

SIX

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. M. BOSSAERT

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

BRINGING UP CHILDREN IN THE RIGHT WAY

"And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age, and grace with God and men." These are the concluding words of today's Gospel. Of course, all parents would like their children to grow up as they should...

All Christian parents, who regard their responsibilities seriously, act like Joseph and Mary in bringing up their children. They know quite well that religion and prayer must be the foundation of all true education...

Therefore, Christian parents, and especially mothers, never fail to pray earnestly and regularly for your children, and do not forget to pray with your little ones, and to encourage them to pray. As they grow up, take care that they go to Mass regularly, and do not avail yourselves of any pretext for keeping them away from Church especially on Sundays and festivals.

2. You must look after your children well, if you intend to bring them up properly. As soon as Mary and Joseph noticed the Divine Child's absence, they were filled with anxiety, and at once began to look for Him, never resting until, three days later, they found Him in the Temple.

3. If a child is to be well brought up, he needs to be punished, with love and gentleness. When Joseph and Mary had found the Divine Child, our Lady rebuked Him gently, saying: "Son, why hast thou done so to us? Behold, Thy Father and I have sought Thee sorrowing."

4. Beware of using angry words and terms of abuse, for you will only spoil your child's disposition and make him spiteful and obstinate, and in time he may even come to regard you with great aversion.

5. Now, please do not be alarmed at the word. The word is nothing. Put out of your mind all the things you have heard said about these things, and hear the fact. Is not the idea perfectly reasonable and perfectly consistent both with Christian life and common sense?

6. Let us go back to our sinner to make it clear. Imagine some great sinner of that kind—let us say an utterly selfish and mean man, who, up to the age of sixty, has never given God a thought, who has never helped his neighbor, who has never loved any one.

7. Now, all he is bound to do is to repent and to refrain from sin for the future. Both you and I believe that if he does that his soul is washed in the Precious Blood and is saved.

INDULGENCES A LETTER TO A PROTESTANT INQUIRER From The Univers, London

My dear Sir:—I am glad that you think that I have made the doctrine of penance appear to you, at any rate, rather reasonable. I quite understand, however, that you will need thought and consideration before you can say more.

You have put your finger exactly on the point when you raise the question of indulgences, and you very properly say that you do not understand how it can be that if absolution really forgives sin, anything like an indulgence is required.

Now, you will pardon me for saying in return that I gather you have not quite grasped what it is that Catholics mean by an "indulgence." I am very thankful, however, that obviously you do not think it to be a "leave to commit sin," or any nonsense of that kind.

Imagine, if you please, a drunkard of fifty years' standing who repents with his whole heart and amends his life. Such a man as this is at once, according to both Catholic and Protestant doctrine, forgiven by the power of the Precious Blood.

Therefore, Christian parents, and especially mothers, never fail to pray earnestly and regularly for your children, and do not forget to pray with your little ones, and to encourage them to pray.

8. Very well then, the Catholic Church has drawn up a list of such good deeds which no one is bound to do, but which will certainly please God if they are done in a proper spirit, and tells us that if, being already in grace, we will do those things generously and freely, she guarantees that they will count before God—just as the heroism of the selfish man who repents and goes to live in a slum counts—as serving the purpose of paying the temporal penalties which we still owe to God for our forgiven sins.

9. We Catholics, then, hold that if those penalties are not paid in this world they are in the next; that this drunkard of ours, or let us say, a proud, spiteful, revengeful man who has always had the best of everything, and who has repented only just in time—that man like this, even though their guilt has been washed away, still must pay their "temporal" debts to God; and we call the place where the transaction is completed, Purgatory.

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11. Let us go back to our sinner to make it clear. Imagine some great sinner of that kind—let us say an utterly selfish and mean man, who, up to the age of sixty, has never given God a thought, who has never helped his neighbor, who has never loved any one.

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THE MIRACLES AT KNOCK By John A. Gibney, in the Irish World

The miraculous cure of Mrs. McCarthy, of County Limerick, at Knock, reminds us that we have in our midst a veritable Lourdes.

My first visit to the hallowed sanctuary took place in January, 1880. In August of the preceding year, at the outer gable of the church, the Blessed Virgin, with St. Joseph and St. John the Evangelist, appeared for the first time.

These people were subjected to a searching ecclesiastical inquiry, and were unanimous in their version of the heavenly vision.

At this time the late T. D. Sullivan, in his paper, wrote column after column about those miracles, while from the most distant parts people began to flock to Knock.

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INCURABLY ILL, RECOVERS On the following 8th of September (that is, on the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin), she was miraculously cured, and the medical appliances that bound her fragile body for so many years were suspended at the gable by a Dublin gentleman who is happily with us to bear witness to this wonderful cure.

During my subsequent visits I was restored fully to health—I health I have enjoyed now nearly forty years.

During my visits I observed that many of the cures were from diseases of an incurable character, such as spine trouble, heart disease, hip joint disease, deafness, blindness, withered limbs, etc.

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AN EASILY ACQUIRED HABIT Have you gotten into the habit of constantly complaining about trifles? If you have you are in a fair way to ruin many of your chances of success.

Perhaps there is no habit in the world which so easily grows upon one as the habit of complaint.

Often our troubles are entirely imaginary and sometimes they are very real, but in either event it does not help matters in the least to be constantly talking about them and finding fault because we cannot have things run always in a perfectly smooth groove.

For, just as the constant dripping of water will wear away a stone, so the constant irritation of the mind over small, inconsequent things, will serve to undermine character; and the strength of the nation is established on the characters of the men who compose it.—Catholic Bulletin.

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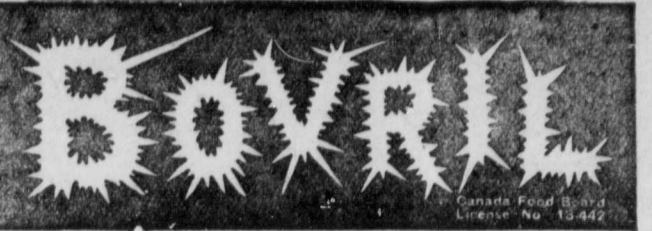
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The Catholic Record LONDON, CANADA. At this time the late T. D. Sullivan, in his paper, wrote column after column about those miracles, while from the most distant parts people began to flock to Knock.