

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.

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - FEAST OF THE MATERNITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

To-day, my dear brethren, the Church celebrates the feast of the Maternity of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary. This Maternity, or Motherhood, is usually taken in one of two senses; first with regard to the glorious privilege by which she was selected to be the Mother of Him who was and is God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, born of the Father before all ages; secondly, as referring to that gift of her made to us by her Divine Son on the cross, by which she became our Mother, and watches over and defends us with more than a mother's love.

But there is another sense still in which her maternity, or motherhood, may be taken. And this sense may be specially conveyed in the lesson read at mass for this feast, the words of which are applied to the Blessed Virgin by the Church. "I am the mother," we read in this lesson, "of fair love and of fear, and of knowledge and of holy hope." By which it would seem, evidently, we are to understand, that it is she who brings forth in our hearts those virtues of the love and fear of God, of hope in Him, and of the knowledge of His will. And if we read still further, we shall find even more.

"In me," the lesson continues, "is all grace of the way and of the truth; in me is all hope of life and of virtue." Now, Our Lord expressly tells us that He Himself is the way, the truth, and the life; if then, indeed, it is true that in Our Blessed Lady is all grace of the way and of the truth, and all hope of life, it would seem the same thing to say that some of the saints have said of her, that all the graces of Our Lord, who is the way, the truth, and the life, are distributed to us through His Blessed Mother, who thus becomes really the mother of grace in us; and that not only the virtues named, but also all others, come to us by her intercession.

But however this may be, it is very certain that the Church does wish us to understand, at this feast and at all times, that devotion to the Blessed Virgin is not merely an ornament to the Christian religion, but that it enters into its very substance. We should not have had our Lord Himself, except by means of His Blessed Mother; and as her co-operation in the work of our redemption was absolutely indispensable, so we may safely say that her co-operation is practically indispensable in the application of the fruits of that redemption to our souls. Practically, we should not have the superabundant graces which we actually have, and by means of which we are saved, did she not by her loving intercession obtain them for us; though, no doubt, we should have enough in any case by which to be saved if our will was good enough to make use of them. God loves us, and wills to save us; but the fact is that, though His goodness and love for us is unbounded, and that He has chosen to put a great deal of His riches and His treasures in the hands of His and our Mother, that she may give of them liberally to those that ask.

How foolish, then, should we be if we should put aside devotion to the Blessed Mother of God as something for which we have no special attraction; which is, no doubt, profitable to others, but which we can get along very well without. "No man," says our Lord, "can come to the Father but by Me," and though we cannot say with truth that no man cometh to our Lord except by His Holy Mother, since He is, no dot, A, always ready to receive all that seek Him in any way, still there can be little question that the way He prefers we should come to Him is in her company, and that those who seek Him in this way get nearer to Him than any others.

It is, indeed, true that our Blessed Mother will pray for us and try to bring us to her Son, even if we do not ask her; and that we receive many graces unasked for which we have her to thank; but it is equally true that we shall receive many more if we make ourselves her loving and devoted children; nay, even so many more that our salvation will be practically secure.

A Hall Mary Every Hour.

The holy priest of Ars, M. Vianney, had established in his parish the pious custom of sanctifying every hour of the day by the recitation of the angelic salutation. Wherever he went, wherever he was doing, the venerable priest of God would, on hearing the clock strike, interrupt a conversation or any other occupation to salute his beloved mother by a "Hall Mary." This he did without ostentation. Many of his parishioners imitated this pious custom. On hearing the clock strike men would uncover their heads in the street to recite the customary "Hall Mary." Even during the sermon the preacher would pause and the audience would rise to salute Mary.

If, during the day, we frequently recite the angelic salutation we will be better able to fulfill the obligations of our state, bear our trials with greater patience and resignation, and taste greater happiness. In fact, what is better calculated to dilate and strengthen the heart of a child of Mary than frequently to salute his loving Mother and receive in return from the dispensatrix of the divine favors the choicest graces and blessings of salvation!

Do not delay in getting relief for the little folks. Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator is a pleasant and sure cure. If you love your child why do you let it suffer when a remedy is so near at hand? There are a number of varieties of worms, Holloway's Worm Cure will remove any of them. Call on your druggist and get a bottle at once.

Mrs. Mary Thompson, of Toronto, was afflicted with Tape Worm, 8 feet of which was removed by one bottle of Dr. Low's Worm Syrup.

DANGERS TO FAITH.

It is very easy to understand a danger to morals and Catholics parents generally recognize such dangers almost instinctively without any warning from their pastors. The case is not the same as to dangers to Faith. It takes a long time to uproot the Faith from the soul of a person who has once been well instructed in Catholic teaching. Little by little, almost imperceptibly, there grows up a spirit of indifference until finally some sacrifice is to be made, some attachment to be abandoned, some arduous task is made necessary by Catholic teaching, and fealty is entirely cast aside. This is undoubtedly the way in which most conversions take place. There are cases in which the transition is more abrupt, when pride rebels against submission to lawful authority, and malicious passion is followed by blindness and abandonment. These are the cases most heard of, most famous in history, as their very character causes them to be, while the greater number of conversions undoubtedly come about more quietly, and more after the manner we have first mentioned.

It follows clearly from Catholic teaching and practice that Faith once received can never be lost except through fault. No person can say that he has abandoned Faith, even in the cases of gradual almost imperceptible decline of Faith there is always a preceding neglect of prayer, of the sacraments, a long continuance of indulgence of unchaste inclinations or other brutalizing passions. The indifference that generally precedes the open break from the Church is always accounted for by one of these causes mentioned. When we speak of brutalizing passions we do not mean those vices alone of which the animal character is plainly external as in the case of unchasteness and drunkenness. There are animal tendencies which are never so manifest as unchaste sins and yet lead to an equal desolation of spirit.

The very fact that Faith can be lost in this slow and gradual way renders parents and those intrusted to them against dangers to this virtue. The only safe course is to follow implicitly the rules laid down by the Church without trusting to our own strength or to our ability to impress and mould the minds of the young in such manner as to render them impragable to assault.

We wish to mention a few instances in which the rules of the Church are not properly understood or applied. Every Catholic knows what is taught by the Church as to mixed marriages, and hence Catholic parents as a rule do not wish their children to enter into these unions. Yet parents frequently do not heed the fact that their children enter into continuous and intimate social relations with non-Catholics. There can be no doubt that such relations are formed as lead to these marriages. It is too late generally when "company keeping" has commenced. Steps must be taken to prevent these unions by preventing these continuous and intimate acquaintanceships which lead to company-keeping. A Catholic accompanies a non-Catholic on an excursion, or to some other entertainment. Not much is thought of it by some parents. Yet if mixed marriages are to be prevented, all parents must think of these little beginnings. The Catholic party may declare its honesty and its party there is no thought of company-keeping and that he or she could not think of marrying the other unless on conversion. How often priests see these dispositions change through continuous association!

It occurs to us while on this subject that some Catholics need to be reminded of the rule of the Church which forbids them to attend non-Catholic religious exercises or sermons even through mere curiosity. There may occur some religious service which it may be necessary to attend, for instance the funeral of a friend. There may be other causes compelling us to go to such places, but to go of our own free will, or to participate for a money consideration or the like is strictly forbidden by the Church. - T. F. Maher, D. D., in Catholic Univers.

A Sure Cure for Hiccough.

A remedy, tested many times without failure, is published in the Popular Science Monthly, which says that it can always be used by some one person upon a person who has hiccough, and generally by the sufferer himself. You say to your friend something like this: "See how close together you can hold the tips of your forefingers without touching. Now keep your elbows out free from your side. You can get your fingers closer than that. They are touching now. There—now hold them so. Steady!" By this time you can generally say: "Now why don't you hiccough?" The involuntary tendency to breathe slowly and steadily when the attention is fixed on performing a delicate manipulation counteracts the convulsive action of the diaphragm.

Catarrh, Catarrhal Deafness, and Hay Fever.

A NEW TREATMENT. Sufferers are not generally aware that these diseases are contagious, or that they are due to the presence of living parasites in the lining membrane of the nose and the eustachian tubes. Microscopic research, however, has proved this to be a fact, and the result is that a simple remedy has been formulated whereby catarrh, catarrhal deafness, and hay fever, are cured in from one to three simple applications made at home. Out of two thousand patients treated during the past six months fully ninety per cent. have been cured. This is not the less startling when it is remembered that not five per cent. of patients presenting themselves to the regular practitioner are benefited, while the patent medicines and other advertised cures never record a cure at all. In fact this is the only treatment which can possibly effect a permanent cure, and sufferers from catarrh, catarrhal deafness, and hay fever should at once correspond with Messrs. A. H. Dixon & Son, 308 West King street, Toronto, Canada, who have the sole control of this new remedy, and who send a pamphlet explaining this new treatment, free on receipt of stamp.—Scientific American.

Our Lady of the Snow.

From the Liverpool Times. The 5th of August was the festival of the Madonna della Neve, Our Lady of the Snow. An interesting story is that of the origin of this devotion. Many years ago, it is related, there lived an aged and very wealthy couple who had neither children nor relatives, however distant, to whom to leave their money.

One night the Blessed Virgin appeared in a dream to the wife, saying, "Leave your money to me. Build me a church where I may have my home." For three successive nights did this dream occur, till at length the good woman consulted both her husband and confessor on the subject. Both were of opinion that a church should be built to the Virgin.

But where? No one could come to a decision on the subject till again the wife had a dream in which she heard the Virgin say "Build a church where you will find snow in the morning." This morning happened to be the 5th of August. Strong in her faith the wife set out to find a spot with snow on it, and after some wandering she came to a rising ground on which she perceived a sheet of snow.

With the Pope's permission the ground was purchased, and on it was built the church which bears the name of Santa Maria Maggiore, one of the most beautiful churches in Rome. The 5th of August is a day of festival in this church, and to commemorate the miracle the building is filled with a shower of artificial snow formed of leaves of white roses and other white flowers.

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