

FIVE MINUTE SERMON
THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

MIXED MARRIAGES

"Be not wise in your own conceits." (Rom. xii, 16)

Many young people have a very high opinion of themselves. They imagine they know more than their elders. They are wise in their own conceits. Especially is this true when they are about to choose a companion for life. They will not listen to the advice of parents or pastor, but thoughtlessly look outside the Church for the one to whom they wish to entrust their life's happiness.

Having called your attention on another occasion to the evil of divorce, I wish to speak briefly to you to day on another evil which causes more and misery second only to that caused outside the Church by divorce. I refer to the evil of mixed marriages. The Church, to show her disapprobation of mixed marriages, will not permit them to be solemnized in the house of God, nor with any religious ceremonies.

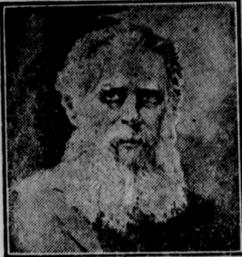
But why does the Church object? Why cannot a Catholic marry a non-Catholic with a dispensation? It is not the Church unreasonable in placing obstacles in the way? No, she is not unreasonable. Her objection is in perfect agreement with reason. She objects, because mixed marriages are opposed to the very ends for which God instituted marriage. God instituted marriage that the man and wife might mutually assist each other in knowing, loving and serving Him, that they might be companions on the road to heaven and that they might teach their children the way to heaven. In mixed marriages both these ends are frustrated. I speak of mixed marriages as a rule. There are some exceptions.

The parties constituting a mixed marriage cannot be companions on the road to heaven, since they are trying to go there by separate roads. They cannot assist each other in the knowledge and service of God, since what one says God teaches, the other says is a mockery or idolatry. They can have no family prayer with its elevating influence. In fact everything pertaining to religion, even the name of God, must be prohibited, "for peace sake." In the household, everything has its time and place except the one thing necessary; every topic, whether of gain or enjoyment has its interest and is talked over with pleasure and profit, but if mention is made of religion an animated discussion arises or a coldness ensues that has no elevating effect. Even when both are of the same religion, difference of natural disposition may cause often cause much unhappiness and misery. How much more so when of different religions. They disagree upon that which above all they should agree upon. If man and wife are one, they should be one in religion, one in everything. A disunited family makes a desolate home. Unity and harmony should characterize the life of the family. This is impossible when they differ in religion, when one is a Catholic. Before marriage all is sunshine; not a cloud appears to darken the sky; no fear is felt for the future. Promises are easily made and may be as easily broken. In nine cases out of ten they are broken. You know that when the Church grants a dispensation for a Catholic to marry a Protestant, both parties must promise: 1st, that the Catholic will have full liberty to practise the teachings of the Catholic religion; 2nd, that all the children shall be baptized in the Catholic faith; 3rd, that the Catholic will endeavor to convert the non-Catholic. How long are these promises kept? How often are they kept for even one year? Seldom. Very, very seldom. Many think when they hear priests preaching on the evils of mixed marriages that much of what is said is exaggerated. But I can assure you that during the time I have been a priest I have seen such sacred promises broken, such woe, such misery, such heart-achings and breakings resulting from mixed marriages that I am firmly convinced that half of their evils have not been told and that it would be infinitely better for any and every Catholic young woman never to marry than to marry a man who is not a Catholic. It is difficult for non-Catholics to understand this. But it will not be so difficult to understand when they remember that to the Catholic who has been well trained in his religion there is nothing dearer to his heart: that it is his aid in need, his consolation in affliction, his strength in temptations and persecutions and that he will work for it, he'll talk for it, he'll fight and if need be, he'll die for it.

If his religion is so dear to him, if he does so much for it, he will not expose himself to the danger of losing it. "He who loves mother or father more than Me," says Our Saviour, "is not worthy of Me." The good Catholic who really loves his religion as he ought, loves it better than any man or woman, than anything upon earth, and he will not run the risk of losing it for anybody or anything upon earth, as the person does who enters into a mixed marriage. He or she is not the only one exposed. The second end for which God instituted marriage is to bring up children to know and love God. Thousands of children are lost to the faith in the United States as the result of mixed marriages. Of the eighty millions of our population, only twelve or fourteen millions are practical Catholics; whereas at least thirty or forty millions ought to be Catholics. This last is caused large-

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ly by mixed marriages. Perhaps you doubt this. Every priest can tell you that the results of mixed marriages are disastrous.

But you flatter yourselves that it will not be the same in your case. So did every one of the countless thousands, who, notwithstanding the warnings of friendly voices, struck the rock that shipwrecked themselves and numbers of others.

Young men and young women, if you are associating with non-Catholics withdraw before it is too late, before you are sorry. Fathers and mothers, for God's sake, for your own sake, for the sake of your children, for the sake of your own immortal souls and the souls of hundreds of others do not, do not, I repeat, allow your children to mingle with non-Catholics. Stop the evil in its source before it goes too far. Better—far better for your happiness in this world as well as in the next never to marry than to marry a non-Catholic and have unhappiness here and hereafter.

TEMPERANCE

NOT TO BE CASHED AT A SALOON

The Escanaba Mfg. Co. issues pay checks to employees which have plainly printed on the face of the check these words: "Not to be cashed at a saloon."

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LIQUOR AND MINING

At the last election two important mining states, viz., Arizona and Colorado, went "dry." This was no great ground for surprise, the incompatibility of whiskey with efficient work in mining having long been recognized. Indeed, mine operators in Arizona, Colorado and Montana have lately been emphatic in deploring the evil tendency of the saloon upon the economics of the industry, especially in increasing liability to personal accidents and decreasing working efficiency. The direct waste of resources, the absence of thrift and the high cost of policing are further results to the community that may be traced to alcohol in a more or less degree, chiefly more.

John V. N. Dorr, a distinguished mining and metallurgical engineer, has furnished, in a letter to the Evening Post, some concrete evidence as to how this question is now regarded in Colorado, quoting from a communication received from a large machinery house in Denver as follows: "It was indeed remarkable to find how strong the various coal mining

companies were in favor of prohibition after having had a year of it under the federal authorities, who enforced the laws and made the coal-mining camps absolutely dry. It was reported a couple of weeks ago that the Colorado Fuel & Iron company had announced to its employees that it was in favor of having the state go dry, and we have talked to a great many operators who called at our office, and one and all, they have agreed that the men were doing about 15 per cent. work per dollar of wages paid to them and that their families were in much better condition than when liquor was sold. On election day and the day before it the coal companies had a great march of their men on the street talking prohibition, and I don't think I ever heard a better argument down the line in favor of it, simply on account of the better work that surrounded them.

This evidence is exactly in line with the experience in the manufacturing cities of Massachusetts, nearly all of which for several years have been "dry," under the local option law of that state. It has been found there that by reduction of alcoholic drinking the efficiency of the labor is higher, that there is less work for the police and magistrates to do and that the local merchants suffer fewer bad debts.

The national prohibition movement was started largely on moral and sentimental grounds. Lately it has been advancing on economic grounds. The combination of the moral and economic will make it irresistible. The cause has been further promoted by the decrees of a military measure of prohibition in Russia, where vodka has been a national curse. If the new rule be continued indefinitely in Russia, the economic benefit to that country may be sufficient to pay its share of the colossal cost of the war.—Engineering and Mining Journal.

THE MODERATE MAN NEVER SAFE

I am one of those who have once been bitten by the plan of moderate indulgence. I had not been a physician I might have been converted by the plausible palaver. But side by side with it came, fortunately, the knowledge which I could not, dare not ignore—that the moderate man is never safe, neither in the counsel he gives to others nor in the practice he follows for himself. Furthermore, I observed as a physiological fact that the attraction of alcohol for itself is cumulative; that as long as it is present in small quantities, the longing for it, the sense of requirement for it, is present, and that as the amount of it insidiously increases so does the desire.—Sir B. Richardson.

AN ADVENTURE IN FLORENCE

An English nobleman, who was in delicate health, was advised by his physician to pass the winter in Rome. Being unacquainted with any of the foreign languages, he took into his service an Italian waiter who spoke English well. This man had been for many years in London, employed at one of the largest hotels in that great metropolis. The nobleman reached Florence toward the end of October, 1829, and was enchanted with the beauty of that city, which, as my young readers will remember, is situated at the foot of the Apennines.

Lord F— accordingly determined to remain at Florence for three weeks, and during his stay paid frequent visits to those two magnificent galleries in which are preserved the masterpieces of the greatest artists. One evening, toward the end of the third week, he took it into his head to go to the theatre. A masterpiece of Rossini was being performed at the time, and Lord F— was a great admirer of the music of the illustrious composer. The theatre being close to the hotel in which he was staying, he did not think it necessary to take his servant with him.

At the conclusion of the music he left the theatre. Instead, however, of turning to the left and taking the way that leads to the Piazza del Duomo, he turned to the right, and after going about fifty yards found himself in one of the poorest parts of the city. It was wretchedly lighted and seemed almost uninhabited. Not knowing a word of Italian, he could not ask to be directed to his hotel. He went to the corner of a street, suddenly, a tall man, with a sword against his head and dressed in shabby clothes, who addressed some words to him in a commanding tone.

The Englishman, who had read in various novels that Italy was full of brigands, imagined that the man had demanded his money or his life, and made uncommon haste to give up his former. He had a long, green silk purse with two rings, one at each end. This he supposed a robber took, and, going up to a lamp, opened it at the end where the gold was. Seeing the quantity of Napoleons, he closed it with a sigh, after which he opened the other end containing the silver, took one coin and returned the purse to the astonished owner, who, being a man of luck notwithstanding his slender physique, followed his assailant at a distance, with the intention of seeing the upshot of this curious adventure.

After a little while he saw him go into a baker's shop and come out again with a long loaf under his arm. When he reached the end of the street the man turned to the left, and

after going a few steps farther entered a wretched hotel, the door of which refused to shut. And thither the Englishman would have been unable to follow him had it not been for an image of Our Lady, just opposite to the house, in front of which there was a lamp burning. He climbed a winding staircase with the assistance of a rope, which he found in groping about, and on reaching the landing place saw through the half-open doorway a picture of misery never to be forgotten. A poor woman, still young, lay on a pallet of straw, and near her four little children of tender years were stretched on the straw. In the middle of the room, on a rough table, was standing a brass lamp, which gave a sickly light. The man whom Lord F— had followed divided the bread into six pieces, portioned out one of them to each; then, after blessing themselves, they all proceeded to devour their meal. The Englishman being extremely moved by so sad a spectacle, entered the room, placed his purse on the table, and quickly withdrew.

To account more fully for this occurrence, which really happened in Florence, it is necessary that I should inform my readers that in the year 1829 the crop of beans and chestnuts, the staple food of the poorer classes in Florence, was exceedingly scanty, and, to make matters worse, nearly the whole of the grain grown in the country had been destroyed by hail, in consequence of which the price of bread had so increased as to cause a veritable famine. The artisans and laborers suffered a great deal, but could not be persuaded to throw themselves on public charity. Some of them, however, made bold by necessity or spurred by despair, took advantage of the dark nights, especially when they happened to meet a foreigner, to cry, "For the love of heaven, sir, give me a little assistance!"

It was precisely this which that unhappy father did. He had been for several days out of work; he had pawned his scanty possessions and had no money to buy bread. So when night fell he went out in a state of desperation, and, meeting our generous Englishman, accosted him in loud tones: "Give me a florin, sir! My wife, my children and I are all dying of hunger!" These words, expressive of the bitterest affliction, were, as we have seen, construed as a highwayman's demand. "Your money, or your life!"

It was very late when Lord F— found his way back to his hotel, and he was very tired, but he did not regret his adventure, which he never failed to relate when the conversation turned on Italy.—The Ave Maria.

NON-CATHOLIC TRIBUTE

REV. EUGENE RODMAN SHIPPEN, FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH, DETROIT, MICH.

"The common attitude of Protestants towards Catholics is scandalous. It represents bitterness, bigotry and intolerance. Professor Rockwell of Union Theological Seminary, admits that no really good history of the Society of Jesus has been written by any English-speaking Protestant, the controversial spirit triumphing over the judicial or scholarly temper."

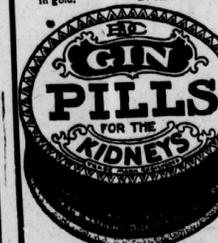
"It is not true that Jesuits teach that 'the end justifies the means.' It is not true that the society is a vast political machine. Jesuitism represents simply the conservative missionary propaganda of the ruling principle of which is the faith delivered to the fathers and carried on by devotees trained in obedience to the authority of superiors."

"Many Jesuits have been men of exalted virtue, courage and self-sacrifice. The sins of the Jesuits have been attributable to individual weakness and the character of the times. Let us do justice to those with whom we differ. Let the spirit of peace

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and good will obtain between Catholics and Protestants. Some of us believe that no one stands in loco Dei; that to obey one's self is the highest law; that nothing in the world is infallible; that revelation is only man's discovery of truth."—The Detroit Tribune, Nov. 9, 1914.

TEMPTATION

The way some persons act, and the way they speak too, they try to prove to us that at times it is impossible to overcome temptations—that we must follow our impulses and cannot overcome our overpowering temptations. Each life has its own besetting temptations, its own share of trials, and is menaced somewhere by danger. Strength is got through all this strain. That is the natural environment for growth in grace and virtue. It is the common human experience for the training of character, for the making of pure manhood and womanhood. He who is not tried and has nothing to overcome cannot be a soldier. And there is no one who is exempt from this battle, whether man or woman. To refuse to see the life of any significance is to empty life of any glimmering of the great and inspiring thought that this is the will of God for us, even our own sanctification, and we manfully try to overcome ourselves, we begin to see how it must be that God is faithful. He will not suffer us to be tempted above or beyond our powers, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape that we may be able to bear it. The trouble with those who say they cannot overcome temptation is in their hearts they do not want to overcome it. In their hearts they take a sneaking love for the fault and take pleasure in it, and therefore they are never able to rise above it and overcome themselves.—Irish Catholic.

CATHOLICITY MUST BE BLOTTED OUT!

Catholicity must be blotted out. Such, we understand, has been the verdict of the anti-Catholic bandits in Mexico, who are bent upon the complete extinction of the old Faith in that unfortunate country. Just what will remain of Mexico if this purpose be carried into execution it is difficult to say. In spite of the warfare waged against Christianity in that country by men whose crimes and sins have long since removed them from the pale of decent human beings, the people of Mexico are essentially a Christian people. There are noble souls, thousands of them, whose fathers had Spanish blood in their veins, and whose mothers were of the same race as Montezuma and Guatemoczin. These people weep daily over the torrents of blood that are being shed in order to place Freemasonry in high places, and extinguish the Church that had lifted that land out of barbaric paganism. If the present policy continue these people must find refuge elsewhere, or else lay down their lives beside their brothers who suffer as martyrs for their Faith. What will become of Mexico when the churches are closed, the priests gone, the nuns exiled? Protestantism can do nothing for there is nothing in its cold negotiations to appeal to the Mexican heart. Moreover, the anti-Christian ferocity of the Carranzas and Villas is more than likely to turn, ere long, against the innovators who are carrying a new religion into that benighted region, and wipe them, root and branch, from the soil. The men who are tolerating Protestantism today will be slaying it to-morrow.

The only hope for Mexico is in that Catholicity which triumphed over the paganism of Montezuma's followers and made them meek followers of the Saviour. If the record of what the Church did for that people between the years 1521 and 1811 be blotted out, we have only a blank remaining. What little joy peace, and content the Mexican has had since the days of the conquest by the Spaniards he has enjoyed while in the protecting arms of Holy Mother Church. It is proposed now to take from him that sole consolation, and to try to satisfy him with a few acres of arid land that he has neither capital nor initiative enough to cultivate. He must be removed from the large hacienda where he and his fathers have made their home for three centuries—where he has worshipped according to the dictates of his conscience, where the Church has sheltered him and where his bones finally would be laid in consecrated ground—to be driven forth a wanderer in that he held dear, in order that he might exercise "the right of a free citizen" to vote for the man who destroyed his home and his Faith. Catholicity in Mexico is giving to the world a magnificent array of missionaries, martyrs, and nuns who are the jewels of humanity. This same Catholicity will yet inspire the Mexican people to nobler efforts, and to a higher and purer patriotism. For she presents the one miracle of the ages—unchanging and indestructible unity fashioned out of the most varied and contrary elements—universality, despite the disintegrating effects of individual and racial pride and ambition.—The Missionary.

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