

## FIVE MINUTE SERMON

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER  
EPIPHANY

DETRACTION AND CALUMNY

"Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law." (Rom. xii, 8).

In order to bear fruit, the spirit of charity must be felt in the heart of the Christian. Christianity does not consist in external forms and ceremonies alone. Praying, giving alms and other good works are but the external manifestations of what the feelings of the heart should be. They are resorted to in order to excite these feelings in the heart. Still a person may pray, fast, give alms liberally, and appear outwardly good and pious and at the same time be bad, impious, rotten to the core.

Let us not deceive ourselves, then, by imagining that we are acceptable to God because we do those good works and appear outwardly to be good. The Pharisees believed themselves to be good because they fasted and prayed; still Our Lord declared that they were "white sepulchres full of dead men's bones and all rottenness."

If we do all kinds of good works and have not charity we are nothing. Charity—love is the fulfilling of the law. If we love God, we love our neighbor, and if we love our neighbor, we will say and do nothing to injure him.

A person's good name, his character, is more precious than gold and silver. It is surprising how many apparently good Christians, who fast, pray and attend to their other religious duties—it is surprising, I say, how many there are who do not scruple to detract, to backbite, to calumniate, to talk uncharitably of their neighbor. Such persons are like the Pharisees, rotten to the inside. They have not the spirit of Christianity.

Detraction or backbiting injures the good name of our neighbor by revealing things that are true. Calumny injures him by telling what is false. Slander is malicious circulation of calumny.

Every one has a right to his good name, though he may have done sinful things that are not public.

They who make public those things or attribute to him things that he neither did nor thought of, take away his good name, which to him is more than money, temporal possessions, or maybe more than life itself. "A good name is better than great riches," says Solomon, "and good favor is above silver and gold."

Remember how you have felt when things were said of you that lowered you in the estimation of those around you, whose opinion you valued.

This thought will assist you in understanding the injustices you are, perhaps, daily inflicting upon others by your busy, ungovernable, uncharitable tongue. You cannot be too careful about what you say of your neighbor. If what you say lessens your neighbor in the opinion of others you are guilty of the sin of detraction. You have inflicted an injury which may ruin him or her forever. You have sown discord where there was peace, disturbed the quiet of families and caused trouble, dissensions and quarrels among friends.

By the sin of detraction, by backbiting, calumny and talebearing is caused an injury which it is difficult, almost impossible, to repair. But reparation must be made, or heaven will be lost. The detractor must not only restore the good name unjustly taken away; but he must also make reparation and restitution for all the temporal damage caused to the person. Simple detraction or backbiting may be repaired by saying before the same persons who listened to the detraction that you did wrong in speaking badly of the person; but calumny cannot be repaired without retracting all that was said, even, if by so doing you do an injury to yourself.

The difficulty, impossibility, of repairing the sins of the tongue—backbiting, calumny, talebearing—is well illustrated by a parable which, it is said, St. Philip Neri imposed upon a certain loquacious woman who was continually talking uncharitably of her neighbors. Although the story has often been told, it is such an apt illustration that it will bear repetition.

"This woman," so the story goes (and she no doubt told it herself) was guilty of frequently talking uncharitably of others, saying things that were untrue, things that injured others in their reputation and in their business.

She was told by St. Philip Neri, as a penance to get a fowl, kill it, and on a windy day go through the field scattering the feathers in all directions. Having done so he told her to return to him and he would complete the penance.

When she returned he told her to go and gather up the feathers she had scattered. She said it was impossible to do so, as they had been blown far and wide by the wind.

The saint then gave her a beautiful and useful lesson, and she was never afterwards known to talk uncharitably of her neighbors; for the truth was indelibly impressed upon her mind, that as the feathers were wafted by the wings of the wind to the four parts of the world, so slanderous conversations, uncharitable remarks, backbiting and calumny are wafted by the wings of gossip to all parts, and as it was impossible to

gather together again all the feathers, so, too, is it impossible to repair all the injury done by the long, interminable tongues of gossip, malicious persons and scandal mongers.

If you hear scandal and keep it to yourself but very little harm is done. If you talk about it, unknown harm will be done to thousands by the evil thoughts occasioned; you not the part of the Pharisees yourself, by trying to show your innocence in being shocked at another's sin: you show your lack of love of your neighbor by your insatiable craving to abuse, to injure him; and you do him an irreparable injury—an injury you would not like others to do to you if placed in similar circumstances. And "let him who stands beware lest he fall." To repeat a scandal may be more criminal than to give it; and the person who delights in talking of the faults of others is in nine cases out of ten worse than those talked about.

The person who listens willingly to detraction, to scandal, to uncharitable talks about neighbors, sins almost as grievously as the one who does the talking. If possible, we should defend our neighbor; or we should show by our looks, our disapprobation.

Let us do on such occasions, as we would wish to be done by. Let us condemn not, that we may not be condemned.

In this, as in everything else relating to justice or charity, we should follow the golden rule and do unto others as we would have others do unto us.

Let us, my dear friends, ask God to impress deeply upon our hearts those maxims of justice and charity; never to do unto others, what we would not wish to have done to ourselves; never to say of another what we would not wish to have said of ourselves; never to speak of another as we would not have others speak of us.

Let us, in imitation of our Divine Model, be humble and kind of heart and never say of our neighbor an unkind, ungenerous, or uncharitable word.

## A HARD NUT TO CRACK

This utterance from the Rev. K. A. Bray, pastor of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Geneva, N. Y., is well worthy of space in a Catholic publication: "To those who are forever harping on the power of the Pope, meaning thereby not his spiritual but his temporal power, the problem set by this war must be a hard nut to crack. Here Roman Catholic fights his brother, each owing allegiance to the same spiritual head, yet each with his life protesting allegiance to different and opposing temporal rulers. Austria, one of Rome's most faithful children neglecting the pressure of Rome, along with Germany so largely independent of Rome, fighting France still very largely Roman Catholic; England dominantly Anglican aided by Ireland herself divided as by a line into Roman Catholic and non-

Roman Catholic camps. If to be a Roman Catholic means loyalty to the Pope in antagonism to loyalty to one's country, what is the answer to the present situation?"—Sacred Heart Review.

## TEMPERANCE

IF USED IN OTHER INDUSTRIES  
The number of men employed in the liquor industry is about 100 to \$1,000,000 of capital. This is less than one-fifth of the number employed for the same amount of capital in other industries. It is estimated that if the capital used in the liquor business and the money spent on drink were turned into useful channels, it would give employment to over 3,000,000 more men and support 15,000,000 more population in the United States.

## AN UNMITIGATED EVIL

The Pharmacopoeia of the United States, a book containing the formulas and methods of preparation of medicines for the use of druggists is being revised at the present time by a representative body of physicians and pharmacists. Harvey W. Wiley, best known to the general public through his connection with national pure food law, is chairman of this committee. The National Advocate quotes Dr. Wiley as saying:

A most interesting discussion has lately taken place respecting the advisability of eliminating brandy and whisky from the pages of the Ninth Revised Pharmacopoeia of the United States. As chairman of the Pharmacopoeial Convention and a member of the Committee on Revision, I have been greatly interested in this matter. The arguments which have been advanced in favor of the deletion of these articles are, in my opinion, sound and convincing in so far as principle is concerned.

In brief, the argument is as follows: namely, that brandy and whisky are no longer used as medicines in sufficient quantities to warrant their retention by the Pharmacopoeia. This fact has been ascertained by consulting large numbers of acting practitioners, who have responded in such a manner as to show that brandy and whisky are rarely found at the present time in the prescriptions of the most progressive physicians. What the final decision on this matter will be, of course, I am unable to say; but at any rate, I may say that if brandy and whisky are retained in the Pharmacopoeia it will be on the ground that there are a few physicians who sometimes prescribe them, and hence, as they are sometimes used as medicines, it would hardly be fair to remove from the Pharmacopoeia, where they have found a place for many years.

Aside from the practice of medicine, what is the general trend of scientific thought on this question? I may answer that in my opinion the great weight of scientific evidence and the force of scientific opinion at the present time lead to the conclusion that alcohol in its various forms is an unmitigated evil.

OWES HER LIFE TO  
"FRUIT-A-TIVES"Cured Both Stomach Trouble  
and Headaches

PALMERSTON, ONT., JUNE 20th, 1913.

"I really believe that I owe my life to 'Fruit-a-tives'. Ever since childhood, I have been under the care of physicians and have been paying doctor's bills. I was so sick and worn out that people on the street often asked me if I thought I could get along without help. The same old 'Stomach Trouble' and distressing 'Headaches' nearly drove me wild. Sometime ago, I got a box of 'Fruit-a-tives' and the first box did me good. My husband was delighted and advised a continuation of their use.

Today, I am feeling fine, and a physician meeting me on the street, noticed my improved appearance and asked the reason. I replied, 'I am taking Fruit-a-tives'. He said, 'Well, if Fruit-a-tives are making you look so well, go ahead and take them. They are doing more for you than I can'.

Mrs. H. S. WILLIAMS.  
'Fruit-a-tives' are sold by all dealers at 50c. a box, 6 for \$2.50, trial size 25c. or sent postpaid on receipt of price by Fruit-a-tives Limited, Ottawa.

Personally I would be glad to see nation wide and world-wide prohibition. While I am not a teetotalist, I am a prohibitionist. I am firmly convinced that the evils produced by alcohol so far outweigh any of its supposed advantages as to lead logically to but one conclusion, namely, the absolute prohibition of the use of alcohol for any but industrial purposes.

## TOO BAD!

The proud citizen drinks on whisky and then another. He looks around slowly with his eyes a little out of focus, and says "You must excuse me to night, boys. This is not usual with me. But my little boy is awful sick."

And the sympathetic friend says: "Too bad; have another."

Meanwhile the wife is at home with that sick boy, kneeling beside him, enduring the agony without whisky's help. She is up all night, and white faced the next day she takes care of the other children. She takes care even of the brute who drunkenly disturbs the house and blubbers in self pity.—Chicago American.

## BAPTIST PROFESSOR'S VIEW

Professor Henry C. Vedder, who holds the chair of Church History in the Baptist Theological Seminary of Crozer, Pa., recently wrote a book in which he fails to show the usual idolatrous admiration of Martin Luther exhibited by so many non-Catholics. "The reformation was not a great ethical force," Professor Vedder says; "instead of this ethical revolution Luther offered novelties in doctrine, a theological reform, not an ethical." Speaking of the Reformation, he says: "The immediate results of the movement are disappointing; it did almost nothing for social reorganization, for civil and religious liberty, for the enlightenment of the world and its advance in civilization." Writing of the personality of Luther, Prof. Vedder says: "If Luther himself, as a passage in his 'Table Talk' tells us, did not so much as know that there was a Bible, until he found one in the Erfurt Library, he must have taken great pains to keep himself in such a state of ignorance." And again: "The common impression that Luther invented German Hymnology is utterly wrong." As for Luther's scholarship we are told: "Luther was not a systematic mind; at bottom he was neither philosopher nor theologian, and at no time of his life did he show himself capable of working out a systematic and complete expression and defense of any doctrine."—The Missionary.

## PRIDE

Ever since the wicked angels fell, says Bishop Hedley, pride has been the curse of spiritual and rational beings, and has turned them from their God. Pride means conceit, vainglory, disobedience and rebellion. These evil dispositions characterize the world as we know it at this moment. Men will tell you they believe in a God; but they will reject with scorn the idea of obeying God's commands or those of His Church. They will tell you that what pass for God's commands are probably nothing more than the ideas of men. They will protest that neither Church nor priest nor book has any pretense to command them; and they will declare that they intend to be free in thought, word and deed, so far as they do not interfere with civil society. We cannot too clearly and definitely see the fact that this spirit of disobedience and rebellion, vainglory, and pride in all its branches, is the exact contradiction of the spirit of Jesus Christ. It is the very essential mark of what He denounced as "the world." The impulse to refuse to obey, to scorn dictation, to criticize, and to set up as our own masters in religious and moral matters—this spirit may be natural; it may be extremely human; no doubt it is so. But we have to make our choice. Either we give in to it,

and then we range ourselves in the army that is opposing Christ; or we elect to be Christ's disciples, and then we must repress and resist it to the utmost. The Gospel spirit is that of humility, childlike docility and obedience. In all that concerns religion and morality, it is most essentially the Gospel spirit to obey, not only the commandments of God, but the instructions of men whom Christ has appointed to teach.

## GRATITUDE

(A Transcript from Life)

I only poor old Dago, I clean the street front of Cap' How'd's house. He stop me oneday, ask me: "You married? How many children you got?" I tell him, "Seven children." He say, "You good man, work good; how much you get?" I tell him. He say, "I try get you better job, better pay." He goes around two weeks to get me better job. I remem' Cap' How'd when I am a thousand years dead; my own father in Italy would not have done it for me.

One day they tell me, Cap' How'd dead. I go to City Hall and tell, "No more work to day; Cap' How'd dead." I go right up Cap' How'd's house. Girl opens door, not knows me. Think only dirty street man. Close door. I go home. Put on best clothes. Go back Cap' How'd's house. Girl say Miss' How'd too busy. Can't see me one. I go to minister, tell him I want see Cap' How'd. He tell me Miss' How'd. She send man tell me come.

This time Miss' How'd opens door. Brings me right up to room where Cap' How'd lying. I take my beads out and show them to Miss' How'd. She cries and smiles, says "Yes." I kneel down and say prayer for Cap' How'd. Then she let me kiss him in his forehead. "Goodbye," I say. "He was my father." He was my father.—The Congregationalist.

## GREAT MEN AND THEIR ROSARIES

All remember O Connell's answer when he was upbraided for reciting his beads in the corridor of the English House of Commons, while his colleagues were in hot debate in the interests of their faith and of their native land.

"I'm helping them more than you think." M. de Castelnau, a French Senator whose death has just been chronicled, was an ardent lover of the beads as the great emblematic. He was a Catholic who believed in frequent Communion every Sunday and all feast days saw him at the altar.

The secret of his power was fervent prayer, and not content with the beads, he often recited the fifteen decades of the Rosary, the little office of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and besides, he went daily for advice to his friend in the Tabernacle. His beads brought him victory at the polls. "What do you want us to do with adepty who say in beads every day?" said one; but these beads did not prevent him from being listened to with attention every time he spoke in the Chamber, where he often treated with rare ability questions of law, finance and agriculture.—Catholic News.

## THE FEAST OF THE PURIFICATION

The feast of the Purification occurs this year on Tuesday, February 2, and on that feast comes the well-known "blessing of the candles," from which it gains its other name of Candlemas Day. Yet, when we say "the well known blessing," are we so sure that it is truly well-known to many among us? Do we realize the occasion from which it takes its rise? Do we know the beauty of the Divine office which are recited for this feast? Do we understand how suitable they are for our own souls and their salvation? See what the Gradual says:

"We have received Thy mercy, O God, in the midst of Thy temple; according to Thy name, O God, so also is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth. As we have heard, so have we seen, in the city of our God and in His holy mountain. Alleluia, alleluia. The old man carried the Child; but the Child governed the old man. Alleluia."

These words tell us how the stainless and immaculate Mother Mary went, nevertheless, humbly to the temple like an ordinary mother, for her ceremonial purification after the holy birth of her Divine Child; and how aged Simeon took Him in his arms and blessed God, and said, in the sublime chant now known as the *Nunc Dimittis*:

"Now Thou dost dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word in peace; because my eyes have seen Thy salvation which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples: a light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel."

This "Light" is symbolized by the candles that are blessed on the feast of the Purification. We ought to become familiar with these beautiful prayers. For instance: "O almighty and everlasting God, Who didst this day present Thy only begotten Son to be received into the arms of holy Simeon in Thy holy temple: we humbly implore Thy clemency that Thou wouldst vouchsafe to bless, sanctify, and burn with the light of heavenly benediction these candles, which we Thy serv-

ants, receiving, desire to carry lighted to magnify Thy name; that, by offering them to Thee, the Lord our God, being worthily inflamed with the holy fire of Thy most sweet charity, we may deserve to be presented in the holy temple of Thy glory."

And still more beautiful is this prayer: "O Lord Jesus Christ, the true Light, Who enlightenest every man coming into this world; pour forth Thy blessing upon these tapers, and sanctify them with the light of Thy grace; and mercifully grant that as these lights, dispelling nocturnal darkness, so our hearts, illumined by invisible fire—that is, the brightness of the Holy Spirit—may be free from the blindness of all vice; that our mental eye being purified, we may perceive those things which are pleasing to Thee and profitable to our salvation; so that, after the dark perils of this world, we may deserve to arrive at never failing light; through Thee, Jesus Christ, Saviour of the world, Who in perfect Trinity livest and reignest God, world without end. Amen."

We have shown, here, only a part of the beauty and appropriateness, and of the applicability to our own spiritual needs, that the divine offices for the feast contain. May it lead us to seek more earnestly into the treasures of the Missal and thus to keep in touch more and more completely with the mind and spirit of our Mother, the Catholic Church!—The Sacred Heart Review.

## BACK TO GOD

"Of evil cometh good." Our foreign exchanges have columns telling us that the war has already brought back the thought of higher things to many minds and hearts. In the Catholic countries from the first day of mobilization, churches have been filled, confessionals besieged, and the Communion rails crowded. Priests have heard confessions in the military wagons, in the streets and in the barracks yard. No doubt, the fear, the just fear of death, has tend-

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