

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. F. PREPENT
FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

"Amen, amen, I say to you, if you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it you." (John 14: 13)

The first three days of this week are the Rogation days, when the Church reminds us to pray particularly for the crops of all kinds, and to pray more especially that the fruit of good works may abound in our hearts. Let us be zealous in prayer on these holy days and ask God for all that is necessary and conducive to the general welfare and also to our own welfare and the salvation of our souls. Not only during these three days, but always, ought we to bear in mind our Lord's comforting doctrine that holy Church impresses upon us by means of the Rogation days: "If you ask the Father anything in My Name, He will give it you." There can be nothing more consoling in all circumstances, and whenever we are in need of anything, man the certainty that we may go to God and ask Him for what we want in the name of Jesus, and for the merits of His dearly loved Son, and, provided it is really for our good, we are sure to obtain it. Our request is granted through Christ's infinite merits, but it behooves us, too, to do our best to be worthy of having our prayers heard.

If our prayers are to be granted, we must pray with confidence, relying upon God's infinite wisdom, mercy and power, and trusting to the infinite efficacy of Christ's merits. This confidence must be heartfelt. Whenever we read the holy Gospels we see what great favors our Lord bestowed upon those who really trusted Him, when they called upon Him. All sorts of people came to Him—the blind—the dumb, and those who had suffered for years from incurable diseases; humanly speaking there seemed to be no hope of cure for such as these, but they asked with confidence, not doubting or wavering; they prayed, being fully convinced of our Lord's merciful kindness and power, and it was with joy that they received the assurance that their prayer was granted: "Be of good cheer, my son, my daughter; thy faith, thy heartfelt confidence hath made these whole." Our prayers are often far too cold and too mechanical, and in the depths of our hearts we are too apt to give way to cowardly doubts, and so we have no right to expect to be heard.

Our confidence ought to be simple and childlike. Let us not forget that our Lord said: "Let the little ones come unto Me." Childlike simplicity is only too often absent from our prayers, and, in the blindness and obstinacy of our hearts, we try to dictate to God, instead of simply asking Him for what we want. We require Him to act in some particular way, and to help us as we think best. We are often not heard, because there is no humility and no real submission to God's will in our prayers. We ought to pray like little children, asking God to do what in His love and wisdom He sees best, and then our prayers are sure to be heard, and we shall obtain what is really good for us.

Our confidence ought to be lively, for life is displayed in activity, and where there is no movement there is death. Hence lively confidence makes us work as well as pray. With regard to temporal matters, most people see that it would be useless to pray for our daily bread if we did not work for it and useless to pray for knowledge and wisdom if we did not exert ourselves to learn; but with regard to the higher gifts of grace it is not everyone who understands that he must do his best to secure them, and not only pray for them. Many ask forgiveness without giving a thought to true contrition; many pray for amendment of life, without making the least attempt to improve. They would be pleased if, by means of a miracle, God were suddenly to take away from their hearts all tendency to sin; but they are not willing to be watchful, and to deny and conquer themselves. The prayers of such people seem to imply that God ought to prevent them from perishing when they rush into occasions of sin, and that He ought to make them more pious and virtuous in the midst of the bad company which they have no intention of forsaking. They make it impossible for their prayers to be heard, and when at last they see that they are sinners, devoid of all grace, they blame God for it, saying: "I have prayed a great deal, and all my prayers have been useless. Henceforth I will give up prayer altogether!" Prayers, unaccompanied by honest effort, and made without confidence, are indeed of no value; but you ought to give up praying in this way and offer instead a prayerful of good will, which will penetrate not only to the heights to heaven, but also into the depths of your own heart, and impel it to act, to struggle and to overcome.

Our confidence ought to be lasting, and then we shall have the joy of knowing that our persevering prayers have been heard. Man in his impetuosity wishes to carry everything by storm. He hears or reads of some virtue to day, and wants to possess it perfectly to-morrow. Yet all things in the world grow slowly; growth is sure, though unseen. Continue to pray, even though it may seem that it is impossible for you to improve; you will gain strength imperceptibly, and at last perhaps after many years you will be able honestly and without vanity

TORTURED BY CONSTIPATION

"Fruit-a-lives" Cured Paralyzed Bowels and Digestion

ST. BONIFACE DR. SHAWENESS, QUEBEC, Feb. 3rd, 1914.

"It is a pleasure to me to inform you that after suffering from Chronic Constipation for 2 1/2 years, I have been cured by 'Fruit-a-lives'. While I was a student at Berthier College, I became so ill I was forced to leave the college. Severe pains across the intestines continually tortured me and it came to a point when I could not sleep down at all, and my Digestion became paralyzed. Some one advised me to take 'Fruit-a-lives' and at once I felt a great improvement. After I had taken four or five boxes, I realized that I was completely cured and what made me glad, also, was that they were acting gently, causing no pain whatever to the bowels. All those who suffer with Chronic Constipation should follow my example and take 'Fruit-a-lives' for they are the medicine that cures."

MAGLOIRE PAQUIN
"Fruit-a-lives" 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-lives Limited, Ottawa.

to say: "I have made progress." The same applies to everything for which you pray. Do not fancy that you need only to ask for a thing and will at once receive it in full perfection. You must continue to have confidence in God; when you imagine that your prayers have been of no avail, they may have effected very much, only the time has not yet come for you to see the fulfillment of your request. The harvest, that we see in the summer, lies for a long time in the earth as seed; no one can look at it, no one knows what is going on, but some secret force is acting upon it and the buried grains. God's fatherly eye is watching over them, and His hand is giving them life; God works where no man can perceive His action; only persevere in prayer.

If our confidence is lasting, our prayer will rise up to God every day, and our morning and night prayers should be golden chains, binding us indissolubly to heaven, and drawing us up whenever in the course of our everyday life we sink down in the dust of this world.

As long as life lasts let us persevere in prayer, being full of heartfelt, childlike, simple, living and lasting confidence; let us pray, trusting absolutely in the merits of Jesus Christ, and then some day in heaven we shall realize the fulfillment of our Lord's promise: "If you ask the Father anything in My Name, He will give you." Amen.

TEMPERANCE

WAR AND THE USE OF LIQUOR

In the lurid light of this horrible war, the drink curse has been brought into new prominence. We face a new situation. When we compare the attention given the subject to-day with the entire absence of any reference to drink in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, we see at once how far public opinion and general intelligence have advanced in a generation.

Three of the great national leaders have spoken vigorously on this matter. The Czar has earnestly warned his soldiers against the use of liquor. The German Kaiser has issued drastic orders against excessive drinking among his men. Lord Kitchener sent his British troops overseas with an earnest warning against the dangers of drink. All this is encouraging to the apostle of temperance, however keenly he may deplore the evils of battles and bloodshed. It shows that generals begin to understand that alcohol is the enemy of

THE OUTLOOK'S SLUR

Discussing the measures recently proposed in Congress to authorize exclusion of scurrilous and libelous publications from the mails the Outlook says:

"If the Roman Catholic Church finds itself assailed by scurrilous and libelous publications, as we think is the case, it should pursue the course which other persons pursue when they are similarly assailed. It should either bring a suit for libel against the publisher, or it should take measures to have the publishers criminally indicted by a grand jury and punished under the general law. That this is not an unpracticable remedy in a free state is very clearly brought out by one witness before the Congressional committee to which these bills for the establishment of a censorship of the press have been referred. Cardinal Newman was brought up in England for trial for defaming Father Achilli who had left the Catholic Church for the Protestant communion as Cardinal Newman had left the Protestant Church for the Catholic communion. He was convicted of a libel and was mulcted to the extent of 12,000 English pounds, or \$60,000. The Outlook quite agrees with Dr. G. F. Williams who stated these facts to the committee that they show that the existing laws are quite sufficient to protect the Catholic Church and its priests and clergy from any scurrilous and libelous attacks which may be made against them by unscrupulous partisan journals."

A striking illustration of the wide public appreciation of the gravity of the problem is found in a strong editorial printed in the Liverpool Post. It opens with the following paragraph:

"Several correspondents have suggested in our columns the desirability of closing, or at any rate partially closing, the public houses while the war tension continues. We are reminded that in South Africa during the Boer War, and also at the time of the recent riots, liquor was either quite unobtainable or obtainable only for a short time each day. The immediate result was that ordinary crime and street accidents ceased. This corresponds with our own experience in Liverpool in the August, 1912 strikes, when an almost miraculous effect came from the restriction of the hours for the sale of drink. It can not be said with any confidence that the conditions generally prevailing at the present time are comparable to either of the cases we have quoted. All the same, there is really a considerable feeling among the public that no harm could be done, and much good might ensue, from the adoption of similar precautions in regard to licensed houses."—St. Paul Bulletin.

IT LEADS TO CRIME
Numerous inquiries added to daily experiences warrant the conclusion that alcohol is an important factor in criminality. The estimates range from 40 to 50 and 60 per cent. The influence of alcohol upon criminality is manifested in different ways. Take a man who is usually sober. Occasionally he commits an excess and being of an excitable temperament he does not fully comprehend what he is doing. He loses his head in a dispute which at any other time would end only in a few warm words, but now he seizes a weapon and deals his adversary a blow that may be mortal. Here you have the influence of an occasional immoderate use of alcohol. It is a fact that most of the quarrels ending in more or less serious consequences belong to this class. And how often a man who has lived a blameless life must expiate, not only by imprisonment but by remorse as long as he lives, a blow given in a moment of intoxication.

Alcohol leads habitual drinkers also to crime, but by another route. The passion that dominates them often results in the destruction of their moral sense. It engenders in them also ideas that come very near to insanity, a delirium of jealousy or of persecution. Thus attacked, the man who is not suspected by his fellow citizens to be dangerous, meditates the idea of a frightful crime. Such alcoholics do not act under the impulse of the moment because they have slowly prepared for the stroke, but the judges declare them responsible or irresponsible, knowing little of the psychology of the alcoholic. There is no doubt that the man has acted in a moment of alcoholic insanity even if his crime appears at first to have been pre-meditated like that of a person of sound mind.

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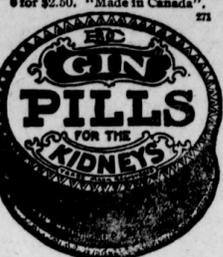
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DEATHBED REPENTANCE
Leave not your soul to the uncertainties of a deathbed repentance. What are the teachings of the fathers of the Church with regard to such a repentance? "It is insufficient," says St. Augustine. "It is presumptuous," says St. Bernard. "It is ridiculous," it is absurd," says St. John Chrysostom. "It is morally impossible," says the great Bishop of Carthage, St. Cyprian. "What sort of a penance must that be," argues the sarcastic St. Jerome, "which a man resorts to only because he has now no longer to live?" But not to weary you with quotations from the fathers, let me conclude with the saying of the same uncompromising champion of true doctrine, this luminous doctor of the Church, this incomparable interpreter of Holy Scripture, himself, perhaps, the most wonderful example of a penitential life in all church history. This great saint being on his deathbed, his disciples came to him to have him speak before leaving them some words of edification. The dying saint, turning toward them with terror pictured on his countenance, spoke to them in these terms: "My dear children, do penance during your life, and wait not till the hour of death to be converted, for I am persuaded and I have learned by a long experience that of ten thousand persons whose life has always been bad scarcely one

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