

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

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

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

OUR GOOD EXAMPLE

"That they may, by the good works which they shall behold in you, glorify God." (I Pet. ii, 12).

Last Sunday we studied the example that our blessed Lord left us, and the obligation we are under to follow His steps. Today St. Peter reminds us that we ourselves are bound to give such good example by our lives that others may, "by the good works which they shall behold in you, glorify God."

To remember that we are obliged to give a good example is first of all a good thing for ourselves. The remembrance steadies us, rebukes our easy-going lives, and nerves us to do our best. We belong to Christ, and we must be loyal subjects of our King. We have received the grace of God in vain, unless our lives show by our uprightness, and by our piety, that we are His. We must be on our guard not to imitate the Pharisee, and make a parade of religion; there must be no ostentation of piety, lest vainglory should spoil our works. A downright earnest life cannot help but influence our neighbours, for they cannot avoid noticing us. Let them see something good in our lives—our regularity in attending Holy Mass, our uprightness, our sociability, our neighbourly kindness. As St. Paul says to Timothy, "Be thou an example to the faithful, in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in chastity" (I Tim. iv, 12).

Example is more powerful than words. We may never know the good we have done, but God does. And how that good example is blessed in this world and in the next! England owes its first martyr, St. Alban, to good example. He was a pagan, an honest, kindly man. A fugitive priest, in the days of persecution, sought refuge at his house. Alban received him as a poor stranger. By degrees it dawned on Alban that his unknown guest was of a different stamp from those he had met before, and he found that he spent long hours at night in prayer—and he wondered. Good example was working its blessed effects on that pagan heart. He was attracted to him, and asked the priest to explain his life and religion, and in a short time he was baptized, and joyfully thanked the good God Whom he had now learned to know. The fugitive was at last traced to Alban's house. The new convert, wishing to save the priest's more useful life, effected his escape, and then, robed in the priest's cloak, Alban gave himself up as the one searched for. Angry at this being cheated, the judge condemned him to be beheaded. And he exulted at his good fortune to be allowed to die for Christ. But good example did not even stop here. On the way to the place of his martyrdom, the executioner was so amazed and touched at Alban's piety and cheerfully forgiving his enemies, that he refused to do his work. He declared he would die with Alban for the same good God; and there, outside the city that bears the martyr's name to this day, they both were beheaded, the executioner being thus baptized in his own blood.

We Catholics, so few amongst so many in this land of ours, are especially watched on that account. No other Church demands such strict adherence to its laws as ours. Our attendance at church, our reverence whilst there, are noted by observant souls, who perhaps are not content with their own place of worship and the laxity of their co-religionists. Years ago a Catholic farmer, who lived opposite a Protestant vicarage, gave good example, unknown to himself, by attending Sunday's Mass. In all weathers he never missed driving his wife and three boys the five miles to their church. Many years after, one of those boys, now himself a priest, called on Cardinal Newman to pay his respects to that venerable and holy man. In conversation he mentioned the home of his boyhood, and humbly said, "Of course, your Eminence does not remember us; we lived opposite your vicarage." "Remember you? I have never forgotten your family. Of a Sunday morning, especially if it was wet, I used to watch from my study window to see if your good father would venture on his five miles' drive to Mass. But whatever the weather, yes, for certain, your mother would mount, you boys packed at the back, and your father drive you off. What a Catholic he was! That good example knocked at my heart, and I owned to myself that there was something grand in that religion."

May we not, or should we not, be doing good to someone in this way? If we are strict in our religious duties, we are helping on the Kingdom of God. And let us have the good intention, that all we may do may thus do good to others.

But if we all can and are bound to give good example, there is one class more bound than others—one class that every day, almost every hour, cannot help but give good or bad example. Fathers and mothers! Children learn by imitating; they cannot help it. They may do what they are told just at the time, but their habits will be formed by what they see their fathers and mothers do. What harm a careless parent can cause; what utter ruin a bad one! Whereas, on the other hand

how our holy religion has been handed down through hard days, days of persecution, of bigotry, of ridicule, of poverty, of hardship, with churches few and far apart—and who have been the chief apostles and workers of this? Good fathers and mothers! From the time they taught their little ones at their knees to hush the holy names "Jesus and Mary," and learn their short and simple prayers—from that time on, through good example, have they kept them faithful and valiant soldiers of the Catholic Church. And thus, from generation to generation, their faith the sacred inheritance of the family, has been cherished. What a glorious vision from heaven rejoices our forefathers in beholding their children's children following in their footsteps, faithful to their holy religion. They are already enjoying the eternal reward of their good example, and may we, too, persevere in such a life, that others "may, by the good works they shall behold in us, glorify God."

DELEGATE VISITS CHAPEL CAR

Washington, D. C., March 26.—America's most distinctive contribution to modern missionary enterprise was given its first introduction to the Most Rev. Pietro Fumasoni-Biondi, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, last week in the nation's capital, when the Delegate inspected the chapel car "St. Paul," which is now touring the east and south.

The Delegate expressed his surprise and gratification at the American missionary spirit which had prompted the work of the chapel cars, three of which are now operating in the United States. After inspecting every section of the car minutely, His Grace inquired of the Rev. Eugene J. McGuinness, vice-president of the Catholic Church Extension Society, who is in charge of the car, concerning the experience of the missionaries in remote parts of the country.

He seemed especially interested in the manifestations of bigotry that were reported by Father McGuinness, who told of occasions when, in certain parts of Oregon, the missionaries were not desired and the people refused to sell him food. These manifestations, Father McGuinness said, were rare, and after several days he was invariably able to gain the confidence of the people. More recently in Norristown, Pa., Father McGuinness was warned that the Ku Klux Klan, which had planted a flaming torch the night before, might be expected to molest him and burn the car, but he gave these warnings no serious attention.

The value of the chapel car, Father McGuinness explained to the Delegate, was as much in leveling the spirit of bigotry as it was in bringing the Mass and the Sacraments to thousands of Catholics scattered in remote sections of the country in which there was no church or priest. The number of conversions that had resulted from an interest in the Catholic Church inspired as a result of a visit to the chapel car was also remarked by Father McGuinness, who traced in eastern cities since last August no less than fifty conversions among visitors to the car. Many of these converts frankly declared that they were impressed most strongly with the maternal solicitude of the Church for the welfare of her children as indicated by chapel car work.

Two converts in Rochester said that they sought the Catholic Church because their own ministers were frank to acknowledge that they did not believe in the Divinity of Christ.

Monsignor Fumasoni-Biondi expressed great surprise when he was told that there are only eight thousand Catholics in North Carolina and ten thousand in South Carolina. He commented on the disadvantage that Catholics in such sections of the country have been laboring under for years and said that especially for these people the chapel car was able to do a splendid and much needed work.

LED CHILDREN IN PRAYER

During his inspection of the chapel car, there was one action of the Apostolic Delegate that was more significant of his character than any number of interviews. The presence of the chapel car in Washington had been called to the attention of the parochial school children and hundreds of them flocked there each day to visit it. There was a throng of twelve or fourteen little ones about the car when the Apostolic Delegate was driven up, accompanied by Monsignor Luigi Cossio, auditor of the Apostolic Delegation, Monsignor Paolo Marella, secretary to the Delegate, and Father McGuinness.

A corps of newspaper photographers hustled about eager to snap the Delegate in the chapel car, but before he would consent to being photographed he gathered the children about him, and kneeling down, led them in saying the Our Father, the Hail Mary and three invocations to the Sacred Heart.

When the inspection was finished and the photographers appealed to the Delegate to stand for another picture at the rear of the car, he again gathered the little ones about him and insisted that they pose with him.

PRIEST LECTURES IN MORMON TEMPLE

The unusual experience of preaching in a Mormon temple, with a Mormon choir singing Catholic hymns, befell a chapel car missionary traveling through Utah.

Father Doyle, who was in charge of the chapel car, reached a town that was practically 100% Mormon, and it looked as though his time there might be wasted. Nothing daunted, he hunted up the Mormon Bishop, and suggested giving a lecture on the Catholic Church in the Town Hall. The bishop thought the idea a good one, but said there was no hall large enough. "If you wish, however," he added, "I could let you have our Temple." Father Doyle accepted, and the word was sent about that a Catholic priest would lecture the next evening on the doctrines of his church in the Mormon Temple.

Back to Father Doyle came the bishop with a new suggestion. "You ought to have singing, sir. If you will give me one of our hymn-books, our choir will be ready to sing your own hymns for you." He got the hymn-books.

Next evening the bishop was on hand at the Temple. This time he was worrying about a presiding officer for the lecture—and volunteered for the job. So Father Doyle lectured on the Catholic Church to a Mormon audience in a Mormon temple, presided over by the Mormon Bishop, sustained by a Mormon choir singing Catholic hymns. When the lecture was over the bishop thanked Father Doyle in the name of the Mormon community; and the chapel car went on followed by the regrets of all, including the bishop.

The story is told by Msgr. Francis C. Kelly in "The Story of Extension," the recently published history of The Catholic Church Extension Society.

ST. FRANCIS' BODY EXPOSED

MISSIONARY ON WORLD TOUR REPORTS MIRACLES

By Rev. Michael Mathis, C. S. C.

Dacca, Feb. 12.—The cathedral at Goa, the episcopal palace with the adjoining Church of St. Francis of Assisi, the Church of Bom Jesus, the Convent and Church of St. Cajeta and the Convent of St. Monica, are immense structures, and the churches are beautifully decorated in gold and paintings. But the religious orders that built and once inhabited these convents have been long since expelled from Old Goa and the commercial prosperity of this ancient city has followed in the wake of the religious. Except for the time of exposition and an occasional feast-place, Goa is a desert place. For most of the year the silence of the vaults of the great cathedral is broken only by a few canons who linger behind to sing the divine praises on the ancient site, once the grandest Catholic center in the Orient.

The Church of Bom Jesus, once the chapel of the Jesuit community in Goa, is distinguished by the fact that it contains the beautiful marble of St. Francis Xavier. During the exposition, however, the gold and silken coffin is removed from the tomb and placed in a golden catafalque. In the catafalque itself there are large apertures for glass windows through which one can see easily the incorrupt body of the Saint. The lower end of the catafalque was opened every morning at 7 and closed at sundown. It is here that the pilgrims come to kiss and touch their religious articles to the body of St. Francis Xavier.

As priests were allowed to enter the sanctuary at any time during the exposition, I went as often as the Catholic All India Conference, which I was attending, permitted. My first visit was just before sundown on the day of my arrival in Goa. I went with a keen native priest from Mangalore. As priests we had little difficulty in making our way through the waiting thousands and through the soldiers who were keeping order with drawn bayonets.

KISSING THE SAINT'S FEET

Fortunately, I had been warned by the Bishop of Bangalore not to expect to see the bluish of youth on the holy body of St. Francis. But in the dim light of the fading afternoon the body resembled the livid appearance of one recently deceased, with the exception that it was much darker and more drawn than is usually the case with the dead. In fact, the bones of the head stood out so prominently that at the first hurried glance the face resembled that of a skull. The thrill of kissing the feet of the greatest missionary since apostolic times, one who blazed the trail of Christianity in the Orient, and one who was even now enjoying the heavenly bliss of the saints, and the necessity of concentrating all my requests into the brief moments allowed for the veneration of the saint, so distracted me that I hardly remember the state of preservation of those feet.

The next morning, however, while, saying Mass at the catafalque, I had a much better view of the body. Throughout the Mass I was within two feet of it, and was amazed to recognize the aquiline nose and the features so commonly seen in the paintings of the Saint. The holy presence of the great missionary's body, my remembrance of the mission needs of America and of the

Bengal Mission, in particular, and the earnest prayers of the worshipping thousands of Indians around the catafalque, marked this Mass as most soul-stirring.

SEVERAL MIRACLES REPORTED

The incorrupt body of the Saint and the daily miracles about the catafalque created an atmosphere of the supernatural. It is practically impossible to ascertain the number of miracles wrought at this exposition of the Saint's body, because the crowds were so huge, each pilgrim was left to shift for himself and Indian piety prefers to keep such heavenly favors a profound secret. Mr. Pais, the secretary of the Catholic All-India Conference, told me, however, that he witnessed the deposition of two cures of blindness before the Goa medical station, as well as one cure for lameness. The latter miracle received much publicity because the favor was granted to the brother of a well known Bombay physician, Dr. Jacob D'Souza, second resident medical officer of the Bai Motilal Petit Hospital. The cured man gave this account of the miracle:

"I was injured in a railway accident at Poona last April 11. As a result my right thigh bone was fractured in three places and my left leg was amputated. Since the accident I had never knelt down or walked without crutches. Having had occasion to visit the shrine of Saint Francis Xavier and after kissing the body, I heard low Mass on my knees. The miraculous act was that my faith made me full and strong. After kissing the holy feet I felt very strong on my stiff right side. Today I can walk without the aid of crutches, with my artificial leg, thanks to the Almighty, the Holy Father, and St. Francis Xavier."

SCHOLARSHIPS

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UNDER MASONIC INFLUENCE

Washington, D. C., March 26.—Evidence of the attempts of Free Masonry to bring under its influence the young boyhood of America is furnished by the rapid spread of the Order of De Molay under the influence of Scottish Rite bodies, in practically every city in the land.

Since it became a national organization in 1921, this organization has increased from 2,000 to more than 200,000 members in seven hundred chapters. Recently at an initiation in Philadelphia more than one thousand lads were enrolled in a single night.

STARTED IN KANSAS CITY

The Order of De Molay takes its name from Jacques de Molay, who, according to Masonic literature was "the last Military Grand Master of the Order of Knights Templar, who went to the stake rather than become a heretic to his Masonic obligations." Inasmuch as Masonry did not exist before the thirteenth century, whereas De Molay's death occurred in the fourteenth century, the accuracy of this statement can be questioned. An attempt is made to blame the death of De Molay on the Catholic Church and it may thus be surmised that the intention of the organizers of the movement is partly to create a young America that will be hostile to the Church.

Sons of Masons and their boy chums are eligible for membership in the Order. The second of the two degrees illustrates the martyrdom of De Molay. The initiation ceremonies are generally held in Masonic lodges.

The Order is international in character and the ritual, originally intended only for American boys has been revised to make it international in scope in response to invitations to establish chapters in the British Isles. Organizations have been formed in every State of the Union, in Canada and even in China, where the sons of English and American residents have been enrolled.

The organization grew out of a boys' club organized in Kansas City in 1919 with nine members. Within two years, under the influence of the Scottish Rite members of that city, it had enrolled 3,000 members and was made national in scope. Already many of the chapters have erected substantial buildings in which to carry on their activities. Plans for a \$150,000 structure for Columbia, Mo., were recently announced.

RAPIDITY OF ITS SPREAD

An indication of the rapid spread of the organization is given by the growth in different parts of the United States. The first chapter for southern California was started in Ventura two years ago and at the beginning of the present year it was announced that 3,000 members were enrolled in eighteen cities of

California. In Michigan the growth has been unusually rapid and powerful branches have been formed in Ohio. On March 18, the occasion of the day set aside, according to the "Ohio State Journal," for devotions in memory of Jacques de Molay, two hundred members of the Order gathered at Columbus in the First Baptist Church to hear a sermon by the Rev. Daniel F. Rittenhouse. The day was observed generally throughout the country by the different chapters.

De Molay Chapters are organized into State bodies, similar to Masonic clubs. Each chapter must be sponsored and under the direct supervision of one of the Masonic bodies, and, although according to Masonic organs, "De Molay is in no way a part of Masonry," the principles of Masonry have been embodied in the principles of De Molay.

In addition to the large initiation in Philadelphia, one Masonic organ recently recorded organization activities in seven other States.

RELIGION IN SCHOOLS

MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS TO REAL EDUCATION

The necessity of religious education was forcibly stressed by Dr. Matt, the Minister of Public Worship and Education of Bavaria, in an effective address recently made before the Bavarian diet, in which he declared the intention of the Government to renew the concordat with the Holy See.

"It is incumbent," said Dr. Matt, "that we direct our full attention not only to the teaching of the young, but also to their real education. The most effective means to achieve this is found in the religious training of the young people. This religious foundation of public education is demanded by the historical development of the German people and by the conviction of the majority of the citizens. "Christian principles of life are also fundamentally important for the development of the social life of the adult. With all due regard for those who are of other convictions, I am firmly convinced that our political life must forever profess to be Christian. For these reasons, the State should always be on friendly terms with Christian churches and will thereby avail itself of the reconstructive powers inherent in these important factors in the development of civilization. "Conformable to these considerations, it is the intention to renew the concordat with the Holy See on a basis corresponding to present provisions of constitutional law."

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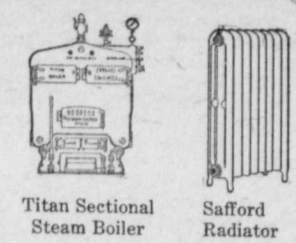
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