

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

By Rev. N. M. REDMOND
FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

THE MIRACLE OF NAIM A FIGURE OF THAT WROUGHT IN PENANCE

"And He said: Young man, I say to thee arise! And he that was dead sat up and began to speak." (Luke vii, 14.)

The miracle wrought by our blessed Lord in favor of the young man mentioned in today's Gospel, is a most striking figure of what takes place in a spiritual sense in favor of poor sinners. The power only of Him Who first gave life to that young man could effect his resurrection. So, too, as only by the power of God divine grace is communicated to the human soul in the first stage of her supernatural life, only the same power can restore it to her when she has been so unfortunate as to forfeit it by the commission of mortal sin.

I need not say it for your sake, dear people, for you believe it as firmly as I do, that it would be blasphemy of the rankiest kind to say that our blessed Lord was guilty of deception in anything which He taught His followers. Now, either He deceived them, or His priests were empowered by Him to be His representatives through whom He would to the end of time exercise His power of forgiving sins. That He deceived His followers no Christian can imagine. What, then, did He mean when He said to Peter: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven" (Matt. xviii, 18).

Every Catholic knows that when the soul is in mortal sin, she is possessed by the devil. So long as the title remains good, not only to use her as his servant, but even to treat her as a very slave (John viii), and sin is the chain of her slavery. The soul in this sad plight is in a state of spiritual death, and this present spiritual death is but the forerunner of that which is to come and last forever in the awful hereafter. That is to say, if whilst she is in her present sad state she sever the connection with the body in any one of the countless ways in which such dissolution may come, she will, as our faith tells us, be instantly plunged into hell. Besides, the soul in mortal sin is deplorably soiled. So great is her filth in the sight of God and the angels that the human powers of man, in their present narrow capabilities, cannot imagine aught equal to it. It is needless to remark that when the occupant of a house is filthy in his habits the house will be filthy. But no human being, no matter how lost in this respect he may be, can at all come near the awful nastiness and filth of the devil, who is called everywhere by our divine Lord the "unclean Spirit." Hence, the unfortunate soul occupied by him is filthy beyond comparison; and she surpasses in uncleanness all the filth of the world heaped together. O God! what a displeasing spectacle

in your divine presence is the soul in mortal sin.

Dead, possessed by the devil, filthy beyond comparison, and every moment in danger of being plunged into hell, the soul enters the confessional with the requisite dispositions for absolution, and in the moment the priest exercises the power of forgiving sins in her regard, her deplorable state is changed into one of grace and life. The bonds of her spiritual death are burst asunder; she again lives; the devil is dispossessed and his filth goes with him; the guilt of sin and the punishment of eternal death no longer stand against her. Now she becomes anew "the temple of the Holy Ghost," and He begins His blessed work within her by ornamenting her with all the embellishments of grace (St. Paul, I Cor. vi, 11). He enkindles anew within her the heavenly virtue of charity, and by means of it gives life to her faith and hope which were dead. He infuses into her the moral virtues together with sanctifying grace; He endows her with His fruits, and with all these embellishments He diffuses a light of splendor through all her faculties, which renders her, as the Council of Trent expresses it, "beautiful and resplendent." The soul is again a child of God and an heir to the kingdom of Heaven; again she is capable of gaining merit by her righteous doing. The divine power which cured the man sick of the palsy and forgave his sins, the power which raised the widow's son to life has cured her; has forgiven her sins; has called her from death to life. Oh! let us ever praise and thank the good God, because He has given such power to man.

TEMPERANCE

PUTS MEN BEHIND BARS

The saloon is sometimes called a bar; that's true. A bar to heaven, a door to hell; whoever named it named it well. A bar to manliness and wealth; a door to want and broken health. A bar to honor, pride and fame; a door to grief and sin shame. A bar to home, a bar to despair. A bar to darkness and life; a door to brawling, senseless strife. A bar to all that's true and brave; a door to every drunkard's grave. A bar to joys that home imparts, a door to tears and aching hearts. A bar to heaven, a door to hell; whoever named it named it well.—By Lifeterners in Illinois Prison.

ALCOHOL A JOY-KILLER

Professor Emil Kraepelin is director of the Clinic of Psychiatry in the University of Munich. He has made more painstaking tests of alcohol and its effects probably, than any other man; and he began them as a believer in beer. Now hear him: "From the recommendation of a wine-dealer, I learn that wine enlivens the imagination, facilitates thought-connection, quickens the memory, is favorable to the clear and rapid perception of impressions and to the formation of judgments. "Every word a lie! "Careful investigation, continued for decades and conducted with the finest apparatus to determine the physical effects of alcohol, has shown beyond a doubt that exactly the opposite of all these assertions is actually the case. "By the elimination of alcohol, we will gain so much that we will be far more than compensated for the alcoholic pleasures lost. In place of the stupidity that shows itself amid beer fumes and the morning after, will come a richer, higher and purer enjoyment, a happy participation in all the delights of untrammelled life in full career, without rowdiness, without remorse. Athletic exercises, dramatic performances, various forms of artistic work, social festivities of every kind, will furnish abundant outlet for gay and exuberant spirits. What we want is a happy, healthy people, strong in mind and body."—St. Paul Bulletin.

SEPTEMBER

MONTH OF ANGELS

Soldiers at Mons claimed they saw a shining host of angels above the battlefield. Whether they were visible or not, it is generally believed by Catholics that guardian angels must have been there. Abbe Paller in "Instructions d'un quatuor d'heure" speaks of the care of angels for the humans they have been appointed to watch over and the response humans ought to make in gratitude to them. "Busy as we are in the routine of life, our guardian angel follows us, accompanies us everywhere, strengthens and sustains us. He trembles when we run the east dangers of body or soul. He warns us in those mysterious presentiments that turn us from danger. What friendship with God! The angels in heaven, says the gospel, feel greater joy at the conversion of a sinner than at the perseverance of ninety-nine just. Are we afflicted? Then he stays by us as that other angel who came to our Lord in the Garden of Olives in the midst of His weariness and sorrow. But it is above all at the hour of our death that he multiplies his cares so that he may consummate the work of our salvation. And if our soul is not worthy of immediate entrance into heaven, he accompanies it to purgatory, visits it frequently, and solicits the prayers

of the living for it. When at last the hour of deliverance comes it is he who brings the soul to God's throne. In a word, the faithful guardian does not cease to devote himself to us until we are restored to the arms of God. "So great love exacts return from us," said St. Bernard, "our guardian angels ought to inspire us with three feelings: respect, gratitude and confidence. We ought to respect his holy presence. It is true we do not see him with the eyes of the body, since he is a spirit which cannot be perceived by the senses but we ought to see him with the eyes of faith, persuaded he is always near us. God has given him to us as a faithful witness, whose vigilance we cannot surprise, and whose presence we cannot elude. When therefore we feel carried away by desire to do a sinful thing we cannot say: 'I am alone. No one sees me!' For there beside us stands our guardian, sad and confused. We ought to be more fearful of wounding the holiness of his sight than that of any mortal. The philosopher Seneca once wrote to a disciple: 'I will give you advice which will prevent you from doing evil. Whenever you are tempted, think of a person whom you admire, and do what you would do if he were really present.' It ought to be still more salutary for us Christians to think of the presence of our guardian when we are in danger of wandering out of the paths of decency and virtue. "Gratitude is the second duty we have toward our guardian angel. We would certainly be ingrates if we could forget his constant care. Tobias, when he went over in his heart all the favors which the angel Raphael had heaped on him, cried out in transport: 'What recompense can I make to him that it may be in proportion to that which he has done for me?' Penetrated with the holiest gratitude Tobias remained prostrate on the earth for the three hours thanking heaven for the mercy that had been manifested toward him. "And lastly, let us give our entire confidence to our guardian angel. He is observant enough to know our needs, powerful enough to assist us to God, and there is nothing nearer his heart than to fill those needs and lead us to heaven. So let us ask him often and in simple confidence to obtain light and strength and consolation from God for us."—New World.

A ROMANCE OF THE CROSS

FROM "A SHORT HISTORY OF JAPAN"

By Ernest Wilson Clement, University of Chicago Press

"In all the history of Christianity and the persecution and martyrdom of the followers of Christ, and the preservation of the faith under supreme repression, nothing is more romantic or dramatic than the discovery in the heart of Japan of thousands of Christians who had kept the faith secretly for three centuries in the midst of idol worshippers who hated Christianity with such venom that the Christians would have been crucified or burned at the stake had their secret become known. "Some fifty years ago, after Japan had been thrown open to foreigners and the safety of Christian worship guaranteed, the order of Jesuits built a cathedral in Nagasaki. At that time it was not supposed, either by the Japanese government or by foreign missionaries, that there were any Japanese Christians in that country; but on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1865, the day the new cathedral was dedicated, a party of fifteen Japanese asked for a private audience with Pere Petitjean, the priest, and, after he had taken them into his residence and locked the doors and corridors they made known to him that they, too, were Catholics. The good Pere could not believe it at first. He was more astonished when they told him there were several thousand of Japanese of the same faith. The story, in brief, was this: "In 1549 St. Francis Xavier, a Jesuit and personal friend of Ignatius Loyola, founder of the order of Jesuits, landed in Japan with two companions and began to preach Christianity under the protection of Mobunaga, a friendly feudal lord. Many converts were made and a central cathedral was built at Nagasaki. When Nobunaga died he was succeeded by a lord who hated Christians and began their extermination in what is known in the annals of the Catholic Church, as 'the great martyrdom.' Twenty-six native priests were crucified in Nagasaki and died preaching and singing, beheaded and twenty-five were slain. In one year thirty-seven thousand Japanese Christians were slain. It was supposed then that the blood of the last martyr had been shed, and the work of the 'Kirishitan Baters' (Christian Padres) had been extinguished. The Emperor of Japan issued a proclamation in which he said: "While the sun warms the earth let no Christian be so bold as to venture into Japan. Let this be known to all men, though it be the King of Spain in person or even the God of the Christians. "But in spite of all this persecution and martyrdom a group of humble Japanese fishermen near Nagasaki escaped death because of their isolation, and for three hundred years they remained faithful, handing their religion down from father to son, worshipping in

the utmost secrecy, in caves of the seashore and on their fishing vessels, concealing their images of the Virgin and some crosses and sacred vessels in fissures of the rocks and under the earth and sand, and even spreading the faith until, in 1867, there were twenty thousand of them holding fast to their religious convictions when discovery of the secret would have meant sure death. "In this case it was again proved that 'The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church,' as it was in the days of Nero and other Roman emperors who nailed thousands of Christians 'head down' to crosses, poured pitch over their bodies and set them afire, the blaze of these long lanes of human torches lighting the roadway for miles."

THE BLUFFERS

"One of the peculiarities of a large portion of the human family," says the Catholic Union and Times, "is that the members thereof have a tendency to make themselves appear just a trifle better than they really are. Everybody knows the man who, at the parish meeting, puffs out his chest and declares that he will do this, that and the other thing. And everybody knows, too, that in the last analysis he never does anything. He manages to get his name on the committee and talks as if the proposed function would be an absolute failure were it not for the important part he purposes to play. He will dispose of one hundred tickets to his neighbor's ten and he wonders why it is that people do not show more interest. He is the champion bluffer. His hundred tickets remain unsold. As a general thing, he does not even take one himself. Sooner or later everyone gets on to his game, and when he arises to make his customary boast the real workers snicker in their sleeve. They know he is an empty vessel, though he makes the greatest sound. On the other hand, the real worker has little to say. He accepts any task allotted to him; he goes at it with a will; he 'says nothing, but saws wood,' with the result that when it comes to a show down

CAN BE SAVED AND CURED OF DRINK

Good News to Mothers, Wives, Sisters

To have seen one you love, going down this road to ruin, and to have heard him try to laugh and joke away your fears, while you watched the drink habit fasten on him; is to have known suffering and to have borne a sorrow to which physical pain is nothing. And when at last he comes to that turn in the road that, sooner or later must come, and wakes to the fact that he is a slave to the drink you think everything will come right. He will fight the habit and you will help him escape it; but he cannot do it. Drink has undermined his constitution, inflamed his stomach and nerves until the craving must be satisfied. And after you have hoped and then despaired more times than you can count you realize that he must be helped. The diseased condition of the stomach and nerves must be cured by something that will soothe the inflamed stomach and quiet the shaking nerves, removing all taste for liquor. My marvelous remedy—Samaria Prescription—has done this for hundreds of cases in Canada. It can be given with or without the patient's knowledge as it is tasteless and odorless and quickly dissolves in liquid or food. Read what it did for Mrs. G. of Vancouver: "I was so anxious to get my husband cured that I went up to Harrison's Drug Store and got your Remedy there. I had no trouble giving it without his knowledge. I greatly thank you for all the peace and happiness that it has brought already into my home. The cost was nothing according to what he would spend in drinking. The curse of drink was putting me into my grave, but now I feel happy. May the Lord be with you and help you in curing the evil. I don't want my name published."

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