

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE ASCENSION

"And the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven." (St. Mark xiv, 19)

In looking back over the life of our Lord while on earth, we see that all the mysteries refer to the Ascension as to the end and completion of His work. As every mystery of His life began with the Incarnation of Lord, so they all end with His Ascension into heaven. After that the work of the Holy Ghost begins. And how glorious an ending His Ascension was! His humble birth, His humility when insults were heaped upon Him and when He was condemned to death, His humility and love when He cried out on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," all are finished by the majesty of His ascension, than which nothing can be more noble; nothing more glorious. He ascended to occupy the throne and to possess the kingdom He had purchased by His passion and death, and in order to show us that the kingdom He spoke of was not of this world, for the wealth and power of this earth is but perishable, while the riches our Lord spoke of are above the natural and are eternal.

Our Lord's Ascension leads us to think of Him and to follow Him in mind and heart. By His rising from the dead and ascending into heaven He gave us a model to follow no less than by His suffering and death. By His Ascension our Lord would show us that although we are in this world we should not be of the world, that our minds and thoughts should be directed heavenward. By the Ascension of Our Lord the gates of heaven, so long closed against us, were opened and a place was prepared for every one of us, for He said, "I go to prepare a place for you"; and there we shall find Him, ready to be our Advocate before the throne of God, provided we be converted and repent of our sins. Is there anything that should give us greater joy or fill our hearts with more earnest love than the thought of Our Lord's Ascension? Should the thought not fill our hearts with gratitude? Should it not compel us to forget ourselves and our surroundings—should it not make us think of God and our eternal home? Our Lord says: "Where one's treasure is, there is his heart also."

But now, my dear brethren, have you followed this advice? Is it not the case with too many of you that your thoughts are centred on things of this life? Do you seek worldly happiness, often at the expense of eternal happiness? And yet those who have been the most successful and most ardent in the pursuit of the riches and the joys of this world have finally become the most severe in condemning them. Perhaps, too, you seek those pleasures and enjoyments which are yours in common with the brutes, and not only momentary in their duration and bitter in their end, but filthy and disgusting. Our Lord's Ascension teaches us to seek the joys of heaven and such as lead to them and are worthy of a rational man. All others are below our level, and to think of following them, of satisfying ourselves with them, is an insult to our regenerated nature, to that nature that our blessed Lord deigned to take upon Himself and to bear aloft with Him in Paradise.

A day like this is a favorable occasion to store one's soul with the virtue of hope. Our Lord brings into His Father's presence the five wounds and the recollection of all the agony that they mean, and He does so on our account. Those wounds shine resplendent in heaven, and they are the jewels with which our Saviour has purchased our salvation. Let us be full of courage, then. Let us call out to Our Lord, "Remember me, now that Thou art come into Thy Kingdom. I am a lustful man, but I am sorry; give me the grace of purity. I am a drunkard; oh! cure me of my dreadful appetite for drink. I am a worldly; teach me the value of eternity. I am quarrelsome; give peace and good will to my stormy soul." Such a prayer as this on Ascension Day will move Our Lord to give us the proper dispositions for a good confession and Communion for our Easter duty.

THOSE PROTESTANT CHARGES

Non-Catholics who object to our Faith on general and particular principles are accustomed to accuse us of evil-doing and misdeed, and simply because certain conditions in our religious life make it an easy enough thing for them to do. Mr. G. Elliot Anstruther, the organizing secretary of the Catholic Truth Society in England, makes it his business to deal with charges of this sort in one of the booklets issued by that body. Here, categorically, are some of the accusations he deals with:

THE BIBLE. In regard to the Bible, he says, the principle difference between the Catholic and Protestant attitude towards the Bible is that one recognizes, while the other rejects, the need for an infallible authority to be the guide and interpreter of the Sacred text. Catholics accept and revere the Bible on the authority of the Catholic Church which originally drew up the "Canon," or list of writings which make up the Bible.

PLEASE PUBLISH MY TESTIMONIAL

So Other Sufferers Will Take "Fruit-a-lives" And Be Cured

Gratitude—heartfelt gratitude—prompted this letter. Madame Langlois was so thankful to "Fruit-a-lives" for restoring her to health and strength, that she gladly allowed her letter to be published.



St. ROMUALD, QUE., SEPT. 23rd, 1912. "I have pleasure in stating that I have been cured of severe Dyspepsia and Chronic Constipation by using "Fruit-a-lives." I was a terrible sufferer from severe Constipation for many years, and I tried every remedy I heard of, and also was treated by physicians without any permanent benefits. Then I tried "Fruit-a-lives," and this fruit medicine has completely cured both the Constipation and Indigestion. I cannot praise "Fruit-a-lives" enough."

Without the Church there would have been no Bible. Protestants hold that individual interpretation will reveal God's Word to all who seek it truly. The result of this is (says Anstruther, in effect) that there are a multiplicity of doctrines, based on the Bible, in Protestant sects. Catholics have only one. Some of the readings of the Bible by non-Catholics also tend perilously towards Rationalism. Far from being forbidden to read the Bible, Catholics are encouraged to do so, and there exists an Indulgence granted by the late Pope to all the faithful who make it a practice to read the Bible.

WHY PRIESTS DO NOT MARRY. Celibacy in the Catholic Church is a matter of Discipline, not of Doctrine. No article of Faith would be affected if the Catholic Clergy was given permission to marry, and the celibacy of the clergy does not belittle the state of matrimony, which is sacramental and holy. It is wise that an unmarried clergy should consecrate themselves to the duties of the Temple and not of the Home, says Mr. Anstruther. The Church asks all its ministers' service. The idea of clerical celibacy is, moreover, appealing to a widening circle, as in the Anglican Church, for example. The Catholic priesthood exhibits morality in one of its highest known aspects.

CONFESSION. Since the early ages of Christianity, Confession has been one of the parts of Catholic belief and practice. Non-Catholics (of the most ignorant kind) say that Catholics can commit any iniquity and get absolution from a priest by Confession. They also say that priests are paid for absolution. Catholics know that this is not so, and Ireland (says Anstruther) is a country which exercises the use of the confessional most, and is one of the most moral in the world. Priests are merely the instruments of God, and every Catholic, from the Pope down, has to make his confession.

CONVENTS. Many non-Catholics think that convents are places in which women are kept against their will; that these women are at the mercy of tyrannical priests and superiors. It is, however, a certain fact that it is far easier for a woman to get out of a convent than to get into one. Many postulants (candidates) are rejected for every one that is accepted for the religious life. Nuns do not take their vows till after a lengthy period of trial. It is to be noted that all the "escaped" nuns have at least been able to "escape." Are monks and nuns lazy or useless? Surely good works are a proof that they are neither the one or the other.

DO WE WORSHIP IMAGES? The Church encourages the use of statues, crucifixes as "reminders" to which a relative honor is paid. When an army salutes its flag, does it pay honor to the piece of cloth of which the flag is made? It simply testifies its faith in a principle. When a Catholic kneels before a crucifix, he is not praying to anything but to Christ there represented.

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INDULGENCES. "An Indulgence is (not leave to commit sin) but a remission granted by the Church, of the temporal punishments which often remains due to sin after its guilt has been forgiven," says Mr. Anstruther. A "Forty Days" Indulgence does not mean forty days less in purgatory. It simply means that once the Church used to impose a penance of "forty days" duration, and that conditions at present make "prayer" or "fasting" an easier way to satisfy the requirements of penance.

THE INFALLIBLE POPE. By infallible Catholics do not mean impeccable, or sinless, nor do they think the Pope possesses divine attributes. But Catholics certainly do hold that the Pope when he voices the majesty or authority of the Church is divinely protected from teaching error—God having promised this through His Divine Son. Certain Popes have fallen into error, but on examination these errors were not found to affect doctrine.

JESUITS. The doctrine believed by the Jesuits are just the same as those believed by all Catholics all over the world. They have no "secret oaths" and do not teach that "the end justifies the means." They do not direct the Papacy, nor govern the Pope, nor plot, nor conspire, and there are no "female Jesuits," nor any in Governments or Cabinets. Even when the so-called "penny blasphemer," the anti-Catholic "Rock" libelled the present Father Bernard Vaughan, it had to pay \$1,500 for the privilege of doing so.

ATTEMPT TO STRANGLE FRANCE'S CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

ENEMIES OF RELIGION WOULD DESTROY REFUGES OF CHILDREN WHOM THEY SEEK TO DECHRISTIANIZE

A fresh anti-clerical campaign is now being opened in France against the "free" or Christian schools, created and maintained by the zeal and generosity of French Catholics. Writes a special correspondent to the London Catholic Times. Since the French episcopate took official cognizance, some years ago, of the so-called "neutral," but really anti-Christian, school manuals approved by the State, and publicly condemned a number of them, new "free" schools have been multiplied as refuges for Catholic children. The excellent result of this move, advised by the Bishops, is shown by the fact that in many places these Catholic institutions have practically emptied the communal schools. Hence the renewed clamor of the Radicals for fresh measures "in defense of the lay schools." So the wolf describes his renewed oppression of the lamb.

A warm debate has recently taken place upon this subject in the Chamber. The bill of sectarian spirit has triumphed over patriotism and voted the postponement of the budget and of the question of "national defence." Now become important owing to the increase of Germany's military forces. M. Dessoye is introducing a bill for punishing parents who actively interfere with the dechristianizing of their children by "lay" teachers and "lay" text-books. M. Brard is adding an amendment to hinder a "free" school being set up in any commune of less than three thousand inhabitants without the discretionary sanction of the Government. At one blow this measure would give the State a monopoly of education in nine tenths of the French communes. This, of course, is precisely what the Freemason dictators of French legislation desire. For State monopoly of education has long since been decreed at the "convent" in rue Cadet, and French Ministers can ill afford to disregard the will of the Grand Orient.

Curious to say, the Socialist leaders seem less keen to oppress the Catholics than Radicals, of the "bloc" species. M. Sembat, for instance, sneers at M. Brard's amendment as being too drastic, and he even gives faint praise to the energy shown by Catholics in resisting anti-clericalism. According to him: "The successes of the Catholics are well deserved. Ought we to blame them? For one man rather disposed to admire them. Let us allow that every success of the Church has been the reward of persistent effort. Bishops, priests and faithful appear to be attending well to their business."

The fact is that the friends of the lay schools are thoroughly alarmed and even infuriated at the marked Catholic revival in France, both in connection with the schools and otherwise. Nor are the enemies of the Church altogether blind to the difficulty attending the task of completely laicizing French education. Thus a State teacher, M. Henri Ferry, writing in the Institutur Francais, realizes the danger of this game. "We cannot snatch the child from its family with impunity; even an animal becomes fierce when lay hands on its young. Let us take care! A breeze of rebellion is getting up in France, and people have sometimes risen in revolt for far less weighty causes than this." One Deputy, M. Chaillez, declares that "the clericals have never before shown so much daring." Another Deputy nervously calls attention to the increase of "free" schools from 341, in the year 1909, to 360, in 1911. The Federation of Friends (i. e., State teachers) is sending out a long and minute questionnaire to its representatives in dif-

ferent parts of France requiring all details as to "free" schools and their resources, the number of local religious societies, of Catholic organizations for Catholic propaganda, "Oeuvres post-scolaires"—for keeping together those who have left school, etc. Even the number of ladies teaching catechism has to be reported. From all these it is clear that at present there is a good deal of fluttering in the anti-clerical dovetails.—Philadelphia Standard and Times.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

There's many a true word spoken in jest. The jokesmith who wrote the following imaginary colloquy threw as great a flood of light on matrimonial relations in certain families as if he had written a book: "Before marriage I used to sit up until midnight wishing he would go home." "Yes?" "Yes, and since we are married I sit up until midnight wishing that he would come home."

PRESIDENT SUSPENDER NONE SO EASY

We imagine that many women who will read that joke will see no joke in it but a heart-breaking picture of a home deserted by the husband who is a "good fellow" in the club-house or the saloon.—S. H. Review.

DR. MURPHY ON SMOKING

Dr. J. B. Murphy, noted Chicago surgeon, when asked recently to testify as to smoking, said: "The best smoke is no smoke. I don't use the weed myself, and don't think I have missed much." "But you can testify as an expert?" he was asked. "Oh, yes, in my opinion, the chief danger is that the cigarette is so accessible to the young. Nicotine does not injure the mature, but to the immature it is

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God does not look at us merely in the mass and multitude. As we shall stand single and alone before His judgment seat, so do we stand, so have we always stood, single and alone before the eye of His boundless love.—Father Faber. 2890

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