

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD
*And behold, there was a certain man before him that had the dropsy' (Luke xiv, 2)

To the mere fact that he came within the sight of the Lord, the man with the dropsy owed his liberation from this fatal malady, and with this incident in mind one of the fathers points out that to keep God within sight, meaning by that to keep the presence of God at all times in mind, is the mightiest safeguard against disease of the soul, namely, sin.

The wicked man referred to in Holy Scriptures says: "Darkness compasseth me about, and the walls cover me, and no man seeth me; whom do I fear? The thief plies his trade, when no man sees him; and the usurer endeavors to cover up his wrongful deeds, and sinners generally choose for their evil deeds the time and place when they think themselves free from observation, not thinking that God, Who is always present, sees and knows all.

May we at all times and in all places, but especially in the hour of temptation remember that God is everywhere, and that He knows what our thoughts are, and hears and sees everything that we do? The thought of His presence will preserve us from sin, and will strengthen us in the performance of good deeds, so that we may exclaim with Joseph of Egypt: "His own God was with me" (Gen. xxxix, 9). Amen.

LECTURE BY CARDINAL GIBBONS

His Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons, is enjoying his annual visit to Long Island. He is the guest of Rev. Francis O'Hara of the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary.

He delivered the sermon at 10:30 Mass at the Southampton church. The Cardinal said in part: "My dear brethren, in contemplating the works of nature we are always deeply impressed with those great and striking objects which arrest our attention, such as the sun and the moon and the stars of heaven, the unlimitable space of the firmament, the vast expanse of the ocean, the lofty peaks of mountains—all those objects of nature impress us with their splendor and magnitude and we are forced to cry out with the Godly prophet of old: 'The heavens declare the glory of the Lord and the firmament announces the work of His hands'."

But there is another world of small creatures that do not at all arrest our attention, the small things of creation, those myriads of animals floating in the air, moving under our feet and those little creatures imperceptible to the naked eye require the creative power of God to bring them into existence. Every one of these creatures are endowed with the organs of sense such as we have.

"That is so, it seems to me, in regard to the moral world. We are filled with admiration when we hear of some good philanthropist who has bestowed millions for charities, but those little neglected objects of courtesy, kindness and charity which are seen only by the all-seeing eye of God we do not notice. We are not to measure these splendid acts of benevolence by the greatness or the amount, but by the motive which prompts them. You will remember how our Lord was pleased with the gift the woman brought into the temple and said she had given even more than the Scribes and Pharisees, on account of the purity of her intention.

"If you had happened to be present in the Temple of Jerusalem you would have seen a Pharisee walking down the Temple, standing before the altar with head erect, and by his very attitude showing himself very familiar with our Almighty God. He asks for nothing and gets nothing. Whereas the poor Publican, standing at the door, would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven. He does not compare himself to others, he considers himself inferior to all, and asks: 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' And the Master said: 'I say unto you that man was justified rather than the other, because he that humbleth himself shall be exalted and he that exalteth himself shall be humbled.'

"Now, brethren, in these remarks, I wish to impress upon you a few thoughts. Our sanctification here, our friendship for God, our salvation hereafter, do not depend upon the performance of any great or striking achievements, but rather depend upon the faithful performance of those duties connected with our station in life and our avocation. In the great day, our Lord will not ask us, 'What have you done?' but, 'How have you done it?' He will not ask whether a man was a king or a peasant, but He will ask whether he performed that part which..."

A Peculiar Double Cure

Wife's Hand and Husband's Shoulder Both Got Better

Mrs. Jane Lane, of Denbeigh, Ont., tells a remarkable story of how she unexpectedly cured her crippled hand. She writes: "For about eighteen months I had no use of my right hand. My husband had a lame shoulder and after bathing him a few times with Egyptian Liniment I noticed that my hand was getting better, and in a short time I could use my fingers quite freely. Before one bottle was used Mr. Lane's shoulder and my hand were both well. It made a wonderful cure and I cannot speak too highly of Egyptian Liniment."

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If righteousness and sanctity were to depend upon great and striking achievements, how few men could acquire them. How few acts of life are worthy of sounding the trumpets of fame. Most are the common actions of life. As there are few officers in the ranks and few in the army, there are few achievements worthy of being recorded on the pages of history.

"Brethren, therefore bear this in mind, that in order to please Almighty God you are not obliged to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, you are not obliged to visit the tombs of the apostles, nor to convert nations as Paul, the apostle was. The words which Moses addressed to the children of Israel in order to encourage them were, 'This commandment I command you this day is not above you or far from you.' The commandment that I give you this day is within thy heart and within thy very reach."

"God wishes us all to reach the state of righteousness and places in our hands the means to obtain righteousness. In the Gospels the man did nothing extraordinary, he had a special mission to perform, the duties assigned to him by his Master, and his Master said: 'Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful in little things, I will set thee ruler over many.' In the last part of the Book of Proverbs it speaks relative to a beautiful wife and good mother. Her husband praised, her children rose up and called her blessed. 'What had the woman accomplished? Had she achieved great social victories? Did she succeed also in advocating successfully female suffrage, or was she prominent in some great club? Nothing said about that at all. She was an affectionate wife."

A loving mother, a kind and considerate mistress of the members of her household, and she did not eat her meat in idleness. Woman as mistress of the domestic kingdom is extolled and admired.

St. Augustine tells us that God created the angels of heaven. He created the little work of the earth. His creative power and wisdom is not more manifest in the creation of one than in the formation of the other. So is our moral record enhanced, so is our justification increased as much by the performance of the smallest act with the right intention as the most prominent deeds. God weighs our actions in the scales of the sanctuary. Those are the heaviest which are performed with the most love of God and our fellowmen. The traveler in the Holy Land is filled with admiration when he views the grand, tall cedars that crown that mountain. He does not pay attention to the grass and trees. When he arrives in the mountains, the trees afford him shelter from the noonday sun and the grass is food and fodder for his beast of burden. Those actions most serve that are the most commonplace, as courtesy and self-denial. These are what make up the sum of life and make life happier and the more sunny.

You have doubtless heard of Michael Angelo. He designed and executed the grandest temple that was ever erected to the Almighty God by the hands of man. He was not only an architect, but also a sculptor, and on one occasion he was engaged to make a bust for a distinguished nobleman. The nobleman one day thought the bust was almost done. But in ten days afterward he visited the sculptor and found him still at work on it. "You have not completed my work yet?" "No, I have not yet," answered Angelo. "What have you been doing all this time?" "I have been giving better shape to that face of yours. I have given better expression to those eyes and I have been touching up every part of your countenance."

The nobleman replied that these were trifling matters and the sculptor answered that "Perfection is no trifling matter." Charity, forbearance, self-denial and lightening the burdens of others, are trifles indeed, but those trifles make the perfect man, and the Christian man the noblest work of God. Therefore, brethren, carry home with you that we are all brethren and that your actions should be approved of heaven. Consecrate every morning all the deeds of the day to your heavenly Father. This early consecration will be the first fruits of the day and the most acceptable to Almighty God. It will be a prayer and every act will be a sacrifice most pleasing to God. Then will not only prayers be acceptable to heaven, but your prayers your conversation, your mind your avocations are so many sacrifices, and even in the unquiet hours of the night you will be advancing in victory and will say with the royal prophet, in peace will I sleep and take my rest. Then will you not fulfilling the injunction of St. Paul, "Whether you eat or drink, do all things for the glory of God, whatsoever you do in word or deed, give thanks to God, the Father."

MAKING THE STATIONS

In Father Matthew Russell's helpful book, "At Home with God," we find the following words about making the Stations, or the Way of the Cross as this devotion is also called. But, where he says that it would be an excellent Good Friday resolution if we were then to determine to make the Stations as often as we can, it would seem, just now, an exquisite thing for us to make this resolution in these summer hours.

"This is a most solid, most Christian devotion, easy to follow, and by the cessation of pictures and changes of posture providing against monotony, weariness and distractions. No sincere enlightened Christian could possibly object to the Stations of the Cross if he really understood the devotion and how we practise it. Was not she a sincere and enlightened Christian, the poor old woman who said to me many years ago, at least once a week during their vacation time? 'What a slight thing in itself to do, and how great the reward! But there is a touching and beautiful reflection which we should join to these remarks. There are people who are making this Way of the Cross, often and steadily during the summer hours. Before Mass or after Mass, in the early morning; or at night, when the evening shadows close round the quiet church, there are those who follow Jesus on His Way of Sorrows, as He bears the sins of us all upon His shoulders up Calvary and on the Cross. He is not left entirely alone. The world is not wholly given over to amusements and frivolities. May these words lead even one heart to do likewise; to turn aside once a week at least, and go prayerfully from station to station, remembering Jesus. It is so simple a devotion. At each station no long prayers are needed, only let them be loving prayers, for He loved us with a love beyond the power of any tongue to tell. He never forgets us; not for one moment does He cease to watch over us. How shall we ever cease to love Him in return? The making of the Stations, or Way of the Cross is one method of keeping alive in our hearts loyal and grateful love for Jesus Christ.—Sacred Heart Review.



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The present day has no value for me except as the eve of to-morrow; it is with the morrow that my spirit wrestles.—Metetrach.

I am quite ready to respect another man's faith, but it is too much to ask me to respect his doubt.—Gilbert Keith Chesterton.

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