

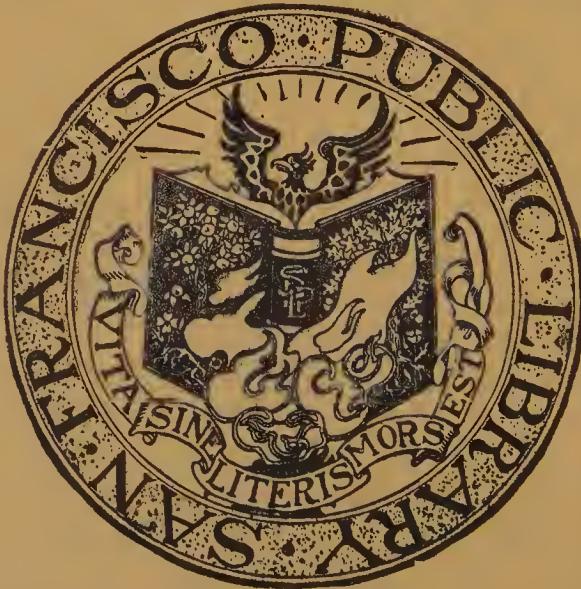


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## THE GREAT MANTLE

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*Archbishop of New York*

*New York, January 9, 1950*





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**POPE PIUS X**

# THE GREAT MANTLE

The Life of Giuseppe Melchiore Sarto  
Pope Pius X

*by*

KATHERINE BURTON

*"How heavy is the great mantle to him who  
guards it from the mire."* DANTE

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*To*

THE VERY REVEREND JOSEPH McSORLEY, C.S.P.

*with gratitude and affection*



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## *Foreword*

DURING the first World War soldiers of eleven nations tramped through the little town of Riese in Northern Italy where Giuseppe Melchiorre Sarto, who became Pope Pius X, was born. On the door of his birthplace someone had written in white paint, "Spare this house which belonged to Pius X." For months officers and men went up to the little stucco building, read the words, and walked away. Although every house in the town had been occupied before the war's end — for the village was very close to the battlefields — this one was never molested.

Over the years since his death in 1914, a belief in the sanctity of the Pontiff has been growing spontaneously in the deep convictions of the people. They have shown it by a veneration of his memory, by faith in his ability to help them still. In the shadows of the basilica of St. Peter's where he is buried men and women are always to be found praying. Fresh flowers are always piled about his tomb of white marble.

Not long after the death of Pius X requests began to come to the Vatican from clergy and laity all over the world asking that the process of his cause be begun. The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, to which he had been devoted because its work was one which lay close to his heart — the instruction of children and adults in the principles and practice of their faith — became active in promoting his cause; and many reports were sent to Rome telling of cures brought about through his intercession. More and more clearly awareness spread that the Pope whose whole life had been a work of love for his fellow beings was still aiding the world with that love.

Even during his life there had been evidences that he possessed a healing power; now after his death there came proofs of Pius X's continuing love for his people. Many of the cures took place in Italy. The parents of a child dying of meningitis were convinced, despite the doctors' hopeless verdict, that Pius X would help them. They arranged for a Mass for her recovery to be said

at the Pope's tomb, and the child was carried in her mother's arms to the crypt. All through the Mass she lay inert, apparently in the coma which precedes death. After the Mass was over the family left the basilica, still full of faith. When they reached home her parents saw that the child's deathlike coma had changed to the sleep of health. By the following morning she had completely recovered.

A young husband, heartbroken when told that his wife's condition was hopeless, remembered in his despair a rosary which Pius X had given them when they were in Rome on their wedding trip. Wrapping it around her limp wrist, he said to her, "Have faith in Pius X. He will save you." She heard the urgent words and whispered a faint prayer. A few minutes later she felt new life in her veins and her anxious husband saw her lift toward him the hand holding the rosary; her cheeks were warm with life and health.

"The holy Father of Riese responded to the tears of my soul and the agony of my heart and my daughter was cured," wrote a grateful father. More than one doctor testified to cures and one wrote, "No human science would have produced this cure so instantaneously. God is great. I bow before Him."

Nor were the Pope's cures confined to his own beloved Italy. His love went, as it had during his lifetime, to the whole world. From the western United States was reported through his intercession the cure of a Good Shepherd nun, from France of a Religious of the Cenacle, from Spain of a young girl suffering from cancer, from Africa the healing of a postulant in a Sacred Heart convent. All these and hundreds more brought forth their testimony. And during all that time the people, through days of war and of peace and again of war and peace, continued to pray at his tomb, to light candles there, to bring flowers, to read the inscription on his tomb:

"Born poor and humble of heart,  
Undaunted champion of the Catholic faith,  
Zealous to restore all things in Christ,  
Crowned a holy life with a holy death."

The inquiry into his life and virtues was begun in 1923. The first step in his cause was taken when, in 1943, Pope Pius XII signed the necessary decree. In that year the Postulator of his cause published a documentary account of favors attributed to his intercession. In the following year, when Pius X's remains were examined, the body was found well preserved, the limbs still flexible. Since that year his cause has been greatly advanced, and the prayers of thousands of his clients all over the world is that before long he will be beatified.

Giuseppe Cardinal Sarto had been unwilling to accept the papacy. He finally agreed because he felt that it was the will of God, and he had wanted to do always God's will. During his first months in the Vatican his eyes were often wet with tears, for he did not bend easily to the captive life which a Pope then led, nor to the constraint of political etiquette.

The results justified the sacrifice. During his comparatively short reign he was called on to make many difficult and important decisions. The more than three hundred encyclicals, letters and briefs bearing his signature dealt with every important problem of life, with the state, the family, the individual, the economic order. He had stern decisions to carry out, for the times during which he ruled were full of quick and almost anarchical changes which he met without faltering. His writings showed a brilliant intellect, a balanced personality, and above all they reflected his deep and comprehending love — his desire to restore all things in Christ.

The keynote of his reign was simplicity — the enunciation of a few clear principles, the re-statement, with no compromise and no subtlety, of the basic doctrines of the Church. "He met Modernism and the French situation," said Belloc, "almost it seemed as if a man inspired by sanctity had foreseen the immediate future of Europe."

He never lost the supplementary virtue of unselfish love — a deep humility. Despite the high offices he occupied he remained the humble man he had always been. His heart and soul were to the end those of a holy old country pastor.

He loved to bless the people who came before him, to consecrate them to God. He loved to bless objects brought to him with the request that they be consecrated to the use of God. Only war he would not bless. "I bless only peace," he told the representative of one nation which asked his blessing on their arms. And so a prayer for the cause of Pius X may well be called a prayer for world peace. "If one wishes to return to the great principles of justice that lead to peace, one must go to Bethlehem," said Pius XII, and Bethlehem, the home of peace, was all his life the spiritual home of Pius X.

"Nothing is impossible," he told his clergy, "for those who will and those who love." It was in this spirit that he lived his life and is living his eternity — the parish priest of Tombolo who became the parish priest of the world, and who, in the deep hope of the men and women who love him, is coming closer and closer to the altars of God's saints.

# THE GREAT MANTLE



## CHAPTER ONE

# *Childhood in Riese and Castelfranco*

SIGNOR FRANCESCO GECHERLE, the village schoolmaster, who was an Austrian, and Don Luigi Orazio, the curate of the Church of San Matteo, who taught the children Christian doctrine and was a Venetian, differed often in politics. But they never failed to agree that Beppo Sarto was a very bright boy and ought to have a chance at a better education than the small village of Riese could provide.

Its little school had only two classes. In the first the children learned by calling aloud the letters of the alphabet and clapping their hands at each. The second class was taught to read and write a little, to do a bit of ciphering, and that was all. But Signor Gecherle, proud of his pupil who learned so rapidly, gave Beppo additional lessons now and then. And Don Luigi, who was teaching his own small brother, just Beppo's age, the fundamentals of grammar and a little Latin, added the boy to his class of one.

Don Tito Fusarini, the pastor of San Matteo, whose Mass Beppo had been serving since he was very young (at ten he was the appointed head of a rather unruly acolyte band), agreed with his curate regarding his pupil's ability. But how to give Beppo a good education was something of a problem.

"Perhaps we could prepare him for the high school at Castelfranco," suggested the curate one day, and Don Fusarini promised to talk it over with the boy's parents, even though he knew the formidable stumbling blocks in the way of such an undertaking. Even if the money were to be found, how could the boy be spared for these years of schooling? He was the eldest in a family of many girls and had only one younger brother.

As Don Fusarini walked the road from the rectory to the Sarto's little house he was thinking of Beppo's parents — Giovanni and Margherita. He had not come to Riese until several years after

their marriage, but other parishioners had often spoken of their wedding which had taken place on a February day in 1833. Although it was as cold as only the climate of northern Italy can be, the people of Riese had come to their doors to watch the gay wedding party leave the Church of San Matteo. Many still remembered the look of pride on Giovanni's face and pretty Margherita Sanson in her white dress and veil, and they laughed in remembering how uncomfortable the groom looked in his wedding outfit and still spoke of the fine appearance of Margherita, who was a dressmaker and knew the styles.

The young couple had little worldly means, but no one in Riese was rich. Giovanni owned the small house they lived in, three acres of land, and a good cow. Besides he had several jobs in the town. He worked his acres to grow food for his family. For the rest the other duties provided. He was janitor for the city hall, which he swept and kept clean, and in addition he carried out errands for the mayor; for these tasks he was paid fifty soldi a day. He also earned a small stipend as village postmaster, a position inherited from his father. And he was by trade a cobbler, but this was not too profitable in a place where many people never wore shoes, or, if they did, only to Mass.

Riese was very old, a typical Italian village of Upper Venetia, even though at the time of Beppo's birth and for some years afterward it was under Austrian rule. Its actual beginnings went back to a Roman colony founded by the Consul Lepidus in the second century of the Christian era. The ruins of a Roman castle were to be seen and an ancient road built by the Consul still ran through the little town. In 1730, when excavation for the foundation of a church was going on, the remains of a Roman villa were uncovered with still legible Latin lettering on them.

The town had been old even in the Middle Ages. It was mentioned for the first time in records when Princess Irmengarde, daughter of Emperor Louis II, bestowed the estate of Rexium, or Riese, upon a favorite. In 972 Castrum Resii was mentioned in a letter from Otto I to the Bishop of Treviso, and a papal bull

of 1152 contained the words: "*Castrum Rexii cum plebe*," and the statement that eight hundred people lived there.

But that history lay far in the past. Riese was now merely an unimportant village, surrounded by fields and olive and orange orchards, vineyards and market gardens. The flat rich fields were watered by dikes, their water flowing from the Avenale, the Brenta or the Piave. Plane trees grew thick along the old road. Far off was Monte Grappa and near at hand the lovely hills of Asolo. In the blue distance were the Alps, sometimes clouded, often with the sun bright on the snowy peaks. The houses were mostly stucco, white in summer heat, gray in rains. They were small and there were not many of them, for the whole village held less than a thousand people. The one building besides the church which was of any size was the town hall.

The Church of San Matteo had a tall slender bell tower with three bells and a clock which showed the phases of sun and moon, and resembled in a small way the great campanile of St. Mark's in Venice. This church held the town's one treasure. Back of the high altar, between marble statues of Saint Matthew and Saint Sylvester, was a painting by Tintoretto — "The Marriage of Mary" — painted by him when he was eighty years old and had just completed his great work, "Paradiso," for the Palace of the Doge.

As he walked along, Don Fusarini was thinking of the great sorrow which had come to the young couple the year after their marriage. A son was born to them and named Giuseppe in memory of Margherita's father, but, to the grief of the young parents, the child lived only a week. However, more than a year later, on June 2, 1835, the Sartos were happy in the birth of another son who was baptized on the following day and named for both his grandfathers — Giuseppe Melchiore — by Don Fusarini's predecessor, Don Pietro Menapace, who had married the Sartos and buried their first born.

This baby, whom the whole village as well as his parents

called by the affectionate diminutive of Beppo, throve, as did the others who followed him. Don Fusarini named them over to himself — Angelo, Teresa, Rosa, Antonia, and the baby Maria, whom he had only recently baptized. He sighed again as he thought of the difficulties in the way of Beppo's education.

He talked the matter over at length with the Sartos. They too knew their eldest was a fine bright lad, and they wanted to do their best for him, though there was little money and even the simplest food and clothing for such a large family was hard to come by.

But, after long discussion, it was agreed that Beppo was to have more schooling. It could be managed, the Sartos decided, if they gave up a plan they had long contemplated — to find a larger home for their brood. The plain little house in which they had lived since their marriage was filled, for it contained only two rooms and a kitchen downstairs and three bedrooms upstairs, two very small and one quite large. At the back of the house was a small garden with a wall around it. Other houses crowded it close on either side, one of them a rambling old inn, the *Trattoria delle due Spade*, above whose door swung two silvered wooden swords, and which was owned by Giovanni Sarto's brother.

Each day now Beppo came to the rectory and studied with Don Luigi to prepare himself for the *ginnasio* — the boys' high school — at Castelfranco. When he thought the boy was ready to take his examinations, the curate himself took him to that town. All the other Sartos were praying for his success and so was most of Riese. Beppo came home wondering if he had answered all the long questions correctly, but a week later every one rejoiced when Don Fusarini announced that Beppo had passed all his examinations with very high marks. Best of all, and what the pastor had been hoping for, he had won a scholarship.

Castelfranco, where Beppo Sarto was going as a day pupil to the *ginnasio*, lay some two miles from Riese. It was a picturesque town with an ancient market place where Riese people

came to buy and sell. That part of it was very old; the other part, in which the school stood, was more modern. The older sector had been built in the beginning of the twelfth century, on the left shore of the Musone River. In its early days a free community, it was later absorbed into Treviso and eventually into the Republic of Venice. It was still interesting because of its historical past; broken towers overgrown with ivy, old fortifications, ancient houses, remnants of fortresses the Trevisans had built in long gone centuries were still to be seen.

Once it had been a center of arts and letters, so renowned that it was familiarly known as Little Athens. Giorgione the painter, Riccati the mathematician, Rainati the educator, were among its noted sons. In the wonderful cathedral hung a Madonna by Giorgione, considered one of the artist's best paintings. It represented Our Lady on a throne, the Child in her arms; on one side stood Saint Francis in brown robes, on the other Saint Liberalis, the patron of Treviso, in full armor. Behind the figures was painted a background of buildings and great mountains dim in the distance.

To Beppo, who often visited the cathedral, Our Lady seemed very sad, much more so than in the painting of her in the church at Riese or at the nearby shrine of Cendrole. She held the Child with great love, but it seemed to the boy that she was meditating on the cross rather than on the crèche.

To the lad Castelfranco seemed a much more exciting place than Riese. Compared with his own little village this was a real city. Even the mossy moat over which he and the other boys climbed was better than the Riese ruins; he liked to wander in the market place and stare about him. Now and then, when he earned a bit of money, he bought a ribbon or an artificial flower for his mother from one of the stalls.

But despite the fact that there was more excitement in Castelfranco than in Riese, and for all his joy in his studies at the school, Beppo loved his home. He was always happy when he came back to it in the late afternoon, to run upstairs and find his mother in her bedroom, mending and patching for her large family. That

room was his favorite. "When I grow up and go out into the world I shall always come back here now and then to sleep in this room," he told his mother, who smiled indulgently.

The years at Castelfranco were not easy years for Beppo Sarto. Each day he walked the two miles from Riese to his school, a piece of bread for lunch sticking from his pocket. His way lay at first through open country, then, as he reached the outskirts of Castelfranco, past long walls and cafes and houses, the cathedral and the square, until at last the long buildings of his school appeared. After the many hours of study and recitation there was the hard walk home again. However, he was a strong lad and he was doing what he loved most in the world — studying and learning. He was well content with his life.

When the weather was fine all went well, but when it rained or the snow lay deep, it was a difficult road. Unless the weather was very cold Beppo went barefoot most of the way, his boots slung over his shoulder to save the precious leather. Just on the outskirts of Castelfranco there was a great tree under which he would sit to put on his shoes before he started through the town.

Sometimes, after he reached Riese on the way home, he stopped to visit his grandfather and grandmother Sarto. The former was a very old man who wore a coat with extremely long tails and a stove-pipe hat. The tails Beppo sometimes mischievously pulled, but the old gentleman only smiled and gave the boy bits of licorice from his deep pocket and told him stories of his own boyhood in this town where he had been postman years before.

Sometimes Beppo halted at the door of the shop of Signor Monico, the blacksmith, and watched the iron hammered red on the anvil and heard the smith tell tales of his son. For from that shop had come a boy who was now a great prelate: once he had been Jacopo Monico of Riese, but now he was Patriarch of Venice, and Signor Monico sometimes showed the awed Beppo a letter from his famous son written on paper that carried a handsome coat of arms at the top. "Just a little boy like you

and brought up right here in this house," he would say, with the double pride of parent and townsman.

It was with delight that each evening the boy entered his own home. Poor, no doubt, as was the place in things material, in love and the treasures of the spirit it was rich indeed. No one knew that better than Don Fusarini. Stopping by one morning very early, he had found the whole family gathered in prayer — father and mother, the two sons, and the little girls. They asked him to stay, and he listened as the father prayed and heard the older members of the family confess their faults and ask pardon if they had offended the others. He recalled that he had read that the early Christians thus began their day.

"It was like an office in common," he told the new curate, Don Pietro Jacuzzi, a gentle man and full of fun, who had replaced Don Luigi and who was soon as proud of Beppo Sarto as his predecessor had been.

It was he who, on Easter of 1846, when Beppo was eleven years old, gave him his first Holy Communion. The year before he had been confirmed, as was then the custom in Italy, at the cathedral in Asolo. It was he who instilled in the boy a love of music, for he was himself an excellent musician and a student of church music.

Once a neighbor who knew the family and its circumstances asked Signora Sarto, "How is your Beppo clothed?"

"As it pleases God," said his mother simply.

But much of it was due to her constant care, her mending and cleaning, to the money she earned here and there by sewing to provide for him. And others helped where they could. Near the *ginnasio* lived the family of Signor Finazzi who were friends of the Sartos, and to their home Beppo went to eat his noon meal of *polenta* which Signora Finazzi always managed to supplement with a bowl of soup. In this home he studied for his afternoon classes and occasionally he spent the night there.

As soon as he reached home in the afternoon he helped his father by bringing the cow from the fields and milking her, by

weeding and gathering wood. He helped his mother in the house and played with the little sisters. When supper was over, he went to the rectory where Don Fusarini helped him with his studies.

His teachers in Castelfranco liked young Sarto because of his eagerness to learn as well as for the quickness of his mind. Don Fioravanzo, the rector, was a fine scholar but easily roused to anger; if a student was inattentive a sudden blow on cheek or shoulder was likely to follow. One professor was intensely patriotic, and occasionally he would arrange a parade through Castelfranco in order to stir up love of country among the Italian people.

Best loved by Beppo was Don Gaetano Marcon, also a fine teacher but a very quiet man, friendly and full of kindness, one who called the whole town by the informal *tu*. He loved the poor and gave them all he had, even his clothing, and on one occasion the very sheets from his bed; and he loved the rich equally and gave them his affection.

During Beppo's fourth year at the high school, his younger brother Angelo was also sent to school in Castelfranco. The year had been a good one for Signor Sarto, and he bought a donkey and a little cart in which the two boys traveled back and forth daily. Angelo seldom got a chance to drive the donkey; Beppo as the elder reserved the privilege of holding the reins. Standing like a Roman charioteer, with reins tight and stick uplifted, Beppo shouted to the donkey and prodded him along so that he and his brother would reach Castelfranco in time for class. And now in the evenings before he went to Don Fusarini he took the donkey out to let him nibble grass for his supper, holding firmly to the cord which held his *asinello* while he studied his Caesar and Herodotus.

A half mile outside Riese was a chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, called Our Lady of Cendrole, no doubt due to the fact that it had been built on the site of an ancient Roman burying ground. On the altar of the chapel was a statue of Our Lady

considered miraculous throughout the countryside. Here Beppo and his father often went on Sunday afternoons, walking the pleasant road that led to the little shrine.

It was a favorite place of pilgrimage for all the surrounding parishes. The present chapel occupied the site of an earlier shrine also dedicated to Our Lady, but of the old church nothing remained excepting the clock tower and part of the choir. There were records showing that even in the sixteenth century many pilgrimages had come, as they still came, to beg the intercession of the Virgin of Cendrole.

The statue of Our Lady was of wood, beautifully ornamented with gold. The altar beneath it was filled with votive offerings and tablets commemorating cures that had taken place at the shrine. Beppo never failed to read one of these tablets: it told of a child at death's door after being struck by a horse's hooves who was completely restored by prayers to Our Lady.

On the evening before a pilgrimage to Cendrole, the bells of the church at Riese were rung. As early as four in the morning, all the pilgrims gathered in the church, and Don Fusarini chanted the *Kyrie* and was answered by the choir. Then the procession set out, the cross borne ahead. First came the young boys, with Beppo and Angelo Sarto among them; then the sodalities carrying their banners, the younger men and women, and then the older ones. Last of all came the choir and the priest. Some of the pilgrims joined in the litany; others prayed the rosary as they walked along, holding candles or swinging lanterns.

At the village of Poggiana a first stop was usually made. The candles and lanterns, which, for the sake of economy, had been put out as soon as Riese was well behind them, were relighted; the ranks were straightened and the litany resumed in full strength. There was a certain rivalry between the people of the two villages, so on these occasions Don Fusarini's parishioners were on their best behavior in order to impress the people of Poggiana with their piety and good manners.

The people of Poggiana would hear the procession coming and many, still half asleep, came to stand at their doors, ready

to criticize if there were any need of it. But the procession swept by, proudly aware that the lights were bright, the ranks straight, the song true and strong.

At Cendrole a Mass was usually sung, and there was a brief sermon on Our Lady. Then the crowd scattered, some to the refreshment booth, some to tents where a fine breakfast of boiled eggs and sausage, black bread and a glass of wine was served.

On the way back the envious Poggianers, again watching, had been heard to say it was evident that some of the older pilgrims had had more than one glass of wine. What of it, was Riese's retort. It made only clearer and stronger the Aves they sang all the way home.

One Sunday Beppo and his father were walking to Cendrole together. The academic year was over, and so for Beppo was life at the school in Castelfranco. He had graduated and, to the pride of his father and mother — in fact, of the whole village — he had been at the head of his classes in all subjects: Latin, religion, geography, Greek, history and mathematics. In view of his fine record, Don Fusarini was now planning to ask for his young protégé a scholarship at the seminary at Padua where several were given each year. The Campion Foundation, which granted them, was almost five hundred years old, and had been established by a Bollandist priest to aid young seminarians who showed promise but had little money. In the matter of a scholarship the Riese pastor hoped to secure for Beppo the support of the Patriarch of Venice, Cardinal Monico.

For some time — for at least two years before he left the school at Castelfranco — Beppo had felt the call to the priesthood, but he feared that the means to attain this end were beyond his grasp. He had prayed for guidance, in his own church at Riese, in the cathedral at Castelfranco, and more than once at the shrine of Cendrole which they were now approaching.

His father also had given sober consideration to the matter. He had a houseful of girls growing up — there were five in the family now — and he was no longer young. In the natural course of events the older son should now be taking his place and help-

ing with the support of the family. So at first when Don Fusarini had come with his offer of help in obtaining the scholarship, Signor Sarto had hesitated. But after some thought and because Margherita was willing, in fact anxious, that the offer be accepted, he felt ready to agree. Beppo's mother had no doubts at all; she was very certain that God was calling their son to His service.

And now, as the two Sartos were walking to Cendrole, Beppo's father had an important question to ask of the fifteen-year-old boy. "Beppo, do you want to be a priest? Are you very certain?"

The answer was unhesitating. "Oh, yes. Yes, father."

Then Beppo, who knew only too well the state of the family finances and realized he was the eldest son, the one to be depended on, had a question to ask in turn. Would the rest of the family manage if he could not help them for some years?

"We will manage," said Signor Sarto. "Like your mother, I am convinced this is the will of God."

On reaching the shrine father and son knelt together before the altar of Our Lady of Cendrole. The one begged her protection for his beloved son, the other that she would be with him always in the years ahead and that he would be allowed to enter the service of her Son.

The request to Cardinal Monico, sent by the pastor of Riese, asked that Giovanni Sarto of Riese, father of eight children, of whom one had a definite vocation to the priesthood, be granted a scholarship for his son Giuseppe at the seminary in Padua. Excellent references of character and scholarship from Riese and Castelfranco were enclosed.

While the matter hung fire the village was in a mixed state of hope and anxiety, for everyone knew what had been asked for Beppo Sarto. Would the Cardinal grant it? He was a Riese boy himself and besides Beppo had such a fine scholastic record. Surely the request would be granted.

Those were particularly anxious days for Beppo and the pastor. But late in July an answer was received and Don Fusarini sent for the boy. When he came running at the summons he

knew by the happy smile on the priest's face that he had good news.

"Beppo, kneel and thank God. Surely you are called to do some work for Him. You will go to the seminary. We shall arrange it. Beppo, you will be a priest!"

The letter, which had come on the day before the feast of the patron saint of Riese, stated that there was a place for Giuseppe Sarto at the seminary, provided he passed the entrance requirements. To take these he had to make the trip to Padua, and Don Fusarini paid his fare both ways.

Again there were anxious days in the village until word came that Beppo, who had taken the examinations with fifty-five other students from all over the province, headed the list in all subjects and had won the mark of *eminente*. All Riese rejoiced and some of the more sentimental wept to think that Beppo Sarto was going to be a priest.

The day after learning of the success of the examinations, Don Fusarini presented the boy with a soutane, hurriedly cut down from one of his own by Bistacco, the village tailor. Beppo wore the new garment home, feeling awkward as its unaccustomed folds fell about him. His sisters and his brother looked with awe at this unfamiliar Beppo.

"I am now an *abatino*, Don Fusarini says, and so should wear it," he said falteringly, seeing his mother's eyes on him.

"Then," she said firmly, "the children must no longer say 'thou' to you. It would not be fitting."

All evening the neighbors kept coming in to see the "little *abatino*," admiring his new garment and the new dignity he had donned with it.

Soon the vacation was over and it was time to leave for Padua. Beppo's father was to go with him in the coach to that city, so very early one morning the entire family gathered in the kitchen by the dim light of a lamp. Even his old grandfather had stamped over to say good-by and to present Beppo with a whole stick of licorice, and his grandmother pressed a few soldi into his hand. The sleepy little sisters kissed him and his mother held him close

to her. Then father and son entered the coach, Beppo carrying his books and clothing and even his cot in a bundle which was strapped on the coach. And he wore Don Fusarini's gift, the remodeled soutane. As the village disappeared in the November mist, Beppo began to wonder if he could live for so many months without a glimpse of his happy family, the neighbors of Riese, the church where he had for so long been an acolyte, and Cendrole where he had gone the week before to make a last visit to Our Lady's shrine.

## CHAPTER TWO

### *A Seminarian in Padua*

FOR YOUNG GIUSEPPE SARTO life in the seminary at Padua proved very different from life at Castelfranco. There he had gone home each evening and been a part of its simple peasant life. Now he would be away from his family for months at a time, away from his friends and his church. He still studied Latin and Greek, but now there were also those other branches which would fit him to be a priest — two years of humanities, followed by two of philosophy and languages and science before he was even ready to begin the study of theology.

Padua was much larger than Castelfranco and even more crowded with tradition. It was the city of Saint Anthony, so beloved that when a Paduan spoke of *Il Santo* all knew whom he meant. Over the Saint's tomb was built a mighty church, one of many fine ones in the city. The university, founded in 1238, was famed for its law and medical schools. A beautiful town hall dated from the twelfth century, and the city was filled with works of the masters of various arts — the sculpture of Donatello, the paintings of Mantegna and Veronese and Giotto. To the country boy who had thought Castelfranco wonderful, this was indeed a place of beauty.

His eyes had opened very wide when he first saw the great buildings of the seminary where he was to live and work. Its history was an old and proud one, although it had grown from very small beginnings in the sixteenth century. A hundred years later a large Benedictine monastery was acquired to house the greatly increased student body.

The present seminary buildings could easily have sheltered the whole population of little Riese. Two rooms especially fascinated the boy: the refectory, its walls inlaid with costly woods, and the library, the first real one which Giuseppe had ever seen.

He had not realized there were so many books in all the world as were housed in this one place, nor such precious manuscripts as were stored here.

Little by little the new life swept him up. The magnificent buildings became familiar everyday surroundings, the more dearly loved as they became more a part of him. Before long he was familiar with them all — from the school for Gregorian chant to the printing shop which turned out books in modern languages as well as in Greek and Latin and Oriental tongues.

Discipline was rigid and life very simple for the seminarians, but for Giuseppe it was not more simple than the life he had always lived. Accustomed to poverty, he had learned to take self-denial without complaint. It had been a part of everyday life to the boy from Riese.

He still wore the long soutane which Don Fusarini had given him, but it was now adorned with the violet buttons, cord and cuffs worn by the seminarians. Otherwise they dressed exactly like their professors.

Giuseppe wrote often to Don Jacuzzi. He was happy, he said: he liked his fellow students and the professors, and was coming on well with his studies. At Lent he hoped to come to Riese and go with the Easter Monday pilgrims to Cendrole. But that hope proved impossible to carry out, and during Lent he wrote to Don Fusarini, who was ill in a hospital in Venice, "Since my hopes have come to nothing, to go home and see the many dear people, as I had eagerly desired, I would think it very thoughtless and inconsiderate of me if I did not send you a few lines," and he added his hope that God would bless Don Fusarini's Easter feast and grant him better health so that he could soon return to his people at Riese.

At the end of his first term Giuseppe Sarto was first in all his classes. "His mind is quick, his will strong and mature, his industry remarkable," was noted at the end of his report. No doubt one reason for his success was the excellent instruction he had received in early childhood from his Riese teachers.

Again at the close of his first year at Padua he was at the head

of a class of thirty-nine. The written comments of his professors upon his grades were uniformly good. "Exceptionally excellent," read several, and all the faculty agreed in giving him the rank of *prima con eminenza*—first, with distinction.

His homecoming in the late summer of that year was a very happy one. The town gave him a rousing reception on his arrival. Don Fusarini, at home again, and Don Jacuzzi were proud of his scholarship. His family was happy to have him again a part of their lives.

Evenings, when the work was done, there were always people in the Sarto kitchen listening to Beppo tell tales of Padua, of the great churches to which the students were taken and where they were shown the various forms of architecture and schools of painting and sculpture. He described the great devotion to Saint Anthony and the wonderful ceremonies which took place in his honor, and often spoke of the fine classes in Gregorian chant which he attended at the seminary.

Once he remarked that he was learning that a great deal of the church music one heard was not very good, since it did not carry out the true ideals of the liturgy.

"But you don't mean our hymns, do you, Beppo?" asked his sister Rosa anxiously.

He looked at her for a moment, then knew that in a few words he could not make her understand. Besides how could he criticize Rosa, who really prayed when she sang?

"No, not the way you sing the hymns, Rosina," he assured her.

But with Don Fusarini and Don Jacuzzi he talked at greater length about church music and his admiration of Gregorian. They were interested in every detail of his life at the seminary and sometimes told him stories of their own years there.

During the day he helped his father and mother with their tasks just as he had always done and joined in the morning and evening prayers of the family. Each morning he went to the Riese church to recite the Little Office and to read a chapter from the New Testament. And sometimes he helped the busy priests in teaching catechism to the children of the parish.

When, in November, it was time for him to return to Padua the people of Riese presented him with a gift. Because, their spokesman said, he had done so well at the seminary, and had been such an honor to the village, they had taken up a collection for him for clothes and books, and they would promise to do this each year until he was ordained.

Signor Sarto took great pride in the scholastic success of his son and often smilingly referred to him as the future Don Sarto. And when, during Beppo's second year at the seminary, he learned of a great pilgrimage to Cendrole which would come during his son's next long vacation, he made plans for them both to attend it.

But one morning in April of his second term the Rector called young Sarto to his office. "I have just received word that your father is very ill with pneumonia. You are to go home immediately," he said. When the worried boy told him he did not have the money for the trip, the Rector quickly supplied this need.

Beppo returned to Riese on a spring day, so lovely that the fears which had lain heavily on his heart were almost dispelled. But when his mother met him at the door, in answer to his eager questions she only shook her head. She looked weak and weary, not alone from worry, but because four days before she had borne another child, a son who was baptized Pietro.

"He wanted another son, Beppi," she said, "and now he will never know him." His brother Angelo came and held his hand tightly. His sisters rushed to kiss him, weeping bitterly, Rosa holding in her arms the little new brother. The boy had time only to give him a glance and a quick kiss before his mother urged him to come to the bedside of his father, who lay so near death that he could only smile faintly at his eldest and lift his hand a little way in greeting. Beppo Sarto had come home only in time to receive his father's last blessing.

It was on him, the eldest son, that everything now fell. He comforted the sorrowing family; he saw to it that his mother had good care. It was he who, as head of the family, stood with his brother

and sisters about him, at the cemetery where, with Don Jacuzzi reading the final prayers his father was buried. There was one other grave, a very small one, in the Sarto plot — that of the first-born who had lived only briefly.

The whole village came to give their sympathy to the bereaved family and counsel and help to Beppo. Don Jacuzzi was a tower of strength, but even so Beppo longed sometimes to talk to Don Fusarini — but he had gone again from Riese. His health had failed entirely, and a few months before he had to give up his parish and enter a home for invalids, Don Jacuzzi having been temporarily made rector in his place. It was hard for the young man to be without Don Fusarini's advice in his desolation at the loss of his father. It was he who had been really responsible for everything — for his schooling in Castelfranco, for his scholarship to the seminary.

Beppo now faced the problem of what to do in the immediate future. As eldest son he ought to contribute to the family finances, for Signora Sarto had not been left in happy circumstances. There was the big family, the oldest seventeen, the next to the youngest four, and the small new baby. The obvious course was for Beppo to give up his seminary studies, stay at home to help his brother Angelo farm their acres, and to take his father's place as postmaster of Riese.

But, though even the neighbors who loved Beppo and knew his good record thought this the wise thing to do, Signora Sarto would not consider it for an instant. She could manage very well, she told her troubled son.

"Your father wanted you to be a priest and I feel it is God's plan for you, Beppi. You must go back. You cost us nothing and we will manage very well," she said as she outlined her own plans. She would take in sewing as she had done when she was a girl, and the older daughters would help her. There was the land, which had always provided their living, and Angelo and the girls would take care of that. The cow was a very good one. Beppo was not to worry, but to go back to his studies and learn to be a priest.

That was what she wanted most — to see him ordained. "I pray every night that I will live to see it," she said.

At last she managed to convince him and to set his fears at rest. She promised that if times became too hard, she would let him know. She had made Don Jacuzzi see her viewpoint and it was no doubt he who finally convinced Beppo that it was his duty to go back to Padua.

He returned to the seminary still worried about his family, but the following day he was reassured by a long and cheerful letter from Don Jacuzzi enclosing a few lire for "some special need." He thought it very kind of Don Jacuzzi to send him the money, but as he felt he had no real need of it for himself, he put it aside to send his mother later on. His expenses were paid by his scholarship and the village bought his books and clothing. He needed little else.

Occasionally, however, he did wish he had money to spend, and that was when he saw some poor, shivering woman who needed a shawl, or a child who would have been delighted with a bit of candy. And there was the sick old man to whom he paid a visit every day for weeks. Before his illness the old fellow had worked on the grounds of the seminary, and when Beppo felt homesick for Riese he had often talked with him because he reminded him of some of his neighbors at home. They would discuss the old man's garden crop and Beppo would give him advice from his own experience. A day came when the old man was missing and the young seminarian, learning where he lived, had found him dangerously ill and evidently all but starving.

Beppo knew no one he could ask for help; he had no money to give him or with which to buy him food. All he had was his little cubicle at the seminary, the food he ate, the clothes given him by the villagers of Riese. But at least he could share his food and this he did. Daily for several months, until the old man died, the young student brought him portions of the meals served him in the refectory.

Over the following months his sisters wrote often about their

mother. She still wept over their father's loss; indeed they all missed him terribly. But on the whole the accounts of home affairs were reassuring, and they were all waiting for the long vacation when Beppo would come home.

When he reached Riese in August, he found things even better than he had thought, and everyone was working hard. All that late summer and autumn he helped Angelo with the crops and with any task that needed to be done. He had brought his shabby clothing home for Margherita to clean and mend. As usual the soutane needed repairing but his mother's skillful needle made it look almost like new again.

When he first came home his mother had worried about Beppo, for he looked very tired. The long hours of class work and study required at the seminary were difficult for even the strong boy he was. But Beppo grew rosier and lost his tired look after a few days at home.

It was almost time for his return to Padua when tragedy again struck the Sarto family. Pietro, the baby, greatly loved because he so much resembled the dead father, was taken ill and almost before they realized how sick he was, he had died. So before Beppo returned to school there was another funeral and the last baby of the family was buried beside his father and his brother.

Another year passed, and it was time for Beppo to come home for the long vacation of his third year at the seminary. His mother, having a bit of cash on hand earned by extra dress making, and to give her son a surprise, sent a carriage to fetch him from Padua to Riese. When it arrived at the seminary a pretty girl's face looked out from the window — his very attractive sister Teresa.

He was touched by his mother's kind thought but he was worried too. He was a long way from home and no one would know that this girl was his sister. Not wishing to hurt her feelings, he did a little quick thinking.

"Look, Teresa," he said, "I want a really good look at the Padua where I have been living — I would like to walk through

the city to the very last house. Then I'll get in the carriage and ride with you."

A bit surprised, Teresa agreed, and when open fields replaced the buildings of Padua, Beppo climbed in and rode with her with much enjoyment the rest of the way.

"Mother," he said when he reached home, "it was very generous of you to give me that wonderful ride — but please don't ever again send a carriage with a young woman in it to the seminary to get me. They won't know it is my sister."

As before, Beppo devoted that summer and autumn to work for his own family. But there was time for walks and talks with Don Jacuzzi, and now that he was more mature and had been a student of some years at the seminary, he was invited to very delightful evenings at a charming villa in the neighborhood, where the elderly Signora Loredan-Gradenigo, called by the village Contessa Morina, kept open house for her friends.

In her younger days she had been lady-in-waiting at the court of Napoleon I, a court to which she referred as "the beautiful and lost." She had doubtless been a lovely young woman and she was still charming — a tall, erect old lady with a pleasant smile and a reputation for great generosity to everyone in need.

She spent most of her time at home and much of it in welcoming or speeding guests, but she took a daily ride in her carriage. Occasionally she went to visit old Signor Callisto Monico, whose "afternoons" were formal affairs in the neighborhood. On these occasions he and the Contessa did most of the talking. When, after an hour or so, the host said, "Ah — ben," everyone knew it was a signal that he wished to retire for his siesta. The guests would say good-by and leave, but in the evening come together again for the usual card game in Contessa Morina's parlors.

At her home people of all ranks of life were brought together — neighbors, clergy from near-by parishes, house guests from the cities — and things always went gaily. Cards were played, and there was good talk as well at these evening gatherings. In fact,

the guests, knowing this was expected of them, usually came stocked with witty stories.

One of the most constant visitors at the Villa was Pietro Battiston, the village carpenter, better known as "the Politician," whose scant education had given him enough knowledge of arithmetic to add up the scores at cards, which he loved. In reading, however, he was so proficient that each day he went completely through the only copy of the *Gazzetta de Venezia* which came to Riese. He took deep interest in the news of ministers and kings and cabinets, all that made up the world of politics and courts, and on these subjects he and the Contessa had many lively discussions.

A member of the Contessa's entourage was her houseman Antonio, an elderly man with black hair and lively eyes. Since his mistress had been a lady at the French court, he was called by her "Antoine." And when she spoke to him, he always bowed deeply and said, "Lustrissima," before answering further. In their relationship there existed only one cause for friction, and this was the Contessa's cats. She loved the animals, and the villa was filled with cats of all colors — white, black, gray, spotted and tawny — and each had his special name. Much as Antonio loved his mistress, he did not like her cats.

But once when Beppo came home for the summer holidays, he found the familiar cats gone. Gradually he learned the entire story. Contessa Morina had gone to spend a week with relatives, and Antonio had put the time to good use. He had got all the cats together in one room, closed the door to keep them in and, holding a rosary high in one hand and a stick in the other, he belabored them with the stick. Every day of the Contessa's absence he went through this performance. When she returned he told her that the cats had been behaving strangely. "I really think they are possessed of the devil," Antonio told her.

The Contessa smiled at his alarm and called her cats about her. It was true they seemed a bit nervous; perhaps they were merely glad to have her back. But early that evening, as was her custom, she gathered her household about her to say the rosary. Antonio,

usually late for these meetings, was on time on this particular evening. He came in, drew his rosary from his pocket and waved it a bit ostentatiously, whereupon the cats began to flee with loud cries, seeking any escape from the room.

"You see," said Antonio sadly. "It is as I said, Lustrissima. The devil has them."

The Contessa was impressed, but she leaned over and tried to pick up several of the fleeing animals. One after the other clawed at her and the alarmed lady found herself agreeing with her houseman. "To be on the safe side," she told him, "I think they should be put out of the way." The recitation of the rosary was resumed, but somewhat distractedly by all save Antonio who prayed zealously and in a fine loud voice.

Antonio openly approved of young Sarto as a member of the evening gatherings. The carpenter Pietro Battiston, who thought himself much above most of the village in intelligence, but who sometimes felt shy among the aristocrats at the villa, showed toward Beppo Sarto a real comradeship. He liked to chat with the friendly young seminarian and occasionally wrote him letters to Padua, feeling sure the young man would not mind if some of the words were not spelled quite correctly.

When Giuseppe came home for his vacation in 1854, Don Jacuzzi was gone from Riese; he had been called to Treviso and a new pastor and a new curate were installed in the rectory of Riese. Battiston, the carpenter, in one of his letters, had informed Beppo immediately of Don Jacuzzi's departure and said it was the "hard hearted Bishop who took him away." He added that he and Antonio talked now only of the happy past, for the change was great. The new clergy was very different and the town was now divided into two factions: those who stood with the new priests, Don Vattai and Don Pamio—a minority—and those who did not. "Nothing is left," wrote Battiston to his young friend. "All we can do is mourn and hope for better luck. Only the *Gazzetta* makes life bearable."

The Contessa too bemoaned the change when Beppo came to call on her in the summer. "Nothing is now left of the old spirit

here," she said to him sadly. "First we lost Don Fusarini and now Don Jacuzzi—to have lost them both is truly too much. I am sending Don Jacuzzi today a little line to say we wish he could have stayed always with us," and she handed him a sheet of paper where, written in her fine slanting hand, were the words of Goethe:

*"Es wär so schön gewesen;  
Es hat nicht sollen sein."*

It was really Beppo who missed most of anyone the two kind priests of his childhood associations. One evening when he was at the villa for a visit and a talk, Battiston suddenly laughed aloud, and, since there had been little gaiety, all wanted to know the cause of his mirth. He said he had just remembered one of Don Jacuzzi's witty remarks and he repeated it. Every one smiled and then looked sad, remembering the absent one of their group, and Beppo felt as if he wanted to cry.

That vacation was a lonely one for him. The new priests were not friendly; he found them cold and even unkind in manner. Perhaps they were only partially to blame and the villagers had antagonized them by contrasting everything they did with the ways of the two who were gone. But it was true that the new pastor was making innovations which no one liked. For one thing, he announced from the pulpit that he would not get out of bed at night for sick calls, nor would he come to people's houses to pay visits. It was all very different from the friendly ways of his predecessors.

Things were difficult for Beppo. As a seminarian, he could not take sides. He spent much of his vacation at his own home that year so that he would not be called on to discuss the situation. When he was cornered he tried to turn the talk to other subjects. To Don Jacuzzi he wrote freely: "No greater grief than in exile to remember happier days," says the poet. And yet, when the other day I received your welcome letter, a feeling of contentment came over me, as I thought over the happy days spent in your company. Now that is all past. . . . The rectory has become

a desert, and those who live there have no time to give for friendly meetings, but manage every day to be away somewhere instead. . . . I am eagerly waiting for the time when I can go to the seminary again, in order to live peaceful days with books in the stillness of my little room."

One day Don Jacuzzi, in his turn, sent on to Beppo a letter which Antonio had written him. "We wait for you," it ran. "The Contessa would meet you with a little bouquet in each hand. There would be happy evenings again. We are really dead here without you. Don't forget this poor village which is very unlucky to have lost two such people, for we shall never find such good ones again."

Before Beppo returned to Padua that autumn he agreed to the new pastor's request to give a short sermon on the Poor Souls at the church. All Riese came to hear him that Sunday morning. He sounded, they told each other afterward, and with some surprise, as if he had preached before. His manner was wonderfully assured and they were impressed by his words, simple but with deep intent. Word went round Riese next day that there had been forty-eight lire in the collection plate, an astounding sum for the village to contribute. Don Jacuzzi heard all about the sermon from both Battiston and Antonio who reported it in long delighted letters.

In the spring of 1855 a cholera epidemic broke out in parts of the province of Venetia. At Cendrole for eight days the image of Our Lady was placed directly before the altar for open veneration; each morning during that time a Mass was said there and the rosary recited each evening.

Before it ended the epidemic had spread to many towns and cities, Padua among them, and the students of the seminary were sent home so that the danger of large groups living together might be lessened. That was how it happened that Beppo Sarto was among the pilgrims who went to Cendrole during that sad time.

None of the Sartos fell ill but many neighbors were stricken,

and Signora Sarto and her older daughters helped to nurse the sick. Both priests of Riese were taken ill and Antonio wrote this news to Don Jacuzzi. It was very sad, he said, that they were so sick and he prayed daily for their recovery. If God willed otherwise, however, there might be a possibility of Don Jacuzzi's return and then Beppo could be his curate. "And I would be cook in the rectory," he ended.

As the hot summer advanced, the cholera still continued. It was November, and Saint Martin's Day, before it was considered safe for the students to return to Padua.

That autumn young Sarto was given a room to himself in the seminary, away from the usual student noise. All he heard there were the bells and now and then a clock striking. "*Quid melius?*" he wrote to Don Jacuzzi. "No more walking in long lines, which those who stare at us think dreary and even more do those who walk in them. In undisturbed peace I do my lessons . . . and in this way I can prepare myself so that when I am curate the life in a lonely study will not become tedious."

During that year in the quiet of his little room he made ready by meditation and prayer and study to live the life of a priest. He received in November 1856, the first two minor orders and in June of 1857 the other two. He had hoped to receive the diaconate after his return from his vacation, in the autumn of 1857, and waited anxiously for permission to arrive from Bishop Farina of Treviso. To his keen disappointment the prelate asked him to wait until the following spring. The seminarian wrote of this unhappy delay to Don Jacuzzi and received from him the consoling advice, "Have courage. It will not be long."

Young Sarto had now almost finished the four years of theology required after the completion of his philosophical studies. In the last year at the seminary he began to collect books for a small library, beginning with the Bible and the Lives of the Fathers. And during this last year he was made director of the seminarians' choir, for his love of music and his skill in that art were by this time well recognized. He himself felt that he was lacking in experience for this task and that he must make up for it by intensive

work and study in the field. "I worked so hard for the music at the feast of Saint Aloysius that I am fair dried up," he wrote to Don Jacuzzi.

He was becoming more and more dissatisfied with the type of music given him to teach, and in the same letter to his old pastor he said he had not been uplifted as he should have been by the festivities of the Saint Aloysius celebration. "It was not good Gregorian at all," he lamented.

In the spring of 1858 Bishop Farina summoned Giuseppe Sarto to Treviso, and at the cathedral in that city he was raised to the diaconate. In June he went by special permission to Riese to give a sermon on the feast of the Sacred Heart. "A little discourse," he described it when he wrote to Don Jacuzzi, adding that "all your good friends at Riese charge me to send greetings to you." Don Jacuzzi later heard from the professor who had accompanied the young man to Riese that he had been much astonished at young Sarto's ability and the ease with which he spoke to a congregation, and especially at his voice — musical and deep.

At last came the day when Giuseppe Sarto was to leave the seminary where he had grown from boyhood to young manhood. He was happy to know that the work of his life would soon begin, sad to leave the beloved place where he had for seven years been so content. When his fellow students wished him happiness and success, he wept even as he thanked them, for he knew he would see few of them again.

At the end of his last term the grades he received were still the highest in his class. "Outstanding," and "exceptional," were the words written after his final year's work by his professors. But because he was only twenty-three years old, he was still, according to church rule, too young for ordination. However, Bishop Farina asked permission from Rome to ordain him at once and the permission was granted. And so, after a week's retreat at Padua, he came home to Riese on September 17th and next day went to Castelfranco to be ordained.

As he rode the two miles between Riese and Castelfranco, the weather, which had been cloudy, cleared and the sun came

out. He thought of the many times that as a school boy he had taken this road on foot, in winter storms and summer heat, often taking off his shoes and carrying them so that they would last longer. On this day the horse which his proud mother had hired for him stepped along calmly, much more steadily than the stubborn little donkey of his school days. But there was nothing calm about Giuseppe Sarto on that ride; it seemed to him the road had never been so long.

When the gray towers, ivied ruins and the market place of Castelfranco came in sight he was even more excited. His heart was beating hard when he saw the cathedral, and he said to himself, "Today at last I am going to be a priest."

It was the feast of Saint Joseph of Cupertino. The old cathedral was filled with relatives and friends of the twenty young men who were to be ordained. In one of the pews sat the entire Sarto family clad in their best; they had risen at dawn and walked from Riese to see their Beppo made a priest. In the heart of Signora Sarto, for all her happiness, there was one sadness — that today, when her son attained his father's great desire for him, her husband was not there to witness it.

Among the others who had come from Riese were relatives and friends who had seen Beppo Sarto rise step by step to the dignity of a priest, who had helped him to that place by their affection and interest as well as by the money they had given him for clothing and books. His ordination day was a feast day for them all.

Next morning the joy of Margherita Sarto became even deeper. In the parish church of San Matteo at Riese she watched as her son, assisted by Don Pamio, celebrated his first Mass in a deep clear voice that spoke sincerely of the love of God. Afterwards she and her children were the first to receive Holy Communion from his hands. Then, when the Mass was over, they went quietly home to wait for him.

He was delayed by the congratulations of old neighbors, who regarded this long hoped for event as a family celebration in which they were all included, and by the many requests for his

blessing. When at last he reached the little house, all its shutters flung wide as if to welcome him, he found the whole family on its knees waiting for his blessing. First he laid his hands on his mother's head, and then on each of the others in turn, last of all on the dark curls of ten-year-old Anna.

It was a very happy home that day. There was deep poverty there, as there had always been, but there was an even deeper love and a great sense of pride now that their own Beppo was Don Giuseppe Sarto.

Next day the young priest received a letter containing his new assignment. After the vacation allowed him, he was to go as curate to Tombolo. He knew this town, "I shall like it there," he told his mother. "Its people are mostly poor, and I have always lived among poor people and am poor myself. I understand them and I know they will understand me."

### CHAPTER THREE

## *The Curate of Tombolo*

TOMBOLO is a village in the Trentino district and in the diocese of Treviso, built on a plateau with hilly country around it, and lying at about the same distance from Riese as Castelfranco. Its name was no doubt derived from the Latin word *tumulus* — a mound, since it was originally the site of the grave of some important Roman personage of ancient times. Its later history was that of a town more than once plundered by various intruders — Venetian and Paduan in turn and by ruthless Spanish soldier hordes in the fourteenth century.

In the Middle Ages its patron saint had been Saint Abraham, but in the late thirteenth century a change was made to Saint Andrew, patron of the church to which Don Sarto now came as curate. This, built in 1750 on the site of an earlier church, was in the Doric style, with pillars like those of a Roman temple. Only the campanile remained of the older church.

Don Sarto found Tombolo much like his own Riese. There were no factories or industries; the chief business was cattle raising and trading. When he first came he was told that one could recognize a man from Tombolo, no matter where one met him, and he soon realized how true that was. The villagers were strong sunburned people to whom weather meant nothing; their voices were loud, no doubt roughened from much shouting and also from much drinking of wine; they had a wide swaying walk. Even their dress was distinctive — a loose jacket, a cloak with fur collar, a long thick staff always in hand.

The people of Tombolo were good hearted and very pious. Every house held its picture or statue of Our Lady or a favorite saint, and, in the evenings, when Don Sarto took his walk about the town, he could see through the windows the little lights burn-

ing before the household shrines. A Tombolo cattleman always lighted a candle in the church before he went to market.

The men of the town had one very bad habit: they swore heavily and all the time. When they saw how this distressed their new curate, they tried to explain it to him. "Don Beppo, it is no offense to God. It is just that we can't carry on business without swearing. Surely He understands that you can't buy or sell beasts with just a 'please' or a 'thank you'."

When the priest shook his head over this reasoning, one man said to him, "Well, you try to go to market with penitential groans or a rosary and see how much you'll bring home." Although the young curate knew the logic here was fundamentally unsound, he decided to wait for a better opportunity effectively to combat the statement.

Don Sarto had to take over many of the parish duties, for Don Antonio Costantini, the pastor, was in delicate health. The curate, as was the custom in the diocese, had to find his own lodgings, and Don Sarto went to live in the home of an old couple, the husband a stonemason. However, he took his meals at the rectory, and Don Costantini's niece, who was his housekeeper, used to complain that the new curate was as thin as a bread crust. It was not her fault, she said, for she tried to feed him well, but she was sometimes in despair because he ate so little. "I don't see how you can manage to keep standing up at all," she would say in exasperation.

After some months of living at the stonemason's and eating at the rectory, Don Sarto rented a small house and sent for his sister Rosa to come to keep house for him. It was a simple place and most of the scanty furniture they had was brought by Rosa from home.

The two had even less to live on than the Sarto family. The food Rosa was able to buy from her brother's modest income was of the plainest. As a matter of fact, much of his income was received from his parishioners in the form of wheat and corn, so that he was dependent for his living on each year's harvest. Nevertheless he was satisfied and so was his sister; her one complaint

was that Beppo used up so many candles studying at night. But he said it was the only time he had for reading and study and that was very true.

Usually he went to the rectory early in the morning to see how the pastor was feeling. "How did you sleep?" he would ask. "How is the pain?" And if Don Costantini felt too ill to get up, Don Sarto said soothingly, "Then stay right where you are. I'll take care of things."

"But how about my sermon?"

"Never mind. I'll preach two."

The young curate was always busy, "in perpetual motion" as Rosa described it. Often, when Don Costantini woke in the morning so early that it was still dark, he saw the window of Don Sarto's little room still bright with candlelight.

"When do you sleep?" asked the pastor's niece one day.

"Oh, all I need is a little sleep. I read a lot."

"Tell me, what is your idea of sleeping as long as you want to, Don Beppo?"

He considered gravely. "Four hours," he said.

The people in the village liked their new curate from his first months with them. He had come from the people, had grown up among them, and could mix with old and young. He liked to bowl with his parishioners in his infrequent spare time and sometimes he played cards with them, occasionally for a soldo or two. When he lost, he paid; when he won, he gave the coins to the children.

Once some of the smaller ones wanted to play for money with him as they had seen the grownups do, and the curate agreed. When he had won their last soldo, he put the money in his pocket and got up to leave. The small faces were full of astonishment and the gamblers were close to tears to think that he would actually take their money. He did not. He came back from the door, returned their coins to them, and lectured them on the sad results of playing for money.

He taught them music, bringing to them the Gregorian he and Don Jacuzzi loved, and under his direction the shrill voices grew

softer and truer. He succeeded in getting the older parishioners to join in the singing too, and Don Costantini was delighted with his fine choir.

Everyone liked to hear Don Giuseppe preach. He spoke with no hesitation, as if he had been speaking in public for years, and his voice was resonant and musical, as he explained to them, simply and clearly, the meaning of the Gospel of the day.

On his first Christmas in Tombolo, Don Sarto had to celebrate all the Masses because Don Costantini was ill. It was an unusually cold night and the young priest hurried from his house to the church to hear the many confessions, for there was no one to assist him. As soon as the last penitent was absolved, he began to vest for Mass, and as he came from the sacristy, he found the church filled. Well in the front he saw Anna and Lucia and Angelo, who had walked all the way from Riese to assist at his first Christmas Mass.

*"Introibo ad altare Dei,"* he intoned at the foot of the altar. And as he sang the prayers of the Christmas Mass the people in the pews looked at each other proudly, thinking how fine was the voice of their curate.

After the first Mass, Don Sarto waited for some hours so that his parishioners living at a distance would have time to reach the church. Then he said two more Masses. When he reached home at last he was very tired, but more happy than tired. Angelo and his sisters were there, talking together, telling Rosa all the gossip of home, drinking coffee and eating the homemade bread Signora Sarto had sent. When he came in the welcome in their faces took away his weariness. And for once Rosa forebore to ask if he were cold, for he seemed in a warm glow.

One day in the following spring Don Giuseppe heard one of the younger men of the parish lamenting the fact that he could not read or write. This gave the curate a chance to set right something which had been bothering him for months. He suggested an evening school where those who had a little learning could teach the others; the entirely illiterate he would teach

himself. When he was asked what pay he wished for this extra work, for everyone knew he had plenty to do without teaching, he answered that his charge would be their promise to stop swearing. The men agreed and they did try to keep their promise, at least when the curate was within hearing distance.

During his years at Tombolo he taught boys of the parish and from near-by towns who expressed a wish to become priests, as Don Fusarini and Don Jacuzzi had done for him, planning later to send the most deserving to the seminary to take the examinations. To Don Jacuzzi, now teaching at the seminary in Treviso, he wrote often of his protégés, asking, in what he labelled "Beppo's begging letters," help in the way of scholarships.

If he still had a spare moment, though Rosa and the pastor's niece declared this was not possible, he designed sun dials for various churches. And once Rosa found him in the kitchen, preparing noodles for their dinner, one of her aprons over his cassock. "It's all right," he assured her. "I learned to do it when Don Costantini's niece was away for a few days."

"I suppose you nursed him too," said Rosa, love and irony showing in her voice, and her brother's silence told her she was right. As he went from the kitchen, he poked his head suddenly back from the door. "Work is man's chief duty on earth," he said solemnly, and left the room before she could think of a proper retort.

From the beginning Don Costantini and his curate got along very well together. "Don Beppo," the older man would say in the evening, "I am sick again. I am so glad you are here." And sometimes he added, "How lucky I am that they sent you to me."

In return, Don Costantini did a great deal to guide and encourage the young assistant. The difference in age seemed to matter little; before the curate had been at Tombolo long, it was obvious that what interested the one interested the other, that they would work together well. Both felt their chief duty was toward their parishioners; both loved music and the study of the Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers. And both had a deep charity and kindness for the poor and suffering.

Don Costantini was a learned priest, well read in the classics and in modern literature. Before the new curate preached his first sermon at Tombolo, Don Costantini took him into the church and told him to rehearse it before him as he sat in a front pew. Here and there he changed a word or sentence, but he saw immediately he would never need to criticize the delivery. Don Giuseppe had natural eloquence and a fine sonorous voice and he spoke from a heart in which the love of God was very evident.

It was not long before Don Sarto was asked to preach in other little towns. "*Fama volat,*" said Don Costantini, and no one was prouder than he when one day Don Giuseppe had to decline to preach a sermon in a near-by village because he had been invited to speak in a large city church. Later, when he had become well known in the region for his sermons, the pastor said to him with mock annoyance, "Look, Don Beppo, it isn't wise for the curate to preach better than the pastor."

To a priest in another town who wrote that he had heard Don Sarto preach and thought he did very well, Don Costantini replied, "You could write nothing more pleasant, more comforting, more dear than of the success and triumph of my Beppo. If I could give him greater good will on my part, he should have it. . . . I am afraid of only one thing: he might lose his health. When next you see him warn him of that, as I often do."

No one could cure Don Giuseppe of giving away the money he earned by his preaching. When the poor of the town learned he was away giving a sermon, they always awaited his return. Once he reached home from a near-by town without one lira of the twenty given him. Don Costantini reproved him, but knew he could not prevent it happening again. "By the time you get to your house you have nothing left," he scolded. "How about your mother?" "Oh, she would want me to give it to the poor," answered Don Giuseppe earnestly. "She would say she is better off than they are, and that anyway God will provide for her."

In 1862 Don Sarto was asked to preach the funeral sermon of Signora Viani of the neighboring town of Galliera, a rich woman who had spent her money freely for the Church and the poor.

"Blessed are the poor," he took as his text, saying that it applied as well to those who were rich in material possessions, but who had the love of poverty in their hearts — "who, though abounding in riches, are detached in their hearts and wills from all possessions that earth can offer them. Truly poor she was, even though a rich woman, with the poverty which has its roots in the example and teachings of Jesus. . . . She dressed in simple black though she could have worn fine silks and jewels; the adornments in which her sex finds delight by her were used as a means of charity. In her home was no splendor, no wonderful meals, none of the comfort one expects to find among the wealthy, only the needful things. . . . Her house was a house of hospitality for the poor; her door was open daily to the needy; everyone went from her comforted. Never was she so happy as when she was able to help; and when she had given away so much that she had little left, she still shared her simple meals and sold what she could to answer some cry of distress. And so I call her poor in spirit."

Afterward the people who had heard the sermon said to each other that it was a good description of the way Don Giuseppe himself lived. He too gave all he had to God and to the poor.

Although Don Costantini was so anxious to encourage his curate to be a good preacher, he held firmly to his other prerogatives as pastor and would not allow him to marry or baptize. In fact, the young priest had been in Tombolo nearly eight years before he was permitted to baptize a baby, and then only because the child was in danger of death.

But Don Sarto did not worry about what he was not allowed to do. There was plenty that remained — preaching sermons in the church of Tombolo and in other parishes, teaching catechism to children, visiting the sick, helping the poor by word and deed. If he could give the latter material assistance from his small store, he did so; if not, he gave them hope and faith, and that was often better than money. All knew that Don Giuseppe ate only enough to keep himself alive; they had heard from Rosa on that subject. They knew he clothed himself with as little ex-

penditure as possible and that the sums he received for preaching were sent home to Riese or given to the needy of the parish. They knew that when he went to give sermons in towns outside Tombolo he wore cheap wooden shoes and put on his more expensive leather pair when he reached his destination.

His measure of giving remained simple: he gave what he had. But it sometimes happened that his charities exceeded his income, and when some pressing need presented itself he went into debt. He had one other resource at such times: he went to Castelfranco or Cittadella and pawned his few personal possessions — a silver watch or the set of silver knife, fork and spoon given him by a family whose son he had taught to read. These articles led a checkered career: one or all of them were often pledged at the loan office to meet some emergency — the needs of a widow with hungry children or of a man out of work.

Don Giuseppe knew how true was the saying, "The poor have no credit standing." A man of excellent character and diligence came to him after he had tried everywhere to raise enough money to go to Verona where a job awaited him.

Don Sarto was troubled. "This time I haven't a soldo. I haven't got my silver out of pawn either. So what *can* I give you?"

"Perhaps," said the man hesitantly, "a little of your wheat — I could sell that. I need only a few lire."

"Of course I could do that. Come, we will get some," answered Don Sarto, and he took him to the vegetable cellar. The man looked in dismay at the small pile of grain he saw there, and when Don Sarto said, "Come, we will split it into two piles," the other did not want to take any. But Don Sarto insisted and even found a good firm bag in which to put it.

The man was weeping when he left with his sack of wheat. "I'll pay you back with my first money," he said fervently. Don Sarto went into the house feeling happy, until he saw Rosa. Then he felt guilty instead, for he knew what she would say when she saw their diminished store.

As the years went by Don Sarto's finances improved somewhat. A wealthy Jewish family who spent their holidays at Tombolo

paid him well to tutor their children. And as his reputation as a preacher grew, he was asked to deliver sermons, each year in more and more important churches in larger towns and cities. Thus his income became larger and both the family at Riese and the poor of Tombolo fared better.

The years went by, quiet happy years, the years of his youth as a priest. Don Sarto worked hard and never ceased to study, encouraged in this by his pastor. He went occasionally to Riese to see his mother, and was happy in knowing that her lot was easier now, for the children were grown and able to help her more. And he continued to be a son to the ailing pastor of Tombolo.

In 1866 the quiet life of the village was interrupted by the Austro-Italian war, and troops of both armies marched through the countryside. At the end of the fighting the Lombardy-Venetian territory was ceded by Austria to Napoleon III who turned it over to Victor Emmanuel. To the joy of the population, which had chafed since 1807 under Austrian rule, the country was again a part of Italy. Merely as a matter of form a popular vote was held to ratify the terms of the agreement.

The pastor and the curate of Tombolo took the matter very seriously and urged the people to cast their ballots, Don Sarto himself making out a list of all possible voters. To his brother, still in the Austrian army, he sent a form to sign, but suggested that if possible he come home to take part in the voting.

Some years before, Angelo, then perforce marching with his Austrian regiment, had encamped close to Tombolo. His captain had permitted him to visit his brother and all Tombolo had urged him to stay and not return to the Austrian army. But he said he had promised his captain he would come back. Don Giuseppe agreed with him. "A promise is a promise," he said, "no matter to whom it is made," and Angelo returned. But now things were different and he could come home.

When Don Sarto had been his curate for more than seven years, Don Costantini, although dependent upon him and grateful for

his help, began to worry lest this fine young man had been entirely forgotten by his superiors. Why was he not, after so many years, given a parish of his own?

He was not the only one who wondered about this; a friend of both men, Canon Marangoni of the Treviso seminary, decided to join Don Costantini in doing something about the situation. They thought it would be a good thing to have Don Sarto invited to speak at the Cathedral in Treviso, where he would be heard by important ecclesiastics who would recognize his ability. And by pulling various strings, the invitation was eventually forthcoming.

Don Sarto worked hard at the preparation of his sermon, the subject of which was the life of Saint Anthony. When he had written it out, Don Costantini offered to hear him rehearse it and made a few suggestions and changes. He also wrote of the coming event to some of his friends, among them Don Tositti of nearby Quinto, asking him to be sure to attend and tell him how the sermon went, since he himself was too ill to make the journey to Treviso. "Take your friends and go to hear him," he urged. "Don Beppo is a good and diligent young man. Note what I say: soon we shall see him as pastor of one of the largest towns in the diocese; then with red stockings — and then?"

The 13th of June, 1866, came, the day Don Sarto was to preach before his important audience.

"Who is preacher at the cathedral today?" people asked, and they were told, "We hear it is a curate from Tombolo — a young priest named Giuseppe Sarto. No, no one knows who he is."

A country curate from a little town preaching in such an important place as the Cathedral at Treviso! Many were disapproving, and even more so when they learned that Don Sarto was just over thirty years old. After all, this was a high feast and the sermon was to honor the great Saint Anthony. And this preacher was a young man from a small place like Tombolo, where everyone knew there were nothing but cattle dealers!

A slim young figure mounted to the pulpit of the cathedral, and Don Sarto's fine voice rolled out over a crowded cathedral; in

his audience sat all the canons, many professors from the seminary and dozens of the clergy. After Mass the comments were very different in tone, and Don Costantini would have been delighted to hear them. Of course it was easy to see that Don Sarto was very young, people told each other, but he was indeed a fine preacher and he actually seemed to understand Saint Anthony as if he were a Paduan. The cattle dealers of Tombolo were lucky — too lucky some thought.

When he came home, Don Costantini looked at his curate expectantly. "Well, how did you make out?" he asked.

"Before I left Monsignor Carminiani asked me to preach again at the cathedral, next year at the feast of Blessed Henry."

Don Costantini was satisfied. His Don Beppo had then been truly appreciated, for this invitation was a great honor. Although Saint Anthony was highly regarded at Treviso, there was even greater devotion to Blessed Henry of Boso, the great disciple of Saint Anselm. His remains were buried in the crypt of the cathedral; a flask of his blood was preserved there. To preach the sermon on his feast day was indeed an opportunity. There would be great crowds, people flocking from towns all over the diocese, and, no doubt, important dignitaries would be invited to attend.

When, in the following year, Don Sarto delivered his sermon on Blessed Henry, the Bishop of Treviso was among those present, — not Bishop Farina who had known Don Sarto in his seminary days, but his successor, Bishop Zinelli. And only a month later Don Sarto was invited to take the examinations at Treviso for a higher position. Don Costantini was now convinced that something he had merely surmised was actually true. Bishop Farina, who had known Giuseppe Sarto, had been transferred, and his successor had never met the young man. This was the reason he had been left in so unimportant a post for nine years.

Everyone was nervous about the examinations. The previous day Rosa lighted candles before the altar all day long, and many of the townspeople went to the church to pray for Don Sarto. That evening before his ordeal groups kept coming to his house to give him courage. They asked so many questions that finally Don

Costantini, who had himself arrived to give a little last minute advice, said, "Go away, all of you. Perhaps you had better go to Treviso and take the examination yourselves."

Two days later the townspeople rejoiced to know that Don Sarto had passed the four examinations, both oral and written. But it was not an unmitigated joy for they knew it meant that they would soon lose their Don Giuseppe. When, some months later, he received an appointment to the parish of Salzano, they gave him a farewell party and presented him with a nicely decorated booklet. On one page was written his name, his title in Tombolo, and then, as if they were degrees of learning, the words, "Father, Brother, Friend, Consoler." On the opposite page appeared two lines:

*"Tombolo tutto in Te trova ristoro:  
L'Angelo suo Tu sei, Tu il suo tesoro."*

## CHAPTER FOUR

### *The Pastor of Salzano*

GIUSEPPE SARTO was thirty-two years old when, in June, 1867, he was appointed to his new parish of Salzano. This was a village considerably larger than the one he was leaving, and his responsibilities would be greatly increased, for he would be not only pastor of his church but fill the additional office of archpriest or director of the local centers of clergy. He would have two curates and a third priest to help out when needed. Although it was true the village was not very large, its limits extended far out into the countryside, and Don Sarto would be administering to a parish of five thousand souls.

Salzano received the news of the appointment of a new pastor with mixed feelings and some reservations. Sarto? Who was this Sarto? The curate of Tombolo, and nothing more. So they were now sending curates from Tombolo to Salzano, a village whose previous pastors had more than once been professors of theology from Treviso or canons at the cathedral there.

But there were others in Salzano who had heard Don Giuseppe preach fine sermons at Castelfranco and Treviso; they felt that perhaps he was not an ordinary curate. Why not withhold judgment and see what he was like? Still, many wondered how anyone who had been left with the cattlemen at Tombolo for nine years could be worthy of the pastorship of Salzano.

And back in Tombolo, Don Costantini worried about the reception which awaited Don Beppo. He guessed what the people of Salzano were saying, and when one day a lay committee from Salzano came to Tombolo to meet their newly appointed pastor, he knew his fears had been justified. One of them said pointedly to Don Costantini that this would be the first pastor Salzano had ever had who made such a quick leap from the curacy.

Don Costantini answered them politely, and drew them and

Don Sarto into conversation which he tried to keep from becoming personal. But after they went away he thought bitterly that it was too bad his Don Beppo did not have the title "monsignor" or "domestic prelate." The length or shortness of a train, the size of a ring — these matters seemed important things to some people.

Well, he decided, it might be hard for Don Beppo for a while, but with his faith and his ability, he would manage well. Even so, his eyes were wet when he thought of what he was losing, thought of his curate's gaiety, his joy in hard work, his kindness to a sick old man.

Don Sarto had felt a disturbance in the air while the men of the Salzano committee were talking with him and Don Costantini, but he had put any apprehension aside. God was sending him to this new post; surely God would stand by him if he did his best there.

On the day of his investiture he went to Treviso, and at the Bishop's palace he met several more of the leading members of the Salzano parish.

"I am doing Salzano a great favor," the Bishop had said to them before Don Sarto came in, and the men from the village looked at each other. A chill seemed to come into the room although it was a warm June day, and the parishioners were silent as the Bishop called Don Sarto in to meet them. The visitors saw their new pastor for the first time — a young man with steady blue eyes, who stood quietly waiting for Bishop Zinelli to introduce him. They were not reassured; this was certainly no one to make an impression on those who had been accustomed to have as pastor an eminent ecclesiastic from Treviso.

On a Saturday in mid-June, Don Sarto left Tombolo by carriage and spent his first night in his new rectory, a large and rather stately building with a walled garden. He was glad that Rosa was coming that week, and that she was bringing with her from Riese their sister Anna to help with the housekeeping, which would be on a much larger scale than that in Tombolo. And he met his curates — Don Monastier and Don Würbs.

Next morning he faced his congregation for the first time.

Despite the hot day a large crowd had gathered at the church of San Bartolommeo, among them not only villagers of Salzano but many from neighboring towns who wanted to see the new priest and hear him preach. They saw a young man, thin but strongly built, his hair brushed back from a high forehead, about him an air of gentleness and friendliness. They heard a sermon simple in delivery, but also, some of them noted, well thought out, even learned. Well, they said after Mass was over, his voice was very fine, that one had to admit, and his words were wise. Some of the listeners wondered why this man had been left so long in little Tombolo. Perhaps more curates should be taken out of old rectories and given a chance.

Don Giuseppe found his new home not unlike Tombolo. As with the land there, here too was fertile soil; its best crops were grapes and mulberries. And, like Tombolo, it was very old, its church having had its beginnings in the Middle Ages. From the time it was first built Saint Bartholemew had been Salzano's patron. The church had been added to and altered over the centuries; it had seven altars, one surmounted by a picture of Our Lady painted on stone and considered by the townspeople to be miraculous.

It did not take long for Don Sarto to make himself liked in his new parish. People found him not only devout in his priestly duties, but always pleasant and willing to listen to and help those in trouble. His simplicity, his charm, his eagerness to work pleased the parish. Before he had been at Salzano a month he was a welcome guest in every home, and the people agreed with him wholeheartedly in any suggestions he made about improvements in church or parish. The church needed many repairs; the floor was unsafe, and the organ in poor condition; a hall was badly needed for the catechism classes and meetings. The new pastor introduced the devotion of the Stations of the Cross, and in order to install them in his church he collected money from friends in other towns.

As soon as the organ was repaired, Don Sarto got together a fine choir and taught the men and boys to sing Gregorian chant. He

established a fund for the poor, and an early contribution to it was the purse given him by his parishioners when he first came to Salzano. At that time he had asked that there be no celebration in his honor and that any money collected be used to build up a fund for the poor.

The work at Salzano was much heavier than his earlier work as curate and Don Sarto's responsibilities were greater. Besides now that these responsibilities were his own, he wanted to see many things accomplished. He often wrote to his old adviser, Don Jacuzzi, now rector of the seminary at Treviso, to ask advice on various matters. One of the Salzano curates came from Treviso and Don Giuseppe sometimes sent by him pears or a little bottle of wine to Don Jacuzzi, along with requests for advice on thorny parish problems.

In this town, there was considerable parish work beside the church services; there was an orphan asylum, an elementary school for boys and girls, and a small poorhouse, all cared for by the clergy. From the beginning Don Sarto took on himself much of the work of teaching catechism to the children. He arranged classes for the older people also, for he knew that many of them were not well taught, and it was his conviction that a sermon did little good unless the basic teachings of Christ were first understood. He also arranged advanced discussions of points of Christian doctrine and these became very popular. People from other villages attended and the discussions were lively and intelligent. These classes closed with what soon became a regular phrase of dismissal: "Now pay a visit to the church, a little homage to God."

He had been saddened at Tombolo, and now too at Salzano, to find so little devotion to Our Lady in her own month of May. He determined, however, to induce such devotion indirectly rather than by sermons. When May came in his second year at Salzano he told his people that he planned to do very little preaching during that month. "Instead I am going to read you from a book," he said.

The book he selected was so full of lovely passages about Our

Lady that after a while some of his listeners asked where they could buy copies. He put off these requests for a time, telling them the book was out of print, but finally he admitted there was only one copy to be had. Before the end of the month it was clear who had composed the book, and by that time it did not matter. The May devotions in his parish were firmly established.

Even though his work was harder in every way, Don Sarto did not mind; he liked to work. And he had the comfort of having his two sisters keep house for him. His home was clean — he had always rated cleanliness next to godliness — and the food, though still very plain, was always well cooked.

One day his brother Angelo came to see him regarding a problem of his own. With the end of the war with Austria, Angelo had been released from the Austrian army into which he had been conscripted some years before. Ever since his conscience was troubled.

"You see I did swear fealty to the Emperor of Austria," he told Don Sarto, "and he gave me my horse. After the war I was told the horse was mine, but this didn't seem right to me, so a few months ago I went to Vienna to give him back, and again they told me he belonged to me. Do you think I can keep him, Beppo?"

Don Sarto assured his troubled brother that the horse was certainly his. "Then," said Angelo with satisfaction, "I shall take him and join the *carabinieri*."

When, the following autumn, Bishop Zinelli came on a pastoral visitation to Salzano, he found everything going well — a satisfied congregation and a busy, contented Don Sarto. The parish was proud of a pastor who preached so well that he was often asked to give sermons in other towns and cities — not long ago even in Venice! And they spoke enthusiastically of the fact that, no matter how busy he was, he would always answer a call for help.

They could cite a recent example: when the body of a dead parishioner had to be brought from the very limits of the parish to the cemetery, Don Sarto had gone with the sacristan to the house where the body lay, and then learned that in the isolated

neighborhood only one other man could be found to help carry the bier. Don Sarto did not hesitate. He took one handle of the coffin, and the three men carried the body several miles to its place of burial.

The sacristan was an old man who sometimes overslept in the morning. When he failed to appear Don Sarto, who liked to say the earliest Mass, opened the church himself, rang the bell and made everything ready. Once an irritated parishioner said to Don Sarto as he saw him vesting by himself in the sacristy, "I'll go and wake him up for you."

But Don Sarto shook his head and smiled at the other's annoyance. "Let the old man sleep. I am young and strong. Do you think I am unable to unlock a door and ring a bell? Some day I shall be as old as he is, and then perhaps someone will be willing to help me."

The pastor of San Bartolommeo's was a familiar sight as he rode about the countryside in a little wagon drawn by a rather aged horse, an outfit which had been bought for him by several of his parishioners so that he might more easily visit his sick and distant parishioners. Often his visits took the priest a considerable distance from home and noon would find him miles from his rectory. In this case he usually stopped at the first house to which he came and invited himself to dinner. The housewives soon learned that there was no use in asking him to wait while they cooked a special dish for him. A bowl of soup and a piece of bread was what they had and what he wanted. If he could not sit down with them to their meal and eat what they ate he would not come at all. Even the most hospitable housewife finally yielded and gave him a share of the family's plain fare, for they all wanted him to come again. It was pleasant to have Don Sarto at the table, joking and laughing and telling stories of his childhood, of a life that had been so like their own.

Once, as he was driving along, two young men came by in a smart carriage, and they decided to have some fun with the country priest. Several times they drove their horse directly in front of him, but Don Sarto showed no alarm and trotted along

calmly. Unfortunately for the young men, several of his own parishioners, coming home from work, saw what was going on. Shouting angrily, "Are you making fun of Don Beppo?" one of them seized the reins of the men's horse while his companions began to drag them from their carriage. Don Sarto had to use all his powers of persuasion to keep his defenders from inflicting violence on his hecklers.

At Tombolo Don Sarto had often wished that he could do something constructive to improve the lot of the poor people in his parish. Their souls he could help, but he wanted to improve their material condition also. Now at Salzano he was able to put a few of his dreams into effect.

It had always seemed to him that a bank run by the people themselves would prove a great aid to them in time of difficulty. Little by little, he managed to make this idea clear to his parishioners, and it was decided to establish a rural savings association, where in times of need the members could obtain loans at very low rate of interest. The project was so successful that soon the *casas rurales* extended beyond his parish and grew steadily larger.

There was also the matter of a fund of considerable size left by Don Bosa, a Salzano priest, to support seminarians at Treviso. His will contained various stipulations concerning its distribution which the Bishop had refused to accept. Don Bosa had stated that in this event the fund be used to provide allowances for poor girls in his town; each year a group of young women, selected for their diligence and good character, was to receive the interest from the fund, amounting to over a hundred lire for each. Don Sarto learned that the heirs of Don Bosa were preparing to sue for this portion of his estate. He himself took the matter to the courts and it was decided in favor of the poor girls, who each year thereafter received their share of the income left them.

By the end of six years all would have agreed that Don Sarto had proved his devotion to his new flock, but in 1873 he was to

give even greater proof of this devotion when a terrible epidemic of cholera raged through Italy. In Salzano the pastor was busy from morning to night, rushing from one end of his parish to another, comforting the sick, caring for the widows and orphans, helping bury the dead. Not wishing to endanger the lives of his curates since he was in charge and responsible for them, he tried to do most of the visiting of the sick himself. He brought to sorrowing homes comfort and spiritual help. Often he even helped out as a nurse, aiding the Franciscan sisters who had charge of the little hospital in the town. If he went there with any money in his pocket, he gave it all away before he left.

He brought good nursing experience to his task. From his work with the cholera epidemic of earlier days, in Riese, he had learned that certain things helped or even cured patients suffering from the dread disease. Once he offered a glass of wine to a man who in his delirium refused it, thinking he was being given poison. Don Sarto himself drank a little to reassure him, and the sick man drained the glass. A second and a third and a fourth was proffered to him and he drank it all. "Now lie quiet," said Don Sarto, "and see that you perspire freely. Tomorrow you will be better." And next day the sick man was on the road to recovery.

But many of the cases he attended had sadder endings. A young husband lay dead and there was only Don Sarto to comfort the weeping bride of one week; when he came next day he found her dying too. That night he went to the cemetery with her body as he had gone with that of her husband the night before. When he reached home after one of these shattering days he was worn out and Rosa could not make him eat. All he wanted was a glass of wine and water with a little pepper in it.

"You say 'yes' to everyone," scolded Rosa in her worry over him. "You are white and thinner than the sick people themselves."

During the hours of rest that followed these exhausting days he was, for the first time in his life, unhappy. He worried for fear that he would fall ill too. If he did, who would do his work? When he tried to sleep, the sad scenes he had witnessed came

before his eyes. In the midst of so much death, Don Sarto heard that someone very dear to him, Don Costantini, was dying, and he hurried to see him once more. Just as he reached Tombolo he heard the church bell tolling, and knew his old pastor was no more. He turned his horse around. "If I could not see him alive," he said to himself, "I don't want to see him dead," and he returned to his work in Salzano.

Only one other time during the epidemic did he break his routine. He had been invited to preach a sermon in Venice on the feast of Saint Jeanne de Chantal. He had no time to prepare a sermon until he was on the train, and then he wrote from the time he left Salzano until he reached Venice. He preached the sermon and by evening was back in Salzano again and spent the night hours in the hospital.

When the dread time was at last over, one old woman in the village voiced the feeling of all. "If," she said, "it had not been for Don Giuseppe I would have died myself of the worry and sorrow that broke over me."

For some time afterwards Don Giuseppe was not himself. He had worked too hard for even his great strength. When his old friend of seminary days, Don Carlo Carminati, came one day to see him, he did not find the gay companion he had known. The pastor of Salzano looked pale and tired, and admitted he was not feeling too well.

"And how can that be helped?" demanded Rosa. "Don Carlo, he is going to pieces if he doesn't stop. He says 'yes' no matter what people want him to do. He is everyone's servant. Look at him — nothing but skin and bones."

Don Carlo agreed. "Your sister is right, my Beppo. Such blind effort as yours can only do you harm. When certain instruments are once broken, they can't be put together again. Let someone else take care of these things for you. In this world each ought to do his share."

Don Giuseppe smiled. "What a famous preacher you have become," he said admiringly.

But Don Carlo did not let the matter rest with a witticism from his friend. He wrote to one of the canons at Treviso that the priest at Salzano was really worn out and might become very ill unless he took a rest. Bishop Zinelli, advised of Don Sarto's condition, came to Salzano to urge its pastor to take a vacation.

Rosa only shook her head when she heard of the good advice. "It will take more than a bishop to stop Beppo if he thinks there is some work he ought to do," she said gloomily to Anna.

But Don Sarto, to the surprise and delight of his sisters, did consent to a brief vacation, offered him as a gift by his good friend Senator Romanin-Jacur, who owned the large weaving establishment in the town where several hundred women were employed, most of them parishioners of San Bartolomeo's. Between its pastor and the Jewish mill-owner a friendship had grown through the years, and the latter often accepted Don Sarto's advice on matters concerned with working conditions in his mill.

If Don Sarto wanted a holiday for the workers on one of the great feast days it was always granted quickly. The Senator made a point of seeing that his employees attended Mass. When he wanted to do some special thing for them, he placed the money in Don Sarto's hands for distribution. And, if there was a case of great need in the parish, Don Sarto knew where to go for help.

For there seemed always to be need of aid. In fact one day, after pondering the matter, Don Sarto decided to sell his horse and asked a neighbor to handle the transaction for him. It was not that he did not any longer need the horse, but he now belonged to everyone. Over and over came the request, "May I borrow the horse today?"

"Of course. Take him," he would say, but as time went on the poor animal was being worked too hard, and, since Don Sarto could not bear to hurt people's feelings by refusing, it seemed a good idea to sell the horse and use the money for the poor.

"Perhaps you could sell the cart too?" he asked his neighbor

hopefully. But the latter looked at the decrepit object and shook his head. "I'll try," he said dubiously.

He sold the horse but the cart remained in the rectory stable. Not for long at a time, however, for those who had a horse or a donkey now borrowed the cart whenever the need arose. That Don Sarto did not mind. You could not overwork a cart.

Late one evening during the year following the epidemic, Don Carlo Carminati came to see his friend, planning to stay for the night. Seeing a light in the kitchen, he looked in at the window and saw Don Giuseppe with a half-dozen boys about him. He was entertaining them with shadow play, making silhouettes of rabbits and geese on the wall, to the loud delight of his young visitors.

Don Giuseppe welcomed his friend, sent the boys home, and the two spent a happy evening talking over old times. In the morning while Don Giuseppe was still at Mass, Rosa came to Don Carlo as he was eating his breakfast. "Don Carlo," she said, "there is a man here who has very good linen cloth for sale."

"That is nice," he said in some bewilderment, but Rosa soon made her remark clear to him. "Now listen to me," she said in a great hurry. "Yesterday Beppo received a little money. Do me a favor please. See if you can make him buy some of the cloth. He has absolutely no decent underwear and not a shirt that is not in rags. Even Anna can't mend them any more."

Don Carlo agreed to do his best to help along the plot. When Don Giuseppe came in for his breakfast, he was followed a few minutes later by the linen dealer, an eager Rosa close behind him. Together they showed him the fine linen, but Don Giuseppe was indifferent to its beauty. "I'll buy it some other time," he said, and began drinking his coffee.

Don Carlo and Rosa tried another method. Taking the cloth, they measured off several ells and asked the dealer the price. He quickly named a figure.

"Fine — that is certainly not too high," said Don Carlo judiciously. "You can cut that much off. Now, Beppo, you pay for it."

Don Giuseppe looked from one to the other. "So you have come to betray me," he said crossly to Don Carlo. But he pulled out his purse, counted the money and gave it to the dealer. And Rosa, hugging the precious cloth to her, flew out to show it to Anna.

"Oh, Don Carlo," she said afterward, "if you hadn't been here today — I know his weakness — tomorrow I would have had no new linen and Beppo no money."

That year Bishop Zinelli learned that Don Sarto had borrowed 2500 lire to enlarge and repair the hospital at Salzano. Even though he was himself a generous and kindly man who spent all his money for the poor, he thought this rather a large debt to assume. "My dear man," he said when next he saw him, "you will end by pawning the very censer from the church. Do you know what I am going to do to make you stop spending money? I shall make you a canon at the cathedral some day soon."

Don Sarto looked at him smiling, relieved to know that the matter was ending in a jest. Suddenly, from the expression on Bishop Zinelli's face, he realized that he might be serious about what he had just said.

"Oh, Excellency," he said in sudden alarm, "do leave me where I am. I am just a country priest and always shall be."

## CHAPTER FIVE

### *At the Cathedral and Seminary of Treviso*

IN 1875, when Don Giuseppe Sarto was in his fortieth year, Bishop Zinelli, who had watched closely the work of this promising priest, called him to a new scene of labor. He appointed him a canon of the Cathedral of San Pietro in Treviso.

The Bishop knew that Don Sarto was rather young to hold such an office and that, although he had been a priest for a number of years, his work had been carried on only in country parishes. But his goodness and zeal were widely known; his scholarship and knowledge were evident. He was tactful and had a ready wit, and the Bishop knew he would be a valuable acquisition in the task of diocesan administration.

Among other duties he would now have to take part in trials before the ecclesiastical courts; he would conduct negotiations with the municipal authorities in matters that sometimes took considerable tact. In addition, he would lecture at the seminary on morals, dogma, church law, and the liturgy.

The people of Salzano were sad at the loss of their pastor, but they were proud that his abilities were being recognized. Some had not forgotten that when he had first come to them, nine years before, they had felt the parish was being slighted by the appointment of a pastor so humble and unknown. Now Don Giuseppe had proved himself: he had been made canon at the cathedral — but because of that they would lose him.

Don Sarto's appointment came in the late summer, although he did not leave Salzano until November. He felt he must wait until his salary covered various debts he had contracted, and he did not want to leave Salzano owing money to anyone. As soon as he could do so, he paid every bill and left for Treviso.

Reaching the city on a Sunday of cold wind and rain, he met for the first time his thirteen other colleagues in the canons' chapter. In the stall assigned to him he joined with them in singing the first Vespers of Advent. His strong voice rang out in the beautiful passages of the Gregorian chant which he loved, and to which, he was happy to learn, great attention was paid at the cathedral and the seminary.

Rooms at the seminary were waiting for him, and he was also to receive his board. This arrangement had been made for him at the special request of Bishop Zinelli, who knew that a canon's income was small and that Don Sarto's charities seldom left him enough for his own needs. At least, under such an arrangement, the Bishop knew that his new canon would have enough to eat. His sisters Rosa and Anna, now back in Riese, agreed this was a wise way to handle their brother.

For Don Giuseppe — now known officially by the title of Monsignor — one of the best features of his new position was that it brought him close to an old and loved friend and adviser of early days. Don Jacuzzi, now like himself a monsignor, was rector of the seminary with its more than two hundred students and its fine staff of teachers.

Monsignor Sarto had for his own use two small rooms, a tiny study with an alcove and an even smaller bedroom in the school dormitory. At first he found this arrangement irksomely confining compared to the freedom of his big rectory at Salzano. But from his windows there was a fine view of fruit orchards and vegetable gardens and beyond them of the quiet silver waters of the Sile River framed in thickets of tall trees.

Unfortunately he seldom had time to enjoy the view. He was now spiritual director of the seminary students and confessor to many of them. He had asked if he might have the task of preparing the children in the school for their First Communions, a duty to which he gave his special devotion, for he loved little children and they in turn loved him for his gentle manner and his clear and simple teaching.

His first talk with the seminarians startled a group unac-

customed to having their religious directors address them as did Monsignor Sarto. "Perhaps," he told them, as he stood facing them from the pulpit of the chapel, "you expect to find in me a man of profound learning and wide experience in spiritual matters, one of those fathers who are capable of directing and counselling you. But let me tell you plainly that I possess nothing or almost nothing of that. I am only a country priest come here by the will of God; and since Our Lord has willed it so, you on your part must be ready to listen to my words and be indulgent with me."

After that introduction, he went on with his discourse, but the students, who had been ready to take him at his own word, began exchanging glances that said, "A country priest? Well —"

He found that he was working with an excellent and intelligent group of students, for the seminary had a fine reputation, especially for its courses in classical studies, and chose its students carefully. Under Bishop Zinelli their number had been greatly increased, thanks in great part to the financial help given by Maria Anna, Empress of Austria. Over a hundred lay students also attended the college, boys from eleven to twenty.

The seminary consisted of a group of buildings of varied architecture, some of them fairly new, others dating back to the Middle Ages when they had been part of a Dominican monastery. The city of Treviso was much older than its seminary. The citadel on the Sile had seen many conquerors come and go — Augustus Caesar, who conquered the Alpine tribe which had first settled there, Charlemagne, Henry II, Barbarossa; it had in its day seen Roman legions and knights in armor. Its cathedral was built in 1141 and in the crypt was buried a Bishop John of the fourth century; the patron of the city, Liberalis, was also buried there. On its altars were paintings by Titian and Veronese and other masters.

Soon after his coming to Treviso, and because Monsignor Jacuzzi had been promoted to a higher office, Monsignor Sarto was made rector of the seminary, an office which put into his hands the direction of the studies of future priests of the diocese.

This was a task he loved and he threw himself into it with great zeal. He took part in the student's retreats as if he were one of them, and when he gave orders it was rather as if he were asking a favor. He nursed the boys when they were sick and saw to it that they were neat and clean at all times, for cleanliness was a passion with him; and he taught them politeness and good manners.

The winters at Treviso were very cold; often for many days the temperature was below zero. The seminary was very cold too, as there was no money for providing heat. Monsignor Sarto often sat for hours at a time in his icy little room hearing confessions. But to those who commiserated with him he insisted that he was not really uncomfortable, for he was sitting against a southern wall. However, since the wall was several feet thick, it was doubtful whether the sun provided him with any warmth.

More than once Monsignor Sarto had noticed that a boy was in need of a warm coat, and during that winter he made the first of a series of yearly compacts with a tailor in the city: when he sent someone to be measured for a garment the order was to be filled, but the tailor must not tell who was paying the bill. Monsignor Sarto's salary was larger now and he did not have to pay for his food, but even so he was lucky if at the day's end a few lire remained in his pockets.

In his own way, and one in which he had through the years become expert, he managed to find, in almost miraculous ways, money for unexpected demands. One seminarian was in deep distress because his parents had been told that they might lose their home if a payment of 150 lire were not made immediately. The boy had no money; his father was a day laborer. A classmate who knew of his trouble suggested he ask Monsignor Sarto for help. "He is so good. Perhaps he will find a way."

That evening the young man knocked timidly at Monsignor Sarto's door and found him sitting almost hidden behind books and papers, writing by the dim light of a lamp. "What can I do for you?" he asked, putting down his pen.

The student poured out his story and Monsignor Sarto looked

disturbed. "Child, you have knocked at the wrong door," and he pulled from his pockets the few lire he possessed. "Look, here is my fortune."

But when the boy began to weep, Monsignor Sarto rose hurriedly and put his arm about his shoulders. "Courage, lad. We'll find it for you somewhere. Come back early in the morning. Who knows what God may send us."

Next morning the student came back. "Here it is, my son," and Monsignor Sarto pulled from his desk a packet of lire. "Now listen to me," he said. "There is no hurry about returning it. But soon you will be a priest, and when you can return this money do so. You see I borrowed it."

His discourses to the seminarians were always in a practical strain, full of solid information as to how to live in the world after they were ordained and no longer in the holy quiet of the seminary. He tried to share his own past with them in order to help them with their future. He did not indulge in theoretical speculation but took his subjects directly from the Scriptures and the Fathers of the Church and from his own knowledge of people. He talked to them as he had been talked to by those who had formed him in his own boyhood and youth — Don Fusarini, Don Jacuzzi, Don Costantini. Like them, he did not minimize learning; like them, he was widely read. But he placed this beside and never above piety. And perhaps one reason for his great success with his students was that, though he was past forty years old, he had not forgotten his own youth.

Monsignor Sarto seldom became angry but he was irked by any show of disrespect or lack of reverence. Once he watched as the students came into the chapel and fumblingly made the sign of the cross with gestures hardly approximating the symbol they were forming. On that occasion he was really angry, and he based his talk on what he had seen. Men who were careless in such a small deference to God, he told the students, could not be expected to carry out very carefully those larger matters entrusted to them when they set out to do the work for which they were being trained.

But as a rule he was sunny and pleasant tempered, a teacher who made lessons interesting and who enjoyed young people as much as they evidently enjoyed him. He had the gift of being young with the young, but his colleagues found him equally companionable. The dinner hour, when the professors met and talked, was to him the most pleasant part of his day. There he was at his best, teasing one, joking with another, arguing with a third. His fellow professors called him the King of the Round Table, and said that when he was away from the refectory, it seemed empty no matter how many were seated there.

When Monsignor Sarto joined the chapter of canons of Treviso, it was composed of men from all walks of life. But until the nineteenth century they had been chosen only from noble families. In those days you might, as the Trevisans said, have the wisdom of a Solomon, and the piety of Francis of Assisi, but you could not be a canon of Treviso cathedral unless your family were noble. A little of that pride still lingered among the present canons, even though it was now an accident if one of them was of noble birth. They wore a violet mantle with a train and a pectoral cross hung on a violet cord. Their cassocks were violet and so were the buttons, girdles and the cord around their hats. In the past their cassocks had been of plain cloth, but now many of them were made of fine silk and the true violet color was getting closer and closer to crimson.

Canon Sarto bothered very little with all this elegance. When not in the choir he wore a plain black cassock, keeping of his canon's dress only the violet collar. At first this annoyed some of his colleagues and highly amused others, but before long many of them followed his example.

He still continued his old habits of working late and rising early. Once a professor said with a sigh that no matter how early he came to say Mass, Monsignor Sarto had already reached his thanksgiving. Monsignor Zanotto, who had the room next to his, could hear him as he moved about or rustled papers and once he called out, long after midnight, "Sarto, go to bed. Don't

work any more. Who works too much in the end finds he works too little."

"You are right, Don Francesco," came the answer. "Go to bed and sleep well," and Monsignor Sarto went on working. Midnight found him always at his desk; at four o'clock he was awake again and ready for the work of the day.

In the college was an old houseman, one of whose duties it was to waken Monsignor Sarto on the occasions when he had to leave very early in the morning to preach outside of the city — in Padua or Venice or Mantua. Old Nane would stand with a little lantern in his hand, waiting quietly until he heard the clock in San Nicolo tower strike three. Promptly he knocked, waited until he heard a voice call from within, "Thank you for waking me," and then pattered away, feeling he had carried out his important duty. What he did not know was that Monsignor Sarto was always awake before he came; when he heard the slippers shuffling along the corridor, he put out his light and was very still until he heard the old man's knock and answered it.

In June, 1877, Monsignor Sarto went for the first time to Rome, on the occasion of the golden jubilee of Pope Pius IX, and with him he bore offerings from the people of Treviso. It was with a wonderful inner sense of well being and peace that he trod for the first time the streets of the city of the Popes. With several other monsignori he went to see Monsignor Mercurelli, a member of the Pope's household, to explain that he had been selected to present to the Holy Father the Peter's Pence collection from the Treviso diocese, as well as an album of spiritual bouquets. He had learned, he said, that the Pope was very tired from the many audiences; perhaps he could not see him. But Monsignor Mercurelli reassured him: he would arrange an audience.

Monsignor Sarto wrote home of the wonders of Rome — "but I am only beginning. It makes me sad to think I cannot see everything." He had attended a Vesper service in the church of St. Peter in Chains where he had listened to a marvellous three voice choral based on the Gregorian and with no accom-

paniment: "I can hardly wait for evening to come so that I can go again."

A few days later, part of a large Italian pilgrimage, he saw the Holy Father for the first time. The following day he saw him in semi-private audience and gave him the gifts of Treviso. The Pope spoke very affectionately of Treviso's Bishop: "Since you have come with these as a substitute for my dear Zinelli, I want to assure you that I could have received no visit that would have been as pleasant as yours."

Monsignor Sarto went back to Treviso full of wonder at the holy places he had seen. Even so, what chiefly held him, what had moved him most, in his visit to the great city, had been the crowds of pilgrims he met everywhere, praying with such fervor that the sight would fill even a weak believer with zeal.

Three years after coming to Treviso, in 1878, Monsignor Sarto was made chancellor of the diocese and vicar general. In this capacity he went from town to town with Bishop Zinelli on his episcopal journeys, stopping at churches and chapels, at convents and schools, examining, investigating, approving and disapproving. So great was his efficiency in dealing with these matters that the aging and ailing Bishop began to leave more and more of the burden to the younger man. The calls on the Vicar General became more and more frequent, and the heavy work allowed Monsignor Sarto little leisure.

The one relaxation he permitted himself was the occasional visits he made to his relatives. Several sisters were still at home with their mother. Teresa, who was married to Giovanni Parolin, lived next door, having come into possession of the Inn of the Two Swords. Angelo lived with his wife at Grazie, and Antonia and Lucia, both married, lived in Salzano. But it was with his mother that he most enjoyed his stays. When he came to Riese the two would sit together, she in the straight chair she liked best, and he in the wide low one he had loved since he was a small boy, and talk quietly of many things.

They looked much alike, with the same mild blue eyes, the

same qualities of gentleness and energy in both faces. Signora Sarto's hair was very white and her son's only graying; hers was still thick and his lay on his head like a heavy cap. They talked of the people they had known, of small family troubles about which he advised her, and he spoke of his own work to her, for he liked to hear her sound advice.

There was no more money in the little house than there had ever been. And Monsignor Sarto was himself not really much better off than he had been as a curate, but he was usually able to settle a few bills for her and leave a small sum behind. If his mother had not been able in earlier days to give her son much financial help, she had given a great deal to the development of his character. She had been self-denying and had taken hardships and poverty without complaint, and so did he. She was generous and kind, and so was he. Like him, she loved the poor and, within the limits of what she could give, she gave generously. Both loved the countryside and cared little for cities or city life.

In June, 1879, Bishop Zinelli raised Monsignor Sarto to the dignity of *primacerius*, that is, superior of the chapter of canons, and the younger man's work was again increased. In November of that year the Bishop died; his loss was a keen grief to the younger priest to whom he had been always a kind and sympathetic friend and an understanding superior.

When the chapter of canons met to elect an administrator for the affairs of the diocese who would serve until a new bishop was appointed, it was to the youngest among them — Monsignor Sarto — that they gave the office. He tried to refuse the responsibility, for he felt that he was not qualified, but at last he accepted.

In a letter addressed to the clergy of the diocese now under him he explained carefully his reasons for hesitation, and then continued, "I must frankly confess that I have accepted this heavy burden not only because I feel assured that you will help me in my task, but because I know the spirit of the clergy. You, my dear brothers, must come to my help in this, we hope, brief time that our church is orphaned, and then we may hand over

with no harm or loss this costly possession which has been entrusted to the one whom God chooses to be shepherd of this important portion of the flock of Jesus Christ. . . . You are full of zeal for souls; seek to win them rather by love than by fear. The supreme wish of Our Lord for His own was that they should love each other, and this wish found its fulfillment in apostolic times when the Christians were one heart and soul in Christ. A priest's life is a continual warfare against evil, which will not fail to raise up powerful enemies. In order that they may not prevail against us, let us be united in charity among ourselves; thus we shall be invincible and strong as a rock. I beg of you," he ended, "each day to think of me during the offering of the Mass and in your prayers."

Monsignor Sarto now worked even harder than ever before, all day and often far into the night by the light of his seminary lamp. There was not enough money to hire secretaries to take on the extensive clerical work connected with his new responsibilities in the diocese. There were difficulties in procuring diocesan funds from the government authorities, and when he took the matter up with the government heads at Venice little attention was paid to him. Finally, by insisting, he was allowed the sum of 1200 lire for church expenditures. He shook his head over this governmental parsimony. "To offer a hundred lire a month for expenses when postage alone costs forty lire," he said in exasperation. "Do they expect the poor to get along on crumbs?"

Diocesan correspondence and financial matters were not his only worries. There were his seminary obligations, sermons to be given in various cities as well as in Treviso, and his other pastoral duties. Someone who watched him at his daily work said, "I will venture a prophecy: Monsignor Sarto will not die in his bed."

In February, 1880, the new Pope, Leo XIII, appointed Don Giuseppe Callegari of the seminary of Venice as Bishop of Treviso, and, to his great relief, Monsignor Sarto was able in June to relinquish his duties as administrator and go back to

the work he loved at the seminary. He was happy there and would have been content to spend the rest of his life in Treviso among the young men he was training for the priestly life. But when, shortly afterward, he was named chancellor to the new Bishop, he willingly took on that duty, for now he did not have full authority, and that had been what he disliked most.

In 1884 the question of appointing a new bishop to the see of Mantua came before Pope Leo XIII. One of the cardinals in Rome, Cardinal Parocchi, called the attention of the Holy Father to Monsignor Giuseppe Sarto, who had shown such ability in managing the diocese of Treviso as well as its seminary.

The Pope remembered that this same Monsignor Sarto had made a favorable impression on him some years before. In October, 1881, there had been a great pilgrimage to Rome from many cities of Italy, made in expiation for the outrages committed against the ashes of Pius IX by Roman rabble. Treviso had sent a delegation headed by Bishop Callegari and including Monsignor Sarto. The Bishop had brought Monsignor Sarto with him to his private audience, and Pope Leo had been much drawn to the man with the quiet, humble air.

Now, when the question arose of whom to appoint to the difficult see of Mantua, Cardinal Parocchi suggested that Monsignor Sarto might be an excellent appointee, and the Holy Father agreed. They knew that Mantua was no easy diocese to manage, that conditions were as difficult as in Cardinal Parocchi's own former dioceses of Pavia and Bologna, in both of which he had met with strong government opposition to his occupation of the see. Both felt that a man of Monsignor Sarto's stamp might better deal with government opposition than one more politically minded or austere.

And so it happened that one morning in September of that year the new Bishop of Treviso, Bishop Apollonio, looked into Monsignor Sarto's little study and said, "Dear Monsignor, will you be so kind as to come with me for a few minutes?" And linking arms, he walked with him to his own private chapel.

"I have brought you here," he told the surprised priest, "so that we may say a prayer together before the Blessed Mother regarding a matter which concerns us both."

After a brief prayer they rose, and the Bishop handed Monsignor Sarto an official document. The latter read it, then looked at his Bishop with tears in his eyes, and when he spoke there was distress in his voice. "No, no — this is a great mistake. I cannot take a post like this. I must write to the Holy Father and tell him so. Your Excellency, I must."

The document was his appointment as Bishop of Mantua. And, as he said he would, he wrote that very day a letter to Rome listing all the reasons why he could not fill the post. Perhaps it was as well for his peace of mind that he did not know what the Pope had said to Bishop Apollonio when they discussed the appointment: "If the Mantuans do not love their new Bishop, then they will love no one."

When the news became known in Treviso and in other parts of the diocese, there was great delight but very little surprise. Monsignor Sarto alone was amazed and doubtful.

In November he went to Rome for an audience with the Holy Father. Already he had learned how futile were his protests against accepting the honor bestowed upon him. Evidently popes were accustomed to such letters as his, and paid little attention to them.

The Pope welcomed him cordially, and after the first greetings had been exchanged, waited for him to speak, expecting of course that Monsignor Sarto would mention the matter of the bishopric. But Monsignor Sarto had momentarily forgotten that this was the purpose of his visit. Instead he held out to the Pope three books. They had been written, he explained, by professors at the Treviso seminary; he spoke of their excellence and went on to speak of the strong tie that existed in the seminary family, of the allegiance of its members to one another. "*Cor unum et anima,*" he described it proudly.

The Holy Father smiled at his enthusiasm, sent the Treviso

professors his blessing and accepted their books. "And now," he said, "about Mantua." Reluctantly the new Bishop-elect made ready to talk of his new office.

From Pope Leo he learned a great deal in a short time, especially that ecclesiastical affairs in the diocese of Mantua were in a condition which some called difficult and others called hopeless. First, under Austrian rule, there had been the struggle between the Church and Vienna over the appointment of bishops, which had left the see vacant at various times for periods of years. When, in 1866, the Lombardi-Venetian province was joined to Italy, the new government had hastened to suppress monasteries and to take upon itself the management of religious foundations; it had loaded the Church properties with heavy taxes. Worse than the loss of property or the taxes, however, had been the way in which the government opposed religion itself.

In 1871, Bishop Rota had been appointed; he was not only refused the official recognition necessary to carry out his duties but was forbidden to live in Mantua. When Leo XIII later called him to Rome the see became vacant, and it had so remained until the appointment of Monsignor Berengo who had recently been elevated to the archbishopric of Udine.

As a result of these disturbances the Church had suffered losses, not only in material assets but in souls. Many had become estranged from their Church; in Mantua itself thousands never received the Sacraments even at Easter. Shops and factories were open on Sundays just as on any other day. Lent was an all but forgotten season. The civil ceremony was often the only marriage rite performed, and other forms of religious indifference and secularism prevailed.

All these things the Holy Father discussed with the Bishop-elect of the troubled see. And, as he left the Vatican, Monsignor Sarto remembered that not long ago he had written a letter to a friend in which he expressed his longing for martyrdom. With a wry smile he decided that perhaps God was granting his wish.

## CHAPTER SIX

### *Bishop of Mantua*

ON NOVEMBER 15, 1884, Monsignor Sarto, in company with a group of his friends among the clergy and the laity, went to Rome, and next morning was consecrated Bishop of Mantua at St. Apollinaris, the church of the seminarians of several Roman colleges, who sang during the Mass.

On the evening of the consecration Pope Leo XIII received the new Bishop in private audience and presented him with a beautiful pectoral cross containing eight of the largest rubies in the papal collection, and five morocco-bound volumes of the *Pontificale Romanum*. After this unusual mark of regard, he gave his fatherly blessing to the incumbent of a post which both knew might prove a very difficult one.

Bishop Sarto remained in Rome about ten days, chiefly occupied in paying ceremonial calls. Then he made a short visit to Assisi and Loreto and by the month's end was back in Treviso, where he was greeted at the station by a large and enthusiastic crowd — clergy, seminarians, lay friends, who had come to welcome him and kiss his ring. At the seminary the students were waiting in two long lines and, as he walked between them, they cheered him lustily as he smiled at them and blessed them.

His many friends at Treviso were happy to learn that he would not take possession of his see at Mantua until the following spring, and thus they would have him with them a few months longer. Meantime he continued his duties at the seminary and the cathedral, since he did not want to be idle during those months of waiting, and he preached in many parishes — at Salzano, in various churches of Treviso, and once in Venice, at a special ceremony on the feast of Saint Francis de Sales.

On the train coming home from that city he and his companion sat opposite two men who spoke very disparagingly of the

Bishop-elect of Mantua. Once or twice the young priest beside him stirred restlessly, but the prelate shook his head gently in his direction. In fact, he agreed heartily with the speakers when they said they were afraid the new Bishop was not very intelligent or very gifted, and outlined what he considered the qualities of the ideal Bishop.

They were much impressed and, as they left the train at Treviso, one of the two men caught the young priest's sleeve and asked, "Who is that delightful priest?"

"Monsignor Sarto, Bishop-elect of Mantua," he said very distinctly and left the train. When he rejoined the new Bishop he was relieved to find him laughing.

The official government *exequatur* permitting him to occupy his see was received on February 26, 1885, and early in March he officiated, for the first time as bishop, in Venice at the Church of San Rocco; on Saint Joseph's day he sang a Pontifical Mass at Treviso.

A few days after the receipt of the *exequatur*, he wrote to the Mayor of Mantua concerning his appointment: "I hasten to write to you, as a new citizen of your city, and to express my fidelity to you and also to ask your aid when I may need it, since I know my ability is not great enough for the high office which the Holy Father has entrusted to me. Without the possibility of help from you I might not be able to do all the good which the city and the diocese have a right to demand of their Bishop"—and he added that he hoped the time would soon come when he could show the Mayor by act what he was now expressing only as a hope.

Early in April he was ready to leave Treviso. On his last night there he could not sleep because of his sorrow at leaving the place he loved so much and where he had been very happy for nine years. He was so affected that he felt himself unequal to the ordeal of a formal leave-taking from the seminary.

"I cannot say good-by to all of you," he told the new rector in the morning. "Instead will you read this letter at noon in the

refectory — and ask all to continue to pray for me and to keep me in their hearts."

He had ordered a carriage to wait for him at some distance from the seminary, and managed to leave at a time when he knew that students and faculty were all so busy that no one would see him go.

He went to Riese for the last week of Lent and spent this time with his mother and sisters. Signora Sarto's pride in her son was great, and she was happy to see that he looked very well. When he showed her his new ring with the beautiful amethyst, she admired it and then, an amused expression in her eyes, she held out her left hand and placed it beside his right. "It is a fine ring, Beppi — but if it were not for this," and she pointed to the wide wedding band, "you would not be wearing that fine one."

The whole family rejoiced that Beppo would be able to have his sisters with him again to manage his household. Rosa and Anna were to come to the palace in a few days, and if necessary Maria would join them, since their duties would be much heavier than in the rectory at Salzano.

On Easter Sunday, Bishop Sarto celebrated Mass at San Matteo's Church in Riese. Instead of his usual sermon on the Gospel of the day, he spoke of his childhood in the town, and of his seminary training which was in part made possible by the people to whom he was speaking, and of what he owed to them. It had been difficult to keep the village from presenting him with some expensive gift but he had managed to dissuade the people, asking them to put the money into the Riese poor fund instead.

He reached Mantua on the evening of April 18th and on his arrival found the carriage of Senator Di Bagno waiting to take him to the cathedral. The streets were lined with cheering people and all the bells of Mantua rang out their welcome to the new Bishop. At the door of the cathedral stood the canons and seminarians who gave him a hearty welcome. Then he was taken

to his palace and there from a balcony he blessed the people of his new diocese.

On the next day he made his solemn entry into the cathedral and preached his first sermon there. He sat on the throne to the left of the high altar and listened to the reading of the Gospel of the day; it was the parable of the Good Shepherd who gave his life for his sheep. The new Bishop prayed that this might be the story of his life in Mantua — to work for his people and if necessary to give his life for them.

Mantua, the city of Virgil's birth, was beautiful, with wide avenues and shady parks. It lay surrounded by little lakes and rivers, and in the distance was a view of the towering Dolomites.

The cathedral was the ancient Church of Saints Peter and Paul, built originally in the tenth century and rebuilt in later times. Its chief treasure was a Madonna by Mantegna, whose work was also to be seen in other churches and palaces of the city. The painter was buried in the Church of Sant' Andrea where there was a relic of the Precious Blood, said by tradition to have been brought to the place by Longinus, the soldier whose lance pierced Our Lord's body, when in the year 36 he came to the early site of Mantua to preach the Gospel.

One of Bishop Sarto's first visits was made to the seminary — in fact, he went there almost daily and that summer took charge of the examinations. The seminary was in need of money but in even greater need of students. The Bishop set about increasing their number, and sent out an appeal asking his clergy and his people to pray that many young men might feel in their hearts the call to the priesthood, that those who had already entered the seminary might have the strength to continue. Next he asked financial aid, the help of rich and poor, from each what he could give. "I know some have little money to spare," he wrote, "but surely every one can give a soldo or a little wheat or corn or fruit or vegetables for the seminary." He needed money not only to feed and house the students; he needed good teachers, and for that he must have money for salaries. "Save the seminary," the appeal ended.

The response to his appeal was a generous one even though, due to hail and drought, it had been a poor year for crops. No doubt another reason for its success was that word spread — although he himself did not tell this — that the Bishop had sold three acres of Riese fields belonging to his family and was devoting the money he received to seminary needs.

In the fall he decided he would add to his own duties that of rector of the seminary and so save that official's salary. In this way he could give several more scholarships; when a young man came to him and said, "My family is poor and I can pay only part of my fees, but I want to be a priest," Bishop Sarto could now say to him, "Yes — come."

At the end of the year Bishop Sarto sent his first report to the Prefect of the Congregation in Rome. After stating the limits of his diocese, he gave the number of churches and chapels under his jurisdiction. There were three hundred and fifty churches, and over three hundred priests; the diocese held about two hundred and seventy thousand people; the city of Mantua itself had some thirty thousand, one third of them Jewish.

He had begun a visitation of his 153 parishes starting with the city of Mantua. He had administered confirmation, had pontificated at the higher feasts of the Church, and preached on those occasions. He also preached whenever possible during his visitations, sometimes three and four times a day, and he was happy to report that abuses and irregularities were being corrected.

One of the gravest faults he had to combat had been neglect by the priests of their preaching duties and the teaching of the catechism. They, in turn, complained that there were too few priests, their salaries were too small, and that there were very few religious left to help them. That, the Bishop admitted, was true. Mantua itself had recently been deprived of the services of the Franciscans. In the monastery Camillus de Lellis there were left only two monks who could help in the hospitals, and even they were looked on with disfavor by the authorities. It was the Jesuits on whom the Bishop chiefly depended; two taught in

his seminary and others helped in various parishes. There were a few women religious who nursed and taught the children of rich and poor alike, but they were sadly limited in numbers.

In the seminary there were now 123 students. Bishop Sarto still went almost daily to supervise the students' studies and to watch over their material welfare. Also he led the singing and chose the voices for the choir.

There were many things that made the Bishop of Mantua beloved by priests and faithful before he had been with them long. He knew how little money his priests had, and he made a rule for his visits: when he came he wished to share the usual rectory meals. "When you share your meal with me and nothing more," he told them, "I shall be happy. I want to pay a visit without having my host put himself out in any way." Perhaps one of the most appreciated things he did during pastoral visits was to take his place in the confessional to help the overworked priests.

Neither, he insisted, did he want unusual church ceremonies in honor of his coming — no extra music, no elaborate receptions. "All these do is to disturb the faithful in their meditations," he said. What he liked best when he reached a town was to find all the people assembled in the church to receive Communion: "This is the greatest honor you can do me, my greatest reward — no useless pomp please. The salvation of souls is better."

He knew the world by this time; he knew its bad as well as its good side. He did not imagine that all the faithful would hark to his voice and listen to his advice. But he tried to share their happiness and their griefs, and everywhere his deep sincerity was so evident that it won to him even those negligent of their faith.

In his first pastoral letter to his people, early in 1886, he described what was really his rule of life: "I shall spare myself neither care nor labor nor vigils for the salvation of souls. . . . Hope unites me to my God and Him to me. Although I am not sufficient for the burden, my strength is in Him. He is

my hope against weariness, danger, offenses and storms and evil."

In the month of March of that year, the eight hundredth anniversary of the death of Saint Anselm was celebrated throughout Italy. Mantua, whose patron he was and in whose cathedral his body was buried under the high altar, held a three-day celebration in the saint's honor. From far and wide, by carriage and train, people came to the city to take part in the festivities. The decoration of the cathedral had been put into the hands of specialists from Verona; at night, lighted within and without, it was a fairylike sight. At every service the church was so crowded that it was almost impossible to move.

The music for the Pontifical Mass of the first day was composed by a Mantuan, Lucio Campiani. Many bishops came to take part in the celebration, and on the final day Cardinal Agostini, Patriarch of Venice, pontificated and brought the blessing of the Holy Father.

In February, 1887, Bishop Sarto sent a letter to his clergy saying he was calling a diocesan synod in the autumn of the following year and that all priests of the diocese were invited to attend. According to the regulations of the Council of Trent such synods should be held annually, but the rule had proved difficult to carry out. Most dioceses in Italy, however, had managed to arrange such meetings from time to time; Mantua had held none for two hundred years.

The synods served many purposes: to offset the evils of the times; to urge the well-intentioned to further efforts and to call back the wandering; to care for new needs that arose over the years. Their greatest value was that the clergy, by thus meeting and holding discussions, could act together. As the various priests presented their difficulties, they were discussed by the group, remedies were suggested, rules and regulations worked out for future emergencies.

In his letter to his clergy regarding the synod, Bishop Sarto

explained that its purpose was not to find out who among his priests were and who were not learned men, nor who among them were eloquent preachers. He wished them to come prepared to discuss their work from the point of view of their success in teaching the truths of the Faith: "If people do not hear of God and the Sacraments and eternal life, they will soon lose every good sentiment, not only religious but social. Do not believe that any difficulty is insurmountable. Nothing is impossible to those who will and those who love."

During the months before the synod met Bishop Sarto continued his pastoral visitations throughout the diocese. When, in 1887, he had finished, he had learned a good deal concerning what was wrong and he was ready to discuss it.

On the day the synod opened in September of 1888, the church bells rang through Mantua. Over two-thirds of the diocesan clergy were present. Two hundred priests went processionaly from the palace to the cathedral where the Bishop pontificated at the Mass.

Before beginning his sermon Bishop Sarto read a telegram from the Holy Father, blessing the synod and all who attended it. His sermon dealt with the purpose of this meeting of the shepherds of the people: "As the artists and the workers feel a need to meet in groups and congresses, to come together and discuss their problems with one another, so the clergy of a diocese must meet from time to time to learn what is necessary for the weal of the souls entrusted to them."

On each of the three days of the synod the Bishop addressed his clergy. The subjects he chose were varied: the zeal for souls, the importance of meditation, unity. At the general meetings local matters were discussed. What about good books and bad books and papers in various parishes? What was the attitude of Catholics in cities with a large Jewish population? What sort of schools best served the young? Other subjects were the work of Third Orders, of church committees, of workers' unions and St. Vincent de Paul conferences, of the Propagation of the Faith. The subject of church music was considered, and at some length,

with emphasis on the value of Gregorian as against other types.

When the synod was ended, Bishop Sarto wrote to Monsignor Jacuzzi, who had written congratulating him on its success: "I assure you I drew a deep breath, a very deep one, when I began. I worked on it almost a year and it took time and money. But it has proved a great satisfaction, and I thank God it was successful."

One Sunday in late autumn of that year Bishop Sarto, on a pastoral visit to the town of Castelbelforte, learned that during the following week over three hundred of its people were emigrating to America, chiefly because of their poverty and their inability to earn a living in their own land. Saddened by this, he himself preached a sermon to the group. "As your shepherd," he told them, "I must lament to see so many of the flock scatter to places where they will perhaps seldom find the comfort of their Faith. How can I not feel deep sorrow and deep sympathy? To leave the church where we learned to pray, where we made our First Communion, where we heard the word of God, to go to a land where we must do without these comforts, where to find a priest may be a true good fortune met only rarely — how can I not help being sad at such a prospect? I tell you, my children, hold fast to your faith. And before you set out on your long journey, go to your priest and he will give you, besides advice, a catechism and a prayer book and the necessary paper to show you are a Catholic Christian."

At the end of 1888 Bishop Sarto made his second report to Rome. During three years he had been away from his diocese only twice, once when the Archbishop of Genoa asked him to preach a novena and once when he was in charge of a retreat for the clergy at Adria. He had completed his visitation of parishes, and in each one had preached, given Communion, heard confessions and administered Confirmation. He was happy to report that the Franciscans had been induced to return to Mantua, to take charge of the Church of Santa Marie delle Grazie at nearby Brescia, and once more pilgrimages were being made

to that shrine, which was one of the most venerated in Northern Italy.

In his report the Bishop described his work in forming societies for young men and women; of founding a home for orphaned and neglected girls, a trade school where they could be taught how to earn a living; of arranging lectures for the laity in the hall of the seminary with free admission to the public. He had also ordered throughout the diocese a half hour of religious instruction for boys and girls on Sundays and holy days in which the doctrines and teachings of the Church were explained in a way in which a child could understand, and the catechism used as basis for the lessons. He hoped there would soon be published a uniform graded catechism for all Italy, so that the children would hear the truths of the Church taught in the same way everywhere.

He had held, he wrote, eight pastoral conferences at the episcopal palace during these three years. He tried to give his priests an opportunity to come to retreats at the seminary twice a year, and he insisted that all of them must come at least once during three years. The seminary, he reported, was prospering. His report closed with the statement that he was planning to begin his second pastoral visitation the following spring, so that he could see the effects of the synod on his priests and their work.

Some of his advisers had urged him not to take on this wearying task so soon again, and he himself knew it would be exhausting. But, as he said, he had not entered the priesthood to lead an easy life. "Our first duty is to work," he had told his priests. "We have to clear the field of tares and to sow the word of God; to build the holy house ever higher; to fight the holy fight against the enemies of the faith; to build and fence and tend the vineyard. There is no time for us to rest. To put it plainly: to be a priest and to be vowed to toil — these are one and the same thing."

Especially he wanted, in this his second visitation, to see how catechetical teaching was being conducted. He had been greatly troubled when he first came to the diocese as bishop and asked

his priests to give instruction to the children to have some report that they tried to hold such classes but often the children did not come. Good shepherds, he had told them, should not care only for the sheep who follow willingly but should also seek out the strayed and lost. In Mantua he had partly solved the problem of the shortage of instructors by selecting among the students of the seminary certain young men to teach catechism to the children of the city.

He did not, in this second series of pastoral visits, find all he had hoped for in the way of improvement, and he wrote to Monsignor Jacuzzi regarding the indifference of the laity: "Despite all the warnings and the efforts, there is still much to be done. If Jeremiah were to rise and on Sundays look into our churches, he would not complain that the little ones are reaching for bread and that no one gives it, but rather that the shepherds are ready to lead their flocks to good pastures — and few among the sheep are willing to follow him."

Bishop Sarto found many Catholics who did not comply with their Easter duty even though he had obtained papal sanction for an extension of the period, and had provided special confessors in some parishes which, when first he came to Mantua, had no priests at all. Days of fasting and abstinence were only partially observed, for, against the words of the Bishop and his priests, many voices urged the people to disregard such superstitious practices.

Of these sad conditions the Bishop spoke often with his clergy, and the essence of his advice to them was: "Preach — teach — both the little ones and the grown, the ignorant and the learned. The most necessary thing of all is to teach people to know better the truths of their religion. When they know them, then the lives of those entrusted to you will become better."

Among his clergy too he found sometimes a disinclination to remember that a priest must give himself entirely to his people. In his see city he learned that one priest was always very late in reaching his confessional, the only excuse being that he liked

to sleep late. One morning this priest was informed by his sacristan that a stranger was in his confessional, and he hurried to his church to find Bishop Sarto hearing confessions.

In general he was very patient. He knew that the bishop before him had been an obstinate reactionary and had alienated many of the priests and people. It would take time to prove his own sympathy for their problems. He was like a farmer who sows in order to reap, but who knows the results must be awaited with patience.

It was those years in Mantua which made a much older man of Bishop Sarto. "I would not notice the years which bend my back," he said one day to his old friend from Treviso, Canon Scalfarotto, who was visiting at the palace, "were it not for the cares, annoyances and irritations without number which come my way. It saddens me that they arise with those from whom I have a right to understanding and affection. But I shall apply to myself the sermon I preach to others — to put oneself in the hands of Providence."

"There are lights and shadows always where men rule," said the Canon philosophically.

"I know," sighed the Bishop. "I'll match your phrase with another: if all the crosses were in one field each man would choose his own."

Sometimes he felt that he was experiencing more trials and troubles than were to be found in other dioceses. But he learned that was not so. Once on a visit to Rome he heard on every side priests of that city telling of their difficulties. "Everywhere, according to them," he wrote to Monsignor Jacuzzi, "hell seems to be working to paganize poor Rome. It makes me glad to know I am going back to my Mantua soon."

The doors of Bishop Sarto's palace were open at all times, but even more open was the door to his heart. He wanted all who came to be able to see him, and often he himself opened the door for visitors. He was so friendly that on one occasion an old peasant who came for advice about his affairs spent half an hour with the Bishop under the impression that he was talking to

his secretary. Not until he asked, "May I count on that?" and received the answer, "Can't you rely on the word of your Bishop?" did he know who was before him.

Priests who came to the city were always welcome at the Bishop's table where the food was frugal but the conversation of the best. One morning early Bishop Sarto was hard at work when he heard a hesitant voice at his study door saying, "May I come in?"

An apologetic young Monsignor stood at the open door. He had come into the palace, he explained, because the front door was open and no one had been there to announce him. He was from Rome and wished permission to see the archives of the diocese of Mantua. His name was Achille Ratti.

"Have you said Mass?" asked the Bishop. His visitor replied in the affirmative. In fact, he had just come from the cathedral.

"Then you must let me offer you some coffee," said Bishop Sarto. They left the study together and the Bishop called to his sisters. "Rosal! Anna! Maria!"

There was no answer. "I'm afraid they are still at church," the Bishop said apologetically. "But it doesn't matter. Come along with me." In the kitchen he coaxed the charcoal to a flame with a kitchen fan, and prepared a pot of coffee. Together they sat down at the big kitchen table and drank several cups each. "You make excellent coffee," said Monsignor Ratti admiringly.

The Bishop was modest about it. "Experience has taught me that as well as other things. One never knows what one may be called on to do, so it is well to be prepared for emergencies."

Visitors who spent some time at the Bishop's palace always took away with them stories of his strenuous activities. When the whole city slept the Bishop was awake; far into the night he worked at his desk. And when the greater part of the city still slumbered, the Bishop was saying Mass in his private chapel — at five or earlier, and afterward often went to the cathedral to hear confessions. Breakfast was sometimes omitted, but even so rarely consisted of more than a cup of black coffee. After that he read his breviary and went to work. At eleven he went to the

kitchen where Rosa had a glass of wine ready for him. He worked until two and had his dinner — a little meat, vegetables and a bit of cheese and wine. After his meal he rested on his couch for an hour or so, and then took a walk, a practice which he rarely neglected. His favorite walks were to the grounds of the House of Providence or to the bridge of San Giorgio, where he chatted with the fishermen and looked into the baskets to examine their catches. At nine he said the rosary with his household, had a little supper and a glass of wine. Then he went back to work.

Bishop Sarto got along very well with the city authorities. "Your Bishop is poor in everything else," he had written to the Mayor of Mantua shortly after he came to the city to live, "but rich in love for his flock, and has no other object than to work for the salvation of souls and to form among you one family of friends and brothers."

Evidently his method of approach had been the right one. He made no demands and offered what he had to give. Difficulties were smoothed over and relations between Church and State in the diocese, if not over-cordial, were at least on a basis of amity.

If Bishop Sarto's relations were good with those in power in Mantua, he was also a good friend to the workingmen. He had become a member of the Workingmen's Union while he was at Treviso and still paid his yearly dues. In Mantua he started a weekly paper in the interests of the workers and of the Church, calling it *The Citizen of Mantua*. There were socialistic tendencies to combat, and he knew only too well that when people are poor it is difficult to convince them that the long range view is the right one. This paper, with its emphasis on Catholic action, was of great aid in explaining the true attitude of the Church toward the worker. But with other newspapers in the city relations were not so cordial, for these journals were either silent on matters of religion and morality or at times even attacked the Bishop personally for his decisions. But as his influence spread, these papers became more respectful in their remarks about him.

The poor of course were always his friends. They knew he gave them all he could, and that the only reason he did not give more

was because he had nothing left. Occasionally, when someone was in great need of immediate funds, he took his episcopal ring to a pawnbroker to obtain the money. People said of the Bishop of Mantua that he was loving to the rich and very loving to the poor.

For some years Bishop Sarto had been on friendly terms with the director of the high school in Mantua, but later, because the man showed very strong atheistic leanings which he could not persuade him to abandon, the Bishop slowly began to break off the association, although regretfully, for he thought the young man deeply spiritual despite his open statements to the contrary. One day, some years later, word came through an instructor in the high school that the director was very ill. "He has asked to see you. He hopes very much that you will come," Bishop Sarto was told.

The Bishop went without delay to the hospital and learned the director was dying. "Ask him if he still wants to see me," he said, and was told that he would be very welcome.

The conversation between the two lasted over an hour; once the doctor came in to try to bring it to an end, but the sick man waved him away. That evening Bishop Sarto returned to the hospital and brought Viaticum to the sick man. He left the bedside of his friend with tears in his eyes, and when he reached home he was weeping.

Rosa was worried. "What is wrong, Beppo? Why are you weeping?"

"It doesn't matter if my eyes are wet," he said, "for my heart is happy." He told her something of the director's story. "Ah, Rosa, if only many conversions like that would come to pass in our beloved Italy. I want to do so many things for God and I am so often thwarted. This makes up for a great deal."

During a visit to Castiglione where Bishop Sarto had gone for the celebration in honor of the tercentenary of St. Aloysius, he was one morning kneeling in prayer in the chapel of the college at which he was staying. As he arose to leave he saw the steward of the college weeping bitterly in a pew at the rear. He asked if he could be of any help, and the other replied that

his thirteen-year-old son was so ill with typhus that the doctor had given up the case as hopeless.

"Let me go to see him," suggested the Bishop, and together they went to the boy's bedside. The Bishop stood and looked at the sick child for a few minutes, then bent over and blessed him. "No, he will not die," he said to the father. "He will soon be better," he promised as he left. The parents were thankful for the attention given their son but not hopeful that he would ever recover. But next morning an astonished doctor said the boy would live. In fact, the fever was gone and he was almost well.

Now that he had finished his visitations the Bishop seldom left Mantua save for a short visit to his mother or to the shrine of Our Lady of Grace. There he carried his troubles and his problems and at her feet he found comfort.

Sometimes he paid a visit to the summer home of the seminarians at nearby Sailletti, and it delighted him when he saw some young man, who had been too pale and thin in the city, grow ruddy and healthy from country air and country food. There, in the company of his spiritual sons, he forgot momentarily his own heavy cares.

In music too he found occasional respite. He still found time to help with the music at the seminary and he rejoiced to see how much more purely Gregorian it had become. The school treasured certain of its musical scores because they had been written by the Bishop himself.

His own musical tastes were still changing. At the Mass during Saint Anselm's centenary celebration he had still liked the flutes and violins, but his viewpoint as to what instruments should be played in a church was steadily altering. For this no doubt young Maestro Perosi was partly responsible. The Bishop had known this musical genius since Treviso days when the young man had been a student there. He had sent young Perosi to Germany for his advanced musical education and now he was back in Mantua in charge of music at the cathedral.

He was still young and temperamental, and people found him sometimes eager to discuss his music and sometimes so wrapped

up in his art that he did not even know they were talking to him. His friends said he did not belong in the present age at all, but in the Middle Ages. He had a great devotion to Bishop Sarto and never addressed him in any other way than "my Bishop."

In 1892 Pope Leo XIII celebrated his fiftieth year as bishop, and among those invited to Rome for the occasion was Bishop Sarto of Mantua. By this time he was no stranger to Rome; he knew the city well and was well known there.

Each time he went, he returned more enthusiastic about the Holy Father. "I can't tell you," he wrote to Don Sartori at Treviso, "what an impression the visits to the Pope make on me. I can say without exaggeration that when first I saw him in 1879 he was gay and cheerful and he still is, though today he is at times grave and sad. Not the smallest matter escapes him. Carefully he considers the whole Church and also the individual diocese and the people in it. He shows so clearly that the true head who rules the Church must not divide the rule. . . . May God grant he lives not only to the years of Peter but beyond them."

In 1891 Cardinal Agostini, who had been Cardinal Patriarch of Venice since 1878, died and no successor was immediately chosen. But the following spring Cardinal Parocchi called the attention of the Pope to the Bishop of Mantua as his possible successor.

The Holy Father was in immediate agreement with this suggestion, for he had watched Bishop Sarto work at Mantua under incredible difficulties and had seen the results of his remarkable success there. He was aware that under Bishop Sarto's rule Mantua had become almost a model diocese. He knew his reputation for wide charity and equally wide learning.

A rumor of the possibility of his being made a cardinal came to the ears of Bishop Sarto and made him smile. "Patriarchates are not dishes for me to eat," he said. "But of course people love to talk and wonder and everyone is free to build castles in the air."

But the rumors continued. At last disturbed by the gossip, Bishop Sarto, during a visit to Rome, asked Cardinal Rampolla with some anxiety if there were any danger that he would be moved from his see. The Secretary of State assured the worried prelate that all this was merely talk, and he went away no longer troubled.

He did not remain untroubled for long. Two months later the patriarchate of Venice was offered to him directly. He tried to refuse it. It was only when he was told that Pope Leo would be greatly disappointed if he did not accept that he did so, though with great reluctance. He asked that the matter be kept secret for a time in case reconsideration was possible.

The Venetian paper, *Voce della Verità*, published a strong hint regarding his appointment, and a few days later was able to announce it as a fact. The news made Mantua happy because of its honor to their Bishop, Treviso because it would bring him nearer to them again, Venice because it was felt that he already belonged to them. In fact, everyone was happy about his rise in office — excepting the Patriarch-elect himself.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### *The Cardinal Patriarch*

**I**N the early summer of 1893 Bishop Sarto went to Rome to receive the high honors awaiting him. He was accompanied by Don Bressan, his secretary, and representatives of the clergy of Veniee and of other cities where he had been priest. From Riese came two priests and Signor Parolin, his sister Teresa's husband.

On his first evening in Rome he had a brief audience with the Holy Father who explained that he wished the Patriarch-elect to remain in Mantua as Bishop until he took actual possession of his Venetian see. In addition he told him that he wished to create him a Cardinal before consecrating him as Patriarch of Veniee. Thus, he explained, everyone would realize that the honor was bestowed as a reward for personal ability and accomplishment.

On June 12th, at ten o'clock in the morning, Bishop Sarto, clad in red robes, went with his master of ceremonies to the palace of Cardinal Paroechi. There he waited until a carriage arrived from the Vatican where at a secret consistory he, with four other prelates, was created cardinal.

During the day his desk at the Lombardy Seminary where he was staying was piled high with telegrams of eongratulation. The next day he devoted to offieial visits, and on June 14th presented himself to Cardinal Rampolla at five in the afternoon in the throne room where, in open consistory, he was to receive the biretta. All those who had eome in his party were with him.

On this occasion Pope Leo read an allocution in Latin. "In the stormy times in which We live," he said, "We feel We must have strong aids to stand at Our side. . . . We have been happy to know how well you have directed the Church in your see. We are happy in you, beloved son, who has so well ruled as a true shepherd the church at Mantua, and We have decided to raise

you to the Patriarchate of Venice. . . . There will be open to your zeal and your charity a wider field of endeavor. . . . Our wish for you is that this high office which is given you will help to bring to maturity the richest fruits of your activity. May God give his blessing to this wish, and may His grace go with you, as We by the apostolic blessing pray for you."

In the group watching this ceremony was Signor Parolin, and, when it was over, he asked the Holy Father's blessing for his mother-in-law. "Ah," said Pope Leo, turning to Cardinal Sarto, "then your mother is still living. I am happy to hear that," and he ordered that his blessing be telegraphed to her.

Next day Cardinal Sarto went to the Vatican to take the oath in the Sistine Chapel. That day in secret consistory he was made Patriarch of Venice and given his titular church — San Bernardo alle Terme. He had been waiting, according to rules as he thought, in the ante-room outside the consistory hall, not realizing that as a cardinal he was supposed to enter without waiting to be called. In some way word spread among the cardinals within the hall that he was ill. As he was talking quietly with Don Bressan, the new Cardinal was surprised to see a gentleman, slightly out of breath from his haste, come up and ask if he needed the services of a doctor. "I am His Holiness' physician and he has sent me to ask if I can be of help."

"I feel very well," said Cardinal Sarto. "I was simply waiting to be called."

A Noble Guard who had accompanied the doctor explained matters, and, as they all began to laugh, the doctor asked, "Then you really don't need any help from me at all?"

"Well," the Cardinal said, hesitantly, "perhaps a glass of Marsala," and to his great surprise, for he had spoken in jest, it was quickly brought. He drank a little. "Now I feel very well indeed," he told the doctor and hastened to the consistory hall.

On the evening of June 21st Cardinal Sarto took formal possession of his Roman church. With the apostolic protonotaries, his master of ceremonies and a Noble Guard, all in formal dress, he was escorted to the door of the church and there received by the

Abbot General of the Cistercians and the monks of his order who were in charge of the church. The Abbot, followed by priests and brothers, escorted him to the high altar where the Cardinal knelt at a *prie-dieu* while the antiphon *Ecce sacerdos magnus* was sung. The papal bull was read aloud and the monks made the customary obediences, the Abbot embracing the Cardinal, the rest kissing his hand.

The Abbot made an address of welcome, giving a brief history of the Church of San Bernardo. Once the famous Baths of Diocletian, the great edifice had been built by the labor of forty thousand Christians brought as slaves from all parts of the Roman Empire, their single crime that they were believers in Christ. And, said the Abbot, the building they had erected remained a witness to their faith. Over the centuries a convent of Cistercians had been built there and among the buildings they had erected was a chapel dedicated to Our Lady.

In answer to the Abbot's address, Cardinal Sarto expressed his happiness that this was to be his church in Rome. He had three reasons to be happy over its selection: it had been built by the hands of martyrs; it was dedicated to Saint Bernard, and it was in the care of the Cistercians: "The martyrs will remind me of unbreakable faith, of the necessity of fighting for that faith even to the shedding of blood if necessary." He spoke of the shrine of Our Lady which was there. "I have always had a great devotion to Our Blessed Mother," he said, "and I have always felt that I grew up under her protection. The shrine near Riese which I love is hers. My church at Mantua is under her protection. And now, I am going to Venice where at every street-corner, on every island, there are monuments to her."

On June 23rd Cardinal Sarto came home again to Mantua. His train stopped at various stations and everywhere crowds gathered to welcome him. At Mantua they were overwhelming, and a roar of welcome greeted him as he stepped from the train to the wide station platform. He greeted those who had gathered at the station, and then entering the carriage of Senator di Bagno was driven to the cathedral, many carriages following his. The

procession went very slowly, for the crowds lining the streets on both sides were great. As the Cardinal's carriage went through the Corso he waved to the cheering thousands and blessed them. There was one brief disturbance along the route: a group of anti-clerical youths shouted, "Abbasso," as the Cardinal passed by, but louder shouts silenced them.

The cathedral was brilliantly lighted as he entered. A *Te Deum* was sung and afterward he blessed the people with the Blessed Sacrament. Then, in a short speech that showed his deep emotion, he thanked them all and went on to his palace, where he went to a balcony to bless the people once again. Long after he had gone back into the palace the crowds roamed the streets. "It had almost the appearance of the good old times relived," said the diocesan paper of the city.

Next morning the Cardinal received calls from prominent citizens of Mantua. Five days later he celebrated his first Pontifical Mass as cardinal in the cathedral.

Cardinal Sarto had learned before leaving Rome that he might remain for some time in Mantua, for his elevation to the Patriarchate had met with an obstacle, quite unexpected in his case, though the Pope had warned him of possible trouble. The Italian government was refusing to grant him an *exequatur* — the official recognition necessary before he could occupy his see. His expected promotion had been announced to the authorities well ahead of his elevation, but the government now claimed this was not enough: the King's permission should have been asked since he now held the ancient right of the doges of Venice to nominate a Patriarch.

At the consistory in Rome the Holy Father had discussed with Cardinal Sarto the possibility of this difficulty, and suggested that immediately on receipt of the bull he ask Venice for this recognition himself. If by some chance it was refused, then the Vatican would take the matter up from a legal point of view. Meantime, he would send the Cardinal the Vatican opinion as to government rights in the matter.

It was not a new problem, for the same objections had been raised in other places; at one time no less than thirty dioceses were vacant because government approval was delayed, for one excuse or the other. In his first pastoral to his new archdiocese, Cardinal Sarto made clear the reason he would have to remain temporarily in Mantua instead of coming to Venice at once. His pastoral, as was to be expected from him, was gently worded. It spoke of the future rather than of the past or the present, and made it clear that it was the spiritual welfare of his people about which he was concerned, that he was not discouraged by the legal difficulties of his position. He voiced his great hope that these would soon be removed so that he could go with little delay to the scene of his future labors.

Meantime in Mantua he continued his usual work — confirming, preaching, visiting many parishes, spending hours in the confessional to help the priests. It was October before he could go home to Riese. His route led through towns which had known him in the past and in several of them his old parishioners gathered at the station to do him honor. At Tombolo the people completely forgot his new position and hailed him by his old title. "Don Giuseppe! Don Giuseppe!" they shouted, and his smiling face showed how happy it made him to hear that name again.

At Castelfranco another crowd was waiting when he stepped from the train to continue his journey to Riese by carriage. As the vehicle rolled smoothly along, he thought of the boy who had walked that road coming from school, his feet dusty, his shoes slung over his shoulders. Forty-five years had gone by since then. Along the road the plane tree trunks were thicker; he noted little other change. The one change was in himself.

The bells of Riese rang out when word sped that Cardinal Sarto's carriage was in sight. The whole town was assembled in the square, and cheers of "Don Beppo!" mingled with "Long live the Patriarch!" The carriage stopped at the church and the Cardinal went in to say a prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. Coming out to the square again, he listened patiently while a little girl timorously recited verses in his honor. He answered her

gently, in words which she and the children around her could understand.

Then, between two lines of people, he went to the little house where he was born and where his mother was waiting for him. Signora Sarto was eighty years old and too much of an invalid to come to the church to greet her son with the rest of Riese.

They embraced with all their old affection and he sat down close beside her invalid chair. Her eyes examined him carefully to see if he looked well and she nodded as if satisfied. Then the old peasant woman, who had spent all her life in Riese since coming there as a young bride, and her son, a prince of the Church, sat quietly together and talked.

It was pleasant to sit there in the old comfortable chair, so much more comfortable for Giuseppe Sarto than a throne could ever be. It was pleasant to be called "Beppo" again in his own home and to know that for several days he could stay here and shut out the world of politics and government quarrels.

He saw his mother dressed just as he had always remembered her, in a high-necked dress with a white kerchief crossed over her breast, around her waist a neat black silk apron. Her blue eyes had grown faded with the years but her glance was still sharp as he talked with her of the family and her daughters in Mantua and of her grandson, Don Battista Parolin, now a curate at Possagno.

In the morning Cardinal Sarto celebrated Mass at the Church of San Matteo, and in his sermon he spoke of his childhood, of his First Communion, his first Mass as a young priest, all the memories that linked him with this, his spiritual home. Before he had finished everyone was in tears, including the Cardinal.

Afterward he walked about the town, talking with old friends. He spent some time at the *Trattoria delle due Spade* next door to his home, where the silvered wooden swords swung still a little crookedly and seemingly untarnished by time. He told the Parolins that their daughter Amalia, who was visiting her aunts at the palace in Mantua, was becoming a fine cook under Rosa's expert tutelage; he liked to have his niece at the palace, for it

was pleasant to have young life in the house. When he learned from his sister Teresa that three children of the parish were to be baptized that day he offered to perform the ceremony, to the delight of the parents.

It was a lovely day in autumn and as Cardinal Sarto walked along he passed one triumphal arch after the other erected in his honor. Before his own home he found still another, placed there since he had left in the morning. A scroll swinging from it was lettered with the words:

To His Eminence  
Giuseppe Sarto  
Risen from a simple son of the people  
To a prince of the Church.  
At their first greeting of him,  
Adorned with the purple,  
The village greets him  
With acclaim and joy.

In the afternoon he gave Benediction at the village church, and in the evening the whole place was gay with lanterns and bright with fireworks. From the balcony of the rectory the Cardinal watched with a happy smile, waving gaily as people passed. When the display was over he walked to his home and had hardly entered when he heard outside the murmur of people, calling with one voice, "Long live His Eminence!" He went to the door, thanked them once again, blessed them once more before they went away. The little town was soon dark and silent and the Cardinal and his mother could be alone together again for a little while.

This time Signora Sarto had a request to make of her son. Would he put on his Cardinal's robes and let her see him in them? She was no longer able to travel, and she knew she could never go to Venice to see him clad in them. But it was what she wanted most in the world. He agreed and went into the other room to change.

In a little while he came out again in his scarlet, the *cappa magna*, the heavy gold cross, the red cap on his head. He stood before her and she could only sit and look at him speechlessly while the tears ran down her cheeks. He blessed her slowly, his words very clear so that she could hear them. Then he stooped suddenly for he thought she was falling from her chair, but as quickly he realized that she was trying to kneel for his blessing. In all the glory of his episcopal robes he pushed her gently back in her invalid chair and kissed her. Then he stood back, smiled his gay smile at her and wiped away her tears. "Mama," he said, "don't you think I look handsome in red?"

The next morning he said Mass at the shrine of Our Lady of Cendrole, and in the afternoon bade good-by to the little town, and last of all to his mother. He was already at the door when she called him back. Then, although there was evidently something she had intended to say to him, she could only repeat, "Good-by, Beppi. Good-by, Beppi." Her deep eyes seemed trying to tell him something that her lips could not say.

On his way back he stopped at Castelfranco to see his long-ago teacher, Don Gaetano Marcon, now old and ill. For an hour and more he and the delighted old man reminisced of *ginnasio* days. By seven that evening the Cardinal was back in Mantua.

Four months after his visit to Riese the Cardinal received word of his mother's serious illness, and on Candlemas Day, 1894, word that she had died, peacefully, in her sleep. He could not go to her funeral, but he had a high Requiem Mass for her soul sung in the Cathedral and alms distributed in her name and to her memory among the poor of Mantua and Venice.

It would have amazed Margherita Sarto to know that these things were being done in her honor. Her son, however, thought it only her due. She had lived her long life honestly and nobly, and the large family she had brought up by her own efforts had all grown up to be good men and women. In all the years her son knew that she had never for a moment lost courage or faith. It was she who had given him the chance to continue his schooling, who had made it possible for him to become a priest. And through

the years he had always been aware, even when distant from her, of her love reaching out to him, of her strength giving him strength. He himself wrote the epitaph for the stone over her grave:

Margherita Sanson, the exemplary wife, the prudent woman, the incomparable mother, who on May 2, 1852, lost her husband Giambattista Sarto. In sad and in happy days she kept brave-hearted courage and devotion, raised as good Christians her nine children, and crowned a life of toil and sacrifice by her death on February 2, 1894, in her eighty-first year.

Cardinal Giuseppe Sarto and his brother and sisters pray for everlasting peace for their dear parents.

Early in 1894 Cardinal Sarto wrote to his friend Monsignor Jacuzzi, "The matter of Venice is, I am afraid, getting darker and more mysterious." He was still at Mantua and the palace of the Patriarch of Venice was still empty. Outstanding jurists of the Church and the government were still arguing the matter of the *exequatur*. In Venice countless prayers — both private prayers and public prayers in the churches — were said that their Patriarch might come to them soon. A plea was sent to King Umberto, appealing to him to help remove whatever difficulties stood in the way. The King assured the Cardinal directly of his regret that he, being merely a constitutional monarch, could do nothing.

In January a great pilgrimage went from Venice to San Pietro di Castello, the home of the earliest patriarchs of Venice, and prayers were offered for the Cardinal's intentions. In May a rumor went about that Cardinal Sarto had given up the matter as hopeless and was going to Rome to head one of the Congregations there. Promptly the Cardinal announced that this must be a joke or a misguided story. There was no doubt that some wished for such a solution — "but not I, surely. After living for fifty-nine years as a free bird of the woods, I have no desire to be put in a cage."

In May a large meeting of protest against the government's

delay took place in Venice, people gathering at the Santo Cristoforo bridge by hundreds. Young and old, priests, entire families, came to voice their protest against the exile of their Patriarch. After peaceful speeches, the crowd went quietly home, still shouting, "Long live Patriarch Sarto! Long live Venice!"

The matter finally reached the legislature, and there Prime Minister Crispi had the effrontery to declare, "The Italian government wants no quarrel with the Catholic Church. It has always respected the Church to which the great majority of Italians belong." But he did not suggest granting the *exequatur*.

That summer Cardinal Sarto wrote to friends at Treviso, "Did this not concern a principle which must be firmly upheld, I believe the Pope would meet my own wish — to stay in Mantua, where, instead of floating around in the air as I am doing, I would be accomplishing some good."

At Venice the protests continued all summer and when it began to look as if every possible means of reconciliation had been exhausted, the government suddenly yielded. Word was received from Rome on September 7, 1894, that the *exequatur* had been granted, and on October 12th Cardinal Sarto received his official appointment.

Without doubt one of the great reasons for the long and inexplicable delay was the hostility to the Church on the part of Prime Minister Crispi of Italy. He had spoken openly and more than once of the necessity of destroying the "great enemy," and had prophesied that the Vatican would fall under the State's "vivifying hammer." Regarding the Pope he had said that the State must "wage a relentless war against him — to the knife."

These policies had been carried out by the Italian government: in the schools religious teaching was suspended; all charitable works were placed under the auspices of the laity; revenues were refused to bishops appointed by the Pope; rights of patronage over many bishoprics were claimed by the government. The Patriarch of Venice knew he was facing the "relentless warfare" that Crispi had described.

Cardinal Sarto held his last service as resident Bishop in the

Mantua cathedral on November 11th, and made ready to depart. His three sisters had gone ahead to get his new home ready for him; with them went Amalia Parolin, this time to stay, for there would be need of extra help now in this new home, even larger than the Mantuan palace.

The Cardinal wrote a letter to the Mayor of Venice, apprising him of his coming, and expressing the hope he would have the Mayor's support in his new work. After all, he said, they both had the same objective — the welfare of the people — and there could be no real conflict between their powers since God was the author of both religion and society.

The Mayor answered promptly. His Eminence would be very welcome, he wrote: "The obligations of the government seem to me to be so sharply set apart from those of the Church that there need not be any quarrel between the two, especially when Your Eminence's letter is expressed in terms of such noble moderation. On our side we will act in a loyal manner, with harmony between the two rules growing out of mutual respect. . . . May your stay in our city be a happy and lengthy one."

It was a guarded letter and parts of it no doubt open to several interpretations, but it was pleasant and polite in tone.

The Cardinal made his last solemn Mass in Mantua the occasion for the reading of a pastoral letter in which he outlined his future program simply: "I am and I shall be ready in the future to be the man of God who speaks to you of His might and power, who tries to lead you to Him by love, and who, if you grow faithless to Him, will seek to bring you back. I shall hold to justice, piety, love and patience; I will fight the good fight for the faith as I have sworn to do, and with the help of Heaven shall keep my own office pure and without blame as long as I live."

Next in the letter came his farewell to Mantua. "Oh, Mantua, how can I speak without emotion of my nine years as your friend? How can I leave you without feeling sorrow at the thought of no longer sharing with you all that we have so long shared?"

On his clergy and his seminarians and all the faithful of Mantua he urged greater faith and confidence in God: "Close your

ears to those who promise much and do little, and do not forget the warning comes from one who has had a share not only in your joy but in your grief, who has loved you deeply and will always love you."

The rest of the pastoral was addressed entirely to the Venetians: "In these days men are trying to cause dissension even among the servants of God. The necessary thing is to speak or work together. . . . Liberalism always preaches love and virtue, as if it were love when a man lets a wolf tear his sheep to pieces, and as if virtue were the cleverness which is in reality repudiated by God. They will call those who oppose them papists, clericals, backsliders, intransigents. You should be proud of that and not in the least mind their insults."

Last he addressed the clergy of his new see. "How can we," he asked, "be silent when we see generations growing up ignorant of the simplest truths of the faith and of their duty to God, and drawn by their craving for knowledge and their boundless love of freedom to consider crimes and trespasses as great deeds? It is true that it takes courage for a priest to oppose the men responsible, but did not God promise to protect him who stands up for Him? And the fight must not be halfway but bold; not back of closed doors, but in the open. Do not despair if your toil does not seem to show any fruit today, for God measures the service of His servant not by the greatness of the accomplishment but by the good will and the effort."

It was a brave and uncompromising document and it drew much criticism from the opposition. One liberal paper in Venice said that by writing it Sarto had announced his stand as one of clerical intransigence.

At four o'clock on the morning of November 19th, while the city still slumbered, the Cardinal and his secretary, Don Bressan, left Mantua. When their train passed through Tombolo crowds awaited at the station to welcome them; more crowds awaited at Treviso, where the Cardinal was to stay for a few days as guest of the seminary.

Amid the pleasant and familiar surroundings of his old seminary he managed to forget for a little while the cares ahead and to relax in the company of the seminarians and professors and of his old friend Monsignor Jacuzzi. For those few days he became more the collegian of twenty years before than a prince of the Church. He was happy and witty and it was obvious that he was thoroughly enjoying himself.

The train on which he was traveling from Treviso to Venice was a long one with many carriages, for seven hundred persons were accompanying him. When he and Monsignor Jacuzzi and Don Bressan stepped from the train in Venice he found that great preparations had been made in honor of his coming. He had dreaded this reception and said to Rosa, "I only wish I could arrive locked in a suit case, so that no one would see me coming."

A boat from the Royal Arsenal was awaiting him. He asked to be taken first to the nearest church, which happened to be the chapel of a Carmelite convent. Here he offered a prayer of thanksgiving and a plea for help; he thanked God that at last He had opened to him the sheepfold from which he had so long been barred, and asked His blessing on his new work.

In the boat again, he passed along the Grand Canal, lined on either side with cheering crowds. From hundreds of little gondolas and from the bridges came greetings, palace windows and balconies were lavishly decorated with flags and garlands. Every bell in Venice rang a welcome.

Down the Grand Canal went the craft, many boats following it. Cardinal Sarto stood at the bow, erect and dramatic in his purple, surrounded by naval officers in full dress uniform, on his right the cross-bearer, on his left his Vicar General. As the boat went by the City Hall he saw no flags, no carpet spread, no people at the windows and doors. It stood out as the one undecorated building along the route, and the Cardinal looked at it sadly for a long moment, its closed shutters, its hostile air.

Such a crowd waited at the landing place that it was almost impossible for the guards to open a way for the Cardinal to walk to his palace over the ceremonial carpet spread for him. To his

delight, even the soldiers on guard saluted, and he returned their salutes with a blessing. In a few moments he appeared again at a wide window; holding one hand on his heart, with the other he blessed the cheering crowds.

In the afternoon a large reception took place in the great throne hall of the palace, with its chandelier of Venetian glass and its fine furnishings upholstered in red. There the Patriarch occupied his place of honor on the throne. The visitors were mostly directors of lay organizations and members of religious orders. Among them were many important personages — Admiral Canevaro; Commander Santamaria; the King's representative; the judge of the Court of Appeals; the president of the university; the mayor or *Sindaco*, Signor Selvatico.

Many gifts were presented to the Patriarch — a great purse, silver candlesticks, a crucifix of gold and ivory, a finely wrought chalice. And a committee informed him that a gondola was being built for him, but that owing to the elaborate decorations, the artists who were at work on it would not be able to have it ready for some time.

Rosa and her sisters had been busy all day receiving in the Cardinal's name the many visitors who came to offer congratulations, and their niece Amalia had been in charge of the visitors' book where thousands had come to inscribe their names during the two weeks since the palace had been opened. That night there were music and fireworks in the streets, the ringing of church bells, and all Venice was illuminated. The Patriarch was at last at home and his city rejoiced.

The palace to which Giuseppe Cardinal Sarto had come to live was a white marble building less than fifty years old, with a small square before it. Its reception rooms were large and elaborately decorated, but the other rooms were small and held little in the way of fine furniture or good paintings. Even so, to the Cardinal's sisters and to him, too, it was a fine and beautiful place, although it was not their idea of a home.

That evening with Don Bressan beside him, the Cardinal made

a tour of the palace. He found that Rosa had seen to it that his own two rooms were furnished exactly as he wished. His study contained a plain writing table with plenty of space for books and papers, and a comfortable chair. Over the desk was hung a painting of Our Lady and the Child, next to which he planned to hang the photograph of his mother which had been taken especially for him some years before her death. The bedroom was as he wanted it — a plain bed, a dresser, a *prie-dieu* with a crucifix over it and a gilt framed picture of Jesus in the manger, an old favorite of his.

He looked around his new quarters thinking that here he could work and here he could pray. The rest of the great building was for the public and for their sake he was glad of its spaciousness. Of the three chapels in the palace, he chose the smallest for his own use.

For the Cardinal the most comforting thing in his new life was that he would still have with him Rosa and others of his family. With them to look after his simple needs he felt comfortable; where they were was home. They still cooked for him and bought the household food as they had done for years, their heads covered with shawls like those of the other women of Venice with whom they mingled at the markets. When her uncle learned that Amalia had cooked his first meal at the palace, he told her that even Rosa could do no better.

He often told his sisters not to work so hard, not to make such efforts to please him. But it was really not very hard to please their brother, even in a palace where there were many visitors, where so much had to be kept clean. Yes, it was easy to please Beppo, thought Rosa, remembering that when she and her sisters had first come to keep house for him at Mantua she had asked him anxiously, "Beppo, what shall I cook for you now that you have become a bishop?"

He had smiled at her worried look. "Just what you always have, Rosina, so much and no more." And she knew the answer would be the same now that he was a cardinal.

As they had done before, his sisters worked for him purely

out of love and received in return their own maintenance. He gave them no regular allowance, nor did they expect one. They knew he would not let them want for anything or ever forget to supply their needs, any more than he would those of the poor who looked to him for help.

The morning after his arrival in Venice the Cardinal made his solemn entrance into the Cathedral of St. Mark, entering under a baldaquin carried by important laymen of the city. A greeting of welcome was extended by Monsignor Zarpellon, at one time his professor at Padua. When it was over the Cardinal arose and thanked him and, since both the speeches had been in Latin, turned when he had finished to the crowds who had been listening, and preached a sermon in Italian, a message of affection, of his great hope of working with all his heart and soul for them. He spoke of the duty of a bishop to his flock and how he must especially care for the poor, that it must be considered no mere phrase that the riches of a bishop are sometimes called the riches of the poor.

"From this moment," he told the great congregation, "I gather you all to my heart. I love you with a strong and supernatural love, desiring only the good of your souls. For you are all my family. . . . My heart and my love are yours and for your sake I ask nothing but the same love in return. . . . You who have zeal for the things of God, work with me, come to my assistance, and God will give us the grace that is necessary to achieve our ends."

Two days later the foreign consuls in Venice came to call on the Cardinal. They represented twenty countries and were introduced by the Austrian consul who was dean of the group. No doubt some of the visitors had arrived with a rather supercilious attitude toward the new Cardinal, for his humble beginnings were well known. But his gift of repartee, his easy manner and his knowledge of the world quickly changed their opinion of him. The French consul later reported that the Cardinal's youthful appearance in spite of the snowy hair surprised him, but not more than

did the majestic expression on his face. "His bearing," he said, "was that of a man at home in his post."

On the following day Mayor Selvatico came to call, bringing with him the good wishes of the government. On succeeding days the Patriarch returned the calls made on him and visited the hospital, where he talked to doctors and patients and spent a happy hour in the children's ward.

The archdiocese of Venice over which Cardinal Sarto now had complete and official charge, numbered over 160,000 souls, distributed over 45 parishes, with 275 priests serving them. The Patriarch had as suffragans nine other bishops throughout the archdiocese.

It was a very ancient diocese; its cathedral church had been in existence since 775. In former days the Council of Venice had never spared funds for enriching the cathedral and the chapel of the Palace of the Doges, both of which in time became marvels of artistic beauty. But now the spending of the money even to keep them in repair was in secular hands, and little was done.

Venice was no longer Queen of the Seas; the glory which had been hers was gone, and she was now merely an Italian province. But the history and the beauty remained — the canals and lagoons, the lovely palaces, the wonderful paintings and mosaics and statues in churches and museums, and especially the great basilica, to which in 1094 the body of St. Mark, its patron, hidden for hundreds of years, had been brought. One of its greatest treasures was the episcopal chair of the saint, brought, said tradition, to Venice by Egyptian traders who had been driven to that city by a storm.

Cardinal Sarto rose early each day, always celebrating his Mass at five o'clock. Then Rosa brought him the usual cup of black coffee. His next meal was at noon — meat and vegetables, fruit and a glass of wine. Guests were often invited to this meal which he called breakfast but which was really the Cardinal's dinner.

As the months went by there was seldom a day when there

were no guests at the Cardinal's table, and they came from every walk of life. The meals were pleasant, for the Cardinal had a good fund of stories and was excellent at imitating the dialects of Italy. The conversation was so good that those at the table did not notice the extreme simplicity of the fare. Occasionally peasants from Riese, on trips to the great market at Venice, came to call on Don Sarto, and then it was a real feast over which he presided.

He had a personal servant now — he had been told a cardinal must be so attended — and he called him a "*tipo famoso*." Giovanni Gornati could neither read nor write and he certainly knew less than nothing of what a valet to the Patriarch of Venice ought to know. But he was good and honest and he loved the *padrone* more than he did anyone in the world.

The cardinal now had an income that to him seemed very large compared with any he had received in the past. It amounted to about five thousand dollars a year, and what he did with that sum would have amazed the most careful accountant. At the seminary he paid the expenses of ten poor students, a hundred dollars a year for each, a fact known only to his steward and the rector of the seminary. On the first day of each month his steward gave him a list of necessary expenditures; what was left went to the poor. During the first week of the month the Cardinal was happy, but by the end of that time the purse was getting empty and the Cardinal's spirits drooped. Sometimes, when pressing needs were brought to him, he was troubled that he had so little personal property to sell or pawn — his pastoral ring, his pectoral cross, his watch, his gondola. There was in Venice a Jewish money-lender to whom the Cardinal went in times of financial distress who, proud to have so distinguished a client, put a high valuation on the articles and charged him a very low interest.

The Cardinal had been delighted when, soon after his election, the valet of the late Cardinal Agostini came to him with an offer to sell his late master's *cappa magna* — the red cape which a cardinal wears on solemn occasions. He bought it for twenty dollars, happy at the savings.

The violet cincture he had worn as bishop could now no longer

be used but had to be exchanged for one of red. The Cardinal had Giovanni take the old one to a dyer, hoping to save money there too. The attempt was not successful, and, when the dejected dyer returned it, it was a grayish color, much nearer white than red.

Both looked at it sadly for a moment, and then the Cardinal sighed. "Well, I suppose I shall have to buy a new one. But don't feel too badly about it. Maybe it is better so. You see I am getting closer to the papacy. I shall save it for that," and they both laughed heartily at the pleasantry.

For some time there was much grumbling in his household because he continued to carry in his vest pocket the metal watch attached to a black cord, which he had had for years and which had cost him the equivalent of two dollars. One day a wealthy parishioner presented him with a fine gold watch and urged him to carry it instead. He agreed and the household was gratified each time the Cardinal pulled the wonderful new timepiece from his pocket. But some months later to their dismay he was drawing out the old watch again.

"Isn't your gold watch working well?" demanded Rosa, all but certain of what was coming.

He looked at her serenely. Oh, it was a wonderful watch. It kept fine time. But the day before he had learned of two families in really dreadful need, and so he had sold it, "for a considerable sum," he said firmly, to impress her with his business acumen and to draw attention from what he had done.

Not only the poor benefited from his charity. Sometimes those not in a slum but in a palace needed money and came to him. He showed no discrimination in his giving; if one was in real need that was enough. Once a politician who had often abused the Cardinal in speeches and in the press, was reduced to utter want; with no one to help him, he called on the Cardinal and was promptly given aid. Rosa had learned long ago to be forehanded about such things as her brother's linen and clothing. She kept them locked up, and doled them out to him; otherwise he was likely to give them away too.

The people of Venice soon learned that they had a Cardinal who meant what he said in his first sermon to them: he would not keep himself shut away from them. As at Mantua the door of his palace was open to all who wanted to see him, rich or poor, important or not. He had let it be known that he would hold an audience from ten to two daily.

Walking continued to be the Cardinal's chief relaxation. People grew accustomed to see him walking along the streets with his strong stride, but ready at any time to stop and talk to them. The children loved him, for his pockets always held something for them; at first it had been only candy but after a while he carried a number of small coins in one pocket; the poor children who ran up to him got candy and a coin as well. His especial delight was the big Christmas party held in the great hall of the palace where the poor children of Venice came for presents and he spoke a few words to them.

He liked best the poorer sections of the city, where the mothers came to talk to him and told him their problems. The fishermen and gondoliers were his friends. They called him "*il buono Cardinale*" and gathered about him in groups. A stranger might have thought there had been an accident which caused a curious crowd to gather, but the people of Venice knew the Cardinal was in the midst of the group. An old gondolier watched one day until the tall figure had disappeared, then he said to the crowd in general, "There goes the Patriarch, going to do some good. God bless him."

There were so many places he wanted to visit during the time at his disposal — among them the hospitals and the prisons. To the latter places he went more than once to hear confessions, leaving, said one of his old friends, the ninety and nine to find the one who had strayed. Sometimes he said Mass there and he always left a small token for each prisoner.

When he had the time he liked to walk on the Lido, going there in the little *vaporetto* which cost two soldi each way. There he paced up and down, reading his breviary, lifting his head to

feel the good Adriatic wind, and before he went home making a brief visit to the Church of Santa Maria Elisabetta.

Occasionally he used the handsome gondola which had been presented to him not long after he came to Venice. When it was brought to his palace all the men who had worked on it came too, and the Cardinal admired the vessel and congratulated them on their beautiful work. But he did not use it very often, usually when he went to pay calls on the rich and the nobility in their great palaces, where he was as much at ease as with the poor in the street. When his household urged him to use his gondola oftener, he shook his head and laughed at them. "Always taking a gondola — being carried from place to place. Why do you suppose the Lord gave Venice all the fine ground it has and why did he give me these strong legs if not to walk with?"

Soon after his arrival, it became a saying among Venetians that the whole city was his friend, and this was very nearly true. The editor of *La Difesa*, the diocesan paper, and Count Grimani, a distinguished lawyer, were two close friends who aided Cardinal Sarto in organizing Catholic lay efforts, and especially to help better the conditions of the poor caught between the quarrels of capital and labor. With the Mayor he continued on good terms; at least there had been no open conflict. This did not mean, however, that the Cardinal ever yielded in his firm convictions. His first pastoral had made it clear that he would not and later ones confirmed it. The crux of his statements was always: "We must fight this enthronement of man in the place of God. The solution of this as of all problems lies in the Church and her teaching."

When necessary he could act and act quickly. In 1895 the Freemasons celebrated as a public occasion the twenty-fifth anniversary of the fall of Rome. This the Cardinal felt was a new insult to the successor of Peter and a roused Sarto spoke. He ordered that for three days in each church throughout the arch-diocese the Blessed Sacrament should be exposed, at an hour chosen by the pastor, and the *Miserere* sung. And he urged the

faithful to go to Communion on at least one of the three days and to make an offering, however small, to the Holy Father.

As a rule, however, he was expert at avoiding trouble without deviating in the least from papal policy. Even though the government of the city made it clear that its opposition was not to him personally but to the principles he represented, he had to be always on the alert, knowing that aggressiveness or impatience on his part could result in trouble, even in a rupture of relations. And then, too, he was a patriotic man and loved his Italy with all his heart; he was unhappy at her divided condition and did not want to add to her difficulties. Like many others, he had hoped that with Austria's withdrawal there would be harmony between Church and State, and he grieved that there was little, almost none.

The year 1894 had marked the eight hundredth anniversary of the building of St. Mark's. However, since the Patriarch had not been able to take possession of his see at that time, the celebration was postponed and took place instead in April of 1895.

The day of the feast brought great crowds to the basilica, where the flag of Saint Mark and the national flag flew in the sunlight of a lovely spring day. Many prelates took part in the great procession and the Patriarch preached the sermon. He spoke of the ancient fame and triumphs and sorrows of St. Mark's and of Venice, and how interwoven they had ever been: "The fleets of Venice sailed on every sea. Art blossomed, until came the day when, in 1796, under the thunder of cannon, the flag of Saint Mark was lowered from its proud height. And as it slowly descended, the people of Venice seized it and bore it to their patron's own altar — and here it still lies." Three times during his sermon the people who were listening could not restrain themselves and broke into loud applause.

Earlier in the spring Cardinal Sarto had announced the beginning of a series of pastoral visits, and he entered upon them in May. He tried to keep these as simple as, though with considerable effort even there, he had succeeded in keeping them in Mantua. He wanted only to go to the churches, hear confessions,

preach, visit hospitals, listen to the instruction of the children. But he found this difficult, and often had to submit to celebrations in his honor. He bore them pleasantly when he could not avoid them, for he did not want to hurt his people's feelings.

When he preached in his own cathedral it was always crowded, filled an hour before Mass began. When he entered the pulpit it could be noted that the people drew forward, as if to be nearer to him, and then there was complete silence as the first clear words were spoken.

The Patriarch stood erect in the pulpit, his clergy on his right in the sanctuary, on his left the symbols of his office, the crozier and the mitre. His expression was gentle and full of affection as he looked out over his people. His snow-white hair was still very thick; above it the red cap was in striking contrast and under it the deep blue eyes were luminous. Everything he said was heard distinctly, not only because he spoke very clearly and with resonance, but also because of the utter silence of the congregation. A visitor who came to St. Mark's to hear him for the first time, watched in amazement: "When an audience of Venetians remains so silent, it is surely a mighty spirit which has such an extraordinary effect," he said afterward. And there was no doubt that visitors as well as citizens of Venice expected fine sermons. The Patriarch took a less serious view of oratory: "If the faithful listener has had little or no religious instruction and does not know the truths of his faith, of what use can sermons be? Note how our good people listen to a missioner who has learned to expound simply — and then watch how they stream to the Sacraments. The most learned sermon will not accomplish that."

As cardinal, as when he had been bishop and pastor and curate, he devoted his most serious efforts to the religious instruction of children, often taking part in this himself in the cathedral. These instructions were given after the last Mass on Sunday, and they lasted three-quarters of an hour. On the high altar on each side of the crucifix two tall candles were lighted. The children were placed in the very center of the church, at first listening, then asking and answering questions. When the instruction

ended, several prayers were recited, and then, while the children marched in procession about the church, a hymn was sung.

Cardinal Sarto made similar rules for catechetical instructions for all his parishes and said that for each instructor there should be not more than twenty or less than twelve children. The *angioletti* — the very small ones — were to be especially instructed and simply taught, according to their understanding.

Through frequent conferences the Cardinal kept his priests reminded of their duties. He hated to see a priest careless about his dress. "Clothing and hat as well as demeanor and speech should show your holiness," he told them. He would not allow a biretta to be worn on the street. And he never stopped telling them that preachers must not take it for granted that their congregations were well instructed in the principles of their Faith; that there was too much oratory in sermons and not enough teaching; that there was no need of flowery discourses but a great need for simple talks on the faith and the Gospels.

Over and over, he especially urged them to remember that they were servants of God. If they planned to leave any money<sup>1</sup> they might have only to relatives, they were reminded that it was to the poor or to the welfare works of the Church that it might best be left, especially to asylums for children, for there it was always needed. He often suggested this to his people too: on those occasions when they wished to make a thank offering — at weddings or births or First Communions — he advised them to give it to those who cared for the children who had no one else to help them. "Even if people give their time to such good works," he wrote in an article in *La Difesa*, "there are still outlays for lights, for rents, for playthings." Each time he asked for such donations his own name headed the list, for somehow he always had a little money of his own for every appeal. His steward had finally asked the Cardinal to put himself on an allowance for charitable gifts, even though he knew that probably the only result would be that the episcopal ring would be pawned oftener.

It grieved the Cardinal sometimes that he had, in an emergency, sold his gold watch and could no longer raise money by

pawning it. He had another now but it was useless for that purpose. When a friend from Mantua, calling on him, asked the time, the Cardinal pulled from his pocket a beautiful timepiece.

"Well, that is certainly an improvement on the old metal one you used to carry," said the visitor. "But how does it happen this one is still with you?"

Cardinal Sarto smiled sadly. "Look at it carefully. The man who presented it to me unfortunately had the patriarchal arms engraved on it — see. And no one will take it in pawn."

All one had to do, said Rosa, half-irritatedly, half-proudly, was to stand at the door of the palace and wait till Beppo came in sight and then ask for something. However, she and Don Bressan knew that it was not always a gift of money that was wanted; no one would ever know how many the Cardinal sent away comforted by his words, how many he raised from despondency. Only those close to him knew of the effort involved in this continuous giving of himself.

"I haven't a thing left I could give you," the Cardinal said sadly to one caller, a Venetian, once wealthy but now in dire poverty. Then he remembered that someone had given him an ivory crucifix the week before and he pressed this on his guest. He was like the bishops of the early Church, said Don Bressan, who used to sell the holy vessels to feed the poor.

Only one thing bothered the Cardinal, and that was that he had not more to give. "I was poor in other places," he told Don Bressan sadly, "but here in Venice I am truly a beggar."

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### *Life in Venice*

BETWEEN Professor Ernesto Ravanello and Maestro Lorenzo Perosi, director of music at St. Mark's, there was a friendly rivalry for the Patriarch's favor. Sometimes all three met in the cathedral, the Cardinal taking his place in a front pew, the others each at an organ console where they played alternately compositions of their own. The Cardinal would sit quietly, his sensitive fingers sometimes moving with the rhythm of the music, his face quiet with the look of a man who is listening to what he loves.

One day, after the music was ended, the Cardinal said thoughtfully, "I am going to write a pastoral letter on the reform of church music." He caught the expression on his listeners' faces. "I know," he said with a wry smile, "it will go against the wishes of many of the faithful — and no doubt of the clergy too."

The letter, sent throughout the archdiocese in the summer of 1895, was a forceful and direct document. "Church music," wrote His Eminence, "ought to stimulate the faithful to meditation and prepare them to receive with greater fervor the fruits of grace. That is its only reason for existence. And it must rely on three factors to do this — holiness, artistic purity, and universality."

He discussed the wrong kind of church music, which he said was at the time in use everywhere, and, unfortunately, popular as well. He regretted that in some churches music was permitted simply because it was the work of a renowned composer but which was in no way in the spirit of the liturgy. Church music was not intended to entertain; it was to help people pray. From the churches of his archdiocese, the Cardinal said, he wished removed the frivolous, the commonplace, the trivial, the theatrical in music. Instead there should be heard Gregorian chant and polyphonic compositions like those of Palestrina, since these were

not only superior in musical technique but were imbued with faith. Such music best served to lift the minds and hearts of the listeners in prayer.

As for instruments, the organ was sufficient, but even this should be subordinate to the voice itself. From all choirs he hoped to see excluded drums, trumpets, bells, Turkish cymbals and whistles. He added cannily that Gregorian shortened a service and so protected people from weariness; in fact he knew that some people, because of the time taken up by lengthy preludes, instrumental interludes and vocal repetitions in the Credo and other sections, were forced to leave the church without assisting at the principal parts of the Mass.

One great need was the development of congregational singing — the simplest way to rouse people to the beauties of the liturgy. He wrote of his own delight when, in some church on a pastoral visit, he heard the congregation singing correctly the different portions of the Mass in plain chant and the Psalms and hymns at Sunday Vespers. He suggested that each diocese have a capable teacher, who would spend some time in each parish and train a few leaders as singers, and these in turn could train the rest of the congregation. "If only this music were taught better," he wrote, "the result would be to attract many to a deeper fulfillment of their religious duties."

He set up a commission, with Director Perosi and Professor Ravanello among its members, to study carefully the rules which the Congregation of Rites had issued on the subject in July of that year, and he gave orders that in the churches of his archdiocese no music for Mass or Vespers was to be sung or played which did not have the approval of his commission. "We shall try to prove to our clergy and our people," he told the commission, "that the liturgy must never be the modest handmaid of the music."

On Perosi fell much of the work, and also much of the animosity aroused by the new rules. But he knew that he had the Cardinal behind him in anything the commission advised and that gave him courage, although he realized that it was making

some estimable people very unhappy no longer to hear sopranos sing the *O Salutaris* to an air from *Faust* or a Creed that sounded like an aria from grand opera. The Cardinal consoled him by telling him such reforms must come slowly and the eager Perosi must be patient. To this spiritual son, whom he had known as a student at Treviso and whose musical education he had furthered by sending him to Germany to study under the great Dr. Haberl, the Cardinal was devoted. He called the young man the child of his soul and his heart and often invited him to the palace. That year young Maestro Perosi decided to begin study for the priesthood and Cardinal Sarto promised to ordain him when he was ready.

One thing that drew them together was a great pride in their country's past accomplishments in music and the other arts and a deep regret that today these were so little appreciated. "We have a wealth of the beautiful in our land," said the Cardinal one day. "We have a worthy and wonderful art which knew how to present sublime truths in the spirit of the Church. But modern Italy seems to have lost the receptivity and understanding for the language of this art."

"If only we could revivify it among the people and not have it appreciated only by the experts," said Perosi sadly.

The Cardinal agreed. "Especially music. The great composers created these wonderful harmonies which had to cross the Alps into Germany after we had forgotten them. There they were honored — and now they are beginning to come back across the Alps to us. But even yet we moderns do not recognize their true worth."

"And then too, of course," said Perosi, speaking out of his experience of the past months, "We have to listen to those who grow over-enthusiastic and who want to banish from our churches all music that is not Gregorian."

The Cardinal had listened to such over-effusive praise too. "An exaggerated idea," he said. "It is certainly unreasonable to assert that only primitive pictures fulfill requirements of religion and good taste. Of course that is true with regard to music too."

In the same year a new Mayor was elected in Venice, and the Catholics of the city rejoiced. For, despite the pleasant letter which Signor Selvatico had sent to the Cardinal-elect and despite his polite calls at the palace, he had not favored the Church in Venice during the past two years. The shuttered, undecorated façade of the city hall on the occasion of the Patriarch's solemn entry into his see proved typical of his attitude. The climax came when the Mayor refused to allow church processions to go over the bridge by which all Venice reached the Church of S. Maria della Salute, a favorite shrine of the city and a popular place of pilgrimage.

The new choice of mayor showed that Signor Selvatico's action had been resented. He was not re-elected; instead Count Grimani, one of the Cardinal's close helpers in his social service work, was chosen. That November a long procession went over the erstwhile forbidden bridge on the feast day of Our Lady of Good Health. All business houses were closed; under a blue and sunny sky thousands streamed to the celebration. And not only the gondola of the Patriarch came to rest before the church but also the municipal gondola of the new mayor.

With Count Grimani, Cardinal Sarto could further extend his welfare work in the city, even though he had accomplished a surprising amount under adverse conditions. The Cardinal had earned himself such a fine reputation for fairness and honesty that the government of Venice found it difficult not to deal with him; he was frank in acknowledging the existence of bad conditions and willing to admit the obligations of the Church to remedy them. One of the reasons the Venetians had become so devoted to their Patriarch, the reason even a hostile government sometimes spoke kindly of him, was his realization of the need for wide and continuing social action of various kinds.

Among his callers one New Year's Day was Bishop Farley of New York and, in the course of their conversation, the latter asked how the Church cared for the poor of Venice. Were there conferences of the St. Vincent de Paul Society there?

At mention of that organization the Cardinal looked very

proud. "We now have a conference in every parish," he said. "More than that, we have a similar organization of ladies in each parish as well, and our funds are evenly divided between the two. We have so interested the ladies of Venice that they are said to be more punctilious in making calls on the poor assigned to their care than they are in calling on their noble friends!"

But he knew that taking care of the poor by giving alms was not the entire answer to the problem. The important thing was to put struggling groups on their feet and to bring them economic security. The island of Burano was a case in point. It was a town whose chief — and at one time only — industry was fishing. In previous winters the lagoons had frozen and the people on the island had almost starved. On these occasions immediate aid was given them, but this was only a temporary solution of their difficulty. Several ladies of Venice remembered that Burano had once had a fine lace-making industry, and considered reviving it. Although only one eighty-year-old woman could be found who knew the old art, several ladies had her teach them how to make the *punto di Burano*. They in turn taught the method to girls of the island and eventually a school for lace-workers was opened. When Cardinal Sarto came to Venice, he was much interested in this project and aided it by soliciting funds so that the school could be greatly enlarged. By 1897 there were six hundred girls either trained or in training and the lace was everywhere on sale.

When the Workingmen's Society was founded in Venice, the Cardinal inscribed his own name at the head of its roster of members. Employers too respected him as a man of keen insight and good judgment. More than once he had brought about reconciliation and peace in a situation where differences had at first seemed irreconcilable.

One organization which gave him a great deal of help was the League against Freemasonry. Many prominent citizens belonged to it, and they made the main objective of their work the winning of the confidence of the young people of the city who were being drawn toward freemasonry and away from the

Church. On the subject of these anti-clerical groups the Cardinal used stronger words than was his custom. "I myself once thought," he told a meeting of the League, "that what people had told me about them was exaggerated. But today, since I, by virtue of my office, have had the opportunity to see the wounds they have opened, I know that nothing I have heard was in the least overdrawn. I praise all of you who fight against this cult, for such service is highly meritorious. You are serving your family, your fatherland and humanity."

Because of his work with the League, he took an increasing interest in the municipal elections in Venice and towns dependent on Venice. He was circumspect in his attitude and, though he favored the conservative program, he was not narrow. He met anti-clericalism by inviting religious and conservative elements to fuse into an accord with moderate liberals. It was partly due to his efforts that the people of Venice voted to defeat the radical element. In fact, Don Cerretti, who had founded the Workingmen's Society, gave it as his opinion that if in 1901 the conservatives had not carried the elections, it would have been almost impossible for the Cardinal to remain in Venice, so embittered had the radical liberals become because of the Cardinal's activity against them.

He knew the value of the printed word, especially of newspapers and magazines, and those which supported Catholic action always met with his sympathetic aid. He knew how hard it was for Catholic publications to remain afloat. At one time when he heard that *La Difesa*, the important diocesan paper of Venice, was on the brink of bankruptcy, he declared vigorously, "I would rather sell my crozier and my robes of office than let that paper go under." Those who heard him knew he meant it; in fact, the steward and the Cardinal's sisters, remembering the sale of his watch and the pawning of other possessions, were uneasy until they learned that the paper had safely weathered its financial storm. For the time being the Cardinal's robes remained in the palace.

For several years Cardinal Sarto had been anxious to hold a Eucharistic Congress in Venice. The Pope had declared himself pleased with the plan, and the event was announced in 1896, to take place in August of the following year. In preparation the Cardinal called a meeting of his clergy; officers were appointed to the various committees and many preparations were made in anticipation of the event.

To make it a truly great display of devotion, he drew the lay folk into his program by promising that each parish was to have a part in the great procession on the opening day. And he asked the laity to do three things during the days of the Congress: to make visits to the Blessed Sacrament; to visit the sick; and to receive Holy Communion as often as possible.

The Congress opened on the evening of August 5th with the pealing of bells and a long and colorful procession from the Cardinal's palace to the cathedral. In the procession were three cardinals and twenty-eight bishops; the Cardinal of Bologna carried the monstrance and after him marched a long line of prelates and priests including those of the Armenian and Greek rites. They were followed by representatives of all the Venetian parishes, with the banners of their sodalities and guilds. The Cardinal observed the intentness with which the people watched the procession and noted their solemn delight in this pageantry. It was necessary, he reflected, to stir the hearts of men by such things when the faith in them grew languid or weak.

Later in the basilica the Blessed Sacrament was exposed and Maestro Perosi directed the singing of the *Pange Lingua* and the *Tantum Ergo*. Next morning at the solemn high Mass four cardinals, five archbishops and thirty bishops were seated in the sanctuary. The Eucharistic march was the composition of Ravanello; the *Missa Pontificalis* that of Perosi. Cardinal Sarto gave the address of welcome to the masses crowded into every possible spot in the vast cathedral. "Jesus is King," he told them, "and the highest King of all and as King He must be honored. . . . This is the purpose of this Congress, to make reparation for the sins committed against Him in the tabernacle."

During the three days of the Congress addresses and lectures were given, all by well known speakers, all bearing on the subject of the Eucharist. One of the outstanding events was the congregational singing of the *Missa de Angelis*. The Cardinal had also arranged a Eucharistic exhibition for which he had himself collected many of the objects on display — monstrances, chalices, cloth of gold and velvet and silk vestments, ancient banners, antique laces.

As he opened the exhibit the Mayor of Venice stood beside him with other members of the government. The Cardinal's speech was one to delight every Venetian heart. "We have so much that is beautiful in Italy," he told the people. "This silver and gold of altar vessels, this wonderful embroidery of vestments and altar-pieces shows the beauty which Italy once made into true art. And all these articles have not been brought from far away but collected in and near Venice. This exhibition proves stronger than words or the most eloquent discourses that . . . our forefathers always made religion the basis of their institutions. They never returned from victory without bringing back some token of their faith, some proof of their devotion to the Blessed Sacrament."

On the final day a blessing was given to the city and the sea as had been done in the days of the doges. The Blessed Sacrament was held high to bless the city, the islands, the sea, and all those who made their living from the sea.

The weather had been wonderful for the entire three days of the Congress, the lagoons shimmering under the sunny sky by day and dark and mysterious in the starry evenings. All Venice had turned out for the occasion, and in a final address the Cardinal thanked them and all the guests from other cities for the great success they had made of the Congress. His closing words were on the Eucharist, as his first had been, and he took as text, "Truly our hearts burned within us as Jesus spoke with us."

As soon as the Congress was ended Cardinal Sarto hurried to Treviso to attend a celebration honoring Monsignor Jacuzzi on his eightieth birthday. It was a gay and happy affair, and the

old rector was so overwhelmed that he could not answer the speech of congratulation made him by his parishioner of long ago. He could only hold the Cardinal's hand tightly and shake his head protestingly as he listened to compliments bestowed on his priestly and educational work over the years. "I know I must say something — express the thanks of my heart," he said, "but Your Eminence has said so much more than there was to be said for me." During the evening the Cardinal sat close beside the man to whom he had been devoted since youth, to whom he felt as would a son to a beloved father.

In 1900 all Italy was shocked to learn of the assassination of their King. When Cardinal Sarto learned of the tragedy, he ordered a high requiem Mass to be celebrated at St. Mark's for King Umberto, and he himself gave absolution at the catafalque. When a few months later Queen Margherita came to Venice she sent for Cardinal Sarto and later spoke of the comfort she had received from his gentle words of sympathy.

The next year, when the new King, Victor Emmanuel III, came to Venice with his Queen, the Patriarch and Monsignor Bressan went to call on them and were given military honors on the occasion of this visit. Later that year the Patriarch was asked to bless a great new ship, for which ceremony the King sent as his representative the Prince of Naples. These ceremonies, especially for the larger vessels, were always gala affairs. A huge crowd awaited the arrival of the Cardinal's gondola; they watched the Prince of Naples and his wife arrive, saw the representative of the King and the Cardinal of Venice shake hands in a friendly way, and saw the Princess kiss the Cardinal's ring.

During this ceremony the Patriarch blessed a ring he had been holding, and gave it to the Prince; he in turn handed it to the Princess, who fastened it to a long white ribbon and let it fall into the sea. This symbolized the old Venetian tradition of wed-ding the ship to the sea. Then the Patriarch blessed the ship, and the crowd watched breathlessly as the mighty *Francesco Ferrucio* took the ways.

In the year 1900, which Pope Leo XIII proclaimed as a year of jubilee, Cardinal Sarto issued a pastoral letter in which he said he hoped all would join in a tribute to the Pontiff who through many years had labored so valiantly for the Church. As a result of Pope Leo's continuous efforts in their behalf, the rights of the Church, the nations and the family had been clearly defined. By his efforts literature and the arts had been promoted; safeguards had been erected against the onslaughts of socialism, and not only the duties but the rights of the individual had been clearly explained. "And all this great work he has accomplished," wrote the Cardinal, "in spite of the opposition of contending parties, and he has remained undismayed by repeated failure and treachery."

That year, on a lovely August day, the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady, there was given evidence of how deeply Cardinal Sarto had won the good will of the city authorities. The officials took part in an entirely religious ceremony; the stores were closed and the streets filled with lively crowds enjoying the feast day in the traditional Venetian way. Many had spent the night on the steps of St. Mark's and in the Square waiting for the doors of the basilica to open.

At the appointed hour a procession of canons, priests of the city and members of religious orders, proceeded to St. Mark's, and in the Square before the cathedral awaited the Patriarch. As his long black gondola came in sight, shouts broke from thousands of throats, "Long live the Patriarch!" His craft was followed by the richly decorated gondolas of the city authorities, with the gondoliers in holiday attire, and as the Mayor disembarked another great shout arose, "Long live the *Sindaco*." He and the other government officials were met at the door of the basilica by the rector of the seminary, an official demonstration of friendliness between authorities of Church and State of which there were very few in Italy during those years.

In August of 1901 Cardinal Sarto was invited to bless a chapel dedicated to Our Lady, built on Monte Grappa, a high peak of

the Venetian Alps which was covered with snow except for the summer months. When the invitation came the Cardinal said he was very willing to go. "But I am not so young any more, and I never was much of a mountain climber," he told the committee. "At all events, I'll try it."

He and Monsignor Bressan arrived one Saturday afternoon in early August at the railroad station at Bassano, the town from which the ascent was to be made. The Cardinal was provided with a white mule and set forth up the mountainside accompanied by priests, seminary professors and a crowd of people from the village. As the group passed through the little mountain villages, bells were rung and cannon fired and more people joined the crowd. A two-hour climb brought them to a shelter built for forest rangers, and there the Cardinal spent a few hours of the night.

At four in the morning they were again on their way, the pilgrims on foot, the Cardinal on his white mule. The procession had in it something of the picturesque aspect of a pilgrimage in the Middle Ages. The moon was shining still and patches of snow on the mountain tops gleamed in its light. The path was lighted by the torches and lanterns of the pilgrims who prayed the rosary or sang hymns to Our Lady as they climbed slowly upward. Far below one now could see the cities and towns; sometimes the pilgrims could see nothing but clouds below them. "Long live the Patriarch!" shouted the mountaineers who watched them pass, and he called back to them his own greeting, "Viva Maria!" More and more people joined the long line of marchers, and when the peak of Monte Grappa was reached as many as ten thousand had gathered and were standing in groups on every plateau along the mountainside.

At the summit the Cardinal sat astride his white mule with its gay red tapestry blanket and an evergreen branch on its forehead. His hat was low on his forehead, his cape drawn tight about him in the chill mountain air. As soon as he had come in sight of the chapel a band which had brought its instruments all the way up the mountain had begun to play. He waited until

the selection was finished, then went into the chapel, blessed the little new house of God, a small octagonal building in the Gothic style, and began the Mass. During the Communion, the Asolo men's choir sang the *Ave Maris Stella*, while outside the great crowd prayed the rosary.

After Mass the Cardinal left the chapel and read to the people gathered without a telegram from their own Bishop who was ill and could not be there, but who sent them his blessing. Then he gave a brief talk, speaking at the top of his voice so that his words would carry. Not without deep meaning, he told them, had there been erected on one of the high peaks of Italy and at the beginning of a new century, a memorial to the Redeemer. Such a memorial, erected by those who had always remained faithful to Him, would serve to bring the mercy of God to nations and people who had lost Him. "We have chosen here," he said, "to honor the Child Jesus in His mother's arms because we cherish the tender hope that the charm of the Child will draw our strayed brethren to Him, that our whole land and all the lands will some day place themselves in the heart of the Redeemer, the King of nations."

As the Cardinal was leaving the chapel, someone handed him a small bunch of edelweiss which he promptly stuck in his hat-band to prove his record as a mountain climber. Then, blessing the people on either side, he rode down the slope, the music of the band following him. That evening he was back in Venice.

At the close of that year the Cardinal lost one of the ablest members of his cathedral staff. Don Perosi, whom he had ordained during that year, was called to Rome by Pope Leo XIII to direct the Sistine Choir. Although Cardinal Sarto was proud that his protégé was thus signally honored, he was really afflicted by this loss.

"I hope," he said, when Don Perosi came to the palace to bid him good-by and to ask his blessing, "that we shall not be apart too long."

In July, 1902, the great campanile of St. Mark's suddenly collapsed, destroying in its fall priceless works of art. But St. Mark's

Cathedral itself was unmarred and no one was hurt, a fact for which the Cardinal, when he came to view the ruins, thanked God, although he was appalled at the task which lay before him.

Almost immediately plans were set on foot to rebuild the tower; funds for the work came not only from the city but from the whole country and from other lands as well. Less than a year after its fall the cornerstone of the new building was laid, on the feast of Saint Mark. On that day in April, 1903, the festivities were opened by the firing of cannon, and for half an hour, by order of the Patriarch, the church bells of Venice were rung. St. Mark's Square was filled with a sea of people, the balcony of the governor's palace and that of the Palace of the Doges crowded with notables. On the royal tribune were the Duke of Turin, cousin of the King and his representative; the Mayor, Count Grimani; Admiral Gonzales; General Bellini, the Minister of Education; Prime Minister Nasi and others.

Down in the Square Maria and Rosa and Anna sat on folding stools, making lace and chatting with the wives of gondoliers and fishermen, as they all waited for the ceremonies to begin. While the bells were still ringing, the Patriarch of Venice came with his retinue from St. Mark's and passed through a lane kept open for him to the tribune in the Square.

Count Grimani spoke first, welcoming the distinguished guests to the city and congratulating Venice on the speed with which the building of the new campanile was being begun. Then he turned to the Patriarch, saying, "And it will rise under your auspices, Eminence, who here, dispensing the blessing of Heaven, are proclaiming the harmony of religious and patriotic feelings."

After a speech by Prime Minister Nasi, the Patriarch rose to bless the stone and speak in his turn. The day had been misty but, as he rose from his chair the sun shone out brilliantly, gilding the mitre and jewelled cross he wore. Perfectly at his ease, he complimented the Mayor, and through him all the authorities present, and thanked them for coming: "It is a good and beautiful thing for men to ask God's blessing upon their work as we do

here. . . . I rejoice that you have shown yourselves worthy sons of your Venetian forefathers who began no enterprise without asking God's blessing and the protection of His Mother on their work."

The glory of ancient Venice, he continued, came from her faith; this was the soul of her people's labors, the guide of their deliberations, the inspiration of their laws. And he ended: "May Venice, which flourished so many centuries under the protection of this patron, awake once more to a new era of good fortune under his auspices. . . . May the new campanile rise blessed by Heaven, and may the day hasten when the new bells will ring out, proclaiming the true glory and the greatness of God and peace to men of good will."

He spoke of the Venice of the ages, the center of European culture, the city of learning and fine arts, queen of the seas at a time when other cities of Italy, and even other nations, were sighing under the barbarian yoke. Venice was then the home of knowledge and of the fine arts; she was the ring which bound East and West in a common cause. However, it was in their religion that Venetians saw the source of all their good fortune, and so they built temples and altars to God and dedicated their institutes and schools to Him. And today the citizens of Venice, in laying the cornerstone for this new campanile, were not thinking of the fine structure they would erect, but rather of making glorious thereby the name of God, of leaving to their country a memorial of their faith.

This speech was well received, for the Cardinal knew well how not to offend — unless the things of God were assailed. Afterward he and the Duke of Turin and the Mayor each wrote their names on a piece of parchment ornamented with the coats of arms of the Patriarch, the House of Savoy, and the Mayor of Venice. This, together with gold and silver coins bearing the likeness of King Victor Emmanuel III, were placed in the cavity which was to hold the stone. After the Cardinal had blessed the stone with holy water and with a silver trowel thrown mortar into the excava-

tion — a ceremony repeated in turn by the Duke of Turin, Count Grimani and Prime Minister Nasi — the workers lifted the heavy foundation stone into its place.

Except for the dedication of churches and for an occasional sermon the Patriarch seldom left Venice. Each morning and sometimes in the evening he took his walks on the Lido, and these outings satisfied him. On one occasion he paid a visit to his nephew, Don Battista Parolin, Teresa's son, pastor at Possagno, and found it so pleasant that he promised to come again.

He continued his hospitable habit of saying to many who came to call on him, "And you will stay for dinner, won't you?" The meals remained simple, and his sisters and his niece Amalia continued to prepare them. To outsiders the household no doubt seemed too simply run, the Cardinal's hours of work incredible, but somehow visitors who stayed at the palace got into the same habits. One young priest, in Venice for the purpose of research in the archives, was invited to stay at the palace. At home again, his friends expressed surprise that he had grown so thin. He considered for a moment, and then said it must have been because he had followed the palace routine of rising before five, working very late, eating lightly and sometimes not at all. "You see the Patriarch is not only a saint. *Il en a la cuisine,*" he said.

It was inspiring to come into the stately palace and find the austerity that prevailed within. The dignity of a cardinal had never changed Giuseppe Sarto's way of life; his household, his table, his service, were not greatly different from what they had been when he was a parish priest at Salzano. In the same way he never felt that it lowered his dignity to carry out even the smallest service of the Church, and he was ready at all times to perform every duty of a parish priest — hearing confessions, visiting prisons, carrying Communion to the sick.

Don Agnelli of the Treviso faculty was the Cardinal's guest one night at the palace, and, since he wished to leave very early the next morning, he asked if he might say Mass in the palace before he left.

"You are very welcome," the Cardinal told him. "And don't worry — you shall have my chapel and you will find everything ready for you. Don't forget you are in a Cardinal's palace here."

When Don Agnoletti came to the chapel at four the next morning, the only person in sight was the Cardinal busy with the altar vessels and vestments for Mass. The astonished guest watched for a moment and then asked diffidently, "Will there be someone to serve me?"

"Of course there will. I am here."

"Oh, Eminence," he protested.

"Come, come," said the Cardinal in mock indignation. "Don't you think a prelate of my standing can serve Mass? You have a fine opinion of the princes of the Church! Now watch how well I do it," and he helped him with the alb, hung the maniple on his arm, and when he was completely vested they went together to the altar, the priest following his server.

Before Don Agnoletti left the palace he handed Rosa a paper which she gave to her brother when he came to the kitchen for coffee. He read it and laughed. "Listen," he said to Rosa. "It is in very fine Latin, but I will give you a translation:

'For the last time I have kissed your cardinal's ring;

Soon I shall be called on to venerate you as Pope.'

He told me last evening that he was kissing my ring for the last time. Next time it would be my slipper. He loves to joke."

For a few moments Rosa had not understood the allusion even in the Italian translation. Then, as comprehension came to her, she looked alarmed. "Oh, no, Beppo, no. Surely being a cardinal is trouble enough for you."

On a Sunday in May, 1903, the Cardinal left Venice to make a special visit to the little town of Vigonovo. He was very proud of this parish, for, small as it was, its people — mostly farmers — had built a fine church and a beautiful campanile, and now they had bought an organ with double keyboard. Some years before he had blessed church and tower and, knowing what an effort it had

been to raise money for an organ in addition, had promised to come to bless that also when it could be installed.

He was suffering from fatigue and his sisters and Monsignor Bressan thought he ought not to go, but he said it would give him a fine chance to visit at the Treviso seminary, where he always found rest and peace. At Treviso too his friends thought he looked unusually tired, but after a few hours with them he seemed to lose his weariness. But now and then his face grew sad, and they all knew why. From the seminary table one familiar face was missing. Since the Cardinal's last visit, Monsignor Jacuzzi, whom he had so loved, had passed away. His place at the table was filled, but his absence was felt almost as his presence had once been.

In June, Cardinal Sarto paid the visit to Possagno which he had promised his nephew. Although he had said he hoped there would be no festivities in honor of his brief stay, he found he did not really mind the way the village greeted him. The people awaited him with no rousing city welcome but the greetings of country people — decorated wreaths, childish verses written in his honor, a crowded little church to hear him preach. The town was lovely under an early summer sky and flowers bloomed everywhere. He was happy to enjoy for a few days the good dry air he had known in his youth, and it was a pleasure to chat with his nephew and again hear intimate talk of the workings of a country parish.

"Let me tell you one thing, Battista," he said as he sat smoking in the rectory on his last evening in Possagno. "When I see that I can no longer move fast and that I am grown too old for the great city, I want to come here and be your curate."

## CHAPTER NINE

### *A Papal Election*

IN July of 1903 the news reached Venice that Pope Leo was not well. A few days later dispatches reported him confined to his bed with pneumonia, a very serious illness for a man in his ninety-fourth year. As soon as word of this reached Cardinal Sarto, he asked prayers everywhere in his archdiocese for the Holy Father's recovery. Later messages reported an improvement in the Pope's condition, and the Cardinal was preparing to order a *Te Deum* sung when a telegram informed him that Leo XIII was dying.

The Pope had seemed better for a few days; in fact he had written some verses in honor of Saint Anselm and sent them to the Abbot of the Benedictines in Rome; he had discussed important matters with his Secretary of State, Cardinal Rampolla, and given instructions on church affairs to Cardinal Oreglia, Camerlingo of the Sacred College. But on the following day he sent for his confessor, and when the latter left his bedside the Pope smiled at him and said, "Farewell — until Paradise." That evening he grew very much worse and early in the morning Cardinal Vannutelli was called to administer Extreme Unction, for it was evident that the Pope was dying. He asked to see his nephews and grand-nephews, and when they came to his bedside he smiled at them all and blessed them with faint movements of his hand. Close by his pillow his confessor recited short prayers in a low voice and one could hear the dying man repeat them in a whisper. Not until a few minutes before his death did he lose consciousness.

In Rome the bronze portals of the Vatican were closed; the great palace was silent. A Pope lay dead, and the cardinals wore the violet insignia of mourning. In the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament at St. Peter's the body of Leo XIII lay on a bier for

the veneration of the public. Around it burned eighteen tall wax tapers, and two Noble and two Palatine Guards stood immovable as statues at head and foot of the catafalque as thousands filed silently past.

When, in 1878, at the conclave held after the death of Pius IX, Cardinal Pecci saw that the votes for him were increasing rapidly, he had said to an older cardinal, "I am afraid some mistake is being made. They think I am wise and learned, but I am neither. I do not possess in any way the qualities that the papacy demands."

But he was elected, and he proved to have those qualities in abundance. As a statesman he is ranked among the greatest of the popes. When his reign began, Church affairs were in a difficult and tangled state, for it was at the close of the pontificate of his predecessor, Pius IX, that Rome had fallen to the Italian troops and the House of Savoy. The Pope was deprived of temporal power over the Pontifical States and tension had continued between the Vatican and the Italian government as the years went by.

It was, in addition, a time of militant anti-clericalism, and Leo XIII battled unflinchingly for the rights of the despoiled Church. The great diplomatic victories which he achieved during his long reign were won with no military power or wealth to aid him, yet under him the papacy had become a force to be reckoned with throughout the world, and not only in purely religious matters. His encyclicals on the labor question showed recognition of the fact that in an age of imperialism an entirely new social duty confronted the Church. At the beginning of his reign Leo XIII had defined his program to reconcile Catholicism with modern times, reviving the ideas of Thomas Aquinas to remove the antagonism that had grown up between the Church and modern civilization, and he had established in Rome important centers of higher learning. Under him the Church had made great progress. Two hundred and forty-eight new dioceses had been established and forty-eight prefectures apostolic. Religious orders had developed wonderfully and many new ones flourished. One hundred and forty-seven cardinals were created by him and

he had canonized eighteen Saints and beatified one hundred and ten.

To the end the clarity of his intellect had not waned. Until his last brief illness he had celebrated Mass at five each morning and worked daily for long hours with cardinals and secretaries, although he had grown so thin that many said he looked transparent. He was much troubled in his last days about the problems his successor would have to face. "How much difficulty he will have in protecting the Faith," he sighed. But still he was able to say, "I shall die secure. God will take care of my dynasty and of my heritage."

When word of Pope Leo's death was received in the patriarchal palace at Venice, the news came as a deep and personal sorrow to Cardinal Sarto, for during the past years he had often seen the Pope and talked with him and considered him a dear friend. Carefully through the years, as bishop and as patriarch, he had followed the great encyclicals and letters written by Leo XIII and, with the attention and obedience of a son for a father, had based his own course directly on them. In the troubled see of Mantua, in the political difficulties he encountered at Venice, he had always had the counsel and help of the Pontiff who had raised the parish priest to bishop and then to the great patriarchate of Venice. Remembering the wise counsel, the paternal encouragement he had received, he wrote, when he announced the news of the Pope's death to his archdiocese, "Pray that God may send to his church another shepherd who will thus serve him with heart and soul."

Cardinals from all over the world were summoned to Rome to attend the conclave which would elect a new pope. This was set for July 31st, and the Italian prelates were expected some days in advance. Cardinal Sarto found it would be impossible to leave Venice until the 26th, for he had a large group of young men to ordain to the priesthood.

On the morning he left for Rome he said Mass at Santa Maria della Salute, and then returned to the palace to bid good-by to his household and to his sisters. The day before he had realized

he was short of funds, since it was close to the end of the month, and he must provide three fares to Rome — for himself, Monsignor Bressan and Giovanni. As he gave Monsignor Bressan the money to buy the tickets, the latter said, "I was afraid you might not have enough, Eminence."

The Cardinal smiled deprecatingly. "I had to borrow most of it — but we will save a good bit by buying return tickets."

He had, during the past years, made many trips to Rome and no one had seemed particularly concerned about it. But this time the household was uneasy, and no one wanted him to go, a feeling which even the practical Rosa could not explain away. He was delayed by the usually punctual Monsignor Bressan. "I must tell him," said the Cardinal, "that he really need not make so much preparation. Rome does not mean a journey to America."

As he was leaving the door of the palace his niece Amalia called to her uncle from the stairs. "Hurry up with the conclave and come back to us very soon."

He smiled up at her. "Short or long, it doesn't matter. But it would be nice if while I am gone you could take a trip to Pos-sagno and get some fresh country air. And on my return I'll try to stop there for you and bring you back to Venice. I must be here by August 10th for an ordination ceremony at the Franciscans. That would give you time for a nice visit with Battista."

He entered his gondola, waved once more, and his boat disappeared among the others on the lagoon. Bells were ringing to bid him good-by and a safe return. It seemed as if all Venice was gathered along the canals, and farewells and good wishes were called from balconies and windows along the route.

He blessed them all, as well as the people who crowded about him at the station. The love they showed him so touched him that more than once Monsignor Bressan heard him call to them, "Thank you. Thank you," as he lifted his hand in blessing. In the waiting-room of the station he spoke a few words to the crowds assembled there, thanking them for their affection and promising to return soon.

"But suppose you don't come back, Eminence?" called someone in the crowd.

He held his ticket high. "See, it is for a round trip," he called in the direction of the voice. "Living or dead, I shall come back to my dear Venice."

As the train pulled away people were still shouting, "Long live the Patriarch!" When the voices had faded away in the distance, the Cardinal sat back and looked out of the window as the last of Venice disappeared. "It will be good to get home again," he said to Monsignor Bressan. "I hope the choice of a Pope will not take too long."

They reached the Eternal City in the early afternoon and Cardinal Sarto went directly to the Lombardy College where he usually stayed when in Rome. He had written the rector that he hoped no special preparations would be made for him: "I already owe you so much that I would not dare ask more of your kindness."

Next morning he went to the Vatican to call on Cardinal Oreglia, Dean of the Sacred College and Cardinal Camerlingo, who was in charge of the papal household until the election of a new pope. He learned that nearly all the cardinals had arrived. Since the conclave would not open for a few days he spent the time visiting old friends, discussing music with Don Perosi, and the catechetical instruction of children with interested priests.

He had learned on his arrival that Monsignor Volpini, pro-secretary to the conclave, had dropped dead shortly before the Pope's own death. His was the duty, among others, of announcing the election of a new pope and handing him the white cap — the *zucchetta*. In his place had been appointed Archbishop Merry del Val, of whom Cardinal Sarto had heard but whom he had never met. This young prelate was the son of a former Spanish ambassador to the Vatican; his mother was an Englishwoman and he was born in England, educated there, and had been a student at the seminary at Ushaw. Ordained for the Westminster diocese, it was there he had hoped to work, but the Holy See had kept him in Rome for much of the time since. When he was made

President of the Accademia Ecclesiastica he had at the same time been raised to the episcopate. He had been a great favorite of Pope Leo XIII, who had appointed him Master of the Robes and acting private chamberlain, and at various times had sent him on missions to England and Canada. He spent his vacations in England and had been preparing to go there when the sudden death of Monsignor Volpini, secretary of the conclave, had led to his new appointment.

When a correspondent of the newspaper *L'Avvenire d'Italia* came for an interview with Cardinal Sarto, the talk naturally turned on the coming conclave. "Of one thing I feel certain," said the Cardinal. "It will be short. I am sure that by Saturday evening — the second vote — we shall have a pope."

The reporter demurred. "I think it will take longer."

"Why do you wish us to remain imprisoned for a long time?"

The reporter explained. There was a general desire in Italy for the election of a pope who had been in active charge of a diocese. The Roman cardinals lived in the city and were familiar with the workings of the Curia, but the others knew the conditions in the outside world; their outlook was wider and the present world needed such a pope. "And since they are not so well known in Rome as the cardinals who live here, it may take longer to elect one," the reporter concluded.

Cardinal Sarto looked dubious about this reasoning, although he admitted that it bore a certain truth. "Well, what I hope for most of all," he said, "is that the cross of him who is elected may be light."

There were several informal meetings of the cardinals, many of whom did not know each other at all. Once a French cardinal, standing next to Cardinal Sarto, spoke to him politely. "*Votre Eminence est sans doute archévêque en Italie,*" he said. "*Dans quel diocèse?*"

Cardinal Sarto shook his head. "I do not speak French," he said in Latin, and when the Frenchman repeated his question, also in Latin, he answered, "*Sum Patriarcha Venetiarum.*"

A smile broke over the other's face. "Non loqueris gallice? Ergo non es papabilis, siquidem Papa debet gallice loqui."

"Verum est," the Patriarch said vigorously. "Non sum papabilis. Deo gratias!"

On the day before the conclave met, the final funeral obsequies were carried out for the dead Pope. The knell which had rung its slow chime for nine days sounded its final note; the last *Requiescat* was spoken over the body of Leo XIII.

Next day, late in the afternoon, the Cardinals went to the Vatican, where the conclave was to open. Formerly these elections had been held in the papal palace of the Quirinal, built in 1590 by Pope Sixtus V, but after the fall of Rome the Quirinal became the home of the new rulers and the College of Cardinals now met in the Vatican itself.

The cardinals arrived in carriages; some were open and the prelates within smiled and nodded to the crowds lining the streets; others had their curtains completely drawn. Several cardinals rode in the carriages of their state embassies, and among these the equipage of Cardinal Puzyna of Cracow, atop which sat a be-turbaned servant in Polish costume, presented a colorful appearance.

For a time confusion reigned and a medley of prelates, Noble Guards and gendarmes milled about. But by five o'clock all sixty-two cardinals were in the palace. From the United States had come Cardinal Gibbons, the first American prelate to take part in a papal election. Only two were missing — Cardinal Celesia of Palermo, who was very old and infirm, and Cardinal Moran of Australia, who could not have arrived in time because of the distance.

Swiss Guards accompanied the cardinals, clad in the violet robes prescribed for the conclave, into the Pauline Chapel. After the *Veni Creator* was sung, they went in procession to the Sistine Chapel, a cross-bearer at their head. They were followed by Archbishop Merry del Val, secretary of the conclave, and others. The doors were closed, and two Swiss Guards took their stand before it.

In preparation for the conclave the Sistine Chapel had been divided into two parts by marble screens hung with violet draperies. On either side of the altar, thrones had been erected, thirty-two on each side, and covered with violet silk, a silk baldachino over each, arranged so that, when a pope was elected they could be taken down from over all the thrones except one, that of the pope-elect. The chairs were upholstered in red; only one was green — that of Cardinal Oreglia, the single cardinal among them not appointed by Pope Leo but by his predecessor, Pope Pius IX.

A temporary altar was set up in front of the papal altar itself, and before this the cardinals were to place their votes. Each cardinal had a small table before his throne where he wrote upon and sealed his ballot. Back of the papal altar were the necessary vestments in three sizes so that the new pope could be immediately clothed.

First the papal constitutions regarding the conclave procedure and papal elections were read aloud, upon the order of Cardinal Oreglia. Then Prince Mario Chigi, hereditary marshal of the conclave, took the oath to carry out fully the papal constitutions, as did the others in their turn. The cardinals chose their apartments by drawing numbers. Cardinal Sarto drew number fifty-seven, the apartment of Cardinal Rampolla.

Next Cardinal Oreglia locked the doors on the inside of the palace and Prince Chigi locked them on the outside. A little stove had been set up in a corner at the entrance of the chapel with a chimney leading out to the roof so that it could be seen on the Square of St. Peter's. When, after a casting of votes, no cardinal had received two-thirds, the papers were thrown into the stove and straw added; the thick smoke showed that no pope was yet chosen. The vote was to be taken twice a day.

All next morning at St. Peter's the Blessed Sacrament was exposed and thousands came to adore. By eleven the Square of St. Peter's was a lively sight, with crowds eagerly watching for the *sfumata*. Photographers set up their cameras directly on the roof of the chapel. The crowds milling about were filled with all sorts

of surmises — that the French cardinals would hold together and vote as one man for Rampolla; that there was no knowing at all where the Austrians and Spaniards stood; that the Germans might go along with the Austrians.

Before noon came the early result of the conclave — a dark cloud of smoke which showed that the first vote had brought no choice. In the evening the smoke gave to the watching people the same answer.

Within the palace the voting was proceeding steadily. The ballots were scattered in favor of various cardinals. The first vote had given Rampolla twenty-four, Gotti seventeen and Sarto five, the other votes scattered. Of the three Cardinal Rampolla was the best known, having been for years the clever, politically alert Secretary of State to Leo XIII. Cardinal Sarto was all but unknown, and Cardinal Gotti, a man much like Sarto himself, had been a Carmelite abbot, long the General of his order, who had accepted the red hat reluctantly and only at the command of the Pope. The second vote of the day gave Rampolla twenty-nine, Gotti sixteen and Sarto ten.

Next morning, before the first vote was taken, Cardinal Puzyna, Archbishop of Cracow, Poland, then a part of the Austro-Hungarian empire, rose and said he brought a message from Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria and he thought the time had come to declare it. In the name and by the authority of His Majesty, the Cardinal wished to make use of an ancient privilege, the right of veto against Cardinal Rampolla.

The other cardinals stared at the speaker in shocked amazement. The first who rose to protest was Cardinal Oreglia, Dean of the Sacred College. "This message," he said sternly, "cannot be admitted to the conclave, either officially or unofficially. Not the least notice will be taken of it."

But Cardinal Rampolla evidently thought otherwise. He rose to speak, his face showing deep emotion. He echoed what Cardinal Oreglia had said, and added, "As regards myself nothing more agreeable or welcome could happen," but he added that

he was deeply regretful that a worldly power had tried to interfere there where it had no rights, and had tried to sway the papal election. He sat down and the voting went on.

That evening Cardinal Sarto, realizing that the conclave was going to last longer than he had expected, wrote to his Vicar General in Venice: "I see I shall not be able to return home for at least eight days more, and I wish the conference of Bishops to be postponed to a later date. . . . If you are in the neighborhood bring greetings to my sisters and tell them that I am very well."

On the third day of the conclave observers in the Square again saw the dark smoke rise. The first vote of the day gave Rampolla twenty-nine, Sarto twenty-four and Gotti three.

Cardinal Sarto, who had been getting restless as he saw the increasing votes in his favor, realized that what he had never dreamed of was actually in process of happening. When it was plain to him that the cardinals were coming into agreement on his name, he rose and begged them not to vote for him any more. His voice trembled; his face was red with emotion and there were tears in his eyes. After he had spoken he went to the Pauline Chapel, where a light burned before the Blessed Sacrament, and he fell upon his knees before the picture of Our Lady of Good Counsel.

He prayed for a long time, his head in his hands. While he was kneeling there, Archbishop Merry del Val, sent by the cardinals to ask Cardinal Sarto's intentions, entered and knelt beside him. Aware of a presence, the Cardinal lifted his head. "What is it?" he asked, and the young Archbishop felt a pang of pity when he heard the despair in his voice.

"Is Your Eminence immovably fixed in your resolution?" he asked. "Is the Cardinal Dean to tell the Sacred College officially that you would refuse the election?"

"Let him do me that charity," said the Cardinal and buried his face again in his hands.

Archbishop Merry del Val rose, looked again at the bent white head, and on impulse put his hand gently on the Cardinal's

shoulder. "Courage, Your Eminence, take courage. Our Lord will help you."

"*Grazie — grazie,*" said the Cardinal, his head still in his hands, and Archbishop Merry del Val went quietly away.

That evening several cardinals came to the room of Cardinal Sarto urging him to accept, and among them was Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore, who told him that the Church in America would be an element of strength to him. Just so twenty-five years before Cardinal Manning had come to a hesitant Cardinal Pecci, urging him to have courage, to accept: "There is no question here of you. It is the Church and the future of the world which are in question."

Cardinal Sarto only shook his head, and over and over he reiterated his unworthiness; he could not realize that his words and his manner only made the men who were speaking with him the more eager to elect him. Cardinal Satolli said to him reassuringly, "*Ego sum, nolite timere,*" and added, "Surely God, who has helped you guide so well the gondola of St. Mark's, will help you to command the ship of Peter."

When his visitors had gone, he faced for the first time the fact that perhaps it would be impossible for him to decline the office. "I am unworthy. I am incapable. Forget me," he had asked of his fellow cardinals, and now for most of the night he said the same thing over and over in prayer to God.

Next day the first vote gave Cardinal Sarto the highest number for the first time — twenty-seven votes to Rampolla's twenty-four. The next gave him thirty-five and Rampolla seventeen. The cardinals separated for the night but there was little doubt that the voting was nearing its end. Next morning on the seventh vote Cardinal Sarto had fifty votes, eight more than was necessary for his election.

The Archbishop of Paris announced that the Patriarch of Venice had been elected pope by fifty votes, and, on hearing this result, Cardinal Sarto, totally overcome, bent his head and broke into tears. He looked at the altar and said in a low voice, but firmly, "*Fiat voluntas tua.*"

Cardinal Oreglia came close to him and asked, "Acceptas-ne electionem in summum pontificem?"

For a long moment Cardinal Sarto was silent, and then he seemed to gather courage. He was unworthy, he said, of so high a place, but because they were so united he saw in it the will of God. "If this chalice may not pass from me unless I drink it, the holy will of God be done. *Accepto*," he said.

"*Quomodo vis vocari?*"

He hesitated. The first name which came to him was that of Benedict, but Pius IX, the faithful defender of the Church in its battles against many evils, the beloved father of his people, seemed a better name for the times. His voice was clear and resonant now. "*Pio Decimo*," he answered.

Only one formality remained: to see if Cardinal Sarto had voted for himself, for that would render his election void. When his ballot was opened, it was found that he had voted for Cardinal Rampolla. Then the baldachinos were lowered over all the cardinals' chairs save one. That of Cardinal Sarto remained high. In the Vatican palace, which had been the winter residence of popes for hundreds of years, and for the past thirty years their only home, there was a new pontiff.

## CHAPTER TEN

### *A Pope is Crowned*

ON the morning of the fourth day of the conclave the crowd in St. Peter's Square had grown even greater, for it was apparent that the voting was nearing an end. By nine in the morning some twenty thousand people had gathered, watching anxiously for the white smoke to appear. They made a colorful appearance, women in bright summer dresses, soldiers with white plumes and shoulder knots.

It was a little past twelve, and the echoes of the Angelus rung at the basilica still lingered, when the great window of the loggia which had not been opened for twenty-five years was flung wide and two chamberlains spread a tapestry of white satin rimmed with scarlet over the balcony railing. At the same time the architect of the conclave broke down the walled door between the Sala Regia and the Leonine Chapel from which the window opened.

At these signs the crowd broke into shouts, but when a priest holding a large cross appeared on the balcony silence fell. Following the cross-bearer, Cardinal Macchi appeared with several monsignori. In his right hand he held the Book of Rites, the left he extended towards the people. In a loud clear voice he spoke the ancient formula: "*Annuntio vobis gaudium magnum. Habemus Papam . . . Josephum Sarto, qui sibi nomen imposuit Pium X.*"

A great cheer from thousands of throats filled the air. "*Evviva Pio Decimo,*" they shouted, and the bells of St. Peter's rang a joyous peal. And almost as immediately telephone and telegraph sent the news far and wide throughout the world.

The election was a great surprise to the public, for Cardinal Sarto had never drawn attention to himself for his scholarship nor had he participated in diplomatic affairs. He was a shepherd

of souls and greatly beloved, but his reputation had not gone beyond Italy and hardly beyond his own immediate diocesan circles. Yet there was a genuine feeling of pleasure in his election, and it was clearly seen that his own background had been one reason for choosing him — a priest who had risen by all the steps from curate in a tiny parish to cardinal of a great archdiocese, one which was still in his care.

The choice of Cardinal Sarto was no doubt also due to the growth of a general democratic trend everywhere — in the Church as well as in the world. Perhaps such a circumstance as the action of Austria in attempting to influence the papal election had something to do with it, although Cardinal Sarto had already received a certain number of votes when that occurred. Perhaps, most of all, it was that the cardinals realized the time had come to consider conditions within the Church rather than its influence on the world outside. Practical politics and a resulting harmony in diplomatic relations had been the vision of Pope Leo and also that of his brilliant and clever Secretary of State, Cardinal Rampolla. Now the conclave had elected a man who had paid no attention to the diplomacy of the Vatican, who had been interested chiefly in the dioceses in his care — one with the spirit and affectionate concern for his people of a good parish priest.

The new Pope was escorted to the sacristy, and Monsignor Bressan and Giovanni were called. Both were pale with emotion; the secretary could not meet his Cardinal's eyes, but when he finally looked up, it was to see tears raining down the cheeks of the newly-elected Pope. "*Padrone*," begged Giovanni, "do not weep. I feel a pain in my heart to see you weeping."

With Archbishop Merry del Val beside him, Pope Pius put on the white talaris, the mozzetta, the stole, the white calotte. Then he dropped his discarded red cap on the head of Archbishop Merry del Val, a gesture which, made by a newly-elected pope, usually indicated that he would be the first cardinal named to

the Sacred College. Then he came from the sacristy and received the first obedience of the cardinals — a kiss on the hand and an embrace. He received the homage in silence, with no word for any of them. There was no smile on his sad face.

Cardinal Oreglia handed him the Ring of the Fisherman, as symbol that his own temporary authority was now over, and the new Pope immediately reappointed him Camerlingo. Then Pius went to give his first blessing in St. Peter's, but not as in older and happier days from the outer loggia. He had thought, when one of the Noble Guard suggested it, to give his blessing from there, but he decided against it when several advisers told him that such a course might be considered too much of a gesture of conciliation towards the Italian government.

The noise of the applause which greeted him, the shouts of the thousands who were acclaiming him as he entered the great basilica seemed to distress him. He turned to Archbishop Merry del Val who was beside him. "They should not do this to the servant in the house of the Master," he murmured.

When he reached the altar he stood, a cardinal on each side, in his white soutane and crimson mozzetta, the white skull cap almost invisible on the white hair, his hands crossed on his breast, his head bent as under a heavy weight. He did not look like the erect, smiling man who had entered the Sistine Chapel six days before. His color was less florid and there was resignation rather than alertness in the honest eyes.

The great basilica was silent now, waiting. Pius X looked for a long moment at the great statue of Saint Peter; a change seemed to come over him — an added dignity, an assurance. He lifted his hand with the great Ring on it and in a clear voice he intoned, "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Thousands of voices answered him, "From now and henceforth, forevermore."

"Our help is in the name of the Lord," he sang, and again came the response, "Who made Heaven and earth."

Then he raised his hand with the Fisherman's Ring, three

times made the sign of the cross, turned to the four directions of the earth and said, "May God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, bless you."

Through the arches of the great basilica came an "Amen" that was like a vast sigh. And Pope Pius X's first benediction to the city and the world was over.

In the evening a delegation of prelates, clergy and laymen came from Venice to bring to Pope Pius the good wishes of his own city. Among them he saw more than one who had given him good support in his work through the years. They wept as they knelt in a half circle about him, and he too was weeping; for a few moments no one could have said a word. Then the Pope asked his friends to rise. "Make the sacrifice as I had to make it," he told them. "Pray for me much, for it is a heavy cross which God has seen fit to place on my shoulders. You know how much I love you. I bless you and your families." He turned away but after taking a few steps came back to them again. "I bless the poor and the sick," he said. As he went away to his own apartments they saw his shoulders were shaking.

They all knew that for him the saddest thing of all was that he must henceforth bless his poor and sick from a distance. He could no longer help them personally, could not meet them on the street and hear their troubles. As one old friend said, their Cardinal had gone from the Venetian sunshine to the darkness of the catacombs.

His own physician had been in the Venetian delegation and, as he knelt before Pope Pius, the latter said softly, "Would you had closed my eyes in death," but the other only smiled and said, "May many years pass before that happens, Holy Father."

Also among the group had been Don Agnoletti. When Pope Pius recognized him, he gave that prophet a sad little smile, and they both knew they were thinking of the same thing — the little Latin rhyme improvised in the palace in Venice.

When his visitors were gone, Archbishop Merry del Val came to the Pope, asking him to sign letters notifying the heads of

States of his election, a message which his two predecessors had not sent — a fact which had caused resentment. "I am sorry you are so tired, Your Holiness," he said sympathetically.

"And you, Monseigneur, how tired you must be," said the Pope. "I have seen how hard you have worked. Now how do I sign?" He made a tentative signature on a scrap of paper. "Like this?" he asked, and then made his first signature as pope — "Pius PP. X."

Archbishop Merry del Val gathered up the papers. "My office as secretary to the conclave is over now and I want to thank you for your kindness to me and forgive any mistakes I have made. And I beg your blessing."

The Pope looked at him. "Do you wish to leave me?"

Archbishop Merry del Val was touched. "Oh, no, Your Holiness, but now the secretary of state whom you will nominate will take over my duties."

"Then I beg you to continue in your office until I decide on one. Do not abandon me. Stay for the present." And the young prelate consented.

When news of the election reached Monsignor Giuseppe Fossano, archpriest of Paeso, near Treviso, and an old friend of Cardinal Sarto since seminary days, he hastened to take a train for Rome, not certain why but feeling that perhaps he should comfort his dear friend. He went to the Vatican and asked that the Holy Father be told Monsignor Fossano had come. When he was admitted the two old friends looked at each other for a long moment, then Pope Pius leaned forward and kissed Monsignor Fossano on the forehead, and they began to talk, their voices at first broken with emotion.

"I could not eat nor sleep," said the Pope, "when I realized they were trying to raise me to the papal throne. When the votes for me reached twenty-four, I could no longer be silent and my conscience laid on me the obligation to tell them that I did not have the necessary attributes for Pope, that it was their duty to give their votes to someone else." He stopped and met

again the sympathetic glance of Monsignor Fossano. "But they repeatedly insisted and at last I had to yield. I did not want it but God wished it."

He kept his old friend with him for nearly an hour, and though the latter kept saying that he ought to go, the Pope did not wish him to leave. When he finally left, the Pope's voice trembled a little as he said, "I bless you and yours and send them hearty greetings." He went with Monsignor Fossano to the door and opened it for him. He kissed him on the forehead again and said good-by, then stood watching him go back to his Venetian parish, back to freedom.

Perhaps the news of the election fell hardest of all on a small group in the palace of the Patriarch — his sisters. Some friend in Rome had taken it upon himself to telephone them. When he was connected with the palace and heard Rosa's voice, he said, "Hello — hello — your brother is elected Pope."

The voice from the palace said, "You must be mistaken. You are speaking to Signorina Sarto, the Patriarch's sister."

The voice at the Roman telephone grew impatient. "Yes, yes, I know it. I tell you that since an hour ago you have been the sister of the Pope."

There was a silence. Then he heard Rosa drop the receiver and say as if to herself, "*Dio mio*, the work there — the washings there will be."

To the Pope's sisters that news came like a blow to the heart. "We had such a feeling of unhappiness when he went away. You know we did," said Anna sadly. "We must have felt this misfortune coming."

The others nodded, and Rosa said, "And when he was gone so long we began to wonder how long it took to choose a new pope. So many good cardinals — but we never thought of Beppo."

"And now he can't bring Amalia home from Possagno," said Lucia. "No doubt she will hear the news soon and how she will grieve!"

Why, they kept wondering, had the cardinals not chosen a younger man? Why place this terrible responsibility on their

brother's shoulders? They had all been living such a happy life together and they had been able to help him in his charities — and now that was all over. They wondered who would prepare his meals for him and if they would know how he wanted things done and who would keep him from giving away too much. Suddenly the thought came that perhaps they would never even see him again, and they wept anew. "We know he is sad too," said Rosa.

Over their lamentations they could hear the bells of Venice ringing joyously, and soon visitors came in to congratulate them and found they needed comfort instead. Regaining a little cheerfulness, they decided to compose a telegram to Monsignor Bressan: "The sisters of His Holiness, the chamberlain and the whole household send thanks to God and bow in reverence before the chair of Holy Peter and beg for a blessing."

Monsignor Bressan answered immediately. The Holy Father, he wired, held their telegram in his hand for a long time, reading it over and over, and he was sending his first apostolic blessing to his sisters and his patriarchal family. "Our beloved Holy Father is quite well," the message ended, for Monsignor Bressan knew that this was what his sisters wanted most to know.

In the Vatican their brother knew full well how they felt. When someone from Venice said to him, "The sisters of Your Holiness must be happy over this honor," he shook his head.

"They have been sad," he said. "I know they have wept ever since they heard the news, and they know that I have wept too."

A boy had bicycled from Castelfranco to Riese with word of the election. At first people were inclined to think it a jest, but soon telegrams established its truth. The flag on the city hall was raised and church bells rang. Excitement ran high. People hurried to tell his sister Signora Parolin, only to find she had already received a telegram from her sisters in Venice, a very simple one: "Brother Giuseppe elected pope. Name Pius X." Teresa had fainted on hearing the news, and when she recovered consciousness it was to weep bitterly. "He will have to stay there always.

He cannot come here to visit or go to Possagno any more to visit Battista," she said.

During the day the whole town came to the Inn of the Two Swords. One old man hobbled up to find out what the excitement was about, and it was shouted into his deaf ears that Giuseppe Sarto had been elected pope. After that he kept repeating to anyone who would listen, "And when I think of the cherries the little rascal used to eat off my trees and how often I chased him away."

In the afternoon Angelo Sarto, now postmaster and owner of a tobacco shop in the near-by town of Grazie, arrived at the Inn, in as troubled a frame of mind as the rest of the family. The climate of Rome would be so different from anything Beppo was accustomed to, he said, and all the excitement would be sure to injure his health. "And there will be many more people asking for help. Beppo is so good — never a cent in his pocket but the best heart in the world. I hope he has a good steward at the Vatican."

The priest of Riese gave orders to ring the bells for two hours, and the sound, so continuous and so unusual, brought people from the countryside about by cart and bicycle and carriage to the church. When they heard the news they hastened to the little house where the Pope had been born, and found the windows already covered with garlands; on the door hung a picture of Pius X.

In the evening the people went to the church to give thanks to God, so many of them that it seemed to be the celebration of a great feast. The pastor, Don Bellincanta, gave a short talk. "At this moment I am so moved by the news that I can say little — only that in this festal hour let us beg God that he will let the clear light of His grace illumine the first Shepherd in the battle for the right which today he begins to wage for the honor and the repute of the religion of Jesus Christ." He could say no more. He broke into tears and stepped back from the altar railing. "Long live the Pope!" shouted the crowd assembled in the church where Giuseppe Sarto long years ago had been an acolyte and where he had celebrated his first Mass.

The Inn of the Two Swords was crowded all evening, for everyone wanted to see the sister of the Pope. There were bands playing and fireworks, and the villagers passed the night laughing, weeping, embracing each other. Next day the town was full of reporters from various papers, from as far away as Naples and Venice.

Rome too was gay with lights that first night after Cardinal Sarto's election, and in the streets picture cards of him sold in great numbers, "*Com è bello,*" people said admiringly. He was as handsome, many thought, as Pius IX. No one really knew much about the new pope. What was known was that he was far from young, but that he was in fine physical condition, partly from his peasant inheritance, partly from his simple way of living. A little bent by the years, those who saw him that day had noted, but with a stately walk, and they said his face might have been stern had it not carried so humble and benign an expression.

The Italian government was favorable to the election of the Patriarch, chiefly because it had not wanted Cardinal Rampolla. The Jewish-Masonic *Tribune* called Pius a fine politician — one of the first rank. One German paper called him social-political, a benefactor of the poor, successful in mediating between employer and employee, a man who had won a victory over radical elements in Venice and therefore had rendered good service to his government.

During the days immediately following his election Rome heard the story of the old Spanish Cardinal Herrero, who had been taken very ill before the conclave met and was on the point of death when it ended. On the afternoon of the day of his election the new Pope had gone to pay the old prelate a visit and to give him his blessing. Only a few minutes after he left him the sick Cardinal had sat up in his bed as if inspired with new life. Next day he told people who came to see him that the new Pope's blessing had cured him, and that he was making preparations to return home soon because he felt so well.

Another, and very different story, was told to only a few. To Don Perosi, Pope Leo had said the year before his death, "Hold

your Patriarch very dear, Perosi, for in the future he may be able to do much for you and your music. We believe he will be Our successor."

The day set for the coronation of Pope Pius was August 9th. The throne was being prepared at St. Peter's where the ceremony was to take place. Delegations had come for the ceremony from cities and towns of Northern Italy where Pope Pius had once served, and they had been received in special audience. The Mayor of Riese headed the delegation of visitors from the Pope's birthplace, and told the Holy Father of the great celebration planned there for the day of the coronation.

"Your sister will be brought to the church in a carriage," he informed the Pope, "and she will be taken home in the same manner in honor of her brother. The town is everywhere decorated with arches and flags and it is to be illuminated at night. If only you could see it!"

The Pope's wistful expression showed how much he wished that too. But the look vanished when the Mayor added, "And sixty poor people are to be dined in the town hall in Your Holiness' honor." Pope Pius smiled then for the first time, and he asked the Mayor to give them all his blessing and to ask their prayers in the name of Our Lady of Cendrole: "For I am only a poor mortal little fitted for the heavy burden God has laid on me. They must all pray that He will grant me the necessary strength."

On August 8th the Pope received in audience an American delegation which had come to Rome to seek the blessing of Pope Leo XIII and had arrived after his death. Its members asked Cardinal Gibbons if he could arrange an audience for them with the new Pope, and although he had agreed to try, he explained that it might be very difficult since only members of the diplomatic corps had been received as yet. When no word came from the Cardinal, the group packed to leave and were just about to start for the train when they were notified that the Holy Father would see them.

He passed down the long kneeling line and said a few words to

almost everyone. Even those who did not know Italian could understand two words which he repeated more than once — “*cara America*.” Afterwards he said to Cardinal Gibbons, “I love these Americans. They are the blooming youth of Catholicism. Convey to them how gladly I impart my apostolic blessing to their whole country.”

Early on the morning set for the coronation the streets of Rome were crowded with people streaming to St. Peter’s Basilica. Many who had come from a distance spent the night sleeping in the open in order to be early for the ceremonies. At six the doors were opened and thousands pressed in, more than half of whom had no cards but hoped to get in anyway. Here and there small slips of paper were being passed among the congregation which read: “It is the deep wish of His Holiness that in the basilica there be no applause and that a reverent silence be observed.”

At half past nine the Pope left his rooms, accompanied by ecclesiastical dignitaries, Noble Guards and others of importance. He looked gentle and humble as always, his head a little bowed. Archbishop Merry del Val noticed that his mitre was crooked and straightened it for him. .

There had been a slight delay because of the pectoral cross which the Pope was wearing. All the pontifical jewels had been under seal since the death of Pope Leo and the new pontiff was wearing his own cross made, it was noted with horror by some of his entourage, of gilded metal. But it was his own, he said, mildly, and it had served him well on other occasions — why not now? “Besides I really brought no other with me,” he said, then added reassuringly, “of course no one will imagine it is not real.”

The group went into the basilica and at the Pope’s approach the silver trumpets broke into a triumphant march. The great throng knelt as Pius X was borne in on the *sedia*, continually giving his blessing to the people.

Against the Holy Door a throne had been erected, and near it the Pope was met by Cardinal Rampolla, who, as Archpriest of St. Peter’s, expressed his good wishes while the choir sang *Tu es Petrus*.

After a few moments of prayer the Pope went into the Chapel of St. Gregory, where the ceremony of coronation was to take place, and now the crowds, despite his plea for silence, could not restrain themselves from enthusiastic cheers. More than once he made a gesture that asked the crowd to be silent, several times with his finger to his lips to emphasize his wish. The Mass began and proceeded with only two variations: just after the *Confiteor* the Pope was given the pallium, and a special litany used only at coronations was sung immediately after the *Gloria*. After the Last Gospel he reseated himself on the throne, and Cardinal Rampolla presented him, according to ancient custom, with a silk purse containing twenty-five lire with the words, "Holy Father, the chapter and canons of this basilica offer the usual stipend for a Mass well sung."

For the final ceremony there stood about the Pope a circle of cardinals, prelates, guards and ambassadors, representatives of many lands. The choir sang, "*Corona aurea super caput*," while the mitre was removed from the Pope's head and Cardinal Macchi, as the oldest of the Cardinals, replaced it with the tiara. Then with the others he moved a little distance away and left the Pope standing alone. Pope Pius extended his arms wide as if he were embracing them all; then with his hand he traced three crosses over the kneeling thousands and gave the papal blessing. After this the Cardinals again surrounded him and old Cardinal Macchi came close and patted his shoulder as if to comfort him. The Pope gave the group a final blessing and afterwards sat quietly, his hands relaxed and heavy in his lap.

The procession formed once more and Pius X, flanked by great ostrich fans, the triple crown on his head, the golden cope about his shoulders, was borne again through the vast throng, now shouting and waving hats and fans and handkerchiefs, down the great middle nave of St. Peter's. More than one in the audience who knew him thought it strange to see the man who loved simplicity above all things forming the center of the greatest display of external pomp.

As his chair passed one group of Venetians they shouted, "Long

live our Patriarch!" and he turned to smile at them. He had promised that he would for a time continue to act as their archbishop.

Now at last the Pope could be alone for a little while. He went to his temporary apartments in the Vatican and stood looking from his window out over the Court of Sixtus V. In the center was an obelisk, an ancient marble needle, brought to Vatican Hill from the Circus of Nero where it had commemorated the death of early Christian martyrs. On its summit was carved a cross; the Pope knew that at its foot were carved the words: *Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat.*

The days ahead would be full of cares and trials, of persecution, perhaps. But he murmured to himself, "*Christus vincit,*" and Monsignor Bressan, entering the study, was glad to see that the tired face at last looked peaceful.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### *Early Pontificate*

DURING the weeks following the coronation, Archbishop Merry del Val and Monsignor Bressan were kept busy with the overwhelming mass of letters and telegrams of congratulation which poured into the Vatican, and with the visitors who came in an endless procession — presidents of Roman societies, members of the nobility with their wives, prelates, officers of the Noble Guard, ambassadors and ministers, as well as those of humbler rank who had worked with the Pope in earlier years.

The fact that so many officials of foreign countries were offering their congratulations was to some extent unusual in view of the strained relations that had existed during Pope Leo's reign between the Italian government, to which they were accredited, and the Vatican. But Venice had never been a Pontifical State and Cardinal Sarto's relations with the House of Savoy had been friendly. The Queen's brother, the Duke of Genoa, was Admiral of the Fleet and his flagship had often been stationed in Venice; he knew the Cardinal well. Soon after the coronation he and his duchess and their child were received in private audience, the first time since 1870 that one of the royal house had entered the Vatican. Some days later a veiled figure came to the Vatican by a private door and was received in audience; rumor said it was the Queen of Italy.

During the week of the coronation the diplomatic corps had been received in a body by the Pontiff. Some of them came with a supercilious, almost an amused attitude regarding the new Pope. Peasant born, how would he act toward them? What would he find to say?

The audience over, the diplomats found Archbishop Merry del Val waiting for them in the anteroom. They all sat down but were oddly silent, and he found it difficult to open a conversation.

Suddenly the Russian Minister turned to the Archbishop, "What under the sun is there in him that exercises so powerful an attraction?" he asked wonderingly.

There was no doubt to whom he referred, and the question loosed the tongues of the others, several of whom agreed that they felt rather foolish when they remembered their earlier remarks about His Holiness. But no one could say why they had been so moved at meeting him. At last the Portuguese ambassador spoke. "Since no one has answered the question of what his attraction is, I shall try. Is it perhaps his sanctity?"

Archbishop Merry del Val looked keenly at the speaker. "I think that is exactly it. I know — I have more than once felt it myself."

One of the first visitors to the Holy Father was the Prior General of the Dominicans who had a special request to make. "I once thought of joining your Order," said the Pope in reply, "and although I did not do that, at least I can say that I was chosen Pope on Saint Dominic's feast day." Then he promised to do what Leo XIII had done — to assume the protectorate of the Dominican Order.

Another visitor was Pope Pius' beloved spiritual son, Don Perosi. When he came they embraced and the younger man expressed his happiness that they would be together again. "Your Holiness has rejoined me at last," he said. "When I left Veniee you said we would be together again some day."

"I prophesied more truly than I meant to," said the Pope soberly.

For a time Pope Pius was almost bewildered by the questions he was asked to decide regarding the Vatican household. He changed none of the duties of the servants and few of the court officials. When he was asked if he wished to keep Pope Leo's cook or have a new one, he asked, "But is it necessary to have special cooks to prepare my plate of spaghetti or to pour my glass of wine?"

As for the servants of the palae, he was not merely kind to

them. Not long after his election he called them all together in an informal audience, spoke of them as "my family," and said he hoped they would all work together in friendship. That day marked the beginning of a complete change in attitude towards these servants who had never before been thus received by a pope.

Had it depended on him alone, his new dignity would have made no change at all in his own way of life. And he did, in fact, manage to simplify many things. Only in his charities did he remain the lavish spender. One of his first acts was to give to the poor of Rome the sum of ten thousand lire, and a smaller sum to the poor of Venice.

The Almoner was dazed at the size of the gifts. "Is that not rather a large sum, Your Holiness?" he asked hesitantly.

"Where is your trust in God's providence?" asked Pope Pius in gentle reproach, and the money was forthcoming. The Almoner learned that this was only the beginning of such gifts, and he came to agree heartily with an old friend of the Pope who said it would not be long before the Holy Father pawned the dome of St. Peter's to provide alms for the poor.

In the early days of his pontificate he found it hard to accustom himself to many things. When he took his first walk in the Vatican gardens he did not go alone; his secretary went ahead and two Swiss Guards followed. He missed his long daily walk on the Lido; for some weeks he had had no exercise in the open air. But these attended walks were very different from the carefree tramps in Venice, where he talked to passers-by, gave candy to the children, shared his tobacco with the loafers enjoying the sunshine, and chatted with gondoliers and fishermen.

And he missed the wonderful sea air of Venice — the Lido with its bracing breezes, its limitless stretch of sea. One day he turned to Monsignor Bressan, pacing solemnly beside him. In the distance they could hear the shrill sound of a whistle. "Listen," he said, "perhaps that is the train for Venice." Another time Monsignor Bressan found the Pope reading a printed sheet absorbedly and later saw it was a timetable of trains in the Venetian

province. The Pope found it very hard to realize that his activities were now limited — that this garden and this great palace must be his world.

He walked by preference in the early morning when the air was fresh and sweet and a breeze wafted from the Albanian hills blew against his face like the Adriatic wind. One part of the garden had been made into a vineyard for Pope Leo, and Pope Pius was told that his predecessor always came to watch the grapes gathered. That autumn he watched too, and as he did so forgot for a little while the guards and attendants, and dreamed himself back to Riese where he had smelled that wonderful fragrance of grapes — only in those days he had himself helped to gather them.

The part of the garden which he liked best was a lower terrace where he could sit and read at a little table or look out at his earthly kingdom. His spiritual realm was wide as the world; his material world was his palace, his garden, his basilica. The oldest gardener said that for a long time the new Pope had not noticed the flowers at all; but one day the old man brought him a bouquet of his best, which the Pope accepted with a pleased smile and promised to put in his own chapel.

Pope Leo had never used Castel Gandolfo on Lake Albano which the Italian government had given the popes in 1870 for a summer home, but Pope Pius went there at various times, his first visit made in late summer when pomegranates and roses filled the air with perfume. The last light of evening was dying on the lake as he stood with Monsignor Bressan, looking out into the violet distance, listening to the voices of the swimmers and the splash of their arms striking the water. "Now I have two worlds," he said. "The Vatican and this smaller one."

One morning the Pope was about to sign a document when he noticed a little dust on his pen. He wiped it on his sleeve as he had sometimes done when he wore his black cassock. Then he looked ruefully at the white cassock he now wore. "I have not yet learned to submit to new conditions, have I?" he said to Monsignor Bressan. And once he said to Don Perosi, "When I

wake in the morning and dress and my glance falls on these white robes I say to myself, '*Tu quis es?*'"

It had not taken him long to arrange his day as he liked it. He had always been careful to keep strictly to schedule, very different in that from his predecessor, who was apt to become absorbed in literary pursuits and forget the passing of time.

Pope Pius rose about four, shaved and dressed without a valet. Then he went to his private chapel, meditated and read Prime from an immense breviary which was his most treasured possession. He said Mass, served by one of his chaplains, and himself gave Communion to those invited to assist; then he heard a second Mass. A cup of black coffee awaited him in his study. A short walk in the garden. Back to his study and his correspondence and a few private audiences. A simple dinner at one, usually in the company of several members of his household.

Pius X broke the tradition which prescribed that the Pope eat alone. When first he invited someone to dine with him he saw consternation on several faces. When he asked the reason, he was told that it had been the custom of the popes to dine alone.

"Since when has it been the custom?" he asked.

"Since Urban VIII set the rule," was the answer.

"If Urban VIII had the right to make such a rule," he said serenely, "then Pius X has an equal right to abolish it."

His were simple meals however. He allowed five lire a meal for his own food, where even the frugal Leo XIII had allowed eight.

Many of the other treasured Vatican rules and customs had also been changed. No one was allowed to kiss his slipper. Those received in private audience sat while they talked with him. Simple priests were often guests at his table. Out of a stable full of horses he kept only two for his rare drives. As for the *sedia*, the chair of state, in which Pope Leo had delighted to be carried even to the garden, Pope Pius would use that only when formality absolutely demanded. He disliked it intensely; one reason he gave was that it made him dizzy.

From two to five o'clock in the afternoon he spent in his own

apartments alone. More audiences followed; the reading of his breviary, a walk in the garden if there was time. Back to work, a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, rosary with the household, and supper at nine — usually *minestrone* and wine. Then he saw more people — mostly intimate friends — until eleven or later, when Monsignor Bressan read aloud to him, often from his beloved *Imitation of Christ*, of which he had given away hundreds of copies to his friends. Then more work. The light in the Vatican windows burned as late as the light had burned in the study at Venice or in the seminary at Treviso or the rectory at Tombolo. At his own request his attendants went to bed, and the Vatican was asleep long before the Pope.

But he liked to work. He had always worked hard. And he was only sixty-eight years old, strong and healthy. There was an electric elevator in the Vatican for the use of infirm or elderly people, but Pope Pius rarely used it. In his new sedentary life he took advantage of every possible occasion to walk. But once when it was very hot, he unexpectedly decided to use the elevator and the two Noble Guards, whose duty it was to escort him, rushed to get to the third floor to receive him properly. They managed to arrive before he reached the floor and awaited him breathlessly. Unaware of their reason for haste, he shook his head at them. "Children, you ought not to run like that in this heat. See, even I used the lift today."

One thing which Pope Pius missed was going out among the people and preaching to them, hearing confessions and listening to the children at catechetical instruction. One day the thought came to him that even if he could no longer go to the people, the people might come to him and he would preach to them. So he invited members of the various parishes of Rome to come, each on a different Sunday afternoon, to the Vatican. At first the government, hearing of the plan, was restive about these sermons. But they could not validly object if the Bishop of Rome wished to preach within the Vatican limits to his people.

On Sunday afternoons the trumpets sounded, and the Holy Father, in white cassock and scarlet mantle, greeted the crowds

assembled in the Court of St. Damasus. He did not sit on a throne; instead a platform was set up and from this he gave talks on the Gospel of the day — simple talks without rhetoric or fine phrases, parish sermons. Thus he remained at least in partial touch with the people he loved.

Each Sunday about twenty-five hundred persons received tickets of admission to these sermons. Each church received a sufficient number for its congregation, but before many weeks passed, others asked to come and there were often famous visitors to Rome among these groups.

The pilgrimages increased with the weeks, and the Holy Father was happy to receive in audience his sons and daughters from all over the world. They came from everywhere — pilgrimages from France, from Hungary, from Mexico and England and from many cities of Italy. Once eight hundred people came from Treviso and he greeted them with the smile they knew and loved. "If I could tell you all that is in my heart," he said, "when night came I should still be speaking."

Once he received a hundred boys who had just made their First Communion, and it was plain from his fatherly air how much he loved young people. He asked them questions and listened carefully to the answers. Then he gave each a medal and a rosary and told them to be always brave and true to their faith. And they promised with one voice that they would.

Meantime Rome — the city — and the whole Catholic world wondered about the policies of this new pope who had as yet spoken no public word. Would he keep the old or turn to the new? Would he bring in innovations or keep everything unchanged?

On October 4, 1903, came his first encyclical, addressed to the primates, patriarchs, archbishops and bishops of the Church. It read much like his pastoral letters — the same clarity, the same simplicity of statement, the same fatherly gentleness, the same humility. It declared that his one aim was to restore all things in Christ — "*instaurare omnia in Christo.*"

"As borne by God's love," he wrote, "we set our hand to the work of withstanding the apostasy from God. We proclaim that the interests of God shall be our interests and for those we are resolved to spend all our strength and our very life. Hence, should anyone ask us for a symbol and an expression of our will, we will give this and no other — to restore all things in Christ so that Christ may be all in all."

He emphasized especially the Catholic teaching concerning marriage, the education and instruction of children, the possession and use of property, the reconciliation of all classes of society in accordance with Christian traditions. He spoke of the need of training zealous and capable priests: "The Church needs priests who have formed Christ in themselves in order thus to form Christ in others." He urged the universal practice of charity, and he ended with a direct but not bitter reference to the Roman Question: "The conviction will awaken in all men that the Church, as the institution of Christ, must enjoy the greatest possible liberty and not be subjected to any other power, that our fight for liberty is not merely in defense of the most sacred rights of religion, but also a bulwark for the common welfare and security of nations."

Those who had been wondering now knew where the new Pope stood. He was beginning his pontificate with a program which would disregard politics and seek its strength in the inner forces of the Church.

As the weeks went by another question was being asked in Rome: who would be the Cardinal Secretary of State? This appointment was made only for the lifetime of each pope, and Leo XIII's Secretary of State, the once powerful Cardinal Rampolla, was now merely Archpriest of St. Peter's.

The post was a difficult one to fill, for the Secretary of State was the Prime Minister of the Pope and acted as his minister of foreign affairs in addition, being consulted on almost every important matter with which the papacy must deal, seeing the Pope daily, receiving weekly the diplomatic corps, and dealing with all matters which it is desired to bring to the attention of

the Pontiff. He also directed the three large bureaus of the Secretariat of State and their countless employees.

The newspapers made guesses; diplomatic and political groups were combed for possibilities. Many suggestions were offered and more than one high official came to Archbishop Merry del Val to suggest that he place before the Pope the name of some prelate who seemed well fitted for the office. Once when he presented the name of such a man and heartily endorsed it, the Pope listened, and then said gently, "In matters of such importance it is better to follow the promptings of God than those of men."

Archbishop Merry del Val agreed, but he hoped the choice would be made soon. He wanted to leave the heat of Rome and go to England at the end of a strenuous year in which he had carried out the duties of the conclave and ever since had acted as temporary secretary of state for a Pope who knew little of Rome or the Vatican.

"I never get vacations," he remarked sadly to Monsignor Bressan, but despite his hard work he looked fresh and full of energy, and evidently did not really mind waiting. He continued to fill the temporary office, finding that he was daily growing fonder of the Pope, and it was evident that his affection was reciprocated.

One day in late October the Pope handed some letters to Monseigneur Merry del Val and said, "Read these for me — and there is one for you at the bottom of the pile."

"Very well, Your Holiness, I will see to them and report to you," he said.

Returning to his own room, he opened the thick envelope and found its bulk was due to a package of bank notes. He smiled tenderly: the Pope, thoughtful as usual, evidently knew that he had received no remuneration for his work of many weeks. Then he saw that a letter was enclosed with the notes. On reading it, he went hurrying back to the Pope's study, the open letter in his hand. "Oh, Your Holiness, I am the last person in the

world for that position," he said in distress. The letter was his appointment as Secretary of State to Pius X.

The Pope looked at him, his blue eyes at once compassionate and amused. "Courage, Raffaelo. Take courage. It is the will of God."

Archbishop Merry del Val, recognizing the words he had spoken to the Patriarch of Venice at the time of his election, looked at the Pope ruefully. Pope Pius touched his shoulder gently and said, "We shall labor together for the love of Mother Church."

At his first consistory on November 12, 1903, and immediately after the postulation of the cause of Jeanne d'Arc, Pius X raised Bishop Callegari of Padua and Archbishop Merry del Val to the purple.

When the Pope addressed the assembled cardinals at this first consistory, he referred at the beginning of his talk to his own unworthiness for the great task they had assigned him. Surely, he said, anyone would have hesitated to take the place of a pope who had done so much to spread the faith, who had been a great defender of the rights of labor, who had shown such wisdom in combating modern errors. But he promised to do his best and told the cardinals that he relied on them to help him.

A feeling was growing in Rome that the new Pope would achieve by simple directness of character diplomatic successes which Pope Leo's polished statecraft had not won. He was extremely intelligent and he knew human nature. He did not have Pope Leo's majestic air, but on certain occasions he knew how to be regal, although his usual manner was mild and kind and simple. The opinion crystallized more and more that here was a man who would not often say, "*Non possumus*," but that when he said it he would not change.

Cardinal Merry del Val, who, as time went by, came to know him better than anyone save his own family, was interested to see how the Pope's usually gentle and often yielding manner

changed when it was a matter of defending the rights of the Church or settling some grave problem of moral theology. His voice grew deeper and became full of authority. Once on receiving the request of a bishop for an exception of faculties, Cardinal Merry del Val brought the matter to the attention of the Pope for settlement.

"This is a request which only the Pope can grant?" the Holy Father asked.

"Yes, Your Holiness, that is why I have come to trouble you with it."

Almost under his breath, and as if to himself the Pope murmured, "No doubt — no doubt — *facciamo da Papa.*" And then in a louder voice, "So let us act as Pope," and he gave a firm and unhesitating answer.

Sometimes, faced with a decision, he would point to the crucifix on his desk and say, "He will decide. He is the *padrone* of the house." And that was true: the house had no other master.

Monsignor Bressan and Giovanni knew that the Pope spent more than one sleepless night because he knew he must make a decision which would cause suffering. But when the time came he made it firmly.

When he spoke informally and in conversation he never used the formal We or Us. Only on the great occasions when, as he said, he must act as pope, did he speak with the traditional majestic plural.

As time went by he learned, but not easily, to do without the freedom which had hitherto been his. It was very difficult. Once his Secretary of State found the Holy Father at his desk looking at a picture, and saw it was a photograph of one of the canals in Venice. Looking up, he said as if half to himself, "To go outside, to go outside." Then he looked with sadness at the sympathetic face before him. "Every day, Raffaelo, I pray that the Pope may have no more wishes."

Pius X had not been long elected when he began to consider the provision that must be made for his sisters. Until this last and

greatest office had been given him, they had lived with him and kept his house for him. Now they were left alone.

They had said when he was first elected, "Thank God for one thing. We are all able to support ourselves and we have the house at Riese to live in. We need trouble Beppo for nothing. He will have so many cares now."

"Poor dear," Anna had said, "he has all the poor people in the whole world now to think of, not only those in Venice. And of course he will try to help them all."

It was interesting to note that none of his sisters nor his brother ever thought that they might profit by his advance. All that mattered to them was that he had been taken from them for life.

But their brother had every intention of having his sisters as close to him as possible. Before long he sent for all three and established them in a modest apartment not far from the Vatican. They lived as plainly as ever there, however, and were granted no unusual favors because of his high position. He did not exalt them materially, but he gave them what was to them the greatest favor: their privileged place in his private chapel and at St. Peter's on great feast days. Other privileges they did not expect, nor did any of his relatives approach him to win titles or rank. Several people suggested that he have his nephew Don Parolin come to the Vatican. He was a very fine priest, the Holy Father admitted that, and he was proud of him — "but he is young and has a parish. He is better off there than in a palace."

But even if they themselves expected no favors, others hoped for them from the Pope's sisters, called by the sentimental in Rome "*le sorelle santissime*," and many came to ask their intercession with their brother. After a few encounters of this sort, the sisters became less accessible to such people. They had simplicity, but they also had a good store of Venetian astuteness.

Twice a week, usually on Wednesdays and Saturdays, they passed an hour with their brother, drank a glass of wine with him and together recited the rosary. These brief hours were

refreshing for them all, for they brought back to the four Sartos the happy family life of Riese.

Once a visitor said to Rosa, "Surely the Pope must often regret his beautiful Venice," and the Pope's sister looked at her coldly. "He is always resigned to everything," she said. And another visitor said, "They say your brother is a saint." Rosa looked aghast, then she laughed. "No, no, he is no saint. But he is a good priest and a good bishop. And every night I pray for him that he may be a good pope. But a saint — no, no."

When the Sarto sisters took up residence in Rome the leaders of the Black society were much disconcerted. It was known of course that the Sartos did not come from the aristocracy or even from the gentry, but they did nothing to disguise their peasant origin either in their ways or their dress. The patricians and their ladies thought the Pope's sisters would be more amenable to Roman ways if the Pope made them papal countesses.

When the Pope was told of this, he was not annoyed, but he was plainly amused. "I have made them the sisters of the Pope — what more can I do for them?" he asked.

But the Roman ladies did not yield easily. At least the country styles could be modified a little. One lady persuaded the Signorine Sarto to put on Parisian hats instead of the Venetian shawls they were still wearing. It was an insult to their brother, they were told, to dress in that fashion.

When next they went to see him, they wore the new hats. At first the Pope stared at these strangers but when he recognized the three ladies under the fine headgear, he began to laugh. "How ugly you look, my dears," he said. "I don't like them on you. It is because you look like home to me that I love you in the shawls."

And so, although secretly they liked the hats very much and wore them sometimes, when they came to see their brother they wore their shawls. He preferred them and that was enough for them. And the Roman ladies had to be satisfied with their half triumph.

When the archbishopric of Lucca fell vacant, Pope Pius ap-

pointed to the post a prelate he knew to be most worthy. But the inhabitants of the former ducal city were dissatisfied with an archbishop of no birth or social background, and they sent an official to ask the Pope to give them a prelate of good family.

Pope Pius listened gravely as his visitor marshalled his arguments, and then, the amused look in his eyes a little less kindly than usual, he said, "Then I am to understand that a few months ago you would certainly have rejected me had I been appointed Archbishop of Lucca instead of Pope."

All those interested in good church music knew his zeal for its purity and felt that the musical interests of the Patriarch of Venice augured well for the future of the art he loved now that he was Pope. They were certain he would order the restoration of Gregorian chant, the basic and true music of the Church. They knew that Leo XIII had been insistent on the need for reform, and that he had given Don Perosi much liberty to change the programs of church music then currently played and sung in Rome. Then too he had asked the Benedictines at Solesmes to enter on the enormous task of restoring the old Gregorian melodies and texts to their original form. But Pope Leo no doubt realized that this whole matter needed the personal attention of some future pope who was himself a musician and student of liturgical music. He himself cared little for music, and even of Don Perosi's compositions and Palestrina's Masses he had little to say save that he liked them best when they were short.

In the autumn of 1903 Camille Bellaigue, the well-known French authority on Church music, had come armed with a letter of introduction from Don Perosi, who was convinced that he would find strong sympathy at the Vatican for the matter he had in mind. He was ushered into the Pope's study, where the shutters were half closed, for the Roman day was warm. The Pope sat waiting for him at a mahogany desk, and there was just room between door and desk for the three ritualistic genuflections. But Pope Pius, as he often did, impatiently cut the third one short and took M. Bellaigue's hand in his.

It took a very short time for the visitor to realize that a strong bond existed between him and the Holy Father on the subject both had at heart. He realized that, as Don Perosi had predicted, he would have little difficulty in presenting the plea he had come to make.

The Pope spoke of his own sufferings with current church music. "Once at Mantua they played," and he began to hum, "*O Norma ai tuoi ginocchi.*" Then he said smilingly, "But don't tell people you heard the Pope singing an operatic air." He spoke of some of the improvements which Don Perosi had already brought about. "The feelings of some of the faithful were hurt — but by no means all the faithful. There are some who understand the full beauty of true church music. And there are those who, when they hear it, exclaim, as some did here in Rome, that they were enchanted as they listened. But of course that is not exactly what we want either — enchantment should not take the place of love. However, tell me exactly what you wish me to do."

"Dear Holy Father," said M. Bellaigue, "what we wish is to beg Your Holiness to speak to the world as some years ago you spoke to Venice on the subject of church music."

The Pope was silent for a few moments; then he said firmly, "Yes, it shall be done — and soon. I shall write a decree on the subject. But say nothing of it as yet. For on this subject we shall have a battle." Then he added thoughtfully, "more than one."

As M. Bellaigue rose to go, the Holy Father told him, "It shall be ready in six weeks. I hope we can accomplish something by these means, for I want the prayer of my people to rest on the beautiful."

Two matters early engaged the Holy Father's attention — that of reform of the Breviary and reform of Canon Law.

His object in reforming the Breviary, as had been that of various Popes before him, was to restore the proper celebration of the seasons of the Church, for the observance of the feasts of various saints had displaced in great part the offices of the ecclesiastical year which were the basis of Christian devotion. A second object was to rearrange the Psalter so that it would be entirely

recited during one week. This last was with him a labor of love, and truly a labor. Others had attempted it, Benedict XIV and Pius IX among them. Leo XIII had appointed a commission to deal with the Breviary but their work had ended with his death.

Now Pius X undauntedly took up the subject once more and set up a commission to make the revisions, which he knew would be a long task and would take years of study to accomplish.

Regarding Canon Law, there too there had been for a long time a great need of recodification, of clarifying confused terms, of reforming portions of the laws to fit the times.

The fifteen Congregations which had been established by Pope Sixtus V in 1587 were, in the course of time, no longer carrying out the business for which they had been founded. The jurisdiction of each was no longer clear nor the apportionment of duties; some carried on very little business while others were worked too hard. Many of the Roman Cardinals had urged Leo XIII to institute reform in the Curia and now they were urging Pius X to do so.

While he was still at work on his decree on music, he called to the Vatican Monsignor Pietro Gasparri, one of the ablest canonists in Rome, to discuss with him the very important and very tangled matter of Canon Law.

He had only one question to ask of Monsignor Gasparri. "Would it be possible for a group of men who understand the subject and who are given all possible assistance to make this codification?"

"Yes, Holy Father. It would mean a good deal of work and would take some years. But it can be done."

"Very well, then," said the Pope. "Let us begin to do it."

In a few days Monsignor Gasparri found himself at work, appointed secretary to the cardinals commissioned to undertake the revision. The Pope himself worked on notes for them, and in March, 1904, gave them an autographed memorandum detailing the steps he wished taken, among them that the commission ask the bishops to consult with the canonists of their respective dioceses regarding the revisions needed. The canonists were then to be sent to Rome to discuss the subject with the commission.

Six weeks after his promise to Monsignor Bellaigue, the Holy Father on November 22, 1903, issued a *Motu Proprio* on sacred music. He had written it entirely himself, with no help from anyone. It was definite and plain spoken; it made clear the fact that church music must be holy, that it must be true art, that it must be universal. For the first time rules were being set down — a sort of legal code of sacred music.

Various popes had spoken on this subject. Pope Benedict XIV had written that, "church music must be of such a nature as to arouse among the faithful sentiments of piety and devotion and lift the soul to God." In 1901 Leo XIII had also insisted on "active participation in the heart and mind of the listener." But now Pius X, a musician himself, was demanding much more than either of his predecessors.

Since the qualities he wished stressed in church music were to be found in Gregorian chant, it appeared then that this type of music was preferred for liturgical use. He made it clear, however, that modern music was not banned, only that which was theatrical. Paid singers were no longer to be employed; bands and orchestra accompaniments were forbidden. Instruction in sacred song was to be given in all seminaries and in town and country parishes — the Holy Father's own long experience with music in parishes made him know the latter was practicable.

Not everyone who read the decree agreed with it. Some thought this matter of music was entirely secondary and not one of the important and pressing questions of the times. Others said it was a harsh law, full of small and unnecessary changes — for example, it brought about the suppression of an old hymn long loved in Rome, *O Felix Roma*, because it was not Gregorian. This angered both clergy and laity of the city. "Reformers are ruthless people," sighed one. A reporter, writing in the newspaper *Figaro*, said that it showed the Vatican was after all merely a sacristy with the peculiar mental outlook of sacristies.

The Pope had expected such criticism; he had met with it in Venice. "Don't be discouraged," he told M. Charles Bordes, founder of the Schola Cantorum and the Choir of Saint-Gervais

in Paris, when the latter complained of the opposition he encountered. "You are young and ardent. Keep working, but do so without hate or rancor. We will see the world coming over to our side little by little."

On the other hand there were many who saw the aim of Pius X: church music must be made subordinate to prayer. To restore all things in Christ, he had declared as his intention when he took up the burden of office—and to him that included making devotional music Christian, making it a part of prayer and an aid to worship. He had realized that some enthusiasts would immediately want to banish from the churches all music which was not pure Gregorian, but this was, he said, "an exaggerated fad." What he wanted was purity and simplicity not only in music but in all church decorations. He hated to see fine walls and stately pillars covered with cheap drapes and flimsy hangings. "Don't ruin their beauty with *stracci rossi*," he said more than once. To him the "red rags" and commonplace music were both bad, and he meant to handle such matters, as he put it, "*suaviter, but also fortiter.*"

On December 23rd Pope Pius held the first Christmas Consistory of his pontificate. Cardinal Oreglia, Dean of the Sacred College, read an address, and the Pope responded with a talk, a simple sermon on the mysteries taught mankind in the stable at Bethlehem, of the gifts brought down to humanity through humility and suffering, how only Christian charity and the rule of the law of God in the hearts of men would conquer the world for Christ.

Before leaving his apartment to go to the chapel for midnight Mass on his first Christmas Eve in the Vatican, the Pope looked at the picture on his dresser which Rosa had framed in fluted green paper with silver stars. It was the photograph of his mother which had hung in his room in Venice.

He smiled into the serious eyes looking straight into his own. Then he put on the alb of fine lace, the chasuble of gold tissue, and, completely vested, went into his chapel where above the

altar in a shrine of crystal, between two adoring angels, hung the picture of that other Mother with her Child. He began the Mass, a low Mass, hidden and solitary, while at Santa Maria Maggiore and the Ara Coeli and other churches in Rome immense congregations assisted at high Masses resplendent with music and hundreds of lighted candles on the altars.

When he was back in his own apartment, he found himself remembering so many other Christmas Masses, most recently at Venice where after he had listened for hours to the confessions of his people — gondoliers and fishermen and their families as well as the ladies and gentlemen from the great palaces — he sang the Mass. It had been a feast both for eye and soul, the splendor and ceremony of that midnight Mass at St. Mark's with the bells pealing from the campanile. The music had been a part of the Mass and the voices true and pure as they answered his own, and the candle light glowed on the wonderful crèche.

He thought of earlier Christmases — at Mantua, at Treviso when he was rector of the seminary, at Salzano, at Tombolo, where he had sung his first midnight Mass when he was twenty-three years old. He remembered that best and most clearly of all, and the deep and holy happiness that filled him as he trudged home through the cold Venetian morning to Rosa's good hot coffee. And now, after the many years, he was once again celebrating a Christmas Mass as simple as the one celebrated by the young priest at Tombolo.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### *Some Great Encyclicals*

IN MARCH of 1904, the thirteenth centenary commemoration of the death of Saint Gregory the Great was celebrated throughout the Catholic world; everywhere services were held in honor of the great Pope who had maintained the primacy of the Roman see in the East as well as in the West, and who, though he had greatly extended the temporal power of the papacy, remained one of the great mystics of the Church.

Calling for the observance of this feast, Pope Pius wrote in his encyclical that although existing conditions differed greatly from Saint Gregory's day — "as we have more than once repeated, nothing is changed in the life of the Church. From her divine Founder she has inherited the virtue of being able to supply at all times, however much they change, all that is required not only for the spiritual welfare of souls, which is the direct object of her mission, but also everything that aids progress in true civilization, for this flows as a natural consequence of that same mission."

In Italy there were many celebrations in Saint Gregory's honor during the week of his feast, and Pope Pius invited savants and artists and musicians to come to Rome to attend a Congress of Liturgical Art and to join in glorifying one of its greatest patrons. On the feast day itself the Pope celebrated a pontifical Mass at St. Peter's where the Saint's body was entombed, using for the occasion a new missal which had been specially illuminated for him by the Benedictine monks of Solesmes.

Don Perosi had worked for weeks to prepare the music for this great occasion. He had recruited nearly fifteen hundred voices from the Roman colleges — North-American, French,

Irish, and others — and from religious houses in Rome. The rehearsals had been kept secret and the Holy Father was surprised and greatly moved when he heard the mighty chorus fill the basilica. The many voices singing in unison the music he loved seemed a realization of his dream for the perfect performance of Church music.

As he finished the Preface and as the Cardinal Deacon turned the page to the *Sanctus*, the Pope saw painted on the finely illuminated page a gold lyre on which rested a crucifix. This symbol held his eye — the loving offering of men chanting the glory of God in their place of exile to a man who was, they knew, eager to place on the music of the Church the image of his Lord.

A few days later, on March 18th, a consistory was held at which the Pope, after thanking the Sacred College for their great assistance during his first year in office, spoke of the growing troubles in France. From his predecessor he had inherited the serious problems created by anti-clerical bitterness in that country. Religious orders there had been dissolved and denied the right to preach and teach; complete separation of Church and State was threatened, as well as repudiation of the Concordat with the Holy See.

The Pope had protested, in this very first year of his pontificate, against the intolerable religious conditions, but Emile Loubet, the French President, had allowed his letter to go unanswered for two months, and when the reply did come it was rude, almost insolent. He was regent and not ruler of the Republic, wrote its President, and could not influence the course of legislation. But he added that he thought any measures taken against the Church had been made necessary by the conduct of some of the religious communities in France.

As he read the reply, the Pope said to Cardinal Merry del Val, "Do you not feel with me that the time is coming when Our Lord is going to take the affairs of France into His own hands?"

and when the Cardinal assented, the Pope went on, "Into those two divine Hands, one of which casts down to the ground if need be, while the other lifts up, revivifies and purifies. . . ."

Now, at the consistory, the Pope told the assembled cardinals that he wished in this matter to act as apostle rather than as diplomat, and that he was still hoping to preserve friendly relations with France but was finding it increasingly difficult. As he spoke his deep voice grew sad and compassionate. "In that land," he said, "there have been for a long time souls who weep — and what souls, among the best of the millions of creatures who serve God. They deserve at least some consolation and this comfort: that there is someone to insist that their rights have been violated and outraged, not only in their faith but in their humanity."

In April, 1904, President Loubet of France returned an earlier visit made by King Victor Emmanuel, and, while he was in Rome, brazenly ignored the Pope. This open insult, followed by a request from the Pope for the recall of certain "state bishops" appointed by the French government, brought about the threatened break in diplomatic relations. On May 21, 1904, the French ambassador to the Holy See was recalled. It was evident now that there was no chance to avoid a real rupture. Many in France were alarmed, but others remembered that the persecuted Catholics in Germany — a Protestant country — had, by acting in their own defense, brought the Kulturkampf to nothing and now held the balance of power in the Reichstag.

In September 1904, the Holy Father confirmed the commission appointed the year before by Leo XIII to take charge of the golden anniversary celebration of the proclaiming of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and Rome prepared to celebrate it in fitting fashion. On the feast day itself all Rome made holiday. In every church processions and high Masses were held; and the great steps leading to the Trinità dei Monti were like a cascade of fire. On the Piazza di Spagna the statue of Our Lady

was adorned with garlands and at its base flowers were heaped high.

On January 8, 1905, Pope Pius presided at the beatification of Jean-Marie Vianney, the Curé d'Ars. The basilica was filled with the thousands who came to honor the gentle man who had all his life remained a country priest, yet who had drawn thousands of men and women to a remote village, who wore himself out with long hours in the confessional, with years of listening to the sorrows of those who came to him for comfort and help. In his address the Pope suggested that the newly beatified priest be made the model of the parochial clergy everywhere.

On April 15, 1905, the Holy Father issued an encyclical — *Acerbo nimis* — dealing with the teaching of Christian Doctrine. Into its writing he put the experience of his own work of almost fifty years of teaching catechism and training others to do so. To him the subject had always been of paramount importance. One day a lady of wealth asked him what she could do for the Church. "Teach the catechism," he had responded instantly, and to her amazement, for she had in mind the making of a large gift and not of acting as a catechist.

Now in the encyclical he spoke of the religious indifference which was to be found not only among the ignorant but among the cultivated, "whose lack is so profound and saddening to contemplate. The intellect is a guide . . . but if it lacks its companion light, the knowledge of divine things, it will be only an instance of the blind leading the blind . . . whereas Christian teaching not only bestows on the intellect the light by which it attains truth but from it our will draws that ardor by which we are raised to God and joined with Him in the practice of virtue." And he added that it was vain to expect fulfillment of the duties of a Christian from one who does not even know them.

The remedy — the Pope called it the only remedy — lay in catechetical instruction for all. In his encyclical he posed the question of whose was the important duty of increasing religious

knowledge. He answered that it was, first of all, the duty of the pastors of souls whose most important task should be to instruct the faithful in the things of God. It was to be done by preaching to the people and teaching the young and the ignorant: "If this labor of the catechist be lacking, then the foundation is wanting."

The teaching of catechism had unfortunately come to be considered in many places as of small account, but to Pope Pius it was so important that he now made it clear that catechists must be men who had been themselves carefully instructed in their subject. Sermons were for those already instructed. It was much easier to find a preacher capable of delivering an elaborate discourse than to find a catechist who could impart instruction praiseworthy in every detail: "They are mistaken who think that because their hearers are inexperienced and uneducated the work of catechising can be performed in a slipshod manner; the less educated the hearers, the more zeal and diligence must be used."

The encyclical not only gave advice and suggestions regarding method. It gave explicit directions: "On every Sunday and holy day, with no exception, throughout the year, all parish priests . . . shall instruct boys and girls for the space of one hour from the text of the catechism on those things they must believe and do in order to attain salvation." This, he made clear, was to be in addition to instructions for First Communion.

In order that priests be not too heavily burdened, Pope Pius decreed that the society known as the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine be canonically established in each and every parish. Through this organization of the laity there would be provided trained helpers for the priests.

The encyclical gave great impetus to the work of the Confraternity. It had been quietly carrying on for years the very work which the Holy Father was now officially declaring must be undertaken everywhere, and he used it as an example of what could and must be done.

On June 11, 1905, Pope Pius X published a pronouncement on Catholic Action (*Il fermo proposito*), by far the longest and most detailed on the subject which any pope had ever made. The general public reaction to the document was great and immediate and probably equalled only by that aroused by the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII.

The Holy Father, however, did not consider the document as new or daring; to him it was the fruit of his long years of diocesan work among his people. The phrase "Catholic Action" had of course been used before, but Pius X clarified its actual meaning: it was the laity's share in the apostolic mission of the church.

He made it clear that the need of such organized group action by the laity existed as never before. At one time the rights of God entered into the constitution of all Christian States, but now the Church and the Pope were no longer recognized as part of the social organism: "In other times it was the popes and bishops who intervened in defense of their children . . . today it must be the children who will rise up in defense of their father, the laity in defense of the hierarchy."

His demand for action would not, he knew, please "certain timid souls who, though good Catholics, are so attached to their habitual quiet and so afraid of every innovation that they believe it is quite sufficient to pray, because God knows best how to defend the Faith." These optimists, he was afraid, would wait in vain for society to re-Christianize itself merely through the prayers of the virtuous. Of course prayer was necessary, but the Pope pointed out that India and Japan would not have been converted merely by the prayers of Xavier, nor would the Apostles have conquered the world had they not been workers as well as believers, and so in turn heroes and martyrs.

The Pope called those pessimists who saw the world so full of evil that they became dispirited, fearing they could accomplish nothing against such forces. "We have been like rabbits," he wrote, "too frightened of everything and anything . . . we must cease fearing to give offense." And he continued, "To carry out

this work aright we must have divine grace, and the apostle receives none if he is not united to Christ. Only when we have formed Jesus Christ within ourselves shall we more easily be able to give Him back to the family and to society."

He wanted the Catholic laity "each to work according to his own strength for his neighbor's good." This meant that they must unite to combat anti-Catholic influences and set out to reestablish the principles whereby human authority represents God; they must take to heart the interests of the working people, especially the factory and agricultural workers, and they must do it not only by prayers and gifts of money, but by giving themselves, by listening to the troubles of others, by soothing their sufferings, by seeking to improve their economic condition through just laws. In short, they must defend and support the rights of God, of the Church, and of her people in every way.

The Pope also made it clear that the time had come for the laity to "prepare themselves prudently and seriously for political life in case they should be called to it." This was an important statement, especially for Italy, since previously papal prohibition had kept Catholics from taking part in national elections — the famous *non expedit* of his predecessors. Pope Pius thought the time had come for Catholic citizens to begin to help build security on a Christian basis. He advised also the convocation of congresses of lay Catholics, both general and local.

It was a practical and far-seeing scheme which the Pope proposed, showing that he understood well that the Church's needs often changed with the times. One day when he was talking with a group of cardinals the Pope asked what they thought was the thing most necessary at the present time to save society.

"To build Catholic schools," said one; "To multiply churches," said another, but the Pope shook his head at both answers, and also at a third suggestion, "To increase the clergy."

"No, no," he said. "What is most necessary at the present time is to have in every parish a group of laymen who are at the

same time virtuous, well-instructed, determined, and really apostolic."

Just before Christmas, on December 20, 1905, Pope Pius issued a decree on a subject which had been a matter of debate for years through all the Catholic world, but for which no special regulations had ever been laid down by the papacy. The decree was long and explicit, but its gist was summed up in this sentence: "Frequent and daily Communion should be open to all the faithful of whatever rank or condition of life, so that no one who is in the state of grace and who approaches the Holy Table with a right and devout intention can lawfully be hindered therefrom."

Until Pope Pius made this definite statement, opinion had varied widely as to what constituted frequent Communion, and what ought to be the conditions for its reception. Even though more than one pope had written on the matter, none had given a definite doctrinal decision.

For the confusion of opinion on the subject there was little doubt that Jansenism was to blame. This movement, originating in the seventeenth century, had been termed by Saint Vincent de Paul one of the most dangerous heresies ever to trouble the Church. It was a system advanced by men of good intentions and of austere faith, but its chief result was to keep the weak from the deepest sources of spiritual strength, and to discourage the sinner from seeking those sources of help.

The movement had drawn excellent and scholarly people into its fold, for it was based on a complete conviction of the unworthiness of man before his Creator and gave rise to a great fear of receiving the Holy Eucharist unworthily. It had its beginnings, as one critic wrote, mostly in religious ardor which had lost its balance in trying to reach for heroism. Through following its tenets many had come to regard Holy Communion as a reward rather than a remedy for human frailty, and had abstained even from their Easter Communion.

Jansenism had been condemned and its influence greatly

weakened long before Pius X became pope, but the movement had left its traces on the faithful. One of its worst results had been that, although some people had abstained from Communion because of their sense of unworthiness, as the years passed this abstention became a habit and was no longer from fear of unworthiness; instead it was often due to indifference.

What gave Jansenism its lingering importance, however, was chiefly the fact that no priest could give his people definite rules regarding the dispositions necessary for receiving Communion. What was frequent Communion—weekly or monthly or less often? Priests, when asked this, were apt to vary in their answers. Some theologians thought a perfect disposition was necessary before the faithful could approach the altar; others thought a state of grace and a right intention sufficed. Often the number of people at the altar rail of a church depended on whether or not the pastor was or was not a man of Jansenist leanings.

Pius X's decree of 1905 was not, however, his first mention of the subject. In the very first year of his pontificate he had included frequent use of the Sacraments as one of the things which he intended to restore in Christ. Now, however, he gave definite rules to put an end to the wrangling of the theologians and the confusion of the laity. The decree stated that the reception of the Holy Eucharist was not intended to serve as a reward for virtue, but the means by which the faithful, united to God in this way, might derive strength to resist their temptations, might be cleansed from their daily faults and aided in avoiding the sins to which human frailty was liable. It was sufficient, said Pope Pius, that the communicant be free of mortal sin and have a firm purpose of avoiding sin in the future, and he urged priests to teach the faithful that frequent reception of Communion was a devout and a salutary practice.

In speaking to a group of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament the Holy Father put the matter most simply: Holy Communion is the shortest and surest way to Paradise. There are others. Innocence, but that is for little children. Penance,

but we are afraid of that. Endurance of the trials of life, but when they come we turn to prayer and ask to be delivered from them. The surest, the easiest, the shortest way is through the Holy Eucharist. "To approach the altar takes only a moment, only a movement," he said, "and he who approaches tastes truly the delights of Paradise."

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

# *Troubles with France— The Modernist Controversy*

ON DECEMBER 9, 1905, the long expected blow fell. The French government decreed the Law of Separation of Church and State. The Pope, when he received this news by telephone from France, said sadly to Cardinal Merry del Val, "Perhaps the hour has now come for Christians in France to give Our Lord more of their suffering and more of their love."

The Law of course merely marked one more step in the long process of opposition — the suppression of revenues, the reduction of priests' pensions, the withdrawal of clerical stipends — this last particularly unfair since they had been paid in partial compensation for church property confiscated by the government during the Revolution. Then too the administration of church property and revenues was now to be given over to *associations cultuelles* to be set up in each parish in lay hands — and in some cases these laymen were not even practising Catholics. In addition, the concordat with the Holy See was to be abolished, and the Republic announced that it would recognize no form of worship. If as a result of being stubborn, bishops lost their palaces and professors their college homes, that was not the fault of the Republic.

In his encyclical of February 11, 1906, the Pope denounced the Law of Separation, and a few days later he repeated the denunciation in an allocution to the cardinals.

Some days later Cardinal Merry del Val brought to him an article from a Paris paper, telling of a recent mysterious and unearthly occurrence in St. Peter's. One evening a startled verger glimpsed a white shape gliding by and had fled after one frightened look. He had told the story to someone, and a news-

paper reporter hearing of it had written up the strange happening.

The Pope and his Secretary of State looked at each other and, despite the gravity of the occasion which gave rise to the story, they smiled. For they both knew that the verger had really seen his white figure. It was the Pope himself who had gone late at night to sign the encyclical on France on the Altar of the Confession in St. Peter's.

Before long it was clear that the Pope's encyclical denouncing the Law of Separation was bringing good results. All through France loyal Catholics came forward, and although the clergy were now poor and some had no homes, the faith of the people was aroused and they were supporting their clergy with both material and spiritual help. And the clergy themselves stood by the Pope; only a few of the bishops deserted.

When this result was reported in the French Chamber, one member said ruefully, "*Messieurs*, everything was foreseen except what has happened." And the Pope now knew that the French church stood with the papacy, that the old Gallicanism was a thing of the past.

On the last day of February, Pius X himself consecrated as bishops fourteen French priests; they were to replace those who had obeyed the government instead of the Church. St. Peter's was filled; sixty-seven bishops had come from France for the ceremony and there were at least forty thousand French visitors in Rome that day.

The great crowd, the majority of them French, watched the ceremony with close attention. The consecration of a bishop is usually one of the most joyous of the liturgies of the Church; but a great sadness hung over this ceremony. Those watching and listening knew that the Church in France was now considered an alien in its own land. When the Litany of the Saints was sung, they knew that those over whose heads the words rang were being prepared for a life of hardship and possible martyrdom.

After the Litany had been chanted, the open book of the

Gospel was placed on the neck and shoulders of each bishop-elect in turn in such a way that the printed page touched his neck. As the *Veni Creator* was being sung, the head of each was anointed with holy oil. Then with mitre and cross they went in turn to the Pope, who drew each to him and embraced him tenderly.

As the Pope offered the Mass, seven of the new bishops had their places on either side of him at separate altars, and when the time came each read aloud, as he knelt before the Holy Father, the oath of fidelity. At the Offertory each offered the Pope two loaves of bread and two small casks of wine, as in the primitive Church where the faithful brought the bread for their own Communions.

After the Pope had communicated, he gave Communion to the fourteen bishops. Then the fourteen again ranged themselves on either side of the Pope and with him read the Mass to the end, surrounding him, thought M. Bellaigue, like the Apostles about our Lord at the Last Supper.

As they all left the sanctuary processionally, giving their first episcopal blessings to the great crowd before them, the Pope looked after them sadly, lovingly, for he knew how true were the words he had spoken to them before the ceremony, "I have not called you here for joy but for a cross."

Last of all the Pope was borne from the church on the *sedia gestatoria*. The French flag was dipped as he passed and he lifted a fold and kissed it. It was a gesture which crowned the whole ceremony with love and tenderness. It was as if, during the short time the bishops and the French pilgrims had been in Rome, the Holy Father had made to beat again the true, the immortal heart of France.

Next day at an audience held for the newly consecrated bishops the Holy Father spoke to them of his sorrow at the plight in which they found themselves and his consolation at seeing them before him. This time he spoke in their own language. "Agissez," he said in his careful French, "and you will gladden the dead of France who have defended Christianity and the

Church and who from on high watch your work and pray for you. *Agissez* — and you will make safe the future and your descendants will bless you and be proud of you."

He told the fourteen bishops before him that he gave them no orders, no rules of conduct, but asked them to form their own judgments as true Catholics in their own land, to conform to the spirit of Jesus Christ, and to bear in mind that the world had its eyes on them, watching to see if they succeeded or failed in their duties. "I would fain come with you," he told them, "to share your sorrows and anxieties, to be always at your side to comfort you . . . but we shall meet each day at Mass before the Holy Tabernacle whence we derive our strength and the sure means of victory."

Next day the fourteen bishops went back to France, poor, with no government protection or recognition and literally with no homes. They went as apostles to a mission land which must be recaptured for Christ. But they went back with the words of Pius X ringing in their ears: "France will not be separated from Him. Remember that throughout her history, in spite of all efforts, she has never forsaken the true Church. Do we count as nothing all the sufferings and the sacrifices there have already been made for faith and for liberty?"

With regard to the *associations cultuelles* the Pope had been placed in a very difficult position. If he did not agree with the government that they were to administer Church property, then all the ecclesiastical property in France — worth many millions of francs — would be confiscated. The clergy would have to get along as best they could — or starve. Hardest of all for the Pope to contemplate was that the blow would fall not on him but on the people of France. And equally hard to face was the fact that he and he alone would have to decide what to do.

Could such *associations cultuelles* be formed within the Church and function there? Pope Pius said no, and very definitely. But he wanted to be very sure before he acted on the matter. He commissioned legal experts to present and read to

him a long report on the question. He listened to it with patience, all the arguments for accepting and the arguments for refusing the new Law, including a recommendation as to how certain modifications of the Law might be obtained. He scarcely waited to hear the end before he broke out, "We have decided. The Law of God is all that matters. We are no diplomat but We have a mission to defend here. At the bottom there is only one simple question to be answered. Was the Church constituted by Christ or was it not? Yes, we all agree on that. Then there is nothing which can make us give up its constitution, its hierarchy, its liberty."

But he tried to consider the situation fairly. He considered facts as well as principle, reality as well as the ideal. "We do not ask the members of the government to go to Mass," he said, "though we regret, but for another reason, that they do not go. What we do ask is that, since they pride themselves on regard for facts, they should not be unaware of one considerable fact: the existence of a Catholic Church, of its constitution, and of its head, who at present is myself."

One day when at an audience a group of French envoys seemed to him to be defending chiefly the earthly interests of the Faith, he looked at them sadly and said, "One speaks always of the goods of the Church — and almost never of her good." To another group who came intent on compromise with the French government, he told a short story: "Once on a high mountain two adversaries found themselves face to face. One showed the other, not bags of money, but all the kingdoms of the earth. He said, 'I will give you all of this if you will agree to bow down before me.' The other refused. He still refuses. That is all."

When some were inclined to continue arguing, he would say, "I can bend for the common good if necessary but a principle cannot bend. However, I still hope the French government will see the folly of this step."

The great majority of the French bishops had prepared a statement of their own stand in the matter and Camille Bel-

laigue was chosen to take their letter to the Holy Father. The Pope was waiting for him in his study and he smiled when he saw again his ally in music. The sun touched the little statue of the Curé d'Ars on his desk and the crucifix which stood next to it, the gold knob of the walking-stick which leaned against his chair. Back of him on a table were marble busts of Pius IX and Leo XIII.

"I have the great honor of bringing Your Holiness an Address from the bishops of France," said M. Bellaigue.

Pope Pius took the letter and began reading it. As he read his face brightened though there were tears in his eyes before he finished. Several times he murmured, "*Bello,*" and when he had read it through, he said aloud, "*Bellissimo.*"

Afterwards the two discussed what would happen in France when priests' incomes were so reduced that it would be impossible to live on them, when Catholic property was placed in the hands of lay groups. There would be no chance for a priest to administer to his people freely when he was bound by such conditions.

"It is very clear," said M. Bellaigue, "that the State is planning nothing less than complete seizure."

"I am no diplomat," said the Pope, "but this concerns the Church's property and her rights and also her liberty. Always we come back to that one word — liberty."

Later M. Bellaigue asked if the Holy Father would grant him a brief interview for the French magazine *Lectures Pour Tous*, which was very anxious to have a statement from him regarding the Law of Separation and if possible his further intentions regarding it.

The Pope knew and approved of the magazine, but he hesitated to give the interview. Then he evidently made up his mind. "Well, why should I not tell them what they wish to know," he said to Cardinal Merry del Val, "and let M. Bellaigue take my words to the people of France? After all we are not workers in darkness."

So M. Bellaigue was given an evening audience because this

would give time for a lengthy discussion. He presented himself at the appointed hour with the questions the editor of the review wished him to ask.

“Would it be indiscreet to ask Your Holiness what attitude we in our country ought to take?” was the first question.

The Pope considered. “In France there are today many troubled and uneasy Catholics. You ask for some words from me to them. A single word will do — wait. That is what I am doing, until the time comes for me to speak. And it will come. To pass a law full of equivocation is of course not everything. It must still be applied. When that happens, and in its entirety, we will speak. When we know the arms of the enemy — all their arms — we will take up ours in turn. Ours are ready and though only spiritual they will not be the less powerful.”

M. Bellaigue presented the rest of his questions and the Holy Father answered them carefully. Then there was silence for a moment or two. The lamp on the desk made a circle of light in the dark room; the two figures were surrounded by solitude and silence. Camille Bellaigue felt as if he were in the very center of the Catholic world as he sat looking at the serene face, the snowy robe and mantle, the beautiful hands quietly folded.

“For the moment,” the Pope went on speaking, “I wish to remain inert — but inert in the hands of Him who holds me and through whom I shall act.” Then, as M. Bellaigue collected his notes, the Holy Father said slowly and thoughtfully, “In France there are so many brave people. Tell them I bless them and ask their prayers.”

He gave his visitor his picture for the magazine and wrote a few words on it, slowly and carefully, with his little pearl handled pen. He went with M. Bellaigue to the door and waited until the latter reached the farther gallery. Then he closed his door and M. Bellaigue went out into the deserted Square where the fountains were now stilled. Behind him the great palace was dark, excepting the windows of the Holy Father’s study.

By August the Pope was ready to speak. In an encyclical

published during that month he forbade the *associations cultuelles* as prescribed by French law, he rejected as illegal and uncanonical the State control of Church property. He also refused to consider the idea of *associations canoniques* which some of the French bishops had put forward as a way of keeping Church property from spoliation and yet satisfying the government. There would be no compromise until the property rights of the Pope and the bishops were guaranteed. The bishops must now begin to organize the faithful on the basis of the common law which guaranteed religious freedom for all.

On January 21, 1907, the answer of the government to this encyclical came with the second Law of Separation. It completed the work of the earlier law and the threats contained therein were now to be carried out in complete action. Since Catholics had not, as they had been invited to do, voluntarily organized the *associations cultuelles*, the property and the buildings, the pensions and salaries and rights of usage were now to be confiscated. Church property would pass into communal — that is government — hands.

The Pope did not publish another encyclical or document on the subject. The one of a few months before had covered the whole matter. He had made clear the injustice of the government's actions and his own intention not to compromise — in fact, his inability to compromise. As he had said to Camille Bellaigue, the matter always comes back to the one word — liberty.

In September of 1907 the Holy Father issued an encyclical — *Pascendi* — directed against the errors of Modernism. The encyclical did not come suddenly to a surprised world. The subject had been discussed for years but, as with other matters, it had come to a head while Pope Pius was on the papal throne.

The human philosophy which underlay the various expressions of what was known as Modernism had come to flower during the French Revolution; it was Rousseau who had

coined the word which became its official designation. The research of later German scholars had given it a spurious historical truth and made it the philosophy of men who looked on Christianity as merely one more system of philosophy.

With Modernism, certain theological methods had come into vogue which were derived from Kantian philosophy. They taught agnosticism, humanitarianism and evolutionism as the bases of supernatural truth, thus divesting the doctrines of the Faith of their primary and fundamental motive, i. e. the testimony of God as revealed to mankind in the Scriptures and in tradition.

Catholic theologians strove to point out three errors which underlay the movement. First, it was based on an agnostic philosophy, relying only on the senses as the ultimate basis of truth; thus depriving Catholic doctrine of the sublime mysteries which the senses can never reach. The Modernists wished to hold to the Scriptures as a norm of faith and truth, but they wished to interpret them according to their own preconceived ideas.

Secondly, it was a doctrine of immanentism, that is, the theory that religion is purely an interior experience, ruled by the emotions and the psychic needs of man; the Modernists said any dogma which did not find its echo in the soul was not necessary to salvation; dogmas could vary with the times, being expressions of religious experience. This of course would make the Catholic norm not a fixed but a changing thing.

Third, it was a doctrine of evolutionism, that is, it held that the Church with her dogmas and morals was not instituted by Christ, but was the result of a gradual evolution of Christianity, dependent on the circumstances of history. Under such a theory, since the dogmas of the Church would be considered the result of evolution they would need progressive alterations to fit scientific inventions and historical changes.

Therefore, insisted the theologians, if the Church accepted these doctrines, nothing would in the end be left of dogma excepting a vague ungrounded certitude about the unknowable. Such a theory would lead to the destruction of the Catholic religion, indeed of all religion.

Many brilliant minds within the Church were strong advocates of Modernism, among them Abbé Loisy in France; Father Tyrrell, the English Jesuit; and Don Murri in Italy.

Abbé Loisy, perhaps the most brilliant of them all, thought that the Christ of history had no intention of founding a church at all, but merely wished men to do penance and await the revelation of God. He insisted that Christianity had over the centuries evolved freely and of its own accord. Father Tyrrell, the well-known English convert, wanted to use dogma and the practical philosophy of the Modernists to bring about a new form of Christianity, the mystical experience of which would be a guarantee of its reality.

Cardinal Merry del Val, after carefully studying his countryman's ideas, and realizing their driving power in England, said to the Holy Father, "It is a good thing the members of the movement are few." Nevertheless he added that word had reached him that the doctrine was infiltrating in to the seminaries in England and causing worry. Perhaps as disturbing as any was news that the Modernists were trying to drag Newman's name into the discussion. Father Tyrrell was attempting to prove that the doctrinal beliefs of Newman were modernist. "I think that a great libel," said Cardinal Merry del Val indignantly, "and I think Tyrrell and his crowd are trying to hide behind a great name in order to avoid censure."

What was true of the English seminaries was also true of the Italian, in several of which it had been learned that the students were conducting a secret correspondence with like-minded students in other countries. Leaflets on Modernism were being secretly printed.

In France Modernism continued along dangerous lines. At the University of Lille, a professor in talks to his students had attacked the Church's methods of defense against her opponents. Abbé Hébert emerged as a disciple of Kant and Abbé Loisy, following his dismissal from the Catholic Institute of Paris, retired to write papers and articles in support of his theories. He was especially dangerous because he was a brilliant and learned

scholar. His book, *L’Evangile et l’Eglise*, written some years before, had been condemned by the Archbishop of Paris. Loisy’s reply had been an ironical work about the banning of his earlier book.

While still Patriarch of Venice, Cardinal Sarto had given a series of conferences on the first of Loisy’s books. Seeing the dangers in the Frenchman’s brilliant sophistries, especially for the young, he set out to explain and to refute his arguments. When the second book was printed, the Cardinal had read it carefully before condemning it and had formulated his reasons. During the years since then, he had read a great deal of the Modernist literature and by the time he was ready to issue papal decrees on the subject he was very well informed indeed.

The encyclical which expounded and denounced Modernism was published on September 8, 1907. It summarized and condemned the entire modernistic theory, its interpretation of the Scriptures, of the personality and divinity of Christ and His teachings and of the nature of the Sacraments. It stated that the entire movement was an error and that Catholics who followed it were at variance with the dogmas of the Church.

Catholic Modernists, wrote the Holy Father, did not realize how wrong was the system they were following, how contradictory to the Faith. Its arguments, though specious, sounded well; it made use of theological terms and expressions used by Catholics but with very different interpretations. It was evident that its attraction was powerful when it could draw so many good and brilliant men into its meshes — men who had been of value to their Church and who now, though they were still few in number, could by their very brilliance and knowledge of theology corrupt a great number in the future unless they were curbed. Modernists were proclaiming themselves as the champions of scientific truth and their words and writings seemed to many a true religious reaction against a materialism which did not satisfy the soul of men. “Excited and confused by the clamor of praise and abuse,” wrote the Pope, “young men, some of them afraid of being branded as ignorant, others ambitious to rank among the learned, and both goaded by curiosity and pride, not infre-

quently yield to temptation and give themselves up to Modernism."

He spoke of the reasons which had brought forth this false philosophy: "The proximate cause is without any doubt an error of the mind. The remoter causes are curiosity and pride. Curiosity unless wisely held in check is enough to account for all errors. But far more effective is pride. Pride sits in Modernism as in its own house, finding sustenance everywhere in its doctrines, and an occasion to flaunt itself in all its aspects. The Modernists are puffed up with a vainglory which . . . makes them say, 'We are not as the rest of men'. . . . It is pride which causes them to . . . seek to be reformers of others while they forget to reform themselves. And if we pass from the moral to the intellectual causes of Modernism, the first and most powerful is ignorance. Yes, these very men who pose as Doctors of the Church, who speak so highly of modern philosophy and show such contempt for Scholasticism, have embraced the one with its false glamor precisely because their ignorance of the other has left them without the means of being able to recognize the confusion of their thought and to refute sophistry. Their whole system . . . has been born of an alliance between faith and false philosophy."

After the Pope had given the history of Modernism and its causes, he ended his encyclical by stating its remedies. These were very concrete: the enforcement of the study of Scholastic philosophy in seminaries and universities for clerics; ceaseless watchfulness on the part of bishops and an oath to be taken by clergy and professors binding themselves to reject the errors denounced in the encyclical. "The security of the Catholic name is at stake," wrote the Pope. "To keep silence longer would be a crime."

The encyclical had made it very clear that Modernism was completely alien to the teachings of the Church and that those who followed it and those who preached it would have to give it up if they wished to remain in the Church. A great deal of abuse followed the publication of this sweeping arraignment.

The Pope had expected it; it was why he had waited to issue a statement only when he realized there was no other way. He was well aware that the encyclical would alienate from the Church a few, if not a considerable number, of brilliant and able men.

Pope Pius and his Secretary of State were denounced as fanatics. The Modernists said they had merely been trying to make it easier for scientists and intellectuals to accept the doctrines of the Church and a statement of this sort only served to alienate such people forever. Did Pius mean to repress violently every sign of originality in the Church and all independent judgment? Could he really stifle a movement to which some of the best minds of various countries had dedicated themselves? A good country priest no doubt Pius was, but obviously, they thought, unable to deal with such intellectual matters as these. Some even called him a hypocrite who under the guise of simplicity was really a very ambitious man; having wormed his way to the top, he was now showing his true colors. "The Modernist movement has fostered a thousand dreams of reunion into enthusiastic hopes and lo! Pius Tenth comes forward with a stone in one hand and a scorpion in the other," wrote Father Tyrrell, leader of the movement in England.

In that country the feeling about the encyclical was especially bitter. One Englishman said that death for heresy would soon be revived as a penalty by the papacy and no doubt also the "most odious methods of the Inquisition." And Father Tyrrell, speaking for others who, like himself, knew they must make up their minds about their future course, said, "I feel like a French monarchist official who throws up his commission rather than serve under a government of Apaches. Very otherwise did the great Founder of the papacy envisage the world and life."

The rumor that Newman's works had been condemned did not die down, until finally the Pope, in a letter to the Bishop of Limerick, gave absolute approval to all of Newman's Catholic works. This made fearful Catholics realize that only the works

of what the Holy Father called "undigested culture" were to be condemned, and certainly not those of a scholar who had always defended the Faith.

But the great majority of Catholics stood with the Holy Father in refuting what he called "this synthesis of all heresies." Among his most articulate defenders was Cardinal Mercier of Belgium, who posed to the Modernists one question which he said must be answered by all among them who were Catholics: "Yes or no, do you believe in the divine authority of the Church?" And to those who insisted that the iron hand was too much in evidence throughout the encyclical, he retorted, "If in the days of Luther and Calvin the Church had possessed a pope of the temper of Pius, would Protestantism have succeeded in getting a third of Europe to break loose from Rome?"

In answer to those who accused him of condemning science, the Holy Father announced that he would soon prove he was not an enemy of true science or a foe to the progress of humanity. He was establishing in Rome an institute where the advance of science and other branches of knowledge could be promoted under the aegis of the Church and of Catholic truth. "Religion has no fear of science," he said. "Christianity does not tremble before discussion but before ignorance."

In the matter of Modernism, the Pope had simply asserted once again the historic policy of the Church, a policy which had met with bitter opposition in other ages when it was attacked by Arians and by Protestants as it was now by Modernists. Though it was disheartening when, as he had feared, a considerable number of brilliant and learned people left the Church in consequence of the encyclical, he was greatly heartened by the many who rallied to him — especially many of the literary and artistic groups who, it had been feared, would be completely alienated. Later he was happy when some who had left the Church returned and made their submission.

Within a year the movement had been greatly weakened. When even Loisy admitted that "Modernism is doomed and will

not be difficult to crush," it was evident that the end was in sight. But it had been a sad mutiny on the ship of Peter, for the mutineers had been trusted men and their loss was hard to bear.

Through the years the work of the revision of Canon Law, for which Pope Pius had established a commission very soon after his election, had been in progress. The actual labor was being performed by this commission under Cardinal Pietro Gasparri. But there was no doubt that the Pope by his unfailing optimism and encouragement aided the work greatly; in fact, the members of the commission called him "the best canonist of us all." He was, in a way, the author of the Code which was being steadily formulated with painstaking care. It was he who more than once overcame the timidity or the opposition of the commission or the bishops who had been asked to help; it was he who gave them confidence to continue their difficult task through the years.

On June, 1908, the Holy Father issued an apostolic letter on the reorganization of the Curia and the revision of canon law. First he summarized the history of Church government. Until the tenth century there had been no system of committees or congregations. There had been only the pope assisted by the Roman clergy. But as the business of the central government increased with the centuries, much of it was delegated to committees of cardinals, and so the various Congregations of modern times had grown.

"The result," wrote the Holy Father, "is that today the jurisdiction or competence of each of them is not quite clear to all, nor is it well apportioned. . . . For these reasons many bishops and thoughtful men . . . in writing and orally and both with Our Predecessor Leo XIII and with Ourselves frequently urged that suitable remedies should be provided for the inconveniences above mentioned. . . . By now there is also the question of codification of the ecclesiastical law, and it has seemed highly fitting that a beginning should be made with the Roman Curia so that once this has been organized suitably . . . it may be in a position

the more easily to perform its work for the Pontiff and the Church."

The commission was effecting a complete redistribution of the duties of the Congregations. Some had been curtailed, since much of their work was of the past; there were several new ones to meet the problems of the day; and some, as the Tribunal of the Rota, were to be restored. There would now be eleven Congregations, three Tribunals and six Offices of the Roman Curia. The Congregation of the Holy Office remained, as it had been, the most important department. With clearly defined duties for each Congregation and with no overlapping of such duties, delays of all kinds would be fewer.

Even yet the work was not finished, but it was nearing its end. The Pope had been especially anxious to have it advance rapidly and during the past year he had more than once expressed the hope that he would live to see it entirely completed and promulgated — "for my age will not permit me to wait too long."

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### *The Years 1908-1913*

IN JUNE 1908, on the eve of the Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul, Pope Pius made an evening visit to the tomb of Saint Peter. He left his library, some thirty people accompanying him — several Noble Guards, a few chamberlains, Swiss Guards, various prelates. A *bussolante* carried his mantle and his hat with gold tracery; eight *parafrenieri* in red velvet held torches to light the way.

Through the salons they went, through the Sistine Chapel, past the names of other popes inscribed on the walls, different names but all with the same title: Pontifex Maximus. Then they passed through the Hall of Tapestries, its decorations the gift of France in bygone years, and into St. Peter's, to the Chapel of the Sacrament.

The Pope knelt and prayed briefly. When he rose there was a profound silence. Torches and candles gave the only light, as St. Peter's was locked to the public on such evening visits of the Holy Father, and one could only half see the privileged few standing about. The Pope's white figure alone stood forth clearly. He began to say aloud the mysteries of the rosary and the responses were made by the voices of those around him. Then he said the Litany of the Blessed Virgin.

"*Turris eburnea — domus aurea — janua caeli —*" the words were music and so was the voice. Then followed the *De Profundis* for the soul of Leo XIII; as it was being said, a sudden summer storm arose and the chapel was lit with flashes of lightning. There was loud thunder — "on the right, a happy omen," murmured one prelate.

After the little ceremony was over the Pope rose and went over to the ancient bronze statue of Saint Peter. In the faint light the Fisherman's Ring shone. Against the metal foot of Saint Peter,

worn with the kisses of centuries of pilgrims, the Pope held his lips for a long time, and those watching thought it a fair sight, for in the dim light the two figures seemed mingled, as if the one were the other. There followed a long prayer at the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles.

Then the little procession went back again the same way. The Pope was now smiling and cordial and talked with those about him. It was clear he had had a happy hour. Tomorrow the crowds again, the arguments of Church and State; tonight all had been holy and peaceful.

September of that year brought the date of the Pope's own golden jubilee. He had said that the most acceptable gift which his clergy could give him for the occasion would be the renewal of their promise of charity and zeal in the priesthood — "the most beautiful gift of all." The best gifts the laity could give him would be their prayers and their Communions offered for his intention. But, if the gifts were to be material, he asked that they would be of such a nature that he could use them for the relief of poor parishes.

His jubilee Mass, which he himself celebrated in St. Peter's, was attended by four hundred bishops and some fifty thousand of the laity. He celebrated the Mass not as pope but as the priest he had become fifty years before. As he walked slowly up the aisle with no papal ceremonial, there were heard whispers from the pews: "*Papa Benedetto*" or "*Santo Padre*." But when he reached the altar there was complete silence as he began the familiar words: "*Introibo ad altare Dei*."

Palestrina's *Mass of Pope Marcellus* seemed to Don Perosi especially suitable for the jubilee of Pius X since Marcellus had been a lover of music and Palestrina's own patron. He had planned great reforms in church music but had not lived to see them carried out; in honor of his noble intentions Palestrina had written the music which was now sounding through St. Peter's.

For his jubilee the Pope had planned an address to the Catholic clergy. He worked very hard at this, for he wanted it to be kindly and affectionate and yet a clear directive for the clergy

throughout the world. In some ways it was much like the first address of his pontificate, and that too had been to the clergy. As he wrote, he read parts of it to Cardinal Merry del Val. "Is this right?" he would ask. "Don't hesitate to correct it, if you think it needs it."

In earlier letters he had told his clergy that in order that Christ be formed in the faithful, he must first be formed in the priest, that the priest must be able to win souls by his charity and kindness. "Such an example will have far more power to move hearts and gain them than words or dissertations, however sublime."

Now, in different words, he exhorted the clergy to be worthy of their calling, to carry out a ministry of deed as well as of word. Preach to the people, he told them, but preach true sermons and not mere rhetoric, for the growth of disbelief in the world is largely due to ignorance of the teachings of Christ. He spoke of the necessity for priests to develop and safeguard their own interior life. Piety and holiness — prayer and meditation in spiritual exercises — these a priest must have and use constantly. Then, and then only, would he be able to offer able support and protection to his people against hostile attacks, and would in all truth be working for the salvation of souls.

In April of 1909 the beatification ceremonies for Jeanne d'Arc were held in St. Peter's, and the basilica was crowded with her countrymen and women. Although the day at first had been misty, the sun came out brightly in time for the ceremony. In the basilica burned hundreds of candles; crimson tapestries hung to the floor of the apse; the open windows showed a bright blue sky. Camille Bellaigue, happy to be in Rome again and for such a wonderful occasion, thought the great church seemed iridescent with the tri-color of France. The great multitude of French men and women who filled the basilica denied the boast of her government that France was separated from God.

"Our beloved compatriot," the Pope called the Maid in his address in Jeanne's own tongue. He had written it in Italian and had Cardinal Merry del Val translate it for him, feeling that,

when receiving France thus in St. Peter's, he must speak in French to the people. To those in the vast congregation who were not French it seemed a pity and even a tragedy that anyone in the country of Jeanne and the Curé d'Ars and of Lourdes and Lisieux should ever be forced to make a decision between Church and State.

When after the ceremony the Pope left the basilica, borne on the *sedia* through the central nave, from the crowd burst a shout which echoed throughout the vast church, and this time he did not try to stop it. That great shout from thousands of throats was for God and France and not for him.

On August 8, 1910, the Pope issued a decree which ordered that the First Communion of children be not deferred too long after they had reached the age of discretion, approximately the seventh year, but earlier or later depending on various factors. After he had carefully stated what the rule would be, he wrote as if to reassure those who might be troubled in mind at learning of such a measure. For there were honest people, tinctured by lingering Jansenism, who were worried as to whether a child of seven or less, still so thoughtless, would understand the reverence due the Sacrament. The child should be at least eleven years old, some thought, or even older. There was also a current feeling that a delayed Communion preserved a child from evil. But Pope Pius believed that the First Communion should be received when a child began to use its reason, whether it was seven years old or even younger. He deplored delay beyond that time because "the gain in no wise balances the loss," and quoted the teaching of Saint Thomas Aquinas: "When children begin to have some use of reason, such as enables them to form sentiments of devotion toward the Sacrament of the Eucharist, then it can be administered to them."

On that reasoning Pope Pius enlarged with his own: "The age of discretion for receiving Holy Communion is reached when a child knows the difference between the Bread which is the Eucharist and ordinary material bread — not full reason, of course,

but incipient reason suffices." The actual age in years was to him of no importance; if the child understood, that was enough.

Once an Englishman brought his four-year-old son to a private audience. The child walked straight to the Pope and they smiled at each other. "How old is he?" asked the Pope.

"Four years old, Your Holiness," said his father, "and I hope he will make his First Communion in a few years."

"Well, let us see what he knows. Whom do you receive in Holy Communion, my child?"

"Jesus Christ," said the boy promptly.

"And who is Jesus Christ?"

"He is God," said the boy confidently.

The Pope looked at the father. "Bring him to my Mass tomorrow morning and I will give him Holy Communion myself."

He welcomed children to his audiences always and at any time. Every first communicant in Rome was invited to come to the Vatican. He gave these groups short instructions, simple and loving, and they talked with him as children would to an older friend and confidant. They were very unconventional audiences. "Yes, Pope," a small child might reply to his question. And sometimes a very small one, seeing the gentle face so close to his, said, "Yes, Jesus."

These audiences made up for many other meetings where adults disputed or argued. The Pope loved even to tease the children on occasion. At one audience he asked a small boy with long curls his name and was told, "Giulio."

"What a pretty name — Giulia," he said admiringly.

"It is not Giulia. It is Giulio," the child said indignantly.

The Pope smiled, drawing the curls through his fingers. "It is really a very pretty name — Giulia."

With that the little boy lost patience. "Can't you see I'm not a little girl?" he demanded, and pulled up his tunic to show the knickers under it. "Don't you see I have knickers on?"

A little French girl was to receive her First Communion at the hands of the Holy Father in his own chapel. Everything was white as she knelt before him at the altar rail — the child's white

dress and veil, the Pope's chasuble, his hands holding the white Host. All purity seemed there in the innocent child and the Holy Father.

Afterward he gave her a gold medal on a chain. But he wanted to give her something more, so he took her into his study and hunted about until at last in a drawer of his desk he found a heavy gold bracelet. He put it on her and smiled as he looked at the heavy antique trinket on the frail little wrist.

"*Buon di, bambini, buon di,*" he would call in his pleasant Venetian accent, when he caught sight of a group of children who had come to the Vatican with parents or nurses, and he loved the name a sentimental Rome bestowed on him — the Pope of the Children.

One day a delegation of youngsters startled him with its request. When the small pupils and their mistresses from a convent academy had been duly greeted, he inquired if anyone wished to ask any question. One little girl promptly asked him for a definition of the dogma of the Assumption.

Smiling, Pope Pius told the child that he adhered to a belief in its strict truth as an article of faith which it already was in the sentiment and the devotion of the people. And he assured her that he would not fail in this matter to follow the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Later, back in his apartments, he asked his Secretary. "Did you hear that child, Raffaelo? What will they ask me for next? Medals, benedictions, my picture — good. But the definition of a dogma! It is the first time anyone has asked that of me!"

It was well that the Pope had such audiences as these with the children to take his mind even for a brief space from the unhappy news which reached him from time to time — news of persecutions of the Church, and each time in a Catholic country. He had been saddened by what had taken place in France, but at least there he had been able to help his people. And the practice of the faith there had been allowed to continue; the celebration of Mass and other services of the Church were not halted.

Education, of course, had been greatly interfered with, but even for the teaching orders the government of France had decreed exile and not martyrdom.

But now in other countries conditions much harsher faced the Church. From Mexico came unhappy news of the persecution of priests and religious. There was a rupture of diplomatic relations with Spain, followed by anti-clerical and anti-religious riots. Churches were destroyed and priests were killed.

In 1911 revolution broke out in Portugal — a republic now, but one where freedom of faith was at a low ebb. Mobs raided convents and arrested priests. Religious orders were forced to send their members from the country and church property everywhere was confiscated by an anti-Catholic government. Bishops were driven from their dioceses and in Lent the Holy Week services were held behind closed doors. Laws of Separation more drastic than those in France were passed. The prime minister of the new government declared that "religious sentiment is a lie and every kind of church a farce."

To the Holy Father it was heartbreaking not to be able to help in a material way his people in these lands, to know that they were suffering and that he was not able to aid them. He began to look old and his face lost its warm color. His Secretary of State watched anxiously, for he had never before seen the Pope depressed.

All the Holy Father could do in the face of such cruelty and terror was to protest strongly, to pray, and to ask the Catholic people to pray with him for better days for the Church in Portugal and Spain and Mexico. To those closest to him he said sadly that although he knew the present days were filled with evil, he was afraid that even worse things lay ahead: "All this is nothing to what will happen in a few years' time, when war breaks out; I fear that within two years it will be upon us."

Cardinal Merry del Val was happy each time he could interest the Pope in something that took his mind from these difficulties which he could do nothing to alleviate. Once he conducted into the Pope's presence two priests from America whose mission, the

Secretary of State felt, was of a most unusual nature. Father Thomas Price, a missioner in the South of the United States, and Father James Walsh, from Massachusetts, had come to Rome hoping to gain approval for a society they wished to found, which would draw its vocations from American youth and train them to go as missioners to other countries, especially to the Far East. It was to be known as the Maryknoll Mission Society. Upon the advice of Monsignor Bisleti, papal chamberlain, they had prepared a brief outline of their plans and were given an audience where they might present it to the Pope.

After an exchange of official greetings, the Pope asked the two priests to sit down; adjusting his glasses, he began to read the statement given him. As his face grew more and more serious, the priests became more and more nervous: would they perhaps have to try to muster more arguments in support of their request — and could they persuade the Holy Father?

Once the Pope stopped reading and expressed his surprise that Americans, themselves from a mission country, should wish to go to convert pagans in foreign lands. "But of course such work would react favorably on the work of the Church in America," he said, and went on reading.

As he finished his face broke into a smile. Putting down the papers, he turned squarely to the two priests and said, "*Ma è finito!*" The look on the faces which had watched him so anxiously changed to one of amazement and then to delight. "Well, it is all settled," he had said. They were at the end of their quest and not at its beginning.

The audience ended with blessings from the Holy Father on the new enterprise, and he wrote a message and signed the photograph of himself which they had brought with them. Afterwards the two priests showed the autographed picture to Monsignor Bisleti and the message upon it — six closely penned lines which expressed the Holy Father's good wishes for the new society. "We only hope," said Father Walsh anxiously, "that the script is indelible."

The many pilgrimages which came to Rome were especially a consolation to the Holy Father when they were made up of working people and of peasants. In the spring of 1912 a pilgrimage of French workingmen came to the Vatican. On such days as this the Pope was happy and smiling, very different from the days of great celebrations when he looked weary, his eyes cast down, his benedictions grave and quiet. This had always been true but was much more so on state occasions during these later years, when he sat motionless on the *sedia*, the tiara on his head, the gold cope heavy on his shoulders. The years had made him realize how heavy, as Dante phrased it, was the great mantle to him who guards it from the mire. But in large and informal audiences he found his joy.

Another pilgrimage came to him from Moravia, peasant men and women with dark rough faces, in gaudy costumes. As they passed along before him, one old woman with a quick movement thrust out some handkerchiefs embroidered in bright colors. "They are for Your Holiness," she said.

He took the gifts and examined them. "How fine the work is," he said admiringly, and, putting his hand on the dark forehead, in a tender voice he said, "Blessings on you." Then he raised his voice so that all could hear. "Blessings on you all. I bless the good that they may stay good. I bless those who do not walk in the right way in order that they may return. I bless the parents that they may rear their children well, and the children that they may honor their parents and the land where they first drew breath."

When groups from Riese or Treviso or Mantua or his own beloved Venice came, he seemed to speak with a stronger Venetian accent than usual. Sometimes in addressing them his voice shook with emotion, as if he were remembering past days when he was one of these people and lived among them.

Always he sent blessings to those who could not come, and often he asked after individuals he remembered. "When you go home," he would tell the Venetian pilgrims, "salute all the others.

Tell the wealthy to give from their abundance in alms. Tell the poor to be proud of being chosen to be on earth the living images of Our Lord."

In 1912 he received in audience a pilgrimage of four hundred children from France. They came from every rank in life, for the well-to-do had paid extra travel money so that the poorer children could also come. This was the first time that a crusade of first communicants had come to the palace of the popes. Later the French group was joined by children from Italian parishes, but first the French children had an audience of their own. They were to present to the Holy Father an album in which were written the names of one hundred and thirty-five thousand children in France who had offered their Communions for the Pope's intentions on the feast day of his patron, Saint Joseph.

After Mass and Communion they were received by the Holy Father in the Sistine Chapel. A small boy made a speech for the boys and a tiny lass for the girls, the latter ending by asking the Pope's blessing on all the children who could not be there. After that they came up to him two by two, and he gave each a silver medal. He talked with them for a while about Our Lord, and how He loved children, ending with a few simple words about Holy Communion so worded that they understood it, and last of all he bestowed a solemn blessing upon the whole pilgrimage.

Then he asked the children to come close about him and speak to him personally if they wished. Although they had been awed at this august figure when they arrived, he had been so pleasant and so kind that they felt completely at ease. Some came directly up to him and begged for favors. "Holy Father, cure my sister — she is very sick." "Convert my father please." "Please give me a blessing for my mother." "I want to be a priest," begged one small lad, "and if you ask the family I know they will let me do so." Some who watched the scene said it must have resembled one in Galilee in the days when children clustered about Our Lord.

Before the group left, the Holy Father raised his hand, and waited a moment to make sure that all were listening. Then he said in French with great solemnity, "*Catholiques et Françaises toujours! Dieu protège la France!*"

As the children left the Chapel they called back childish good-byes to the kind man in white. When one boy shouted, "We will come back to see you again," others called, "We will! We will!"

After they had all gone the Pope went into the basilica to bless the palliums of white wool, his face still happy from the little pilgrims' visit. Everywhere St. Peter's was filled with the roses of a Roman June and the air was sweet with their fragrance. In a basket holding the snowy fleeces which were to be blessed were mixed red carnations to be distributed later to the prelates present at the ceremony. Pope Pius kept one for himself, and it glowed scarlet on his white robe. Before leaving the basilica after the blessing he stopped twice — first before the bronze Saint Peter and then before the tomb of Leo XIII. Cardinal Merry del Val saw him looking at the tomb with a sad gaze — almost, he thought, with envy. Then the Pope's glance went up to the words written above him: "*Tu Es Petrus.*" As if consoled, he linked his arm in that of his Secretary of State, and they walked slowly back to his apartments.

In his later years the Pope's personal holiness gave rise to many accounts of his healing powers. The children who asked at papal audiences for the cure of their relatives were not the only ones who begged these favors. There were many such requests, and more than one had seen or experienced his healing touch.

A young girl, afflicted with running sores which would not heal, came to Rome so that, as she said, "the shadow of Peter's successor might fall on me." She was received as one of an audience of forty who knelt as the Pope went slowly past with a word for each. After he had gone by, she whispered to her mother, as they were still kneeling, "I am cured." At their hotel the bandages

were removed, and it was true. The disfiguring sores were gone; the flesh was clean and whole.

Two nuns ill with an incurable disease came as pilgrims to Rome. Because their journey had been a difficult one and because of their condition, they were given a private audience. Looking at the two women, at the signs of illness in their worn faces, their thin hands, the Holy Father asked, "Why do you want to be cured?"

"To work for the glory of God a little while longer," said one and the other nodded.

Placing his hands on their heads he blessed them. "Have confidence," he said. "You will be well."

They were cured before they left the audience room, but the Pope asked them to be silent about the change and to go their way. However, in the outer halls others had noted that two sick women dragged themselves into the presence of the Pope, followed by glances of pity from those waiting outside the audience chamber. Later they saw two healthy women walk out with firm steps. It would have been impossible to keep such a thing secret. As for the cab-driver who awaited the nuns outside, he would not at first believe that they were the fares he had brought to the Vatican.

To one public audience came a man carrying in his arms his small son, a child paralyzed since babyhood. "Let me hold him," said the Holy Father when he stopped before him. He held the little boy closely, smiling at him now and then as he talked to the other pilgrims. Suddenly the child wriggled from his arms and began to run about the room; as suddenly he stopped, looked around and then ran back to embrace the white-clad figure.

Not only in the Pope's actual presence did these things take place. The two-year-old child of a railway worker was ill with meningitis, supposedly beyond hope of recovery. The young parents decided to write to the Pope to whom they had often gone to confession in Mantua. The Pope answered their letter

with a short note bidding them to hope and pray. Two days later the child was entirely well.

There were many other similar happenings and the Pope did his best to suppress any discussion of them. "I have nothing to do with it," he would say in distress. "It is the power of the Keys, not mine."

One day a lady said to him, with a certain lack of tact, "They tell us that you are a saint."

The Pope smiled. "You have made a mistake in a consonant," he told her. "My name is Sarto — not Santo."

He enjoyed making puns on his name which in the Italian means "tailor." When one gentleman asked if a friend of his might not be made cardinal, the Pope shook his head gravely. "I cannot give him a hat," he said. "I am not a hatter. I am only a tailor."

But during the last few years of his life the Pope's pleasantries were heard less frequently, and he seldom drew on his large fund of good stories. There was, however, no lessening of his deep interest in the sufferings and the griefs of others. The maimed and hurt, whether in soul or body, knew his boundless pity and some who came to him in misery, whose hands he clasped, felt his strength go into them and make them strong.

There were others he evidently knew he could not help directly. At an audience a young priest knelt at the Pope's feet, weeping bitterly and looking at the face bending over him as if asking for a miracle. The Pope clasped the dark head tenderly and repeated, again and again, "Faith — nothing but faith, my poor child. Take refuge in faith."

A group of deaf and dumb girls came to him and eagerly watched the motions of his mouth as he blessed them, repeating his words very slowly and distinctly. Then he asked them, "My poor little ones, *avete capito?*" .

A strange sound came from their throats, and their heads nodded to show they did understand. He leaned toward them, beckoned them to come close to him, and on each head he laid his hands, silently and with infinite compassion.

"I did not want to leave them, Raffaelo," he said sadly afterward. "I did not want to leave those mouths dumb. I let them go only because it was clear to me that God did not wish them opened."

Late in 1912 Rosa Sarto died. Nearly all her long life had been passed very close to her brother. She had first gone to keep house for him at Tombolo when she was only seventeen. In Salzano and Mantua she and her sisters had lived with him and served him, and again in Venice. After he was made Pope and they had come to live in Rome, she had seldom left the city but lived in the little apartment near the Vatican which their brother provided for her and her sisters. She had given her time to charity and good works, much of it at the request of the Pope, and she had rejoiced in any opportunity to be of service to her beloved Beppo.

Many in Rome came to say a prayer beside the dead woman who lay in her own small room on a bedstead of plain white iron. The sweet old face was framed in a white cap, and the only decorations were the violets scattered over the sheet that covered her.

Her requiem Mass was celebrated by the Pope's chaplain in St. Peter's; it was attended by all the cardinals in Rome and members of the diplomatic corps, by priests and religious who came to honor one so near and so dear to Pope Pius. Only her beloved brother was not there: in his private chapel he knelt and prayed for the soul of his sister, who had always been nearer and dearer to him than anyone save his mother.

Cardinal Merry del Val had arranged that the coffin in which Rosa's body was carried to the cemetery was to go past the Vatican, as close as possible to the windows of the Pope's study. He stood looking at the simple cortège, and long after it had gone from his view he still stood there with Cardinal Merry del Val beside him. When he finally turned around the younger man was surprised to see that instead of tears there was a smile on

the face of the Pope. "I was thinking, Raffaelo," he said, "what a very happy family we were."

No doubt it was the death of Rosa which depleted the Pope's waning strength. In the spring of 1913 he fell ill, to the deep anxiety of his Secretary of State — "first because of my love for him and second because of the consequence to the Church," he told Monsignor Bressan. The Pope suffered from a bad attack of influenza followed by bronchitis which left him still weaker. But after several weeks he made good recovery and was soon refusing to follow the instructions of his doctors. To their great annoyance they had no sooner left him with directions to rest than he was giving orders to admit someone to an audience or to transact some business; he declared they were only trying to make him waste time which belonged to the Church.

"Think of our responsibility before the world," the troubled Dr. Amici said to him.

"Think of mine before God," retorted the Pope, "if I don't take care of His Church." Then, seeing the physician's chagrin, he smiled comfortingly and said coaxingly, "Come, come — don't be cross. Surely it is to my interest to get well as much as yours to keep me so."

But before he was quite well again, another blow fell. In Mexico revolutionists were again persecuting the Church, and priests and bishops were forced to flee the country. Churches were made into barracks. Sacred vessels were being used as drinking cups. An old archbishop was forced to sweep the streets; many religious were being killed.

The aging Pope — he was seventy-seven that summer — was greatly affected by these things. He was grieved by the suffering of his people which he could in no way lessen, save by his prayers. When he came now to functions at St. Peter's those who looked at him thought him greatly changed. He seemed remote from the pomp around him, not even troubled by it any more; his shoulders were bowed under the golden cope.

Once when a movement in the crowd brought to a halt a

procession in St. Peter's, the Pope, suddenly aware of the pause, awoke from his contemplation. He bent forward and looked at the people gazing up at him on his *sedia*. A beautiful smile lighted his whole face, and they smiled back at him. One of the priests accompanying the Pope heard an old Italian woman say, "Oh, Father — dear old Father."

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### *War and the Shadow of Death*

“**I**PITY my successor,” said the Pope to Cardinal Merry del Val in the spring of 1914. “I shall not see it, but it is only too true that a great conflict is coming nearer and nearer.”

For several years he had been speaking of a disaster which he saw gathering over the world, and he spoke out before the conflict was more than a fear in other men’s hearts. Again and again he referred to “*la guerra che viene*.” At first some thought he meant the Balkan troubles, but he said he spoke of a greater conflict of which that was merely the beginning.

“The tragedy which is coming is one which I am powerless to help men escape and which I shall not be able to halt,” he said to the cardinals at a consistory on May 19, 1914. “I have the highest ministry of peace,” he said sadly, “and if I cannot protect the safety of so many young lives, who can — who will?”

At this consistory he created thirteen new cardinals, breaking an ancient custom since, for the first time in over five hundred years, the Italians no longer formed a majority in the Sacred College. Half were now Italian, the rest of other nationalities, among them four Americans.

He spoke in his address to them of the coming disaster, of nation rising against nation. He was pessimistic, but he expressed the hope that men of good will in those lands might be successful in averting the disaster. However, he said he feared it was too late for their work to be of much avail — “unless at the same time an attempt is made to establish in the hearts of men the laws of peace and charity. The peace or the strife in civil society and the State depend less on those who govern than on the people themselves.”

But there were some mitigating events during that summer

of his eightieth year. In Mexico his efforts to promote peace between Church and State met with a measure of success, and in addition he had the happiness of knowing that war between that country and the United States had been averted. A concordat had been signed between the Vatican and Serbia. Preparations were afoot for a Eucharistic Congress to be held in Lourdes in July, to which every country was sending its representatives, even China and Japan.

His last pontifical brief was on the subject of this Congress: "Never has Mary ceased to show that motherly love which until her last breath she poured forth so fully. It might indeed be said that her sole work was to . . . lead all human beings to the love of Jesus and to zeal in His service. . . . May the divine Author and Preserver of the Church look upon those of His flock who are afflicted today with so many calamities. May He pour out the fire of His love and revive the half dead faith of those who now hardly retain the name of Christian."

Three weeks before the Congress was to open the murder at Sarajevo of the Austrian Archduke and his wife took place. The Pope read the note sent following the tragedy to the Serbian government by the Austrian government, and felt that now the catastrophe he had been dreading was at hand. The Papal nuncios in various capitals were instructed to do their best to avert war, but the Pope realized that such efforts would probably be in vain. "In ancient times," he said mournfully, "the Pope with a word might have stayed the slaughter, but now I am powerless."

When an important diplomatic document was brought before him, he barely glanced at it. "What is this in comparison with what is coming, when before this year is over the whole world will be at war?"

At least in the wonderful Congress at Lourdes there was some measure of comfort for him; for in that meeting there prevailed unity between men, when so much of the world had lost all conception of it. When Cardinal di Belmonte, Papal Delegate to the Congress, returned to Rome, he told the Holy Father that, despite the rising tide of national hatreds, there

was no doubt but that the head of the Church was greatly loved in every land: each time the name of Pius was mentioned great enthusiasm had been shown by the crowds gathered at Lourdes.

The Congress was held from July 22nd to July 26th. Less than a month later war had begun. "I would have given my life to prevent it," said the Pope. Representatives of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy came to the Holy Father, asking him in the Emperor's name to bless the allied armies of Germany and Austria. He looked at the delegation sadly for a few moments. Then his face flushed as if in deep anger. "No," he said sternly. "I bless peace and not war. But I shall bestow a blessing on all my sons alike in this forced march to suffering and death."

When he bade farewell to the seminarians of the various Roman colleges who were leaving Rome to take up military service in their own countries, his unhappiness showed in his face, although he tried for their sakes to be cheerful. When they were gone, he said sadly to Cardinal Merry del Val, "It is hard to see my own children who yesterday worked here with me abandon the cassock for the soldier's uniform. Although here they worked in sympathetic companionship in different fields, now they are arrayed against one another ready to take each others' lives." And he asked each bishop who came to see him to begin a crusade of prayer for peace on returning to his diocese.

He was very tired and he knew that much of the old strength was no longer his. In the past he had risen above difficulties and dangers, but now he was too tired. But he sent a brief exhortation to all the Catholics of the world, those still at peace, those at war, to all for whose welfare he was so solicitous. "At this very moment," he wrote, "when nearly the whole of Europe is being dragged into the vortex of a most terrible war, with its present dangers and misery and the consequences to follow, the very thought of which must strike everyone with grief and horror, We, whose care is the life and welfare of so many citizens and peoples, cannot but be deeply moved and Our heart wrung with the bitterest sorrow.

"In the midst of this universal confusion and peril, We feel and know that both fatherly love and Our apostolic ministry demand that We should with all earnestness turn the thoughts of Christendom thither 'whence cometh all help' — the Christ, the Prince of Peace, the most powerful mediator between God and man. We charge therefore the Catholics of the whole world to approach the throne of grace and mercy, each and all of them . . . so that the merciful God may, as it were, grow wearied with the prayers of His children and speedily remove the evil causes of war, inspire the rulers of the nations with thoughts of peace and not of war."

When Pope Pius blessed the crowds in the Court of St. Damasus it was difficult for him to give them his usual welcoming smile. When the days passed and reports of new battles came to his ears, he would say, "My poor children," over and over again. He blessed groups of pilgrims in silence and gave no public addresses. He slept even less than usual. And he prayed both day and night. His health, however, seemed fairly good, and neither his doctors nor his careful sisters were unduly worried about his condition, for his heart remained strong. The threat of a recurring bronchitis also seemed to have vanished.

On the Feast of the Assumption he was not well, but he celebrated Mass and later gave audiences, the final one to a group of Americans. Thus his last audience was given to a group of pilgrims from his "*cara America*" as had been the first of his pontificate.

Two days later Cardinal Merry del Val was ill and could not come for his daily audience. The Pope, who on the orders of his physician had remained in bed, sent word to his Secretary of State that he was not to worry — "but tell him to get well, for when the angel of the Vatican is ill, I am ill too." His sisters came to see him that morning and sent word to the Cardinal that the Pope was feeling better and the doctor thought he would be completely recovered by morning. As Anna and Maria left him, the Pope said, "*Arrivederci questa sera*," and to all who during the day had asked how he felt he made

the same reply, "*Sto bene*," and added that he would be out of bed in the morning.

But next day he complained of feeling weaker, and that night he grew worse. By noon of the following day he had a high fever and was completely prostrated. He himself realized the seriousness of his condition. "May God's will be done," he said. "I think it is the end. Perhaps He in His goodness wishes to spare me the horrors Europe will undergo."

When that evening the doctors said the Pope was threatened with pneumonia, Cardinal Merry del Val was certain that he would not recover. "He has suffered too much from the strain of public events," he said sadly to Monsignor Bressan, "to offer prolonged resistance to serious illness."

That evening it was clear he was dying, and Cardinal Merry del Val and some of the other cardinals were summoned. The Pope lay propped up with pillows and his breathing was difficult. An ebony and silver crucifix lay on the pillow beside him. His sisters and several of his nieces were kneeling at his bedside. Beside him stood the Brother of St. John of God who was his nurse. On the other side knelt the cardinals, trying to restrain their tears.

When the Pope saw that preparations for the last rites were being made, and a crucifix and two tapers had been placed on the little table at his side, he asked Cardinal Merry del Val if the time for this had come. Then, seeing the latter's expression, he said, "I am in the hands of God. Do it quickly," and he received Extreme Unction quietly, almost resignedly. Cardinal Merry del Val gave him absolution and Holy Communion, with difficulty managing to keep his composure; when he had finished he broke down and sobbed bitterly. They heard the Pope say, "I resign myself completely," and then he answered the prayers for the dying in a voice that grew fainter and fainter.

Suddenly the great bell of St. Peter's rang out, the signal that the Pope was in his last agony. In every church in Rome prayers were begun. People gathered in the Court of St. Dama-

sus, grief on every face. Thousands knelt in St. Peter's before the exposed Blessed Sacrament. In the room where the Pope lay one could hear the murmuring of voices from the Square below. Maria and Anna Sarto had gone to the Pope's chapel and were lighting candles for their brother before the statue of Saint Joseph. The bell continued ringing.

The Pope could no longer speak but he knew all that went on. When someone came to the bed and took his hand they felt a faint answering pressure; sometimes he smiled faintly or even raised one hand a little to bless them. Sometimes he tried to make the sign of the cross on his forehead.

At eleven that night Cardinal Merry del Val came close to his bed, walking very softly, but the Pope heard him and turned his head and lifted his hand a little to welcome him. The Cardinal sat down close beside him and again the Pope smiled faintly. He kept his eyes riveted on the Cardinal's face and for a half hour they remained so, the Pope and his Secretary of State, the hand of the one close in that of the other. Sometimes the Pope's grasp grew loose and his glance wavered; then he again clasped the Cardinal's hand firmly and looked straight into his eyes, as if trying to tell him by an intent look what his voice could no longer say. Was he recalling the long years they had spent together, the joys and sorrows shared? Was he trying in vain to give the Cardinal a last comforting word to assuage the grief he could not conceal? Finally the Pope's head sank and his eyes closed, and the Cardinal felt that he had told him good-bye.

As the Secretary of State left the room for a few minutes, Dr. Machiafava, writing an official bulletin, said to him softly, "Could you give me a little help, Eminence, with this report?"

"But how could I be of help? I know nothing of medicine, Doctor."

"No, no, I don't mean anything technical," said the doctor. "But if you would suggest a phrase or a word which would give some idea of the marvellous attitude which he carries in the face of death. Look at him — is he not truly wonderful?"

And it was true: he was wonderful as he lay there, the white head resting on the pillow, the eyes, open now, bright and calm, the face lighted with the smile which had lighted it all his life. The Pope's whole demeanor was one of perfect ease in the face of death.

Shortly after one o'clock, on the morning of August 20th, he died, peacefully and quietly, as if he were falling into a sweet deep sleep, as would a tired workman after a long day's work. The end was so quiet that it was unexpected. Dr. Machiafava had been standing by the bed. Suddenly Anna, who was kneeling there, broke into uncontrollable sobs, and this seemed to rouse the Pope and bring him out of his coma. He opened his eyes wide and the doctor saw his lips move. As he was evidently making a great effort to say something, the doctor leaned close to him. Suddenly speech returned to the dying man. It was only a whisper but the words were clear in the doctor's ear. "Together in one — all things in Christ," he said. A moment later the doctor bent again to listen to his heart. It had stopped beating.

Dr. Machiafava touched Cardinal Merry del Val on the shoulder and he looked up; the doctor's expression told him that all was over. The Cardinal rose from his knees and as he did so, Anna and Maria looked up anxiously, waiting for some word. "His beautiful soul is with God," he said gently in answer to the question in their eyes.

Word of the Pope's death spread through the palace and everywhere men wept openly and unashamedly for one who had been so good and kind to them all — the servants to whom he had been friend and counsellor, the priests and prelates who had served him in the Vatican.

When news of the death of Pius X reached the outside world, thousands of messages of sympathy came to the Cardinal Secretary of State by telegram and cable. "The whitest of souls has fled from a world of horror and bloodshed," read one, and another, "He died of a broken heart, one of the first victims of the war and its most illustrious." And it was true that his death,

on the threshold of terrible years, was caused not so much by illness as by grief. Night and day he had brooded over his helplessness in averting the conflict, and it had broken his heart to realize how little he could do.

From Venice came the story that at midnight of the evening he died a group of people had seen a figure in white standing in a recess of the wall at St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice. The story had spread and many, hearing that the Pope had died a few hours later, were certain it had been Pius himself, fulfilling the promise he had made when, as Patriarch of Venice, he went to Rome to the conclave: "Living or dead, I shall come back to my dear Venice."

The Pope lay on his bed, the little crucifix in his folded hands, and four high tapers burning at head and foot. Four Noble Guards stood immovable as statues about his bed. Across the room from where he lay was a plain altar, and there, from the hour of his death, all morning long, Mass succeeded Mass, and others were said continuously in the Pope's private chapel. After his own relatives and the cardinals and priests and servants of his household had come to his bedside to say farewell and to pray, his body was taken to the Throne Room, and there he lay in state, in white robe and red cape, red silk gloves on his hands and a mitre of cloth of gold on his head. The Noble Guards stood about the bier and in the background Franciscan Conventuals kept up an unbroken chant. During the rest of the afternoon people were allowed to see him and many pressed their rosaries against his body. Monsignor Bressan echoed the feelings of the Pope's relatives and his household when he said, "I ask of God only to be near him in eternity as I have been near him in this life."

That evening Angelo Sarto came and hurried to his brother's bier. He knelt there for a long time until at last his sister Maria took him, a bent grief-stricken old man, away to the sisters' apartment.

On the morning of August 21st, surrounded by cardinals, Swiss and Noble Guards in dress uniform, members of the diplomatic corps, and his relatives, the body of the Pope was taken to St. Peter's. In full pontificals, and with the white pallium with its black crosses about his shoulders, he was placed in the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament. The bier was raised and the body of the Pope was visible to the people; over the catafalque hung the Triple Crown. The altar was draped in black and the antependium was purple and black, the papal colors of mourning. During the day thousands came to pass before the bier. And many who came were praying not for him but to him.

On the morning of August 22nd the Pope's will was opened. It was very simple. "I was born poor, I lived poor, I die poor," was one of its first statements. It contained only a few provisions and bequests: he especially asked not to be embalmed, and he wished to be buried in the crypt of St. Peter's. The financial provisions were equally simple, the chief of them concerning the disposal of a considerable sum of money which had been given to him recently. This sum, contingent on the permission of the next pontiff, was to be used in two ways: for his sisters a monthly sum from the interest, the rest to pay the expenses of four hundred children to whom he had given his care since they were orphaned by the Messina earthquake.

Maria Sarto thought the sum would be more than they needed. She and Anna planned to return to their house in Riese as soon as her sister, who had grieved herself into illness, was better. In Riese one could live on very little.

In the evening of that day the body of Pius X was entombed in the crypt of St. Peter's. There were no great ceremonies for him; his family wanted the services simple and private, but even so there were a thousand people by invitation and request in the basilica.

The great basilica was illumined only by a few tapers. Candles flickered at the Shrine of the Apostles and in the chapel where the catafalque stood. A sunset of soft rose and gold only added to the gloom of the scene.

The procession formed at the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament and was met by Cardinal Merry del Val, Archpriest of St. Peter's since the death of Cardinal Rampolla the year before, and by the canons of the cathedral. First came the bearer of the great silver pontifical cross, then the prelates and priests and Guards. In the middle of the line was the Pope's bier, carried by the same men who had formerly carried his *sedia*.

As the procession went through the vast church, the Sistine Choir, with Monsignor Perosi conducting, sang Palestrina's *Miserere*. It was still being sung when the crypt was reached and, the roof being low there, the mournful effect was strengthened.

The tomb was at the right of the entrance to the subterranean crypt, close to the tombs of other popes. It lay partly within the wall and partly in the passage. Later a tomb would be built for Pope Pius by the cardinals he had created.

There were only a few close to the bier when the rites of absolution were performed. Once more and for the last time his brother and his nieces and last of all his sister Maria looked at the quiet face. Then the coffin of cypress wood covered with red silk was closed and placed within a second one of lead, on which was a plate engraved with the Pope's name and the dates of his birth and death. This in turn was placed in a third coffin of oak and on this Cardinal Merry del Val affixed the seal of state, and then stooped to kiss the coffin.

The *Miserere* was almost finished. When the echoes of the psalm died away Cardinal Merry del Val spoke the final "Amen" over Pius X. His face was lined with grief, and his voice was unsteady. He had been, save for the Pope's own relatives, closer to him than anyone. He had been with him from the day the Patriarch of Venice had accepted the papacy, and now he consigned the Pope to the grave.

"I wonder," he said that evening, "how I will live without him. I shall of course, but the void in my heart will be there as long as I live."

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