

What I have written I confidently believe to be trustworthy, and in harmony with the constant teaching of the holy Catholic Church; nevertheless, I humbly and unreservedly submit everything contained in the book to the unerring judgment of the same holy Church.

Lastly, while vindicating the truth of the Catholic faith, and while disproving the claims of its antagonists and rivals, I shrink from the idea of saying anything in the tone of sarcasm, or irony, or disrespect; and I utterly disclaim all intention of indulging in personalities of any kind, even by the most distant allusions or insinuations.

JOHN MACLAUGHLIN.

11 OAK STREET, ANDERSTON, GLASGOW,  
*Feast of The Most Holy Trinity, June 5, 1887.*