

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

THE REV. F. P. HICKEY, O. S. B.

PENTECOST

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

"The wonderful works of God." (Acts II.11)
Wonderful are all the works of the great Creator; but on this day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit in descending on the Apostles commenced a wonderful work that was destined to develop and last even to the consummation of the world. We celebrate today the birth of the one, true Church of Jesus Christ. The Apostles were praying and waiting for the fulfillment of the promise of their Divine Master; and on this morning the Paraclete that He had promised descended on them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with divers tongues; for these were the men commissioned to preach the Gospel to every living creature. We read that the multitude were confounded in mind and amazed, saying, "We have heard them speak in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."

How much more should we, looking back through the vista of nineteen hundred years, be amazed and proclaim the wonderful works of God. We can behold the growth and development of the Church from its cradle in the upper chamber in Jerusalem. That which commenced there is the same universal Church, which has existed and spread and taken root in every land, century after century, in spite of the world and the powers of evil. Picture the thousands of cathedrals and churches, from the earliest times to the present day, that have existed and still exist, testifying that they are witnesses of this wonderful work of God.

And the chief figure on that first day of Pentecost, Peter the fisherman, illiterate and unlearned, was one of God's wonderful works. For it was he, filled with the Holy Spirit, who declared there was no other name but that of Jesus Christ whereby we can be saved. And was all his apostolate ruined when he endured the martyr's death? He was the Vicar of Christ, the head of that Church that should never fail, and his power and his prerogatives lived after him. Pope succeeded Pope. For three hundred years each successor of blessed Peter laid down his life under various tortures and cruel deaths. Still Sovereign Pontiffs succeeded one another. The days of peace came, the days of expansion. The days of heresy and apostasy followed on, but still the successor of St. Peter sits in Peter's chair, ruling the one, true, and holy Church. Two hundred and fifty-nine Popes have ruled the Church, proving that the Papacy is one of the wonderful works of God.

And again, beholding in spirit that multitude that gathered round St. Peter that day at Pentecost, we recognize "the wonderful works of God." Gathered from all parts, did it not typify the millions of millions that would through succeeding ages listen to and obey "his successors? Lands and continents, even unknown then, and for centuries after, would submit to the yoke and accept the doctrines of that Church, born of the Holy Spirit this day of Pentecost. Wonder of wonders that the souls of men could be subdued by the Spirit of God speaking through the apostolic missionaries of the Church. Empires of old crumbled away, and the Church was found ruling in their place. Barbarians overran Europe, but, their ferocity tamed, their ignorance enlightened, they became docile children of the Church of Christ. Then when the far distant lands of the East and new continents to the West were discovered, the first to enter were those bearing the message of salvation. "Unto the farthest parts of the earth" was verified by the bearers of the Cross and preachers of the Gospel.

This day the Festival of Pentecost is celebrated throughout the whole world. It is the special festival of the Propagation of the Faith, and our hearts overflow with gratitude as we recall how the multitude has spread from Jerusalem to China and Japan, to the southern hemisphere and to the continents across the Atlantic. The same doctrines, the same devotions, the same Sacraments, the same Gospel, the same ruler all over the world! From pole to pole, hearts are amazed this day at "the wonderful works of God."

Are we simply onlookers this day? Have we no part, no vital part, in this great Festival? Yes, indeed, we have. For what is this Church that today we are glorifying? The home of the souls of men! And the infinite loving work of the Holy Spirit is their sanctification and salvation. And are we not the children of this Church? The faith that is in us, and the hope of eternal reward, and the love that inflames our hearts are the work of the Holy Spirit. A soul in grace is His divine work—one of "the wonderful works of God." It is the Holy Spirit that enables us to despise the world and its allurements, and to give ourselves to God. And our yearning to be His—His faithful, obedient servants—brings down our divine Lord into our hearts at Holy Communion. Then filled with His grace and divine Presence, we become temples of God, and may justly claim to be one of "the wonderful works of God." May we

always remain children, faithful children, of His divine Church!

THE PENTECOSTAL OCTAVE

The miracle of the Resurrection of Our Lord together with that of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles in the midst of a great wind and in the form of parted tongues of fire changed the face of the world. To the former, the Apostles pointed as the central proof of the Divinity of their Master. From the latter they derived the inspiration, the light and the strength to preach to the world that revealed truth of which Christ had made them the guardians and interpreters for all time. The miracle of the Resurrection laid the corner-stone of the Church of Christ, that of Pentecost placed upon the spiritual temple built upon that immovable foundation, its roof and crown.

The "mighty wind" that came from heaven on the first Pentecost swept from the minds and hearts of the Apostles the lingering clouds of human weakness and the mists of doubt. It cleared their vision and opened up to them the unclouded heavens of the loving designs of God in the work entrusted to their hands. In that vision they saw the full scope and meaning of their Great Charter written by the Holy Spirit, unerring finger of the right hand of the Father, *Digitus Patris* *descendens*. The parted tongue of fire that rested in visible form upon their brows were but the symbol of the Divine fire that was enkindled in their hearts. Their coming was a fiery baptism in which they were anointed with the strength of God for the struggle against the powers of evil soon to be banded against them. Thus cleansed and strengthened they went forth and spoke the wonderful works of God.

In the souls of the Faithful as well as in the Church of God, Pentecost has its unending octave. Its wonders there are daily renewed. Not with audible sound, nor in visible form does the rushing wind stir, nor the fires burn. But the Holy Ghost, Spirit of Truth, ever guides the Church. That Spirit still moves over the waters. He guards that Church from error and through it speaks the same Pentecostal message to the world. In the souls of the Faithful, His power still enkindles the virtues of faith and charity. To all who seek Him He gives with generous hand His sevenfold gifts. As on Pentecost Day He can still work marvels for the conversion of the world. For He is still the Giver of all good gifts, the Father of the poor, the courage of the faint-hearted, the light and the guest the world needs today. Now as when the Apostles were assembled in the Cenacle, the world yearns for a second Pentecost. It needs the breath and the fire of heaven to cleanse its darkened intellect of its errors and to purify its heart. Like the ancient world it awaits a new creation. It is not in vain that the Church prays: "Send forth thy Spirit, and they shall be created, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth."—America.

RECOURSE TO THE QUEEN OF PEACE

The General Intention recommended by His Holiness, Pope Pius XI, to the members of the League of the Sacred Heart for the month of May is "Recourse to Mary, Queen of Peace." The impulse to appeal in every need to the Mother of God is ingrained in Catholic habits of thought. The saying of St. Stanislaus, "God's Mother is my Mother," finds its practical application in the lives of all Catholics. To her they go in every great crisis, with unwavering confidence in her ability and willingness to help all her children who humbly and earnestly supplicate her.

Whenever the Church of God has been beset by grave dangers, her holy Pontiffs have always recommended the faithful to have recourse to Mary. And never has that sweet intercession been invoked without obtaining relief. Not to go back too far in history, we have seen in our own day the recourse of the universal Church to Mary, and its marvelous results. During the agony of the World War, the late Pope Benedict multiplied his petitions to our Lady for the cessation of hostilities. He invoked her under her various titles to come to the assistance of her unhappy children. He called upon the Virgin who brought forth the Prince of Peace to restore by her powerful intercession peace to the war-torn world.

Again His Holiness, reminded her of the aid she once rendered to the Christian hosts, and besought her under the title of Help of Christians, to stem the bloody tide of war and bring the blessed boon of peace. Then when mothers' hearts were breaking over the deaths of so many valiant sons, he pleaded with her as the Mother of Sorrows, to assuage humanities grief with the almebic of peace. And finally with what seemed to be an inspiration from Heaven, he laid his supplications and the supplications of three hundred million Catholics at the foot of the throne of the Queen of Peace.

The Holy Father ordered the invocation "Queen of Peace, Pray for Us," added to the Litany of Loretto,

and decreed that it should remain forever, to remind the faithful of future ages of the efficiency of her intercession, and of the greatness of the favor, "which," he said with sublime confidence, "we shall owe to her." Subsequent events proved that the confidence of Christ's Vicar was not misplaced. Peace came soon after suddenly and unexpectedly. All Catholics believe that it was granted largely through the intercession of the Queen of Peace.

Today the peace of the world is threatened with many dangers, the Church is hampered by grave difficulties, and the faithful in many countries encompassed by calamities. The Holy Father with the same holy confidence in Mary's power of intercession bids the members of the League of the Sacred Heart to have recourse to Mary, the Queen of Peace, during the month of May. She who triumphed over the mortal hatred of nations in time of war, can heal their lesser enemies in time of peace. She will do her part, if we do ours.

REUNITED AT MASS

ALUMNI OF BIG STATE SCHOOLS OF FRANCE

Paris, April 16.—The custom established a few years ago of having the alumni of all the great State schools make their Easter Communion together prevailed again this year.

At the Church of St. Etienne-ou-Mont, in Paris, 1,050 engineers and officers, all graduates of the Ecole Polytechnique, went together to the Holy Table. On the same day similar groups of alumni of this school assembled in 46 different churches throughout France. The circular urging the organization of these Masses bore the signature of 950 Polytechnicians, some of them among the most famous in France, such as the names of some of the Marshals of France, listed very simply, according to the custom, in position of their number on the promotion list.

At Notre-Dame de Paris, the Communion Mass of the engineer graduates of the Ecole Centrale brought 1,000 former comrades together. At the same hour 30 other Masses were said in other churches throughout the land for the engineers of the Ecole Centrale. The general invitation to these ceremonies bore 1,280 signatures.

Eight other large schools organized similar ceremonies. They were the Paris Ecole des Mines; the Ecole des Fontes et Chaudronneries; the Ecole des Mines de Saint-Etienne; the Ecole des Travaux-Publics and the National Arts and Trades Schools of Paris, Aix, Chalons and Lille.

The attendance at the ceremonies of Holy Week and Easter was greater this year than in any previous year. At Notre-Dame de Paris, for instance, on the evening of Good Friday, more than 10,000 persons attended the service; for men only, crowding the nave and tribunes to hear the sermon preached by Father Janvier. A crowd at least as large remained outside the cathedral, in front of the doors, waiting in vain for a chance to enter. Marshal Foch, in civilian dress, was among the group seated near the pulpit.

On Easter Sunday, at the eight o'clock Communion Mass, Mgr. Roland-Gosselin, who administered Communion at Notre-Dame, was forced to have three assistants, and the distribution even then lasted more than twenty-five minutes.

PROTESTANTS GIVE CHALICE TO PRIEST

Dublin, April 28.—A unique and gratifying incident took place in the parish of Kiltullagh in the Tuam diocese. The Protestants of the parish presented a costly chalice to the parish priest, Very Rev. Francis MacDermott. In an address accompanying the presentation the donors recognized the worth of Father MacDermott "both as a clergyman and a friend." The address continued:

"Our gift is a symbol of that great bond which should bind all Christians in a common brotherhood and we trust that in a brighter future Irishmen of all classes and creeds may unite to make our country a contented and happy Ireland."

Father MacDermott accepted the chalice with gratitude as an eloquent proof of the cordial relations existing between the Catholic and Protestant communities in the parish. Concluding his reply he said:

"I shall have pleasure in cherishing this symbol during my life and transmitting it among our other church treasures as an enduring monument to the honor of your community and as a testimony to their kindly dispositions towards their Catholic neighbors. Archbishop Gilmartin, who was present at the presentation, expressed great pleasure at the event and trusted that the cordial relations would long continue.

SOCIALISM MENACES RELIGION

WORLD STANDS AGHAST AT EXECUTION OF MGR. BUTKIEWICZ

Washington, April 20.—Citing the murder of Mgr. Butkiewicz as the logical result of so-called "liberalism" and socialism, Mrs. George Maynard Minor, President-General of the Daughters of the American Revolution, called upon the delegates to the national convention of the organization here to fight against the spread of bolshevistic teachings in the United States.

SOCIALISM STRIKING AT RELIGION

"Under the mask of peace and freedom movements, of international friendship movements," she said, "this socialism by whatever name you call it, masquerades as though it and it only were that 'one far-off divine event toward which the whole creation moves.' Tear off the mask and you will see it as it is—the denier of God, the negation of all that men have held sacred from time immemorial, the denier of homes and the denier of country. He is not this onslaught upon religion, this attempt of socialists to abolish God, had fruitful fruit in the murder of a vicar-general of the Roman Catholic Church by the reds of Russia? The whole world stands aghast at a crime perpetrated not alone against the individual but against the sacred religious instincts of all mankind, regardless of church or creed.

"It was an example of bolshevistic repudiation of God and bolshevism is socialism and is not confined to Russia. It is over here in this country deriding our faith in a God of righteousness, sneering at spiritual things, leading astray our young people, some of whom are saying: 'There is no God.'"

BIRTH CONTROL DANGER TO NATION

Continuing, the speaker declared that members of the D. A. R. could best serve their country by building up real homes with large families.

"It is not birth control that America needs today," she said, "for our country is 48% foreign and birth control will not be practiced by the foreigner and the poor whom it professes to benefit. It aims straight at the hearthstone of the American home. Make no mistake about that."

"It is for you to keep the homes of the nation firmly built on the sure foundations of the past," Mrs. Minor told the convention delegates, "the foundations of a strong pure family life around the family lamp as a center from which glows all that is highest and best in the nation's character. For a nation can rise no higher than the level of its home and the character of its mothers."

ANTI-KLAN VICTORY

Baton Rouge, La., April 11.—Judge H. F. Brunot of Baton Rouge, anti-Klux Klan candidate for associate justiceship of the Louisiana Supreme Court, is the recipient of many congratulatory telegrams as a result of his victory over two Ku Klux candidates in the recent election. Judge Robert S. Ellis and Columbus Reid of Amite, who opposed Judge Brunot and who were supported by the Klan a planning to contest the election, it has been rumored.

One of the telegrams congratulating the anti-Klan candidate on his victory was signed by Mayor R. L. Dade, and nineteen other citizens of Mer Rouge, La., the scene of Klan outrages and murders which were the subject of an open hearing investigated by the State authorities last January.

CARDINAL FAULHABER TO VISIT U. S.

Munich, April 8.—Cardinal Michael Faulhaber will extend his personal thanks to the Catholics of the United States for their relief efforts in behalf of the German population in a series of addresses he is to deliver in the principal cities of America, according to an announcement made here prior to his departure for that country last week.

His Eminence, who was created a member of the Sacred College in 1921, and who observed his fifty-fourth birthday last month, is noted for his vigorous and forceful comments on affairs of the times, but it is not likely, in his American addresses, which will be both in German and English, that he will touch on other than charitable topics. He has always manifested a keen interest in the questions of the day and has offered clear and comprehensive solutions of the women's question and the school question in Germany. His lectures on economics have made him a distinguished figure among Catholics and non-Catholics alike. His social conference based on the social philosophy of the great Bishop Ketteler, have attracted men from all circles and have done much to educate the German workmen in the philosophy of the great sociologists of the Church.

When the flood of red revolution was at its height in Bavaria, Cardinal Faulhaber showed himself a great leader of the people, with undoubted political genius. When revolutionary government undertook to abolish the schools, he succeeded in forming numerous "Parent Associations for the Protection of Christian Schools," which served to meet the crisis.

HISTORICAL PAGEANT AT ARUNDEL CASTLE

London, April 20.—Arun-del Castle the historic home for centuries of the Catholic Dukes of Norfolk, is to be the scene of an historical pageant, with the fourteen year old Duke of Norfolk, and Premier Peer of England and Hereditary Earl Marshal of the English Court, as one of its central figures.

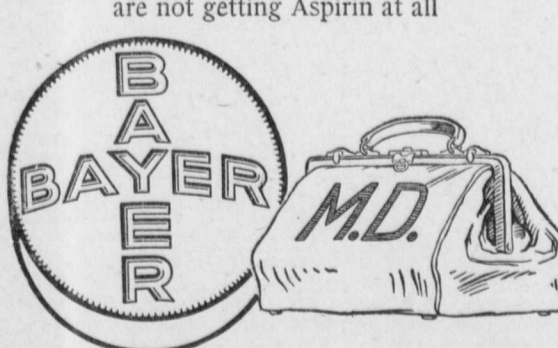
With the ancient walls of the vast Castle and the old tilting court as a background, scenes will be presented from episodes of English history which actually took place on the spot.

Patrick Kirwan, one of the best-known members of the theatrical profession, who directed the Shakespeare Festival and produced the Nativity plays at Westminster Cathedral, and the surrounding villages and towns in Sussex are making themselves responsible for the individual episodes. Some of the episodes presented will be landmarks in the past Catholic history of the country.

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