

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

HOW TO BECOME A SAINT
 "And take unto you the helmet of salvation."
 (Eph. vi. 17)

Brethren: God is continually bringing home to our minds by visible signs His love and care for all His creatures, and especially for man. God is everywhere and in everything, by His power, by His essence, by His love. Everything about us, everything that happens to us by the providence of God, is a manifestation of His loving care, and all the events of life are intended as so many aids for our sanctification.

None of us would dare question the statement of St. Paul that we are all called to be saints, to holiness of life; but how few of us fancy it possible or realize how easy it is to attain sanctity! "To be a saint! God forgive me!" you say, "I never practically thought of such a thing as possible for one like me. I know, and so do my neighbors, that such a state, such high perfection is farthest from my thoughts. Saints! Why, those are people we read about, not every-day Christians who have a thousand daily cares to annoy and distract them."

Brethren, if you do not talk this way I know that in your innermost soul you often think these things. Sanctity is to your minds something away off; it is the top of the highest mountain, at whose base you stand; you look up, and say: No, I cannot reach the top; some few chosen souls may attempt it, but I must stand just where I am, satisfied to remain in the shadow of its great height.

Oh! what foolishness of heart, what want of confidence in God! Does He not most earnestly desire our sanctification? Does He not want us all to be saints? And if so, has He made the road to sanctity so difficult, so disheartening that most of us must give up the struggle through want of courage?

If the work of our salvation, brethren, seems so beset with obstacles apparently insurmountable, it is assuredly because we have no just idea of what holiness of life is. For be convinced of this, that sanctity simply consists in fidelity to the order of God in our daily lives, and this fidelity is possible and within the reach of all. And what is the order of God to which we are bound to be faithful? In the first place we are faithful to the duties imposed upon us by the commandments of God and His Church, as well as to those belonging to the particular state of life we have chosen. And again, we must willingly accept all that God sends us each moment of our lives.

Now, in this is there anything beyond our strength? To enable us to keep His commandments God gives us those seven great channels of grace and mercy—the Sacraments of the Church; and to fulfill the duties of our special calling He sends us attractions and aids to facilitate their practice. "All this have I done from my youth," you may say with the young man in the Gospel. "The commandments I succeeded in keeping fairly well, but my difficulty is to know how to fulfill the order of God in the duties of the present moment."

Brethren, the duties of the present moment is for you the sacrament of the present moment, the outward sign by means of which God bestows His grace upon you. Every care, every trial, sickness and health, poverty and wealth, sorrow and joy, all that comes upon you, are so many means by which the providence of God works towards your sanctification.

Our lives consist in a great number of unimportant actions. Yet it is through fidelity in performing these common-place actions that we are going to sanctify ourselves, accepting with love and patience what we too frequently endure with weariness and irritation. This great treasure, this constant and ever-present means of grace, this sacrament of the present moment, is yours, brethren, present everywhere and at all times and in making use of it lies a sure road to sanctity, your helmet of salvation.

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THE ROSARY

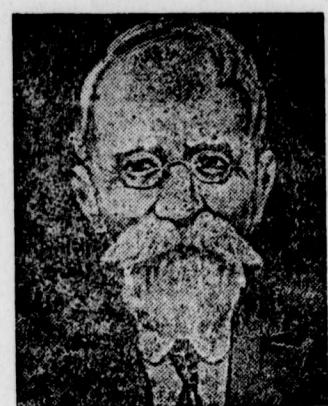
HISTORY OF THE ORIGIN AND SPREAD OF THIS BEAUTIFUL DEVOTION

In the beginning of the thirteenth century a fearful heresy ravaged the Church of God, and Catholic belief, once the ornament of France and Spain, was giving way before the bloody sword of the Albigensian fanatic. All that religious enthusiasm could suggest, all that Catholic loyalty could prompt was done to stem the torrent; but all was born down in the fearful flood of error, whose path through France and Spain and Northern Italy was marked by pillage, rapine and murder. In their pride these heretics would hearken to nothing. They cut down those who attempted to instruct them, and in vilest treachery murdered the legate of the Pope. Even the sword of the Crusader was powerless to stop their terrible advance, and their own stubborn steel cut out a path ever widening and more threatening.

With her faintest provinces ravaged, with her faintest provinces ravaged, this was a trying moment for the Church. But such crises, in which human institutions go down serve only to show the divine protection promised by Christ to his Church. Behold, at this very time Dominic de Guzman, a young and brilliant Spaniard, threw himself into the breach and with very eloquence, and all unmindful of threatened death, fought the advancing error. But nothing human could avail. He spoke to hearts of stone and to intellects still more impervious. All looked disheartening. One of commoner

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MR. GEO. W. BARKLEY

CHERTSEVILLE, ONT., JAN. 25th, 1912
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GEO. W. BARKLEY.
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day would despair, but Dominic brought him of a patron whose power of intercession was all-powerful, and called on Mary to help them in this dire hour of need.

Then was handed down from heaven that wonderful devotion whose efficacy and sweetness have since held the world astounded. The Mother of God appeared to Dominic, and handing him a rosary, told the saint to recite the Ave while meditating on the life, death and glory of her Son, thus uniting the devotion to Mother and Child. "Be of good courage, Dominic," she said, "the fruits of your labor will be abundant." The remedy for the evils you lament will be meditation on the life, death and glory of my Son, uniting thereto the recitation of the Angelic Salutation, by which the mystery of redemption was announced to the world. The earth will remain barren till watered by the heavenly dew—my rosary, I beseech this devotion by your preaching, as a practice most dear to my Son and to me—as a most powerful means of dissipating heresy, extinguishing vice propagating virtue, of exploring the divine mercy and of obtaining my protection. The faithful will obtain from it innumerable advantages, and will always find me ready to aid them in their wants. This is the precious gift which I leave to you and your children."

The saint preached the Rosary, and behold, the fierce invective of bitter controversy died away. The glitter of steel, the bloody fray were past. Where the rhythm of the rosary ascended like incense there came to dwell true Christian love, and error perished from the land. And the spread of the rosary was eagerly sought for, and soon it proved the truth of Mary's promise in the death-knell of the Albigensian heresy. The rosary, however, remained, and victories and favors of no less magnitude than the defeat of Albigensian error have ever marked its progress through the world, until to-day among all the devotions that voice the true Catholic love of Mary it stands easily preeminent both in popularity and effect.

THE PROPAGATOR OF CHRISTIANITY

In view of its history and achievements, one easily realizes why Pope Urban calls the rosary "the propagator of Christianity," and why Pope Clement VIII. declares it "the protection and security of the faithful," or why Julius III. holds it "a most illustrious ornament of the Catholic Church."

Rejoicing in a heavenly origin, composed by the great Mother of God herself, this devotion has spread wherever true Catholic faith is found. Its presence has been recognized by miracles the most astounding, but the countless souls whom in its secret, unfailing and marvelous efficacy it has saved from hell will be known only on the day of judgment. In the hands of the living, the rosary is an augury of final perseverance; and seen in the death chamber, it is a token of salvation. All religious orders recite it daily, and Popes have vied with one another in enriching it with lavish indulgences. Gregory XIII. calls it "the appeaser of the anger of God, the rainbow of peace uniting angered heaven with guilty earth." And elsewhere the same Pontiff calls it "a heavenly shield." Gregory XIV. calls it "the destroyer of sin," and Paul V. describes it as the "treasury of all graces." His own great Leo XIII. pronounces it "most holy," and to be its queen he deems a title worth joining to

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the august litany of titles which show forth the glories of Mary.

Now, wherein does the excellence of this devotion lie? And what is the secret of the wonderful favor it obtains among Catholics? Is all this to be found in its august institution, in the miracles that ever accompany it, or in the priceless indulgences that enrich it? The fact that this devotion was instituted by the great Mother of God and was preached by her special command would be sufficient to make it the favorite devotion of Catholics. And, again, the countless indulgences that enrich it would make all eager for its fervent practice. But while these things contribute to make the devotion popular, yet is there an inherent excellence in the devotion itself, which makes it most fitting for Catholics. There is its admirable simplicity. What more easy than to count the beads by Ave, and what more simple than to select a mystery and think about it while counting the beads? A devotion in which the simplest child can delight, and one whose possibilities for reflection and deep thought the greatest mind can leave unfathomed, it combines the humble earnestness of vocal prayer with the highest flights of divine meditation. In the words of Mary herself it comprises in one beautiful tribute the devotion to Mother and child, and in it is realized that constant wish of the saints that Jesus be approached through Mary. In proposing the mysteries of the life of Christ and of Mary it lays open the entire Gospel for our consideration. In the several mysteries of the rosary are recalled to all alike, the liberator or the peasant, the king or the priest, the priest or child, the wonderful tribute of God's love and mercy, the incarnation, the life and death of the Man-God—those tributes which constitute the well-springs of man's love and the incentive for man's devotion. And thus the mind can find food for deepest thought; or if wearied, can still find profit and relaxation in the simple and loving repetition of the two greatest prayers, the Pater and the Ave.

THE SYMBOL OF OUR LOVE

Whether from Mary herself in instituting it, or from Dominic in preaching it, or from the faithful in using it—whichever it takes its name, the word rosary is eminently fitting the devotion. Long before the prophet sang of Mary "as a rose planted beside brooklets have I fruited," and we, while admiring her perfect purity, while reverencing her unspeakable dignity, rejoice in that perfect charity, which embraces even us poor mortals, permitting us to call her mother and to feel towards her a deep and tender love, an earnest of which we offer in the chapel itself—a crown of roses and symbol of love.

The devotion of the rosary has been enriched by numerous indulgences, plenary and partial; and while the faithful in general, by the simple recitation of the rosary, may gain these indulgences, yet are there special favors attached to the organizations known as the Confraternities of the Rosary, the Living Rosary and the Perpetual Rosary. These societies, which widely obtain cannot be commended too highly, for to all the advantages predicated of the rosary devotion they unite that excellence which is obtained by union, and are a means of mutual edification and encouragement.

While from its institution the rosary has been popular, still in these latter years it enjoys a pre-eminence before unequalled "Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, pray for us!" is the daily call of millions; churches named in honor of the rosary have been erected everywhere; organizations whose object is the greater culture of the devotion exist in every parish. A feast exists, with Mass and office, and even a whole month (October) has been set apart wherein the rosary forms the public prayer of the Church, and in which devout rosarians assemble and daily offer to the Queen of Heaven a chapter whose acceptable fragrance is as of heavenly roses. Thus, during the month from

every parish and from every true Catholic household there ascends the incense of this wonderful and beautiful prayer, which rising heavenward, provokes a downpour of grace sweetening the trials and curing the evils of life.

The Church of God to-day is fighting a battle of far greater consequence than when it sought to stem the Albigensian heresy. To-day the great evils that are sapping all religious life are rationalism and indifference. So great have been the achievements of science that men forget its limits, and now refuse to believe whatsoever science can not demonstrate. The sublime mysteries of religion being above human comprehension, and therefore impossible of scientific demonstration, are rejected. Moreover, too much engrossed with mere worldly affairs, the pursuit of wealth and pleasure, and tainted with the spirit that is abroad as the result of the disintegration of Protestantism, men are becoming indifferent to all religion, and secretly ask, in their wavering faith, is not one religion as good as another? If ever the Church of God stood in need of a heavenly protector, she does to-day, in order to combat these two evils of rationalism and indifference.

This devotion, therefore, is for the safety of the Catholic Church, for the honor of Mary, for the sanctification of individuals. Can any Catholic, then, afford to be a stranger to it, and will not the love of Mary which burns in every Catholic heart rise to a greater flame at this opportunity and manifest itself in an earnest practice of this mighty and lovable devotion?

Confidence in God is a virtue that many of us need. Our souls are afflicted as the future as if God could repudiate His promises. We need to ponder the words of St. Paul: "I know Whom I have believed, and I am certain that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day, being a just Judge."

CURED OF DRINK BY SIMPLE REMEDY

A Devoted Wife Helps Her Husband to Cure Through Samaria Prescription

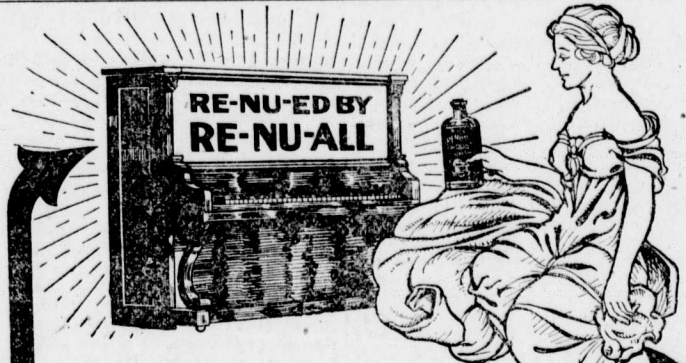
Mrs. S., of Trenton was in despair. A loving father and a careful mother, her husband had gradually fallen into drinking habits, which were ruining his home, health and happiness. Drink had inflamed his stomach and nerves and created that unnatural craving that kills conscience, love, honor and breaks all family ties.

But read her letter: "I feel it my duty to say a few words about your Tablets. As you are aware, I sent and got a bottle, thinking I would try them in secret. My husband had only taken them a week when he told me he was going to Port Arthur for the summer, so I had to tell him all about the Tablets. He said he would take them just the same, so I sent and got the second bottle for fear one would not be enough. He writes me saying that he has taken the contents of both bottles, and he feels splendid, does not care for drink. In fact, he has not taken any liquor from the first my giving him a bottle. I feel I cannot say too much in favor of your wonderful Remedy."

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A recent convert from Protestantism, says the "Messenger of the Sacred Heart," one, too, who had to do brave, hard things to purchase the faith, and who did them observed of his school days: "I was brought up on rigid, hopeless Calvinism. Gradually, from the atmosphere of my school life, there penetrated deeply into me the idea of unalterable predestination one way or the other. Heaven or hell had been fixed for me, and I was helpless to change or better it. And I've never been able fully to get that thing out of my system since. In the chapel and in the day's work for God, I've got to fight against it even now." A statement like this brings straight home to us the Church's anxiety about the education of her tender ones. Unquestionably the school is a mighty engine in shaping souls for God or against Him. It not only forms or deforms the young mind and heart, but in coloring his attitude of mind, it fixes his way of thinking, and consequently of acting for the rest of his days. It does this largely by what it positively teaches or leaves untaught; but it does so principally by the mental and moral atmosphere it gives the boy or girl to live and be formed in.

Another exchange quotes Dr. Windle, F. R. S., a university president, as saying that: "Born and brought up a Protestant, I was educated at a great public school, for which I still retain considerable respect, and even affection; but I wish to say, with a due sense of responsibility, that the Catholic parent who sends his son to a non-Catholic public school deliberately and without the shadow of justification exposes him to the almost certain loss of his faith and to the grave danger of the corruption of his morals."

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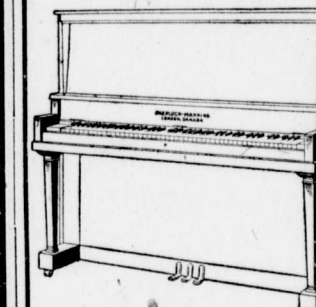
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