

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Fourth Sunday After Epiphany.

TAKING COURAGE.

Sometimes, my brethren, we feel discouraged because we have not kept our good resolutions, and are even ready to say it is better not to make any at all, so often do we break them. I have no doubt there are some listening to me who began the new year courageously and with some sincere promise to God of leading a good life, and have already slipped back into the bad old ways; and now they say, "What was the matter with my good resolutions? I did not mean to lie to God, yet I have not kept my word with Him; I have relapsed; I am as bad as I was before, maybe I am worse. What, then, was the matter with my good resolutions?"

Now in considering this question let us not get into a panic. God knows us just as we are, and far better than we know ourselves. Therefore He is not so cruel as to hold us strictly to all our promises. "God is true and every man is a liar," says Holy Writ, and our experience of human nature demonstrates that although we are honestly determined to tell the truth, and do tell the truth, and do tell it, when we promise to God to behave ourselves properly, yet we know very well that in a moment of weakness we may break down, and that is understood when we make our promise. I remember reading of St. Philip Neri that sometimes on waking in the morning he would say, "O Lord, keep thy hand on Philip today or he will betray thee."

Hence it is a great folly to say: "I do not want to make a promise for fear I could not keep it. That would be good sense if you were going to swear to your promise, or if you were to make a vow. But a promise to attend Sunday Mass, to keep out of saloons, to stop stealing, to be more good-natured at home, and the like is a very different matter. In such cases, we must shut our eyes and go ahead, and meantime pray hard for God's assistance."

There is such a thing as being too fidgety about the future, looking back too far into it or imagining temptations not likely to come up. Once there was an army officer who led an edifying life, and who came to a priest of his acquaintance and informed him that he was in great distress, and feared that he could not persevere. "What is the matter?" said the priest. "Why I know that duelling is a deadly mortal sin; yet if I were challenged to a duel I fear that I should not have the virtue to decline the challenge and suffer the disgrace which would be sure to follow." "But," said the priest, "has any one challenged you or is any one likely to do so?" "Oh, no! not at all; but—" "But wait until the temptation comes. You have made up your mind not to commit mortal sin, and when this particular temptation comes God will give you grace to overcome it."

Do not cast your net too far out into the stream; do not be in a hurry to promise to abstain from any particular sin or to do any particular act of virtue for your whole life except in a general way. In a general way you are determined to keep God's law, honestly and firmly determined. As to this or that particular sin, you hate and detest it; and have made up your mind against it; whenever the temptation comes you are resolved to resist it.

There are three things about which one should make good resolutions rather than about any others: First, the practice of prayer; second, going to confession and Communion; third, avoiding the occasion of sins. The first two fill our souls with God's grace and the third keeps us out of danger. Put all your good resolutions into company with prayer and monthly, or at least quarterly, Communion; and you will have no great difficulty in pulling through. From month to month is not so long a time to keep straight, and a good confession and a worthy Communion is God's best help. Morning and night prayers are a mark of predestination to eternal life; keep away from bad company and dangerous places, and avoiding bad reading, and all other dangerous occasions, has very much to do with an innocent life and a happy death.

For Young Men to Ponder.

There is something for young men who are forming habits to ponder in the reason given by a young lady for declining to marry. She said: "I have considerable money of my own. I have a parrot that swears, a monkey that chews and a stove that smokes, so you see that I am not yet in need of a husband very badly."

Is there not more than ordinary significance in the fact that the first one to whom our Lord, by word of mouth, announced his own Divinity was the Samaritan woman? When she professed her belief in the Messiah to come, He said, "I that speak to thee am He." Through salvation was thought to be only of the Jews, yet our Lord's first missionary work was this effort at convert-making.—The Missionary.

Two Warnings.

Losing flesh is one and a hacking cough is another. If they come together the warning is a loud and hard one. Scott's Emulsion does some of its best work in just these cases. It prevents consumption.

There is danger in neglecting a cold. Many who have died of consumption dated their troubles from exposure, followed by a cold which settled on their lungs, and in a short time they were beyond the skill of the best physician. Had they used Bickel's Anti-Consumptive Syrup, before it was too late, their lives would have been spared. This medicine has no equal for curing coughs, colds and all affections of the throat and lungs.

"QUESTION BOX."

Father O'Connor in Philadelphia Catholic Standard and Times.

Great interest is still being taken in the "Question Box." The queries recently submitted show that the columns of the Catholic Standard and Times are being watched for replies. The out-of-town questioners are taking this method of obtaining answers. Rev. Joseph V. O'Connor lectured last Sunday evening on "The Curse of Cromwell," and in conjunction with the discourse answered the following interrogatories:

M. C., on behalf of a Protestant friend, asked: "What proof have we that Christ was born December 25?"

St. Chrysostom, in a Christmas sermon December 25, 386, says: "The Romans who have celebrated this day as the anniversary of our Lord's nativity have transmitted it to us (the Greeks) from ancient tradition. Ancient authorities are not agreed on the date; the Church has, however, the right to appoint any day for the special commemoration of a mystery or great religious event. The acceptance of the Roman date by all Christians shows not only the supremacy of that Church, but also the fact that tradition must be relied on in many cases. The name of the festival itself is Catholic in the extreme, made up, as it is, of the words of Christ and Mass."

M. F. asked who first went to Heaven. Moses and Elias stood once beside our Saviour surrounded by a glorious light. Where were they then? Where were the holy persons who died before Christ ascended? Did not our Saviour tell the penitent thief of "this day shalt thou be with Me in Heaven?" Did that thief get to Heaven before Moses and all the prophets?

Supernatural beatitude or the beatific vision was restored to fallen man by the death of Christ. The souls of the just before that time were in a state of peace and natural happiness. The other world was divided into conditions corresponding to the spiritual state of its inhabitants. St. Paul speaks of the "third heaven" and of Paradise. Our Lord spoke of "Abraham's bosom." St. Peter of the "spirits in prison." Christ's descent into this region made it Paradise according to the interpretation of Cornelius a Lapide. As there is neither time nor local space in Heaven, you must try to think, if possible, of the other place without the material ideas involved by the terms "the first to enter Heaven," etc. Probably the admission to Heaven of the just ascending with Christ was simultaneous, yet there are degrees of glory among the blessed.

McN., Mauch Chunk, says that an apostate is going around showing from the New Testament that our Saviour had three brothers and one sister.

First cousins, uncles and nephews are called brothers in Scriptural language, and it is of faith that the Blessed Virgin was a virgin before, after and at the time of our Lord's birth. This was answered more fully two weeks ago in these columns.

"Cola," an appropriate pseudonym considering the question, asked: "Do you not think it was a gross injustice on the part of Clement VI. to excommunicate Rienzi, and what right had Innocent VI. to imprison him?"

Pope Clement VI. favored Rienzi's legitimate efforts to curb the tyranny of the Roman nobles. It was only when the "last of the tribunes" degenerated into a scandalous despot that the Pope denounced him. Power and popular applause turned his head. Not the Pope, but himself, brought disaster on Rienzi. He was killed in a popular uprising against his tyranny.

"American Methodist," William-sport, asked by postal card to "have some special pleading on the holy Inquisition."

The Congregation of the Inquisition does not need any "special pleading." It is only a censorship of the press. Father O'Connor said he would give no answer to notes of this kind because they contain no question, and asked "American Methodist" to be more specific.

C. J. N. asked three questions. (1) "Why do you ring your church bell three times a day?" (2) "What is the lamp before the main altar?" (3) "Is that lady saint with a pen in her hand a statue of St. Teresa? Who was she? I cannot find her name in the Bible."

(1) The bell is rung to put us in mind at morning, noon and night of our Lord's Incarnation. The devotion is called "The Angelus" from the first words, "The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary." See article "Mariolatry" in the Catholic Standard and Times some weeks ago. (2) The lighted lamp indicates the presence on the altar of the Blessed Sacrament. (3) St. Teresa was not a Scriptural saint. She was a native of Spain, born in the sixteenth century, and renowned for the gift of prayer. The pen indicates her literary labors in the production of the valuable treatises on the spiritual life. Even Protestant writers have written her biography affectionately.

R. F. X. inquired (1) if a layman could be elected Pope? (2) St. Augustine says that the words of Christ, "Taon art Peter," etc., refer to Peter's confession of His divinity. This confession of faith and not the man Peter is the rock on which the Church is built. (3) Christ's words to Peter "Feed My lambs," repeated three times, is a plain allusion to St. Peter's threefold denial. By these words Christ restored him to the office which he had forfeited.

(1) Yes. The Papal primacy is not a part of the sacrament of Holy Orders. It is an office of supreme jurisdiction. Adrian V. (1252) was a lay-

man elected Pope. He died before receiving Holy Orders, but reigned as true Pope eighty-nine days. (2) St. Augustine's interpretation is consistent with the general one that the Church is built on Peter, confessing the Godhead of Christ. (3) The words "feed my sheep," etc., are universally used in Scripture for the conferment of authority. In Homer, Kings are called the shepherds of the people. Nothing in the words imply a reprimand to the Apostle.

J. J. R. asked: "Did St. Augustine in any shape or form encourage religious persecution about the year 382 or 383?"

The Emperor Honorius issued a decree against disturbers of the public peace in Africa. These were also Donatists, a turbulent body of heretics. Augustine, then Bishop of Hippo, approved of the imperial decree not as against religious opinions, but as against civil disturbance.

M. C. asked whether in the event of an unbaptized person married to a Catholic becoming a Catholic, would that person then receive the sacrament of matrimony?

The reception of baptism removes the obstacle to the grace of the sacrament of matrimony. The priest then explains to the newly-baptized that his marriage is a Christian sacrament. It is customary on such occasions to give a blessing.

R. I., who has never clearly understood why the Catholic Church gives so great honor to the Blessed Virgin, said: (1) "St. Paul says 'there is no mediator' you make the Virgin our mediator." (2) What Scripture is there for praying to her? (3) The strongest argument against the Church of Rome is that the best priest left her. They would not do this unless they were satisfied that she had fallen into error. (4) The Roman Church never came into prominence until after the fall of the Western Empire. All the first great councils were held in the East. The Bishop of Rome never claimed to be head of the whole Church on earth until far down in the Middle Ages, when ignorance and superstition prevailed.

(1) So completely does the Catholic Church regard Christ as the true life and the one mediator that she teaches that all of Mary's powers are derived from and depend upon the power and merits of her Divine Son. This rather tends to exalt Christ than to derogate from His divine honor. (2) You must admit that Mary is at least a saint. In the Book of Genesis Jacob prays to his angel to protect the children of Joseph. At the marriage of Cana (John III.) Christ works a miracle at His Mother's request, even though He said His time had not yet come. The Jews prayed to God invoking at the same time the names of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, etc. (3) Your standard of the best people cannot apply to such Protestants as Henry VIII., besides, even good and sincere people are liable to make great blunders. (4) The Roman Church was prominent enough in St. Paul's time to make him say of it that "its faith was spoken of throughout the world." (1 Romanes) The first councils were held in the East because the first heresies originated there and the councils were called to condemn them. The Bishop of Rome presided over these councils by his legate. It was Pope Leo I. that revised and confirmed the dogmatic decrees of the Council of Chalcedon. The Bishops exclaimed "Peter has spoken by the mouth of Leo." It would have been impossible in the Middle Ages to claim the headship of the Church had not title been his from the beginning. The whole Catholic episcopate would have protested against such a usurpation. This theory of the latter day origin of Papal supremacy is of all hypotheses the most absurd and indefensible.

Suggestions.

From the Catholic Citizen.

Here are a number of additional suggestions to those who would at once promote the welfare of the Catholic press and do good in other ways as well:

1. Make a list of all the Catholic families of your acquaintance who are drifting from the Church, or of mixed married families, and send a Catholic paper to each of them for a year.
2. Send a Catholic paper to all the public institutions of your State.
3. Send a Catholic paper for a year to all the Catholic priests and Sisters in Alaska or other missionary regions where the Church is scantily supported.
4. Let a Catholic paper go to all the Protestant ministers of your section for a year. It will liberalize their views.
5. Let a Catholic paper be sent to all the Congressmen from your State.
6. Make a list of a dozen young men living away from their homes and let each receive a Catholic paper regularly.
7. Let a Catholic paper go for a year to all the teachers in your county.

Was Out of Sorts.

"I was all out of sorts with loss of appetite and loss of sleep. I could not dress myself without stopping to rest. My kidneys were affected. I began taking Hood's Sarsaparilla. I now have a better appetite and am able to sleep soundly." MRS. MARGARET BIRD, 582 Bethune Street, Peterborough, Ontario.

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MORALITY AND MEDICINE.

A Physician's Responsibilities Outside of Civil Law.

Dr. Pooley, the distinguished surgeon, who died recently in the city of Toledo, was an unique character in many ways. He was considered by the medical fraternity one of the best read surgeons of Ohio, and for that matter, of the country. He had a born aptitude for the surgeon's knife and with a keen eye and deft hand made a great success in his profession. He was a bundle of nervous activity, a very small man in stature, so small that it was once said of him "he could curl himself up in case of necessity and sleep in his hat." It was once told of him that after supper, he performed a difficult amputation, jumped into his buggy, drove to a church and lectured before a large audience in a Presbyterian church—he was a fine orator—and on his way home he bested two or three friends in a heated political argument, all before 10 o'clock. He often told of his first encounter with a Catholic priest and also of one with a sister at a hospital. He was about to amputate the limb of a young man seriously injured in a railroad accident. Just as he was in company with two or three other surgeons was preparing for the operation, a young, boyish-looking priest stepped into the room and after a few words of greeting to those present held a hurried conversation in low tones with the injured man. He then requested all to leave the sick room, as he desired to hear the man's confession. Dr. Pooley strenuously objected, saying that time was precious and that he had another engagement during the next hour. The priest persisted very courteously, however, and finally the doctor lost his temper and, blurted, "Hang it! hear his confession after we get through with him." "Oh! no," said the priest, "it might be too late." "Why," said the doctor, "who in thunder ever heard of anybody succumbing under such an operation as this?" The priest's answer was, "I have."

"What was the cause?" asked the doctor. Again the priest answered, very coolly, "Inexperienced surgeons." The others present roared in laughter, and Pooley himself smiled, muttering, "A centre shot." The priest was permitted to hear the confession, and Pooley acknowledged in relating the story that he tried to "fix" the priest by thoroughly filling the room with the fumes of ether, as it was a small apartment in a tenement house, and the priest remained during the operation at the request of the young man's family. The priest never flinched, but remained until all was over, although he told Pooley in after days that he came mighty near tumbling over, but the quiet look of the surgeon, who anticipated it every moment, nerve him to stay in the room. Both priest and surgeon were the best of friends after this novel introduction under such peculiar circumstances.

A HOSPITAL INCIDENT.

On another occasion, very shortly after Dr. Pooley became a member of the medical staff of a hospital under the charge of Catholic sisters, a man was brought to the institution with his ankle very badly mashed and broken. The surgeon at once decided it must come off. The Sister in charge of the ward, who had had an experience of over a quarter of a century in such work, quietly suggested that it might be saved. The surgeon laughed at the suggestion, but the Sister insisted. The surgeon said: "If you refuse to let this foot be taken off, mortification will set in very soon and the man will die and then you, pointing at her dramatically, as he could, 'will be guilty of murder.' The Sister replied, 'Well, we will not talk of dignity, dying, but, she added with dignity, 'we will try and save both the man and his foot.' Her determination took the surgeon by storm and he said: "All right, but what are you going to do in the case? Let me hear your proposed method of treatment." The Sister in a few words indicated what she thought ought to be done and he at once was convinced she knew her business; and then he asked, "Anything more?" The Sister replied, "And we will pray for him; science and prayer will bring him around all right." "Very well," said Pooley, "you go ahead and pray like— but don't you forget your science and I'll look in every day and see how your patient is progressing— mine— he is now your patient, dot mine." The man recovered and his foot was saved and Pooley used to say—"Science and prayer—a great combination in a critical case—can't be beaten."

MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE.

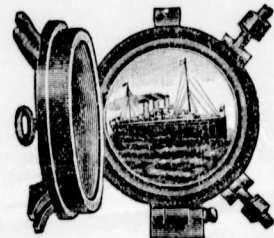
Much more attention is being paid of late years to Medical Jurisprudence than formerly. The staffs attached to some of our Catholic institutions where medicine is taught, are making a specialty of this, notably Georgetown and Omaha. Taking the general run of medical colleges—the theory runs through all their teaching—that anything and everything is lawful, provided it is not prohibited by direct statute of the civil law. Of course, this is false and leads to serious error. Morality is not based on the civil law, but on God's law, and a physician and surgeon is bound primarily by divine law. Father Coppens of Omaha has done a great work in his late book—"Moral Principles and Medical Practice." He says both doctor and patient are moral agents and duty and conscientious regard for the higher law of morality are incumbent on both; hence, that law must be the basis of their operations. Walter Lecky in his review of Father Coppens work makes some points that

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are worthy of attention. Lecky is a wide awake reviewer of any work that comes under his pen and always scores a shot. Quite recently in reviewing Father Smith's "Life of Brother Azarias" he speaks of the New England towns as places stagnant in business as well as in religion, with a veneer of culture. The description fits some places in Ohio, New England transplanted, and if he had added what Father Smith once said of them, "and all the society of the town ruled by the preachers and their wives," the Yankee towns of Ohio would have been touched up to perfection. But I am wandering from the main issue, and I quote a portion of the versatile Lecky's review of the work of Father Coppens.

THOU SHALT NOT KILL.

"The cry of our times is the 'social evil,' and what is wanted to check this is the outspoken explanation of the Fifth Commandment, in the manner of Father Coppens. That it will ever be preached by the race of doctors that with little learning come annually in flocks from our universities, where their professors laugh at a personal God, I for one will not believe. Hence a further necessity for the education of the people. The present reviewer, while a newspaper man in Chicago, happened to board at a house frequented by medical students, and any idea he ever had of these sceptical youths as men becoming teachers of morality then vanished. Experience of another kind has but confirmed the former opinion. Father Coppens quotes authorities that can be accepted as to the absence of the 'social evil' among Catholic people, but in our time and country, what with the atmosphere that surrounds us, the 'unprincipled and unscrupulous fakes ignorant alike of medicine and morality,' who disgrace the medical profession and a literature bringing motherhood into contempt, there is a grave danger that every thoughtful Catholic should be made aware of in order that his influence for morality should be the more strongly exerted. Here again is a mission for this book in the hands of the competent clergy. Father Coppens' book gives them material for a series of sermons that, to my mind, ought to be preached in every parish church of the land. Catholics ought to have a clear idea of the man who is to become their bodily physician and

enter into the secrets and friendships of their family. If he is one of those men who has no respect for the higher law and thinks as long as he escapes the common law he does well, then they have admitted into their home a criminal, one who is not only dangerous to the family, but to the community. Father Coppens' book is of great value. It upholds the Catholic position from the dictates of human reason, and that clearly and convincingly. The medical questions are looked at through ethics." — R. C. Gleaner in Catholic Columbian.

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