

Certain Sermons
appointed by the Queen's Majesty
to be declared and read
by all Parsons, Vicars, and Curates
every Sunday and Holy Day
in their Churches,
and by Her Grace's advice perused and overseen
for the better understanding
of the simple people.

Newly imprinted in Paris according
as is mentioned in the Book
of Common Prayers.^a

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^a Certain – Prayers.] *Such, with the date and generally the words, Cum privilegio Regiæ, below, was the Title of the First book throughout the reign of Elizabeth.*

In 1547 and 1548 the Title was this : Certain Sermons or Homilies appointed by the King's Majesty to be declared and read by all Parsons, Vicars, or Curates every Sunday in their Churches where they have Cure. In Grafton's editions of 1549 and 1551 it was the same, with these words added, Newly imprinted by the King's Highness' authority divided. In the editions of Whitchurch and Oswen in 1549 the form was altered by the omission of or Homilies, the insertion of and Holy Day after Sunday, and the substitution of these words at the end, Newly imprinted in Parts, according as is mentioned in the Book of Common Prayer.

In 1623 the Title at the beginning of the volume, serving in fact for both Books, ran thus : Certain Sermons or Homilies, appointed to be read in Churches in the time of the late Queen Elizabeth of famous memory, and now thought fit to be reprinted by authority from the King's Most Excellent Majesty.

A TABLE OF THE SERMONS
Contained^a in this Present Volume.

- I. A Fruitful Exhortation to the Reading of Holy Scripture.
- II. Of the misery of all Mankind.
- III. Of the Salvation of all Mankind.
- IV. Of the true and lively Faith
- V. Of Good Works.
- VI. Of Christian Love and Charity.
- VII. Against Swearing and Perjury.
- VIII. Of the Declining from God.
- IX. An Exhortation against the Fear of Death.
- X. An Exhortation to Obedience.
- XI. Against Whoredom and Adultery.
- XII. Against Strife and Contention.

Finis Tabulae.^b

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^a Sermons Contained] Sermons or Homilies Contained 1547–1551 *except* 1549 W.

^b Tabulae] *added in* 1559.

THE PREFACE^a

CONSIDERING how necessary it is that the word of God, which is the only food of the soul, and that most excellent light that we must walk by in this our most dangerous pilgrimage, should at all convenient times be preached unto the people, that thereby they both learn their duty towards God, their Prince, and their neighbours, according to the mind of the Holy Ghost expressed in the Scriptures, and also to avoid the manifold enormities which heretofore by false doctrine have crept into the Church of God; and how that they which are appointed ministers have not the gift of preaching sufficiently to instruct the people which is committed unto them, whereof great inconveniences might rise, and ignorance still be maintained, if some honest remedy be not speedily found and provided; the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, tendering the soul health of her loving subjects and the quieting of their consciences in the chief and principal points of Christian religion, and willing also by the true setting forth and pure declaring of God's word, which is the principal guide and leader unto all godliness and virtue, to expel and drive away as well all corrupt, vicious, and ungodly living, as also erroneous and poisoned doctrines tending to superstition and idolatry, hath by the advice of her most honourable counsellors, for her discharge in this behalf, caused a Book of Homilies, which heretofore was set forth by her most loving brother, a Prince of most worthy memory, Edward the Sixth, to be printed anew; wherein are contained certain wholesome and godly exhortations, to move the people to honour and worship Almighty God and diligently to serve him, every one according to their degree, state, and vocation. All which Homilies Her Majesty commandeth and straitly chargeth all Parsons, Vicars, Curates, and all other having spiritual cure, every Sunday and Holy Day in the year, at the ministering of the Holy Communion, or, if there be no Communion ministered that day, yet after the Gospel and Creed, in such order and place as is appointed in the Book of Common Prayers, to read and declare to their parishioners plainly and distinctly one of the said Homilies in such order as they stand in the Book; except there be a Sermon according as it is enjoined in the book of her Highness' Injunctions,¹ and then for that cause only, and for none other, the reading of the said Homily to be differred^b unto the next Sunday or Holy Day following. And, when the foresaid Book of Homilies is read over, Her Majesty's pleasure is, that the same be repeated and read again in such like sort as was before prescribed..

Furthermore Her Highness commandeth, that, notwithstanding this order, the said ecclesiastical persons shall read Her Majesty's Injunctions at such times and in such order as is in the book thereof appointed;² and that the Lord's Prayer, the Articles of the Faith, and the Ten Commandments be openly read unto the people as in the said Injunctions is specified;³ that all her people, of what degree or condition soever they be, may learn how to invoke and call upon the Name of God, know^c what duty they owe both to God and man; so that they may pray, believe, and work according to knowledge while they shall live here, and after this life be with Him that with his blood hath bought us all. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory for ever. Amen.

^a The Preface.] The Preface, as it was published in the year 1562, *Ed.* 1623. ^b differred] deferred *from* 1569.

^c God, know] God, and know *from* 1547.

¹ See *Cardwell's Documentary Annals*, I, 180, Inj. III, IV; 182, Inj. VIII.

² *Ibid.* 185, Inj. XIV.

³ *Ibid.* 181, Inj. V.

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The Preface above is that which was set before the First Book of Homilies by Queen Elizabeth. King Edward's Preface was as follows:

The King's Most Excellent Majesty, by the prudent advice of his most dear beloved uncle Edward Duke of Somerset, Governor of His Majesty's person and Protector of all His Highness' realms, dominions, and subjects, with the rest of his most honourable counsel, most graciously considering the manifold enormities which heretofore have crept into His Grace's realm through the false usurped power of the Bishop of Rome and the ungodly doctrine of his adherents, not only unto the great decay of Christian religion, but also (if God's mercy were not) unto the utter destruction of innumerable souls, which through hypocrisy and pernicious doctrine were seduced and brought from honouring of the alone true, living, and eternal God unto the worshipping of creatures, yea, of stocks and stones, from doing the commandments of God unto voluntary works and phantasies invented of men, from true religion unto popish superstition; considering also the earnest and fervent desire of his dearly beloved subjects to be delivered from all errors and superstitions^a and to be truly and faithfully instructed in the very word of God, that lively food of man's soul, whereby they may learn unfeignedly, and according to the mind of the Holy Ghost expressed in the Scriptures, to honour God and to serve their King with all humility and subjection, and godly and honestly to behave themselves toward all men; again, calling to remembrance that the next and most ready way to expel and avoid as well all corrupt, vicious, and ungodly living, as also erroneous doctrine tending to superstition and idolatry, and clearly to put away all contention which hath heretofore risen through diversity of preaching, is the true setting forth and pure declaring of God's word, which is the principal guide and leader unto all godliness and virtue; finally, that all Curates, of what learning soever they be, may have some godly and fruitful lessons in a readiness to read and declare unto their parishioners for their edifying, instruction, and comfort; hath caused a Book of Homilies to be made and set forth, wherein is contained^b certain wholesome and godly exhortations, to move the people to honour and worship Almighty God, and diligently to serve him, every one according to their degree, state, and vocation. The which Homilies His Majesty commandeth and straitly chargeth all Parsons, Vicars, Curates, and all other having spiritual cure, every Sunday in^c the year, at the Communion,^d when the people be most gathered, to read^e and declare to their parishioners plainly and distinctly in such order as they stand in the Book; except any Sermon be preached, and then for that cause only, and for none other, the reading of the said Homily to be differred unto the next Sunday following. And, when the foresaid Book of Homilies is read over, the King's Majesty's pleasure is, that the same be repeated and read again, in such like sort as was before prescribed, unto such time as His Grace's pleasure shall further be known in this behalf.

Also His Majesty commandeth that the said ecclesiastical persons upon the first Holy Day falling in the week time of every quarter of the year, shall read his Injunctions openly and distinctly to the people in manner and form in the same expressed. And upon every other Holy and Festival Day through the year, likewise falling in the week time, they shall recite the Pater Noster, the Articles of our Faith, and the Ten Commandments in English openly before all the people, as in the said Injunctions is specified; that all degrees and all ages may learn to know God and to serve him according to his holy word. Amen.

^a superstitions] superstition 1547 G 1. ^b is contained] *so in all*. ^c Sunday in] Sunday and Holy Day in 1549 W.

^d the Communion] High Mass 1547, 1548. ^e at the Communion – to read] at the celebration of the Communion, in such order and place as is appointed in the Book of Common Prayer, to read 1549 W.

¹ See *Cardwell's Documentary Annals*, I, 12, 30-35.

² See *Cardwell's Documentary Annals*, I, 7, 19–27.