

of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother" (Matt. xii, 49-50).

Nor need we cast about to find God's will for us. It shines revealed. "What God asks of you," says St. Paul, "is that you should sanctify yourselves" (I Thess. iv, 3). God wills, not only that all men be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth, but that they be fashioned in the likeness of His Son. And it is Jesus Himself who leads us on our way. "If thou hast a mind to enter into life," were His words to the rich young man, "keep the commandments" (Matt. xix, 17). And on every other page in Holy Writ, the Spirit is harping on the self-same string. Of the letter of love of St. John the Beloved this is the pith and point. There it comes as a constant refrain, and rises in a crescendo; "The test is whether we keep His commandments. The man who claims knowledge of Him, without keeping His commandments, is a liar. Truth does not dwell in such a man as that" (I John ii, 3-4). And again: "It is no new command that my letter brings. Only the command that we were given from the first. Let us all love one another. Love means keeping His commandments. Love is itself the commandment which our earliest lessons bade us follow (II John 5-6). And at the last: "Beloved, if conscience does not condemn us, we can appear boldly before God, and He will grant all our requests, since we are keeping His commandments and living as He would see us live. . . . When a man keeps His commandments it means that he is dwelling in God and God in him" (I John iii, 21, 22, and 24).

PETER ORR, S.J.

*Heythrop College, Chipping Norton, Oxon.*

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

*Why is there no reference to St. Peter in the Epistle to the Romans?*

There are two ways of approaching this question. We might ask why there is no direct reference to St. Peter as residing in Rome and head of the Church there, or why there is no reference to Peter's work in that city. The answer will accordingly be divided into two sections.

i. It is now admitted by all who have studied the evidence that St. Peter came to Rome and was put to death there. An excellent summary of tradition on this point may be found in Fr. Philip Hughes' *History of the Church*, I, pp. 59 ff. We cannot, however, establish exactly the time when he first came to Rome nor determine the length of his stay. Eusebius places Peter's arrival in Rome during the reign of Claudius (A.D. 41-54), *Eccles. Hist.*, II, 14 and his death during the reign of Nero

in A.D. 67. Although a period of twenty-five years is usually associated with his stay in Rome, cf. Hughes, p. 65, we must not imagine it as an uninterrupted residence there. We know, for instance, that Peter was at the Council held in Jerusalem in A.D. 49 cf. Acts xv. He was also at Antioch where he came into conflict with St. Paul, Gal. ii, 11 ff. and his first Epistle implies that he undertook long missionary journeys, 1 Peter i, 1. It is reasonable to suppose that Peter, like Paul, would move from place to place spreading the Gospel and founding churches, which would mean long periods of absence from Rome itself. In such circumstances the lack of mention of Peter being in Rome need cause no surprise since it may well have been that when Romans was written in 58 that he was not in fact resident there, but busy elsewhere preaching the Gospel.

2. By 58, when Romans was written, the Roman Church had long been established and had acquired a world-wide reputation. It had not been established by Paul and consequently he tells us in Romans xv, 20 ff. he does not think it right to intrude upon *another's foundation*. This may be an indirect reference to Peter's work because the flourishing state of the Roman Church would argue to a great personality as its founder. Who is that great personality? Tradition has been insistent that it was the Prince of the Apostles. But a mere solitary brief visit of Peter would not account for the position assigned to him by tradition. When Peter and Paul are mentioned together in connection with the Roman Church in the earliest notices, the name of Peter invariably stands first.

The answer to this second part of our question is well given by a non-Catholic writer: "It has often been asked, why St. Paul, if he meant that another had preached at Rome and been the founder of the Roman Church, did not mention his name? The answer is a very simple one: he was not writing for the information of students and critics of the twentieth century, but for the Roman Christians, who knew the facts. There had then been a founder of this great Church of world-wide fame with whom Paul was well acquainted and into whose special sphere of successful preaching he did not think it right to intrude. Who was he? All tradition answers with one voice the name of St. Peter." G. Edmundson, *The Church in Rome in the First Century*, pp. 28-9. Consult further, P. Boylan, *Epistle to the Romans* and Jules Lebreton and Jacques Zeiller, *The History of the Primitive Church*, I, pp. 233 ff.

R. FOSTER.