

# THE BULLETIN

“So the faith was planted: so it must be restored.”

*Eight Pond Place, Oyster Bay, NY 11771*

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## “Not by Silver and Gold...”

Adapted from a sermon by The Most Rev. Clarence Kelly  
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Many centuries ago, there was a bitter struggle between England and Scotland. The leader of the Scottish soldiers was a man called Robert Bruce, who reigned for a time as King Robert I of Scotland. In the course of the conflict, the English put a price upon his head. On one occasion while the English were in hot pursuit of him using bloodhounds to track him down, Robert was almost captured. In fact when he and his companion heard the deep baying of the hounds fast upon their trail, they knew that they were close to being taken. “We are lost,” Robert Bruce’s friend declared. “The English have unleashed the hounds, and they are on our trail.”

But Robert Bruce did not give up. “We are not lost yet,” he said, “They will not catch us.” Then he explained his plan. “There is a river not far from here. We will swim it and the dogs will lose the scent.” It came to pass, just as Robert predicted. They reached the river’s edge and plunged in. They swam to the other side and disappeared in the forest. When the dogs came to the water’s edge, they could go no further. The scent of those they sought was lost in the river’s flowing water. The trail ended there and Robert Bruce and his friend escaped. (Msgr. Arthur Tonne, *Stories for Sermons*, Vol. 2, p. 94)

About six thousand years ago, sin was introduced into this world when Adam sinned. With his original sin, and the human race fell. Mankind was now pursued by Satan, and it seemed there was no place for man to go—no refuge of his own making, no river into which he could plunge. The devil pursued, and man’s

lot was death. Death and the shedding of blood were his to deal with. Of course, man had been warned by God Who told him what to do and counseled him to be careful. “Of all the trees of Eden you may eat,” God said, “but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat. For in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death.” (Gen. 2:17) But Adam disobeyed and ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. So it was that death came into the world, and with death came the shedding of blood.

Yet God did not abandon man. Instead, He promised to send a Savior. The Savior would save man by the very effects of sin. Since death and the shedding of blood were the result of sin, the Savior would use His own death and His own Blood to save mankind. Forgiveness would not come through the death of ordinary men and the shedding of their blood, for the blood of Adam and his children was not of sufficient value to atone for sin. Man’s blood was of limited worth. Its shedding did not have the power to atone for sin or to restore man to the grace and friendship of God. Man could be punished for sin, but he could not atone for sin. Since Almighty God longed for the love and friendship of man, He would have to take the matter of man’s redemption into His own hands. Hence, for the love of Adam and his children, God would do what man could not accomplish. He would atone for sin and repair the damage that was done, and He would do it by sending His only begotten Son into this world. The Son of God, Who became the Son of Man by becoming the

Son of Mary, would offer His life and shed His Precious Blood for our sake.

The prophet Isaias foresaw all of this in the Old Testament. Looking into the future, he saw the coming of the Savior, and He wrote about it in the 54<sup>th</sup> chapter of his book. So much would the Son of God suffer, that Isaias called Him “the Man of sorrows [Who] hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrow.” (Is. 53:4) The prophet goes on, referring to Christ, “He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins.... The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.... By His bruises we are healed.” (Is. 53:5) St. Peter, the first pope, declared of Christ the Savior, “He bore our sins in His body upon the tree [of the Cross.]” (1 Peter 2:24) St. Paul says that, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” (Gal. 3:13) St. Pauls also says that “...when as yet we were sinners Christ died for us.” (Rom. 5:8) Yes, Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world. He shed His Precious Blood to pay the penalty for sin, to close the gates of hell for us and to open the gates of heaven. He shed His Precious Blood to atone for sin. He died to redeem us—to buy us back. Furthermore, Our Lord offered Himself willingly, lovingly, and even enthusiastically. Isaias says, “He was offered because it was His own will.” (Is. 54:7) Adam sold us. Christ bought us back. That is why we call Him our Redeemer, for to redeem a thing is to buy it back. Christ bought us back, and the price He paid was His

Precious Blood. As St. Peter said, we were not purchased by silver and gold but by the Precious Blood of Christ. (I Peter 1:18)

Sin and temptation pursue us like the dogs that pursued Robert Bruce and his friend. For us, as for them, there is a means of escape. Theirs was a river of water, ours is a river of Blood. As they plunged into their river, we must plunge into ours. We must, as it were, plunge our souls into the stream of Christ’s Precious Blood, flowing to us from the cross by means of the seven sacraments. By His Blood our souls are cleansed. By His Blood, we overcome both sin and death. Thus do we escape Satan, the great pursuer, finding refuge in the forest of God’s mercy.

July is the month dedicated to the Precious Blood of Our Lord, and July 1<sup>st</sup> is the Feast of the Precious Blood. During the summer months, and this month especially, keep close to the sacraments which are your escape from the powers of the devil. Keep close to confession, by which we wash sin from our souls in the Blood of Christ. Keep close to Holy Communion, which is the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ, and the food of our souls. By these means and the help of Our Lady, you will fly from sin and its near occasions. You will persevere in the state of sanctifying grace, which is friendship with God. You will be safe under the redemptive power of Our Lord’s cross, bought back from power of the devil by the Blood of Him Who hung thereon.

