

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

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

ALL SAINTS

ETERNAL REWARD

"Do glad to separate from you, reward is very great in heaven." (Matt. 2, 12)

All Saints is a great and consoling festival for each of us, who believe what he learned in the Catechism as a child: "God made me to know Him, love Him, and serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him for ever in the next." Yes it is the vision of the next world, blessed and glorious, that lifts up our souls today. We behold the multitude of those blessed spirits who in life knew, loved, and served God, and are now happy with Him for ever in their Father's home. It is not merely the festival of the great saints of God, whose names and lives we know and venerate, but of every man, woman, and child whose piety and fidelity have been rewarded with the crown of life. In humble hope and yet with loving confidence we too may count upon that reward, for God is faithful, if we now in life strive strenuously to know, love, and serve Him.

The example of the saints should encourage us, in spite of our past sins and negligences and weakness and cowardice. What they did by the grace of God we too may accomplish with the help of that same grace, which will never be wanting to us if we pray for it. True, the heroism of the martyrs, hermits, apostolic men may daunt us, but we must remember that it was by the power of God's grace they became the great saints whom we venerate. It was not the great actions and events of their lives that made them saints, but because they were so holy that they became famous.

The foundations of their holiness we read of in the gospel today. "Blessed are the poor," said our Lord, not only despising what the world could offer them, but the poor in spirit—that is, cultivating humility and the fear of God. "Blessed are the meek," those who forgive and bear no resentment. "Blessed are those that mourn," mindful of their sins and wasted opportunities. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after justice," putting God first in all things in their daily lives. "Blessed are the merciful," for God takes as done to Himself all kindnesses done even to the least of our brethren. "Blessed are the clean of heart," for those who refrain from all taint of evil and act with a pure intention are rewarded, "for they shall see God." "Blessed are the peacemakers," thus imitating our Lord Himself. "Blessed are they who suffer persecution," and our Saviour warned His followers that this would be their portion, for the world hates those who are not of the world, for theirs is the Kingdom of God. These things are the foundations of the holiness of the saints. And the more faithful in their observance, and in cultivating their spirit, the more holy they became in life, and the more blessed now, "for great is their reward in heaven."

It is on such a day as this that we realize the transforming power of God's grace. What the world makes no account of, what it might sneer at and despise, if done with a pure intention and for the love of God, is precious in His sight. Obedience, forgiveness, kindness, humility—little thought of, yet, perhaps ridiculed in this world, are the secret springs of holiness, that have raised up countless thousands to become the saints of God.

Though now secure and blessed and glorious in heaven, the saints are deeply interested in our welfare and endeavors to serve God. Their Lord and Master loves us, died for us, is offered on our altars for us, as He loved and died for them. He nourishes us, as He did them, in His tender mercy, with His own sacred Body and Blood. For His sake, then, for His glory, they are willing, yea, anxious, to help to save us by their example and their prayers. We see why they are interested in us—because we are the redeemed of Christ. Our worth is what we are: and we are Christ, and He ransomed us at a great price. And though we may have defiled our souls with many sins and much neglect, nevertheless we are worth the precious Blood of our Redeemer, for that has been given for us. For God has so loved the souls of men! And the saints are most anxious that we should remember this, and with all earnestness should cast off by repentance all that defiles the soul that the Almighty values so. Let us ask the saints to make us think of this, and be brave enough to attempt anything to make ourselves fit for heaven. It is all included in one word for us, by our great own English saint, the Venerable Bede. He says: "Give thyself and thou shalt have that—that is, the Kingdom of heaven. 'Give thyself!' That should be the thought to make us break with sin, to cast aside anything that is not leading us to God. And then with all our soul, give ourselves in faith and hope and love to God's good service. In His mercy, He accepts of us—His all our powers, thoughts, words, and deeds, our whole self offered to Him; and in return He gives us Himself, the light, glory, and joy of heaven: "Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is exceeding great in heaven."

One example is worth a thousand arguments.—Gladstone.

GENERAL INTENTION FOR NOVEMBER

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS POPE PIUS XI.

THE CONVERSION OF THE MOHAMMEDANS

The Mohammedan world comprises over two hundred and twenty million souls who are spread over the deserts and along the sea-coasts of Asia and Africa, from Mongolia to the Sahara and from the Philippines to the Balkans. These vast populations are made up of Arabs, Persians, Turks, Malays and Berbers, and they are continually annexing minorities drawn from the Hindu, Negro, Abyssinian and Chinese races.

The religion they profess is based on the Koran, which, according to the Catholic Encyclopedia, is a heterogeneous mixture of "dogma, legend, history, fiction, religion and superstition, social and family laws, prayers, threats, literature, fanciful descriptions of heaven and hell, the Judgment day and the Resurrection." It is to this amalgam of fact and fancy, this half-political half-religious code, devoid of force and originality, that more than a couple of hundred millions of human souls have for thirteen hundred years been pinning their faith and their hope of the hereafter. Notwithstanding occasional heresies, they form a real international community, observing the same laws and keeping the same customs, the chief of which, besides their veneration of the Koran as the Word of God, are their five daily prayers, their pilgrimage to Mecca, their tithing, and their yearly fast of Ramadan.

In past centuries, the Mohammedans played an important role in the world, at one time threatening the existence of Christianity in Europe. While the struggle lasted, it was one of life and death, but it ended with the defeat of Islam, meanwhile giving the Church of God new religious Orders, augmenting the number of her martyrs, and adding a few choice flowers to her liturgy.

Legend has it that the followers of Mahomet are impervious to Christianity, but history denies this. Between the eleventh and the seventeenth century, Spain, Sicily, Malta, Crete, Bulgaria, and Syria had colonies of Christianized Moslems and gloried in canonized saints of Moslem blood, such as St. Anthony of Padua, St. Casilda of Toledo, St. Bernard of Alzira, and others, all of which prove that the grace of God can subdue even the souls of the followers of Mahomet. And in our days, we are told, so marvellous is the working of that grace that one may discover among the Mohammedan men of lofty piety and humility of life who, while far from the visible Church, deprived of the priesthood and the sacraments, and chained, as it were, to a hopeless religious system, are modelling their lives on what little they know of the counsels and examples of Christ.

However, these are the exceptions. Since the value of a religious belief may be gauged by the way it influences the lives of those who profess it, writers are unanimous in asserting that the doctrines of Mahomet have been a blight on the intelligence of the human race, and after centuries have left hundreds of millions of souls in a state of spiritual torpor and helplessness. The Koran, it is true, has preserved portions of the Divine Revelation, but the sensual lives and anti-Christian traditions of those who seek inspiration in its pages have hardened them against what for us is the entire truth. The Moslems profess to follow the natural law, but they live as if they were against the integrity of Christianity and against the lofty asceticism which is one of Christianity's most consoling outgrowths. All this shows what an immense field is open to Christian zeal; and what fruits might be gathered if intense missionary effort were undertaken to lead Islam into the true path.

During the late War the ruin of the temporal independence of the Mussulmans became an accomplished fact. The Ottoman Empire is dismembered, and the Turkish caliph has no longer any sway except in the spiritual domain. Strange to say, this political downfall is coinciding with a renewal of Islamic missionary zeal. We learn that a spirit of proselytism is becoming rife among the Mussulmans, and that its baneful influence is spreading among the Hindus and the Malays. It would seem that the moment has come for some special effort on the part of the Christian world to counteract this movement, which, if permitted to go on, would injure the prospects of the Church in India and elsewhere in the East.

The conversion of Islam is surely an apostolic work which should appeal to all Christian nations. Those nations which have Moslem colonies under their wing should be moved to help them spiritually through a general motive of Christian charity, just as one is moved to help abandoned children. Other nations having Moslems as subjects, and therefore with greater responsibilities towards them, should feel that it is a special duty of state to give the benefits of Christian training to those rather troublesome children of adoption. They should feel morally obliged to lead their Moslem subjects in some way or

other towards that integral civilization which Catholicism represents. Russia notwithstanding its present condition, has its obligations to the Mussulmans in Kazan, the Caucasus and Turkistan. England has its Egypt, Arabia, Zanzibar, Nigeria, and especially India. Italy and Spain have their obligations in their African possessions; while the French Republic has its work marked out for it in Algeria.

But the conversion of the Mohammedans is a labor that calls for much patience, delicacy and discretion. In the gaining of those souls, also redeemed by the Blood of Christ, there should be no clashing of mere commercial interests among nations; for this would only turn away millions of subtle Arabs, for instance, who are well able to distinguish between what man's obligations are in the face of the world as well as of the next. What will appeal to the Mohammedans is not any attack on their traditions or their beliefs, but rather a charity that will draw them little by little towards Christianity. Already in many Moslem countries Catholic effort has done much to break down barriers by benevolent societies and other works active within their borders. Well-disposed souls are won over by works of mercy, and when they see zealous Catholic missionaries studying their languages and their traditions, merely with a view of being useful to them, they are impressed and they yield easily to suasion.

The Holy Father has his eyes turned in the direction of Islam. The teeming millions of Mohammedans in Asia and Africa appeal to his paternal heart, perhaps all the more urgently for the reason that since the late War the lack of missionaries has weakened the Christian forces opposed to Islamism. If something be not done to stem the torrent, the cruel, proselytizing spirit with which the Moslems have been animated in recent years may easily work havoc in many tribes along their borders and draw away people who might otherwise be attracted to Christianity. The prayers of Christians have wrought victories over the Moslems in the past; they will work other victories over them in the future. Let us therefore pray not merely that God may strengthen the souls of the heroic missionaries who are laboring among those peoples, but also that he may inspire others to offer themselves for labor in such rugged foreign fields.

E. J. DEVINE, S. J.

In connection with the General Intention for the present month the Penitentiary Apostolic has authorized July 24, 1923 the following prayer for the conversion of the Mohammedans, and grants an indulgence of hundred days to all who will devoutly recite it once a day. A plenary indulgence on the ordinary conditions, may be gained by all who will recite it daily for a whole month.

PRAYER FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE MOHAMMEDANS

O Jesus, true God and true Man Redeemer of the whole world, vouchsafe we beseech Thee, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, to turn Thine eyes towards those nations which for centuries have lived under the yoke of Mohammedanism. Forgive them for the opprobrium they have cast on Thy most Holy Name, and on the Christian people Thy Elect. With the rays of Thy light banish the darkness in which they are plunged, and in the waters of regeneration open up to them the treasures of Thy Heart, so that in the confession of the true faith they may adore and glorify Thee, the Eternal Word made Flesh for our salvation in union with the Father and the Holy Ghost. Amen.

BRUSH YOUR TEETH ON BOTH SIDES

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RECONCILIATION REMARKABLE OUTCOME OF THIRD INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC CONGRESS

Constance, Aug. 29.—The Third International Catholic Congress will go on record as one of the most important and successful Catholic assemblies held in Europe this year. It was attended by prominent leaders in the Catholic movement in every country, and the seriousness of the deliberations and timeliness of the resolutions passed give promise of permanent and concrete results.

The spirit of the Congress was the spirit of the Encyclical "Ubi Arcano Deo." This was clearly reflected in the resolution in favor of international peace advocating the formation of an international Catholic Peace Council, composed of Catholics prominent in the scientific and political world, the duties of which would be to study the basic

principles of the Catholic peace movement and endeavor to remove difficulties arising between Catholic nations by practical arbitration.

RECONCILIATION OF FRANCE AND GERMANY

Another proof of the fact that obedience to Catholic teachings and principles forms the sole basis for real international reconciliation is revealed in the subject of a Franco-German entente. This resolution is as follows:

"The French and German Catholic delegates present at the Third International Catholic Congress have adopted the following resolution concerning reconciliation between the two peoples:

"The French and German Catholics attending the Third International Congress recognize that the whole world requires a definite and permanent reconciliation between Germany and France, and consider the solution of this question not only as a political and economic task but as a moral and religious duty, to be adjusted in accordance with the will of God in a spirit of justice and charity. In accord with the directions of the Holy Father, the Congress recognizes as a duty to justice and charity that the damage caused by the one nation during the War be repaired and that on the other hand this reparation be recognized by the other nation in a spirit of Christian justice, charity and mercy.

"All right-minded persons of both nations are urgently requested to work in order to bring about an early and direct understanding between the two nations."

The Congress accepted with great joy the suggestion made by the French Catholic delegates that on the first Sunday of every month a Peace Communion be held at which the French Catholics will pray for the Germans and the German Catholics will pray for the French, to the end that through unity in the Heart of Christ a new era of brotherly cooperation may dawn for the two peoples, for their own welfare and the blessings of the entire world.

One of the most important discussions was that concerning the Catholic press. A long resolution was passed urging Catholic organizations to support the Catholic press by every means in their power, and to use the Catholic papers for publicity concerning their activities rather than confine such publicity to their own local organs. Aid through increased circulation, advertising and active cooperation was also advocated; and Catholic leaders the world over were invited to celebrate Press Day annually on June 29 as recommended by Pope Benedict XV., with a program of prayer, propaganda and publicity.

INTERNATIONAL PRESS URGED

The resolution also recommended that Catholics and non-Catholics and Catholic leaders consider the advisability of forming an international press committee the task of which would be to create an international Catholic press agency, or at least a federation of existing national Catholic news services. The creation of an international advertising bureau for the benefit of the Catholic press was also urged.

HIGHER EDUCATION NOT DECLINING IN SOUTHERN IRELAND

Disparaging criticism in a Belfast newspaper of University education in the south, especially in the National University, has been effectively answered. This criticism was to the effect that between 1908 and 1921 there had been a deterioration all round as tested by the results and the numbers of students.

An answer is given by an authority closely in touch with the work of the National University. He says that adverse critic had compared two periods which are not comparable. In 1908 the old Royal University was in existence and students from Belfast, as well as Dublin, Galway, and Cork colleges were candidates for its degrees. When the Royal University was abolished the National University was created in the South, and the Queen's College in Belfast was constituted a separate University. Thus the figures for 1908 included Belfast; those for 1921 excluded Belfast. The case against the National University, based on a comparison of those two years, in view of the facts just mentioned, falls to the ground at once.

The actual truth is that among both Catholics and Protestants in Southern Ireland there is a far greater number of University students now than in 1908, as the registers of Trinity College, Dublin, and the Dublin Catholic University College testify.

CATHOLICS PROTEST MOTION PICTURE OF INQUISITION

London, Sept. 18.—A moving picture film, under the title of "The Wandering Jew," is the subject of a strong protest addressed to the Watch Committee of Manchester city by the Salford Catholic Federation, an extremely active body that is interested in defending all points of Catholic morality.

The point of issue taken up by the Catholic Federation is that this film confuses in a ridiculous manner the

Booril makes you feel ten years younger

ecclesiastical tribunals and the secular power, thus presenting a distorted and prejudiced view of the Catholic Church in connection with the Jews.

It is in connection with the Inquisition that the Catholic Federation makes its protest most strong. The protest rehearses that: The Catholic Church disclaimed all power to punish the errors of the mind with the sword, and in countries where heresy was contrary to the law of the land, and liable to severe punishment from the secular power, the ecclesiastical tribunal was obliged to plead for mercy to be exercised by the secular power on behalf of the heretics.

Pope after Pope protested against the arbitrary conduct of Spanish kings in using the Inquisition.

No ecclesiastical tribunal could condemn a Jew merely for being a Jew. The Manchester Catholics declare that the portrayal of the Jew, in this film, should be just as offensive to the Jews themselves as to the non-Jews.

In this connection, although the protest says nothing about it, the firm producing this film is without Jewish connections.

Miss Boissineau Tells How Cuticura Healed Pimples

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Mrs. M. A. McNeill, Canaan Sta., N.B., writes: "I was troubled for years with terrible backache, resulting from kidney disease. At times in each month I remained in bed, the pain was more than I could stand, and to walk was almost impossible. I used about \$50.00 worth of other medicines, but with little results. Now I am completely better, after using only five boxes of Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills.

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