

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS FOR EARLY MASSES

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

SWIFT FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST. "Pay what thou owest."—Gospel of the day—St. Matt. XVIII, 2.

Justice, my dear brethren, is the first and highest law of human conduct. And although our Blessed Lord in the Gospel gives us to understand that justice should be tempered with mercy, He none the less insists on the strict observance of the law of justice, always and in all cases.

Without doubt, my dear brethren, we all appreciate the excellence and the importance of the virtue of justice; but when we come to apply the law to ourselves, some of us, I fear, are rather lax in our interpretation of it.

But suppose a man is not able to pay his debts. What then? Well, in the first place, a man has no right to contract debts unless he can see his way to pay them; and in the second place, he is bound in conscience to make every effort in his power to meet his obligations.

But suppose a man is not able to pay his debts. What then? Well, in the first place, a man has no right to contract debts unless he can see his way to pay them; and in the second place, he is bound in conscience to make every effort in his power to meet his obligations.

Now, my dear brethren, we all hold justice in high esteem, and we recognize an honest man as the noblest work of God. Only let us carry our admiration into practice and illustrate in our own conduct the glory of God's greatest attribute and the incomparable perfection of Christian honesty.

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FLOWER-PRAISES OF OUR LADY.

(Professor Giose, in the Ave Maria.)

Virgo praeconiosa ora pro nobis. The laurel has always been the symbol of renown. Among our American laurels, species of the general Kalnia, Rhododendron, and others, there is an Embarras de riches; we hesitate which among them to choose as celebrant of the praises of the most renowned Virgin.

Virgo potens ora pro nobis. Rising like a scepter of virginal power above the prairie flowers, its lithe and graceful stem gemmed with a wealth of gold flecked crimson bloom, on the long days of the summer solstice we may find that lovely orchid-like "giant pink."

Speculum justitiae, ora pro nobis. The emblem of justice—the sword to punish offenders, and the crown to reward merit—stand forth mirrored in our native flower de luce (Iris versicolor), its ensiform leaves raised in threatening guise while its beautiful blossom—the flower-de-luce itself—is the chosen ornament of royal coronals.

Notae sapientiae, ora pro nobis. The gift of wisdom is the epitome of all virtues. Far from seeking display, it yet cannot be hidden, the vicissitudes of human life continually demanding its exercise.

But it must be sought after, like the most brilliant flower American woods produce. I know a young lady, an American born and a great lover of flowers, whose privilege and delight it was to adorn the altars of her parish church with the choice productions of her garden, and yet she had never seen the cardinal flower (Lobelia cardinalis).

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