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THE NEW CHURCH AT CASTLEISLAND.  
Castleisland, Tuesday.

To-day the solemn and auspicious ceremony of laying the first stone of a new Catholic Church, to be erected here, was performed by the Most Rev. Dr. McCarthy, Bishop of Kerry, assisted in the ceremony by a large number of the priests of the diocese and some thousands of people who thronged from all parts of the parish to witness the inception of a work that was sadly wanted. The old church is very seedy looking, standing quite adjacent to the site of the new. Indeed, one wing had to be removed in order to make room for the ground-plan of the new.

The ceremonies commenced shortly after 11 o'clock. A procession was formed in the church, and making such a detour as the littered state of the building ground would permit, arrived at the particular spot where the first stone of the edifice was to be laid. Here a tastefully got-up platform and dais had been provided, and the ceremony of blessing the stone was proceeded with. A radiant sunshine seemed to signify the blessing of Nature upon the inauguration of a temple to Nature's God, and of course the brilliancy of the weather insured the presence of a large and respectable throng who assisted in the ceremony throughout with a fervent demeanour that showed they thoroughly appreciated importance of the occasion, and had devoutly prayed for this moment.

The following assisted his Lordship and were amongst the guests entertained by the Archdeacon in the evening:—

- The Rev. Dean Higgins, P.P., V.G.; Ven. Archdeacon O'Connell, P.P., V.F. (founder of the new church); Ven. Archdeacon O'Sullivan, P.P., V.G., Kenmare; Very Rev. Canon Griffin, P.P., V.F., Millsreel; Very Rev. Canon Brogan, P.P., V.F., Cahirciveen; Very Rev. T. Hyland, O.F.; Holy Cross, Tralee; Reva M. O'Connor, P.P. Ballybunion; Eugene O'Sullivan, P.P., Ballylongford; T. Nolan, P.P., Lixnaw; J. H. Brogan, P.P., O'Dorney; John O'Leary, P.P., Ballymacelligott; P. O'Connor, P.P., Fries; A. Moynahan, Adm., Listowel; L. O'Regan, P.P., Dush; F. Walsh, P.P., Rathmore; F. Moriarty, P.P., Brosna; D. O'Keefe, P.P., Spa; M. McCarthy, Adm. Killarney; D. R. Harrington, President St. Michael's College, Listowel; D. McCarthy, C.C., Ballymacelligott; M. A. Hogan, C.C., O'Dorney; D. M. Gillycuddy, C.C., Castleisland; J. O'Callaghan, do; U. O'Sullivan, C.C., Tralee; W. O'Callaghan, C.C., do; H. O'Riordan, C.C., do; M. Harlihy, C.C., Lixnaw; Father Scollard, C.C., Currans; F. Pierce, C.C., Milltown; J. K. Fitzgerald, C.C., Cahirciveen; C. Scannell, C.C., Tuost; M. A. Duhig, O.P., Tralee; Father Edward, O.S.F., Killarney.

A procession was again formed, and when after filing through the circuit of the foundation groove, the platform was again reached, the Bishop turned to the vast throng, who had reverently followed in the wake of the procession, and addressed them in the following eloquent and touching words:—Your reverend pastor has chosen this day for laying the first stone of this church on account of the feast which we celebrate, and its origin I think well to explain to you. About 300 years ago the infidel Turks, having subdued the whole East, and threatened to blot out the Christian name in the West also, the saintly Pontiff, Pius V., who then sat in the chair of Peter, called on the Christian nations to join in a crusade against the enemy of religion and civilization. All refused one after another on various pretexts, except the King of Spain and the Princes of Italy, and the Republic of Venice. The

Pope, nowise daunted by this defection, and confiding more in divine than in human aid, and encouraged the leaders of the allied troops to meet the infidels in open battle. Having embarked at Messina on the 15th of September, 1571, the allied fleet reached the Gulf of Sepanto, within sight of the enemy, on the 7th of October, a little after mid-day. The Turkish fleet consisted of 300 large ships, while the Christians had only on their side 209, chiefly light galleys and barges. The Christians fought under a banner blessed by the Pope, having inscribed on it the noble motto—"In hoc signo vinces." In this sign shalt thou conquer.

Before the battle all knelt down reverently, received the priestly absolution, and the papal indulgence. At four in the afternoon the battle was general along the whole line—and within one hour the defeat of this enemy was completed, and their prestige lasted for all time. Ever since the Turkish empire has been tottering, and we see it now saved from utter ruin only through the cupidity and jealousy of the Christian nations, who cannot agree about their share in the spoil. While the battle was impending, the religious communities in Rome, by order of the Pope, gave themselves up to fasting and prayer, sacred processions visited the churches, and especially the great Confraternity of the Holy Rosary, watched night and day in the Dominican Church of the Minerva, invoking the powerful help of the Queen of Heaven. The Pontiff never ceased to invoke her aid for the Christian soldiers. On the day of the battle of Lepanto—at the very hour at which the splendid victory was won—the treasurer of the Pontifical household and other prelates came to consult his Holiness on matters of great importance to the church. They found him absorbed in prayer. He rose up suddenly, walked quickly to the window, and, opening it, looked out eagerly for a while. Then, turning round to the prelates, he said, "We must not now speak on business however pressing; this is not the time. Run at once to the churches to thank God, our army is victorious." Remember the battle was fought hundreds of miles away, and yet the Pope saw the issue clearly, as if the engagement took place before his eyes. All the prelates noted exactly the day and hour of the happy vision. It was five p.m. and the 7th Oct., 1571—the day and hour of the triumphant victory in the Gulf of Lepanto. In honor of that glorious day Pius V. ordered a commemoration of our "Lady of Victory," to be made every year, and the words, "Help of Christians," to be added to the Litany of Loreto. For the same purpose Gregory XIII. commanded the festival of the Holy Rosary to be celebrated on the first Sunday of October in all churches where an altar was raised under the protection of Our Lady of the Rosary, and Clement XI. extended the feast to the universal church. The office and mass of Our Lady under the title of the "Help of Christians," were added to the liturgy by Pius VII., and fixed for the 24th of May, the anniversary of his return in 1814 to the eternal city after a long exile. His Lordship concluded by reminding his hearers that the new church would be dedicated to St. John and St. Stephen, and called on those present to invoke the blessings of those saints on the good work they had begun to-day.

At the conclusion of his Lordship's remarks, and acting on a suggestion from the Bishop which, however, it would seem was merely pro forma, the priests assembled liberally contributed to the fund for the erection of the church. A sum of one hundred and sixty four pounds was subscribed by twenty eight priests. Glancing around to estimate the numbers present, one was impressed that the two or three thousands persons on the spot did not adequately represent how many had assisted at the long wished for ceremony, as a continuous stream of people poured into and out of the grounds. Being market day in the town many could scarcely come at all, and others were merely able to join for a few minutes in the solemn inauguration of the work they had so much at heart. From the overlooking windows of the Convent of Mercy, and schools adjacent, a host of favoured lady friends of the convent were enabled to commune in the pious solemnity of the hour; and now their beaming faces, interpressed here and there with the pale but glad brows of the nuns, told how dear to hearts of Erin's daughters is the process of the resurrection of the once—aye, and once again—numerous monuments of the faithful devotion of our race to the grand old creed, which, through every vicissitude and ordeal, has been preserved as pure and revived as strongly as in the days when Ireland was an emblematic emerald of abiding Christianity, thickly studded with bright temples to the worship of the True God. A technical resume of the descriptive particulars of this church might not be out of place as foreshadowing what it is to be.

The building will be executed in local limestone—well faced with chiselled dressings. The following are the dimensions of the edifice—length of nave, 100 feet; width, 30 feet; width across, including aisles, 60 feet in the clear; width across transepts, 76 feet; chancel, 23 feet by 30 feet wide; height from floor of nave, to springing of roof, will be 33 feet, and to ridge will be 50 feet. The building will

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be carried out in the early geometric Gothic style, and will be of a bold and dignified character—especially the west end of the church. In this elevation is shown a deeply recessed doorway—the jambs are filled in with 2 rows of coals, with moulded bases and carved caps—supporting a moulded arch; and to give emphasis to doorway, a bold moulding is shown, to form a canopy thus terminating in a carved finial and crockets. Over the doorway is the west window 15 feet wide and 30 feet high; it is divided by mullions into four lights, and the head filled in with tracery. On each side of the window is shown a panel carried from the sill to the springing of arch. There are slender and annuletted columns, dividing window and panels, and supporting arches of same. At the south west angle of the church will be placed the tower and spire, which, when completed, will be 160 feet high. The nave arcade will be supported on sharp golden gray, polished granite, a most beautiful material procured by the architect; it is extensively used in England, but it is for the first time, introduced here. The responds to arches in side chapels are in the same material; but the coals, in angles of aps, will be in local red marble, taken from a quarry recently discovered by the Ven. Archdeacon O'Connell, in the vicinity of Castleisland. This is a very beautiful marble, believed by competent judges to surpass the Cork red. The architect is Mr D. J. Coakley, A.R.J.B.A., 48, Grand Parade, Cork, and the contractors are Messrs Butler, Bros., Killarney.

The inscription on the stone reads as follows:—  
Primarius lapsi hujusce Ecclesiae parochialis de Castleisland, sub invocatione S.S Joannis Apostoli et Stephani Proto Martyris benedictus et positus est, in festo B.M.V. sub titulo Auxilium Christianorum XXIV Maii A.D. 1881, feliciter regnante summo Pontifice Leone XIII, assistentibus Daniel M'Carthy, Episcopo Kerryensi, et Joanne O'Connell, Archidiacono Ardferriensi, et P. rocho ejusdem Ecclesiae Dominioci J. Coakley, architecto, multisque et venerabilibus et populo frequentissimo.

The Venerable Archdeacon entertained his clerical and some lay friends at a banquet in the evening. With commendable consideration for the convenience of those who had to catch the evening train to Tralee the hour was fixed at four p.m. The Venerable Archdeacon occupied the chair at the vestive board.

Amongst the laity might be mentioned—Messrs Redmond Roche, J.P.; Captain Chichester, Lieut. Thompson, W. Nolan, M.D.; R. Harold, M.D.; R. Roche, senior; J. W. Roche, solr.; William M. Nolan, National Bank, Tralee; John R. Hayes, M.D., Tralee; M. S. Keilly, J. Cruise, E. Harrington, KERRY SENTINEL; H. Brassill, "Kerry Independent"; D. J. Coakley, P. H. Leahy, J. Walker, E. O'Connor, C. W. P. Quin, National Bank; Mr Pembroke, W. Hayes, J. Murphy, & Co.

After His Lordship's address the following subscriptions were handed in:—

The Lord Bishop,	£10 0 0
The Deane of Kerry,	10 0 0
Ven Archdeacon O'Connell,	500 0 0
Rev T. Nolan,	20 0 0
Cannon Brogan,	20 0 0
Rev T H Brogan,	10 0 0
Rev J K Fitzgerald,	10 0 0
Rev P O'Connor,	10 0 0
Rev P Pierce,	3 0 0
Rev M M'Carthy,	5 0 0
Rev E Walsh,	5 0 0
Rev E O'Sullivan,	5 0 0
Cannon Griffin,	5 0 0
Rev J O'Leary,	5 0 0
Rev A Moynihan,	3 0 0
Father Hyland,	3 0 0
Rev D M'Carthy,	3 0 0
Rev D R Harrington,	3 0 0
Rev P Scollard,	3 0 0
Rev M Herthy,	3 0 0
Rev D M Gullycuddy,	3 0 0
Rev J O'Callaghan,	3 0 0
Rev D O'Keefe,	3 0 0
Rev M O'Sullivan,	3 0 0
Rev J Beazley,	3 0 0
Rev W O'Callaghan,	3 0 0
Rev C Scannell,	2 0 0

The ceremony concluded with the Episcopal blessing pronounced by His Lordship.

After the viands, which had been excellently catered by Mrs O'Sullivan, of the Hibernian Hotel, Tralee, were done justice to, the Venerable Chairman rose amid applause to propose the health of our Holy Father the Pope. He said—My Lord, Rev. Brethren and Gentleman, at a gathering—a festive gathering like the present—I believe it is usual to propose a few toasts appropriate to the occasion. The first on my list is one which, I am confident, will recommend itself to all present without exception. It is a toast which, in any quarter of the globe, would be received with respect and reverence. But in an assembly, like the present, composed chiefly of Catholics and true-hearted Irishmen, it will, I am certain, be received not only with respect and favour, but with heart-

felt applause. The ceremony of this day naturally suggests the thoughts that we all have been engaged in great and good work—a work of abiding importance—a work calculated not alone to do good in the present but to influence the lives—the actions—the future destiny of generations yet unborn? But it does more; it reminds us all that 18 centuries ago the great architect of the universe—the author and finisher of our faith—laid deep and solid the foundations of our Holy Church on the unshaken rock of Peter! From the day on which the momentous words were addressed to the Prince of the Apostles—"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church"—the assaults of the enemy have never ceased, but never since the early ages of the Christian Church were these assaults more frequent, more violent, or more general than at the present day. Truly, it may be said, that the gates of hell never showed themselves so furious. But the promise of Christ is there, and will be verified in the present, and the future as well as in the past. If we take a retrospect of the eventful periods of the Church's history and review the lives of her distinguished Popes, we will find that in every emergency—in her trials and persecutions from age to age. He has raised up in a of majesty and power, men of learning and wisdom, men of acknowledged holiness, who in His Providence were the instruments of her most signal triumphs. Are we then to fear that the hand of God is shortened? Rather I should now have asked, have we not proof of His continued protection even down to our own times. Even you heard to day in the able address of the Bishop how the power of the Turks has been broken; so, likewise, from time we know that He constantly watches over us. We had our Gregories and various others, and now we have our Leo XIII (cheers). Without saying any more I give you the health of His Holiness the Pope (loud applause).

The toast was drunk with all honors.

The Chairman next proposed the health of the clergy secular and regular.

The Chairman again rose and said—I believe it may be admitted as a truism, that a commander without an army or with an army badly officered could effect but little in the face of the enemy, no matter how skilled he may be in the science of war. This is but a familiar, an apt illustration of the condition of a Bishop who has not a virtuous, heroic, self-sacrificing body of priests—and an army well disciplined and ready for an encounter however hazardous, when the welfare of the people temporal or spiritual is at stake. That there is no such misfortune or anything of the kind to be apprehended in this large and important Diocese is beyond all question; and I am happy to be able to bear, and I do bear willing and truthful testimony to the satisfactory state of this Diocese! It is six and forty years and more since I joined the ranks. I have since served in many campaigns and fought the good fight, side by side with my Rev. Brethren. Perhaps I will be told that it is time for the old warrior to retire from active service, and leave the field to abler hands. Well it will be conceded at all events that I have had an ample opportunity of witnessing the merits and worth of my rev brethren, and I will say, and I say of without exaggeration or fear of contradiction, that the priests of Kerry would compare favourably with the priesthood of any diocese in Ireland, and that is saying a great deal, for I believe there are not better in the world! Whether, while serving in the ranks, or since I became a kind of subaltern, I always enjoyed their confidence and friendship, and had reason to be proud of both one and the other. And who would not be proud of them? Had we not this day a splendid representation of that body?—of the main force as well as of the auxiliaries. Had we not a grand specimen of the distinguished officers—the dignitaries of the Diocese both secular and regular—men in every way worthy of their respective positions in the Church! Who with such an array of rank and dignity would not be encouraged to undertake, even in old age, any work calculated to promote the honour and glory of our Divine Master? To me, gentlemen, it is a great consolation—a pure joy to be surrounded by so much union, so much friendship and so much sterling worth! Hence it is that I cry, out *quam donum et quam jucundam habitare fratres in unum* (cheers). I am proud and happy then to propose the health of the venerable clergy of the diocese.

—Regular and Secular.  
Venerable Archdeacon O'Sullivan, P.P., V.G., Kenmare, responded.  
The several other toasts suitable to the occasion were ably proposed and fittingly responded to.