

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

By Rev. M. BOSSAERT

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

JESUS OUR SALVATION

"Rejoice... The Lord is nigh." These are the words which today's epistle begins. We may apply them to the glorious event that we shall shortly celebrate, the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ at Christmas. We have all cause indeed for rejoicing at our Lord's coming, for Jesus is our salvation. He taught us this consoling truth Himself when He said: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

1. Jesus is the Way. Through the sin of Adam and Eve in Paradise all mankind had gone astray from the right path, the road leading to heaven, and had turned away from God. The saddest result of the fall was perhaps that they could not return to the right path, because it was closed against them. At last the Son of God, Jesus Christ, appeared on earth and, by dying for us upon the Cross, He removed the obstacles and reopened the path. As the Redeemer of the world He "broke down the middle wall of partition," as St. Paul says, the wall that closed the entrance to heaven, and thus gave us access to the Father. Therefore our Divine Saviour cleared the way for us, and leads us along it by His example and His grace.

By His example He shows us the right way, and by His grace He helps us to follow it, without stumbling or straying. In the Gospels He often calls upon us to follow Him and to tread the path that He trod. And what is this path? You all know what it is. It is the way of humility, meekness, patience, chastity, self-denial and holy charity. This is the way that our Saviour Himself walked on earth, and we must follow it too, if we wish to attain to everlasting happiness. But because it is so steep and narrow and bestrewn with thorns that in our weakness we should be apt to sink down exhausted, our Lord in His mercy holds out His hands to us, and helps us continually with His grace, until at length we reach our goal and enter the everlasting home of our predestination.

2. Jesus is the Truth. The first sin brought falsehood into the world, and this evil laid the basis of all the evil that followed. Hence in Holy Scriptures we read much about error and blindness, deception and falsehood. But when our Saviour came, He proclaimed the truth, pure and unadorned with error. For three years He went to and fro in Judaea and Galilee, preaching His holy Gospel. The laborer left his plough, the shepherd his flock, and the artisan his trade; from all directions men gathered round Him, listening eagerly to every word that proceeded from His Divine Lips, and saying, "Never did man speak like this Man."

Thus Jesus made known the truth, and He preserves us in the same truth, because He established in His Church an infallible teaching office, and conferred upon this office the continual help of the Holy Ghost, so that neither the folly nor the malice of men can falsify or distort the Gospel that it teaches. Our Saviour's words: "He that heareth my words, and doeth them, shall not come into judgment, because he hath already passed from death unto life," are true not only of the Apostles, but of their successors in the teaching office of the Church. Therefore through the teaching office of the Church we too are preserved in the truth.

3. Jesus is the Life. By sin death obtained dominion over the world, death both of the body and of the soul. "By one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death," as St. Paul tells us. The death of the body was hard and painful, but far worse was the death of the soul, which robbed a man of sanctifying grace, and of God's love and friendship, excluding him from heaven and assigning him to hell.

Then Jesus Christ came down and by dying on the Cross restored life to the world. There on the Cross He roused mankind from the sleep of death, and infused into them the life of grace. On the last day He will say to those who have followed Him faithfully: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess ye the Kingdom prepared for you," and they will enter upon everlasting life, where there is joy, but no suffering, life, but no death; and happiness, but no sorrow.

We see, therefore, that our salvation is in Jesus; He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. He has opened to us the way to Heaven and guides us along it. He has revealed to us the truth, and preserved us in it. He has brought us life, and will summon us some day to live with Him forever. What more could He possibly have done for us? No one else can do for us what He has done. Therefore it is a most sacred duty to cling to Him and serve Him with unflinching loyalty all the days of our life. May we make it our delight to fulfill this duty to the end. Amen.

WORLD CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC LAITY

PROJECT OF FORMING A CATHOLIC WORLD LEAGUE ENDORSED BY VATICAN AUTHORITIES

A conference of representative Catholic laymen from various countries for the purpose of forming a Catholic World League will be held in Paris in November. The proposal to form a league of this kind has been discussed in Europe for several months, and while the plans are only tentative, it is believed that it will

be possible formally to establish the league at the Paris Conference.

The promoters of the plan point out a society which should be able to concentrate the weight of world-wide Catholic opinion at any point at any moment on the defence of Church interests, should be as feasible as it is desirable, for the reason that it will concern itself with no other interests, however important, political or national. To bring such a league into being is, of course, an immense task.

The Holy Father recently gave his approval to the proposal, and Cardinal Gibbons and Cardinal Bourne have assured the promoters of their cooperation. The American and Great Britain will participate through the Confederation of England and Wales.—The Tablet.

NEW IDEALS

A FLOWERING OF CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES

The opportunity for doing good offered to the Catholic layman was never so great as it is today. The country is engaged in a tremendous task. To paraphrase the words of Abraham Lincoln, that task is none other than to see that this world has a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth.

The world cannot be freed by formulas, however idealistic they may be. The old formulas sound hollow, the old principles of expediency, of selfishness, of commercial greed, have proved inadequate. They have passed through the furnace of war, and are soon to emerge, we hope, clarified, purified and spiritualized. While they are in the mid state, we must bend every endeavor to see that they harden into fixed principles of justice.

The world is waiting the result of the trial through which we are now passing. It is seeking a sound ideal. The false ideals of class, of riches, of industrial life, of social distinctions, of international relations have been found wanting. Where will the world find the ideal that will save it from the wreck? Not in its discredited principles, but in the eternal truths enshrined in the Gospel and insisted upon, again and again, by the Church during the late war and during the present period of reconstruction.

To bring these principles to the masses, the Church must rely on human agencies. Through her leaders, her bishops and priests, she can communicate her teachings to the members of her flock. But others must take these teachings to the public forums, to the shops and to the markets of trade. The Catholic laity are in daily contact with the people. They are experiencing their trials, meeting their objections, and helping them to find a solution of their problems.

Catholic laymen should be alive to the opportunity that is theirs. How many are trying to perfect themselves in the social teachings of the Church? How many read a good Catholic journal? How many are studying the great pronouncements that her bishops are sending forth from the National Catholic War Council?

How many ever read the great Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII. on the Condition of the Working Classes? The basis upon which the solution of the present industrial crisis will ultimately be solved lies in the principles enunciated by Pope Leo, and by his successors, Pope Pius X. of happy memory, and Pope Benedict XV. now gloriously reigning. It behooves Catholic laymen, therefore, to familiarize themselves with these immortal pronouncements.

Catholics in public life can do inestimable service for the cause of freedom and justice. Every Catholic layman should consider himself an apostle to spread the saving truths of Christ to a groping world. In times of stress, the educated laity have made important contributions to the thought of the world, and have saved civilization from moral and spiritual ruin.—The Pilot.

TO COUNTERACT INFLUENCE OF RED SOCIALISM IN SPAIN

GROUP OF EMINENT MEN, LAY AND CLERIC, UNITE C. P. A. Service

London, October 2.—In Spain they are taking up that work of Christian Socialism, which is spreading so much now in all countries as a counteracting influence to the Red Socialism. Hitherto "El Grup de la Democracia Cristiana" has been a brilliant headquarters staff without troops, but they now propose to start a general campaign for Catholic social claims as against the Socialists, who have already captured the Official Institute of Social Reform. Catholics propose to fight both Socialism and Conservatism, and they have at their head Cardinal Guisasaola, Archbishop of Toledo, to whom the Pope has confided the direction of the Catholic social movement in Spain. The new group is now definitely constituted, thanks largely to the efforts of Professor S. Azaur, who holds the chair of sociology at the University of Madrid.

The group contains many illustrious names of ecclesiastics, university men, religious and professional and commercial leaders. It is not political, but covers Carlists, Mellists and others, who are opposed politically. It is a national circle of study

and a centre of culture, which will manifest itself in social works, including doctrinal conferences, meetings of propaganda, the publication of books, brochures, and the promulgation of projects of law inspired by Catholic principles.

An interesting programme of the group's activities has been prepared by its director, who says in a preface: "Borrow the doctrine of the French Catholics, and realize in the manner of the Belgian Catholics." This new force in Spain is one to be reckoned with.

THE WORLD'S DEBT TO THE PAPACY

THE ONLY MORAL FORCE THAT CAN UNITE WORLD, SAYS BRITISH PRIEST

Nottingham.—In his address before the conference of the Catholic Truth Society at Nottingham, Monsignor Grosch, speaking on the world's debt to the Papacy, said:

"We have heard something in these days of a league of nations which is to bind all the peoples of the world into one and to make future wars impossible. We agree that this is the only way of safety for the world. We honor the men who have spent so many months in an endeavor to formulate the principles which shall govern it.

"So far their labors do not seem to have materialized appreciably. They may do so presently, and we may hear of a complete agreement upon international conduct, but failure must await on any scheme which leaves out the only power in the world which has ever produced a league of nations—the only power which possesses the sanction which can dominate men's consciences and discipline their hearts.

"The Papacy is the only power which has succeeded in forming a league of nations, and without the Papacy no league of nations will ever be effective. A league of nations with the Pope is an omelette without eggs—not very real and not very sustaining.

"Shut the Pope out of the councils of the nations and you shut out the only moral force which ever has or ever can unite the people of the world. The Pope was excluded from the Hague convention, and the Hague convention has proved a disastrous failure. The Papacy is an expert in forming a league of nations. It has done it before; let it try again. A Clemenceau, a Wilson, even a Lloyd George might learn something from the Papacy.

"This land of England owes all that is best and noblest in her to the influence of a thousand years of Roman ecclesiastical government. No one who wishes to know need remain ignorant of England's debt to the Papacy.

"And now one final word. The Papacy stands before the world today a vigorous survivor amidst almost universal ruin. The spirit of social disorder and hostility to all lawfully constituted authority threaten nations and society. The Papacy remains as a principle of order, the immovable rock of right and freedom and of justice.

"Let the statesmen of the world and the peoples of the nations acknowledge its power and seek its guidance as the heaven-sent teacher

and custodian of the moral law, and the material and social problems which confront the world will solve themselves."

ROOSEVELT TOLD GOETHALS TO IMITATE JESUITS

Panama.—The newspaper Estrella de Panama recently published the following reminiscence of the late Colonel Roosevelt: "The last words of Roosevelt when saying good-bye to Goethals, who was leaving Washington to take charge as engineer in chief of the works of the Panama canal, were the following: 'Colonel, there, at the junction of two continents, there is a hydra (water-serpent) with seven heads which is swatting a new Hercules, and you have to perform greater works than that god of mythology; but precisely at the capital, Panama, there are a great university and a convent which belong to the Jesuits, 'those most perfect organizers next to God,' as Napoleon said. Now, when you happen to be most disheartened on account of the disorganization and the rivalries among your subordinates, go and call on one of those two institutions and imitate their system."

FRENCH CLERGY

3,000 PRIESTS LOST LIVES IN BATTLE—BOTH SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS

In a carefully written volume, entitled "The Church of France During the World War," we read the following eloquent figures: "There were no less than 3,000 secular priests killed at the front, and many more were grievously wounded, infirm and crippled.

"Of those killed at the front from among religious, there were Eduards 25, Dominicans 29, Foreign Mission



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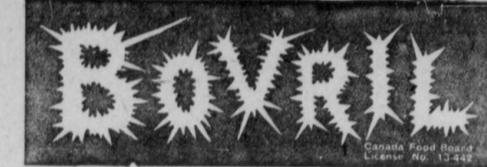
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