

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

GOD AND MAMMON

"No man can serve two masters." (Matt. vi, 24).

When the Philistines had captured the Ark of God they carried it into Azotus and put it into the temple by the side of their idol Dagon. When they returned home they found the idol lying upon its face on the ground before the Ark of the Lord (I Kings v, 4). What is the moral of this incident? That God and the evil spirit cannot dwell together, and that we cannot serve both God and the evil spirit. Our Saviour again impresses this upon us in the words of to-day's Gospel: "No man can serve two masters," God and mammon.

We are told that when Christ entered the house of Zaccheus the evil spirit of covetousness departed and Zaccheus was converted. Before that day he had constantly schemed to acquire wealth, and he had been hard and merciless to the poor, but now he became merciful, even generous toward them, and he thought only of God and the salvation of his soul: "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged any man of anything, I restore him four-fold" (Luke xix, 8). In Zaccheus, before his conversion, you see, my dear Christians, what an influence avarice and greed may have upon man. They prevent him from loving God and his neighbor, and hence from caring for the salvation of his soul. If you therefore care for and strive only for wealth, your hearts will not be with God, but with the things of earth, and your salvation will be in danger.

Avaricious people have no purpose other than the gain of money and do not hesitate to resort to injustice, and even fraud, to attain that purpose. Therefore the Apostle says: "The desire of money is the root of all evils; for that they will become rich, fall into temptation, and into the snares of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which lead men into destruction and perdition" (I Tim. vi, 9, 10). Covetous persons often cheat and deceive their neighbors in many and various ways, e. g., by using false weights and measures, by adulterating their merchandise, substituting inferior qualities etc. Their one thought is to increase their possessions, everything must yield to this. Especially in our times is it a very frequent occurrence that men who are well-to-do, and who have their money, or other possessions, by a multitude of schemes. It is very sinful to obtain goods of any kind by false pretences, and the wealth thus acquired is sinful wealth. Remember my dear Christians, that our Saviour says: "You can not serve God and mammon." If the only desire of a greedy person is to increase his riches, if he is not particular about the principles of honesty and justice, how can he be at the same time serve God? But some will say: "There are many honorable rich people who are God-fearing; they attend church, and receive the Sacraments, and lead a good life." It is true there are many such people, people who came into possession of their wealth, in honorable ways, and use it in a proper way. But, alas, there are among the wealthy some who pretend to lead a Christian life, who do deeds of charity for reputation and fame. Such people do not serve God, they serve mammon, they seek their gratification in things that can not bring them eternal life.

It is well to remember then that you can not serve God and the mammon. If you serve the mammon of money you can not hope to enter into the kingdom of God, for the Apostle says: "For know you this and understand, that no covetous person hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Ephes. v, 5). And Christ declares emphatically: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Mark x, 25). Let us, my dear Christians, beware of attaching ourselves to the vain and passing things of this world, they tend to cast our souls into eternal destruction. "Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth: where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven: where neither rust nor moth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Matt. vi, 19, 20). Virtue and good deeds are the treasures which merit heaven. Endeavor to become rich in these things; lay up an abundance of such treasures, for they alone will help us in the life that is to come. Amen.

WHAT OF THE NEXT
GENERATION?

No truer words ever were spoken than those from the Southern Guardian of Little Rock, Ark:

"The increasing number of mixed marriages is no good omen. It not only breeds, but betrays, the existence of religious indifference. Those who enter the matrimonial state should be deeply imbued with the sense of responsibility for their offspring; and it takes all the devotion of father and mother, all the religious atmosphere of a Christian home, to plant the faith, that most precious heirloom, deep into the hearts of children. That our young do not think of this, but follow merely their fancy in choosing their mates, is a deplorable failure of faith among the present generation. How will it be with the next, if our young men and women do not bethink themselves?"

Love, of course, is said to be blind, and it is this paralyzing blindness that has wrecked many a life and created for scores and thousands of young men and women a hell upon earth. If a person really thinks anything of his religion and marries a person of another faith he is not how earnest anti-nuptial promises have been, sooner or later there is bound to be trouble. Especially is this the case when children appear on the scene and become of school age. The non-Catholic father cannot see the necessity of placing the child under the tutelage of the Catholic teacher. The

public schools are there and they are good enough for his offspring. If the mother be weak she gives in sooner than have any trouble. The man can make himself very disagreeable and his home very unhappy by his persistent belittling of everything Catholic. Oftentimes, under these conditions, the wife becomes a hypocrite rather than have a constant turmoil, with the result that faith sooner or later ceases to exist and the entire family falls away.

Stand by your religion, young men and women; if you cannot find among your own the person you think you want for a life partner, a million times better that you remain single. You will find there is little peace or contentment in a mixed marriage, that is, provided you are an earnest, practical Catholic. — Catholic Sunday.

IN THE OLD MISSIONS

LONG ABANDONED STRONG-
HOLDS IN TEXAS TO BE RE-
STORED — HISTORIC SENTI-
MENT

It is a far cry from the warwhoops of Apaches and Comanches to the industrious bustle of a peaceful city; from the savage his of flint-headed arrows to the pealing of church bells, and from the howling of wild beasts in the wilderness to the welcome of a hospitable people, writes the Rev. Father D. S. Eshel in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

No less a gulf, comprising the development of two centuries, lies between the first and second advents of the Franciscan Fathers in San Antonio, Tex., where they propose gradually to re-conquer and to restore their crumbling missions, founded in the eighteenth century for the conversion of the Indians. The chapel of the oldest of the missions is the renowned Alamo, where the Thermopylae of the New World was fought and where James Bowie and David Crockett, met Spartan deaths.

San Antonio's sense of historic sentiment and its gratitude to the brown-robed and barefooted friars who, in the cause of the cross, were the devoted forerunners of civilization in Texas, have prompted the city officials, clergy and citizens to extend an invitation for the return of the disciples of St. Francis of Assisi to their ancient seats.

The management of the restoration is in the hands of the Rev. Benedict Schmidt of St. Louis, who is provincial of the Sacred Heart province of the Franciscan order. A delegation of friars will go to San Antonio from the Franciscan monastery at 3140 Meremec street, St. Louis, the first one to be chosen being Father Philibert Haase, because of his proficiency in the Spanish tongue. Their companions will be recruited from the other forty-six Franciscan cloisters of the province.

The first Franciscan ministry in Texas extended from 1528 until 1834, during which period nine friars suffered the death of martyrs. The ninth of these, Fray Antonio Diaz de Leon, called "the last Franciscan in Texas," was assassinated seventy-seven years ago, after writing an affecting farewell letter, in which he predicted his doom.

Twenty-one years previously the flourishing Franciscan missions in the province had been suppressed and the first to be repaired and restored, the mission of San Antonio de Valero, of which the Alamo was the chapel. According to present plans the first to be repaired and restored will be the Concepcion mission, near San Antonio.

These missions are five in number: San Jose de Aguayo, founded in 1720, and declared to be the most beautiful monument of mission art in North America; La Purissima Concepcion de Acuña, San Capistrano, San Francisco de la Espada and San Antonio de Valero, of which the Alamo was the chapel. According to present plans the first to be repaired and restored will be the Concepcion mission, near San Antonio.

The plan of the Franciscan revival was conceived by the Right Rev. Bishop J. W. Shaw of the San Antonio diocese. By his invitation Father Schmidt went to San Antonio last February to work out on the ground the details of the proposed reclamation of the missions. After the restoration is accomplished the blessing of His Holiness the Pope will be bestowed upon the enterprise.

At least two friars of the Franciscan community of St. Louis will go to San Antonio to prepare for the coming of those who will inhabit the Concepcion mission. Despite its age and decay, it is estimated that the building may be made habitable by a reasonable outlay of labor and expense.

If the rehabilitation of the Concepcion mission fulfills expectations, steps may be taken to restore the other missions at San Antonio. But the Franciscans wish it understood that sentiment alone does not govern their motives in the reclamation of the missions. The entire program may not be completed unless the friars find abundant work for the order and an adequate ministry for them to perform in San Antonio. They could not endure to serve as mere objects of interest to sightseers—as enhancements of the picturesque of the old missions.

Much of the new work planned in Texas will be among the Mexican population, and for this reason only Spanish-

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speaking monks will be sent to San Antonio. What the Franciscan ministry means, in a practical sense, may be seen from the following extracts from an old report of the United States government:

"The Franciscans transformed the uncouth savages, into masons, carpenters, plasterers, scapblers, tanners, shoe-makers, blacksmiths, millers, bakers, cooks, brickmakers, carters and cartmakers, weavers and spinners, saddlers, shiphands, agriculturists, herdsmen, vintagers—in a word, they filled all the laborious occupations known to the civilized world."

The past, and possibly future, prosperity of the Franciscan missions in Texas may be estimated from the fact that in 1831, twenty-one missions in California harvested the following crops: 2,200,000 bushels of wheat, 600,000 bushels of barley, 850,000 bushels of corn, 160,000 bushels of beans, and 100,000 bushels of peas and lentils. They raised 232,000 head of cattle, 298,000 sheep, 34,000 horses, 35,000 mules, 8,300 goats, and 3,400 swine.

It was almost two centuries ago that the Franciscan missionaries braved the wilderness, the ferocity of savage tribes and the sufferings of exposure and hunger to found these institutions for the conversion of the Indians. To-day, the crumbling piles are said to be the finest examples of mission architecture in the world. Despite the decay of time, the effect of cannon shot and shell and the vandalism of souvenir hunters, the San Antonio buildings are still stately and impressive. It has been estimated that most of them could be restored at a reasonable cost.

The missions were constructed by almost incredible labor and perseverance. Saving the Alamo, there is not a better stone in the history of the world. The stones were brought from great distances in baskets on the backs of Indians and cemented together with mortar, forming a material something akin to concrete.

The San Jose mission, in particular, retains much of its original beauty, despite the ravages of time. Its west window and front door are tumbled down and the fortress wall which once surrounded it has given place to a barbed wire fence. Yet the structure's stately lines may still be distinguished.

The oldest of the missions, San Antonio de Valero, gave its name, that of St. Anthony of Padua, to the future city of San Antonio.

By the restoration of the San Antonio missions, Texas will be annexed to the jurisdiction of the Sacred Heart province of the Franciscans, the headquarters of which are in St. Louis.

The province now comprises the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, Tennessee, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan, together with a western division called a commissariat, composed of the states of California, Washington, Oregon and Arizona. There are thirty-two cloisters in the central states and fifteen in the commissariat, besides three colleges and about a score of fathers in Indian mission work.

There are three other Franciscan provinces in the United States—that of St. John the Baptist, with headquarters at Cincinnati; that of the Holy Name of Jesus, with a provincial at Paterson, N. J., and an Italian province in New York. Besides, there is a Polish commissariat in Wisconsin.

All these provinces are grouped into what is called the twelfth district of the order, and are represented at Rome by a defensor, or delegate. The twelve districts of the world are commanded by the minister-general of the Order of St. Francis, at Rome.

The gulf between barbarism and civilization lies between present conditions and the circumstances under which the Franciscans first established themselves at San Antonio. The men they trudged for hundreds of miles through thickets of cactus and sagebrush and forests of mesquite. At any hour a volley of arrows might come whistling toward them from an Indian ambush, or a beast of prey leap upon them.

How richly has been fulfilled the vision seen in faith two hundred years ago by the Franciscan empire builders of the southwest!

PROTESTANT VACATION
SCHOOLS

One of the recent forms of proselytizing is seen in the vacation schools for poor children in New York. We refer to those that are conducted by the Federation of Protestant churches in this city. How is it that Protestants generally do not, and many of them will not see the unalterable position of Catholics, who so long as they are loyal children of the Faith must believe, and live up to the belief, that they cannot save their immortal souls in any but the Catholic Church? To win them, therefore, the little ones away from their Church or their Faith is to force them into the commission of an act of treason, the maliciousness of which over an ordinary act of treason is to be measured by the sacred character of that Society, whose founder and invisible head is Christ, and whose members owe Him their allegiance from the day of their baptism to the day of their death.

Presbyterians may, as they see fit, make inroads on Methodists, and Episcopalians on Baptists, without incurring any such reproach, for they all admit virtually that their religion is as good as another, and that Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians all stand an equal chance before the Just Judge of receiving a reward for their good work. Catholics concede that they do. But why will not the denominational friends be considerate toward Catholics and not make them perform renegades to the highest allegiance that man can have on this earth? A writer in the New York Tribune gives a picture of what she saw when she strolled into the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church on a sultry, humid morning recently. The place was alive with children of every age. "An attractive Barnard girl in crisp white linen was seated at the piano, and the music was being led by an energetic youth, whose physique bespoke the Princeton football field. And the children! What were they? Not well-dressed, conventional little Madison Avenue Presbyterians, but Giuseppe and Moses and



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Esther and Pat and Fritz, hatless and not seldom shoeless, who have traveled all the way from the East Side. At the sight of this visitor falls to dreaming. A vision arises. Is not this church unity, if only in embryo? It is quite as wonderful as the Pentecostal gathering addressed by Peter, Moses and Father and Fritz and Pat and Giuseppe are there, and, of course, Carlotta and the bambino. More fortunate than Peter's audience they can talk English, for here is the song they sang:

"Somebody did a golden deed,
Proving himself a friend in need;
Somebody sang a cheerful song,
Brightening the skies the whole day long.
Was that somebody you?
Was that somebody you?"

And this doggerel is set forth as the common ground of a united Christianity! It is simply *peace* paganism. Cannot something be done by Catholics themselves to prevent these inroads upon the faith of the little ones?—America.

WHEN THE POPE COMES DOWN
FROM THE VATICAN

June 29, the feast of St. Peter and Paul, always marks a deep change in the life of Rome. The lectures end in the great ecclesiastical universities and the tired students still held here by the annual examinations, look forward to the delightful months among the Castelli. The English-speaking residents disperse in all directions; the stream of visitors dwindles to vanishing point; the orators of the Chamber of deputies give the reporters a long rest; the King and Queen of Italy go home to Racconigi; the Bloc on the Capitol suspends its sessions; the cabmen doze idly on their boxes in the shade, and their deadly taximeters are still. Even St. Peter's is deserted, save by its reduced chapter of canons, who come at fixed hours to sing the Mass and Office. Later on the congregations suspend all but their routine work; their officers take their forty days in the country; the familiar carriages of their Cardinals are no longer to be met in the streets; there is a deeper calm and silence about the Vatican itself.

But the summer brings no change of air or scene for the Sovereign Pontiff.

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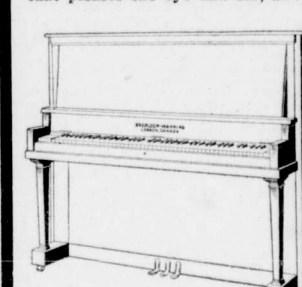
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