

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS FOR EARLY MASSES

By the Paullist Fathers. Preached in their Church of St. Paul the Apostle, Fifty-ninth Street and Ninth Avenue, New York.

BEARING YOUR BURDEN. "Bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if any have a complaint against another. Even as the Lord hath forgiven you, so you also."—Col. iii., 13.

THIS, my dear brethren, is the law of Christ. It is a law we are bound to keep. We cannot save our souls unless we do keep it. There is no possible way to escape its requirements, for our Lord Himself declares positively: "But if you will not forgive me, neither will your Father forgive you your offences" (Matt. vi., 15). Therefore, there is no way to save our souls, no way to be true Christians in life unless we forgive all and every one without exception, every injury they have done us.

BUT one may say, I do forgive all who have injured me if they repent, say they are sorry and ask pardon. My dear brethren, this won't do. You must forgive whether they repent or not. Nothing will satisfy the Lord. The best reason is that because the Lord has forgiven us, so we also are bound to forgive all. A true lover of the Lord doesn't want a better reason. A greater or a better cannot be given. Our Lord Himself has set the example. He has taken our sins upon Himself and caused the Eternal Father to forgive us our sins for His sake before we had even repented or asked pardon by a single sign that we want to belong to God and to hate sin. Do we not receive in our baptism, as infants, the grace that destroys original sin? Original sin placed us under the power of the devil and made us unworthy to be called the sons of God, but our Christian baptism made us again the sons of God. Does not God seem to forgive us also a great part of our mortal sins, in as much as He gives us time to repent and waits patiently for our repentance? Remember, these sins after baptism are all the greater because after being made innocent we again become guilty.

TO make this reason all the stronger, call to mind what our Lord has done to persuade us to forgive one another for His sake; not only did He suffer and die on the cross for us, but even gave up His own Mother to suffer and endure an agony unparelleled that she might merit the right to protect and aid us when His justice demands our punishment eternally. No, my dear brethren! No greater nor better reason can be given than this: that we ought to forgive all simply because our Lord asks us to do so.

BUT some try to excuse themselves and say, it is hard to have to do this. I can't do it. The sin against us is too great. It ought not to be forgiven. This is not true. There is nothing we can't forgive, nothing we are permitted to leave unforgiven! We can forgive any sin against us if we will. If it is hard, pray and it will become easy. Sincere prayer for him who is our enemy is sure to remove very soon all feeling against us. This is certain: that it will, without fail, prevent the malice and revenge in our hearts from overcoming us and causing us to sin grievously against charity. Remember that everything we do well for our Lord is hard at first, but it is made easy by prayer and faithful, persevering effort.

AGAIN some object, I try to pray but cannot, because when I pray I think of my wrongs and begin to hate my enemy, so that my prayer is insincere or stops on my lips! Then pray for all poor sinners, and don't mean to leave your enemy out of your prayers. This is a good beginning and keeps you from mortal sin, for pray we must for our enemies. This is the fundamental law of the Christian life. If we intentionally leave out one single soul when we pray for all poor sinners, we sin in the very presence of God and our prayers are rejected, nor shall they be accepted until we include that soul also. Let us remember, my dear brethren, that we are called by our Lord to show to the world that being the friends of God means that He puts into our souls His loving, merciful, long-suffering Spirit, and thus makes us like to Himself. Does any one want to be Godlike? Then let him forgive from his heart every injury and all who injure him.

TO encourage us to forgive, let us see what it does. It saves God's honor. It prevents His being insulted. For example: when one insults us, we sin against God and insult Him also. If we answer back, we also insult God, and make two sins instead of one. Next, our answer makes our enemy reply again. For another sin we are responsible. So it goes on until a number of sins are committed by each one. Silence on our part would have prevented these insults to God and left our souls unstained. We were not silent. The consequence is we not only increased another's sin, but we added our own and lost the friendship of God. Had a forgiving spirit been in each soul this could not have happened. Had it been in one of them, one soul at least would have been kept from sin. Cultivate, then, a forgiving spirit, and "Even as the Lord hath forgiven you, so you also" forgive all.

Dr. O'Connell, rector of the American College in Rome, will sail from Liverpool on Saturday for New York. He takes with him the acts and decrees of the council held in Baltimore some time ago, which have been revised by the Pope.

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Young married people will find that there will be more happiness for them if they go to housekeeping independent of relatives on both sides.

Don't put off house-cleaning until so late that some member of your family contracts a heavy cold or pneumonia from the damp and chilly rooms.

Girls, never marry a man that is a bigger fool than yourselves. "As the husband is, the wife becomes." You'll be sure to deteriorate.

We are immortal, in spite of death—wonderful, in spite of our weakness—admirable, in spite of our imperfections—and capable of all good, in spite of all our evil.

Doing Good.

Nothing is so certain to bring genuine happy smiles to our own faces as to watch such smiles grow in those of others as the result of our own sympathy, our gentle words or hopeful deeds. Whoever did a real kindness for another without feeling a warm glow of satisfaction creep into some shady corner of the heart, and fill it with sweetness and peace! It is like fastening a knot of violets and mignonettes in the buttonhole, just where their perfume may rise deliciously to our sense all day. And what a pleasure it will be when the present trouble is over to remember, that even in the darkest days we found time and inclination to give to others some portion of that tenderness or practical helpfulness which was the overflow of that generous spirit which finally bore us through it all, to a happy and peaceful ending! "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."

A very interesting bit of news occurs in a recent number of Les Missions Catholiques. Mgr. Van den Braden de Reeth, titular Bishop of Erythra, and lately Coadjutor of Cardinal Deschamps, Archbishop of Mechlin, has gone to Drammen, Norway, to ordain priests. Since the Reformation the Sacrament of Holy Orders has not been conferred in Norway. Lutheranism in Norway has six Protestant bishoprics, with large revenues, enjoyed by doctors of the University of Christiania. Sectarianism and infidelity are common in Norway—sects abounding among those who read much. Up to this time, the Church there has had a difficult position to hold, but the prospects are brightening.—N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

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