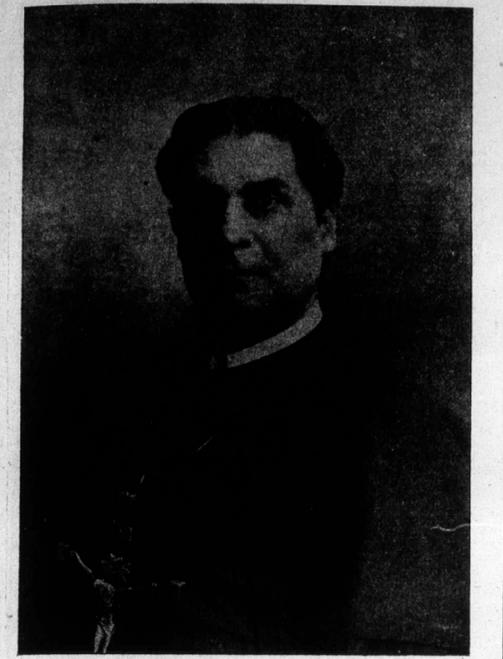


MISSION TO NON-CATHOLICS.



REV. ELIAS H. YOUNAN, C.S.P.

SUNDAY EVENING. — The Rev. Father Younan delivered a series of luminous and eloquent sermons to non-Catholics this week in St. Patrick's Church, beginning on Sunday evening last. The sacred edifice was crowded on each occasion, most of those present being Protestant. A large number received the grace of entering the True Fold, as was the case when the same zealous preacher occupied the pulpit of the same church last year, with a similarly meritorious object in view. This year, too, a question box was placed in the church for earnest seekers after truth; and only questions relating to doctrine were answered, those of a personal or frivolous character being ignored.

Montreal has long been a fruitful field for the Catholic missionary priest. Twenty years ago and at later periods, the Redemptorist Fathers, when they came to this city, directed the grand inspiring missions of which many of the generation now passing away always referred to with great fervor and pride, realized this: a local prelate of this city, associated with St. Patrick's Church since his ordination, has for years in his quiet and humble way been instrumental under God in bringing a large number of non-Catholics into the True Fold. Since last year this good work of conversion has become more public, owing to special sermons and services in St. Patrick's. Many unthinking Catholics consider that there should be more converts than there are; but they do not know how many there are, how wonderfully numerous they are, taking all the circumstances into account; nor do they reflect on the amount of prejudice that is removed by these sermons to non-Catholics, even in cases where no conversion takes place.

Father Younan in his sermons treated of such subjects as God, His Son Jesus Christ, the revelations of God, and the teachings of Our Saviour, where those revelations and teachings are to be found in their completeness, the Church which has taught them from the time of Christ, the necessity of Faith in Christ, His Passion and His death on the cross for the salvation of mankind; and the two great sacraments of the Church, confession and communion. The opening sermon was preceded by the singing of the first hymn on the St. Patrick's Church hymnal, "Nearer, My God, to Thee!" and was followed by the singing of Cardinal Newman's beautiful hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light," by the choir.

THE SERMON. — There is nothing nobler, said the Rev. preacher, than to lead to God a soul that has been wandering outside the Fold of the Good Shepherd. It is far more meritorious, far more divine, than to gain the whole world. There are over 300,000,000 Catholics in the world, leaving out of the reckoning those belonging to the Greek and the American churches; while Protestants of all sects hardly numbered 100,000,000. If therefore, every Catholic would bring one heretical soul into the True Church there would be no more

devison amongst Christians. Christ, whose Sacred Heart is full of love for those straying souls, as well as for all sinners, is waiting for them, ready for them, calling upon them to realize this: a local prelate of this city, associated with St. Patrick's Church since his ordination, has for years in his quiet and humble way been instrumental under God in bringing a large number of non-Catholics into the True Fold. Since last year this good work of conversion has become more public, owing to special sermons and services in St. Patrick's. Many unthinking Catholics consider that there should be more converts than there are; but they do not know how many there are, how wonderfully numerous they are, taking all the circumstances into account; nor do they reflect on the amount of prejudice that is removed by these sermons to non-Catholics, even in cases where no conversion takes place.

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God, who hates sin. Jesus hates and loathes sin too; yet all the sins of the world were upon Him and in Him, the Unspotted One; our sins were there. Let us grieve that we had a part in causing Him that agony. How sweet was the prayer He uttered at that moment of anguish! "Father, if it be possible, Thy will, and not mine, be done." No matter how full of sadness we may be, no matter what our sufferings may be, let us repeat that beautiful and simple prayer: "Thy will be done, not mine." Men have attained the highest sanctity, men have obtained certain salvation by sincerely uttering that short prayer.

Christ went to the three apostles, Peter, James and John, whom He had asked to watch with Him; but they were asleep. Their spirits were willing, but their flesh was weak, as is the case with so many of us, although they loved Him and had partaken of His bounty. He went back into the garden and His time knelt for another hour. He looks into the chalice, and what did He see? He saw, in this second agony of His, the traitorous kiss of Judas. His cruel sufferings at the hands of His enemies, His passion, His shameful death on the cross, His blood issuing from His head crowned with thorns and from His five wounds—He saw His body bleeding from head to foot. This time the chalice was full of blood. What He sinned at that night! No, He was glad. He had willed it. He was longing to pour out His life-blood to save mankind. Then His heart and soul, has a special remedy for He saw His blood covering the seething mass of all men's sins: He saw men trampling that blood under their feet in black ingratitude, despising His love and His mercy, shutting out the light of His mercy from their intellects and wills, and going on sinning. This ingratitude was the cause of His second agony. Is it not extraordinary that we are grateful to strangers for little favors done to us, and are ungrateful to God for the great favors He confers upon us? Strange humanity! For a little gain men run a long way; but for the Eternal Kingdom of God, how few will follow Him!

Another inquirer asked: "How can a fallible man declare his own infallibility?" That is a contradiction, said Father Younan. The Pope did not declare himself infallible. It was Christ who declared himself infallible, before He ascended to Heaven, left an infallible teacher, or He did not. Christ promised to abide with His Church for ever, and therefore His Church will never be without a teacher. The Pope being His mouthpiece, and the Pope being the head of that Church, and the successor of St. Peter, are infallible. If Christ did not leave on earth an infallible teacher, there could be no salvation, no Church. The Pope is not infallible in his own conduct; it is only when drawing upon the teachings of the Church, founded upon Divine Scripture, upon the rock of Peter, that he teaches on matters of faith and morals.

A communication asking twenty questions, not one of which involved a point of doctrine, was also received by the Rev. Father. It finished by stating that the writer would meet the former "in public discussion at any time." Father Younan said that he did not take part in public discussions, because they lead to nothing. He would have a private discussion with the writer, if the latter wished, although such discussions seldom led to any practical result. One of the questions was about the Trinity, which the Rev. Father was called upon to explain. "I cannot explain it to you," he said. "It is a mystery, and must be received by Faith; for it is above human comprehension." If the questioner is sincere, and has ever opened his Bible, he will see many references to the Trinity. All Scripture teaches that there is but one God. In the Scripture of the New Law, God the Father is mentioned frequently, in some ten or twelve times in one chapter—My Father, "God the Father," "Our Father." There are more than thirty passages in which Jesus Christ is called the Son of God—"This is My Father, who sent me," "I am the Son," etc. It is the same with the Holy Spirit of God. Many distinct references were made to Him, as well as to the other two Persons of the Blessed Trinity. There is one God, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, equal and distinct. This man also asks about the Scriptural authority for the existence of hell. There are one hundred and ten passages of Scripture referring to the torments of hell, not to mention the words "Eternal Damnation" in the New Testament. He must have never read the Bible, else he would not have asked such questions.

THE SERMON. — Non-Catholics who are intellectually clever are continually denying the Divinity of Christ. But look at the consequence of that false teaching. If Christ were not God, but only man, how could you account for the wonderful spread of the Catholic Church, the Church of Christ? How could you account for so many millions of men and women overcoming their passions, overcoming what is known as the "world"? How could you account for the three hundred years of martyrdom which marked the early age of the Catholic Church? How could you account for the fact that after nineteen hundred years there are millions and millions of men and women leading good and holy lives? How could you account for the fact that the Catholic Church triumphed over the mighty power of "barbaric Rome"? How could you account for the fact that for nineteen hundred years the finest and brightest intellects have adored Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Surely this is not human, it is Divine. What do the clever non-Catholic men of to-day offer in place of Christ? Nothing. The denial of the Divinity of Christ, however, is not new. It was denied in the time of the Apostles. It was denied by the Jews, and then it was denied by the pagan. Hold fast, my

brethren, to your faith in Christ. Without him there can be no beauty of soul, no hope in Heaven, no salvation. Let your faith in Jesus Christ be as a rock on which you firmly stand. It is faith in Jesus Christ, it is His teachings that have elevated and purified so large a portion of mankind. The secret of peace and happiness here, and the certainty of eternal life hereafter are only found in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

What a contrast there was between Peter and Judas! Peter was generous, Judas was hard-hearted, and had a greed for gold that denied Christ, the other betrayed Him. One was raised up to take the place of Christ, to be the head of the Catholic Church, the other repented, lost his apostleship and lost his soul. We loathe Judas, yet sometimes we are worse than he, for we betray Christ more than once. He fell once; we fall several times. Had Judas been pardoned he would never in all likelihood have fallen again. Peter is always first, wherever the apostles are named in Scripture; the name of Judas comes last. Both were called, chosen. Are we not chosen too? Is not Christ always calling us? Do we obey the call? The predominant passion of Judas was his greed for gold. This is one of those grave sins which grow with our growth and increase with our increase. If we do not check it by repentance and amendment, Jesus loved Judas, loved him even when He inflicted such sorrow upon his heart by giving the traitor's kiss that betrayed him into the hands of His enemies. He called him by the sweet name of "Friend, friend, whereto art thou come?" Judas was the first man to commit suicide, for at the Last Supper, when Christ had just washed his feet and had drunk Judas partook of the Eucharist, while in a state of mortal sin, he had resolved to betray his Master for the sake of money. After the great sacrifice on Calvary Judas was sorry he went to Christ's enemies with the thirty pieces of silver he committed the sin of despair, and took his own life. Had he gone to the Master, instead of to His enemies, he would have obtained pardon, and been saved. My own opinion—my private opinion, of course—is that poor Judas did not comprehend what Christ had said so often about His approaching sufferings and ignominious death on the cross. Like then he did not comprehend how the Son of God would allow Himself to be held by His enemies, to be scorned, crowned with thorns, and nailed to a cross. He thought that being the Son of God, He could easily escape from His enemies and from the cruel tortures and death they had planned for him. Every soul has a worm, a canker in it; the fairest fruit, like the brightest intellect has this worm, this canker, eating away at it for years if it is not cut out. Go into your secret hearts, and seek out this corrupting sin of pride or human passions, or whatever fault it may be, and get rid of it while there is yet time. Go to the Master, and not to His enemies. Do not read the books of sceptics and unbelievers, but instead pray humbly and sincerely to God for grace to believe, to subdue and destroy your besetting sin. Let there be no Judas here. God is calling you. Make your minds to go to Him, to accept His teachings, to do His will, and you will certainly be happy for ever.

Peter, in his generous way, was always forward in declaring his loyalty to his Master. He cut off the servant's ear when his Master was about to be captured. He boasted that, though others might deny His Master, he would never do so. It did not enter into his mind that he could ever deny his Master. Yet these Peter gave the same answer: "Yes, Lord, thou knowest." It was the pity and love which the Master had for Peter that induced Him to ask the question three times. He desired to give Peter an opportunity of making three professions of love to blot out his three denials. The Master told him to feed His lambs and His sheep; He gave him the keys of Heaven; He raised him up to take His place at the head of the Catholic Church.

There are many in Heaven who had fallen here and repented. Through repentance their sins became stepping-stones leading to God. Peter fell; Paul, who converted pagan nations, was once a persecutor of Christ, and fell; Augustine fell; and so did others who are saints in Heaven to-day. Be generous to God. Give Him your love—nav, your lives. Let no obstacle stand, or small gap between you and God, neither the love of woman nor of father and mother. A time will come when you will be alone with God, and no women, no father or mother will be there. Life is short. It is not worth living except for God. Think

of eternity, repent, be generous in your love of God, and you will have everlasting joy and glory.

THE QUESTION BOX.—To a question evidently put by a person whose feeble criticisms on Father Younan's sermons appeared side by side with reports of the learned Frenchman's remarks in an afternoon newspaper, the Rev. gentleman replied at the outset of his discourse on Tuesday evening. The critic asked on what authority Father Younan had stated that Christ's agony in the garden on Mount Olivet was suffered as a man and not as God. Almighty God, said Father Younan, suffered during His life on this earth as a man; and He suffered as a man only. Jesus Christ is one person, true God and true Man. This one Person has two distinct natures, the nature of God and the nature of man. A Divine Person took upon Himself the nature of man. Jesus Christ has a human body and a human soul; and this human body and soul are hypostatistically united to His Divinity, to His Divine Person. Jesus Christ suffered and died in His human nature only; for a Divine Person is impossible. When we say that God suffered, we mean that Christ suffered in His human nature.

The second question was "How can I believe that God who is infinitely good, created some men who are to be eternally punished?" The answer is very simple, replied Father Younan. Man is human, not Divine, and human man has a right to human, natural happiness. His evil is natural. But eternal happiness is divine. Man has no right to it, except the right given to him by Christ on certain conditions. If these conditions are not observed, man is eternally punished. Almighty God so loved man that He gave up His only begotten Son to suffer and shed His blood for him, in order to raise him up to the position of eternal Sonship, to make him eternally happy by the inheritance of divine life, good and merciful. It is easy to keep His commandments; to accept His teachings, the teachings of His Church and to live up to them. Man has free will, and can either accept or reject the teachings of Divine Redeemer, by rejecting them he merits eternal punishment. If every man who goes on sinning were saved, there would be no goodness of God, no justice of God, no God at all.

"Justification by Faith alone," was the subject of another question. It is an immoral doctrine, said Father Younan. It is the same thing as to say: "I believe, will sin, will sin against the light of Heaven." Faith without good works is dead, as the apostle tells us. It would be absurd if God said: "Believe in My Son, and you are saved." Faith alone cannot justify. The damned believe in Jesus Christ. The devil believe in Jesus Christ. We must not only believe, but act up to our belief. Faith and works must go hand in hand. "Justification by Faith alone" is not only immoral but blasphemous.

The dogma of infallibility came up again through a question as to whether the Pope could be deposed. His own acts as matters of faith and morals, no, declared the Rev. Father. The Pope only gives his decision on faith and morals after a council of the Church has decreed that in questions of doctrine he is infallible. The doctrines of the Catholic Church have been known to the world for centuries—from the time of the apostles. A council of the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, is divinely founded by Christ, who abides with her forever, who is the depository of truth, has decided that the Pope, the head of that infallible teaching Church, the successor of St. Peter, the Vicar of Christ, is infallible when teaching matters of faith and morals. That the Church is infallible has been held and taught by the common consent of theologians of all ages. "What sort of a place is Purgatory?" is the strange query put by an inquirer. The Rev. Father answered: "I don't know. All we know is that it is a state where some souls suffer for a time before they are fit to go to Heaven. They go to Purgatory because nothing defiled can enter Heaven; venial sins must be forgiven before the soul guilty of them enters Heaven. That sins are forgiven in Purgatory is clear from what Our Saviour said about the sin against the Holy Ghost. He said that it shall not be forgiven in this world, or in the next. Belief in Purgatory has come down to us from historic ages. In olden times sacrifices were offered up for the souls of the just; and the Scripture tells us that it is a holy thing to pray for the dead. Why should we pray for the dead if our prayers did not benefit them? As to another question—where will the soul go whose body dies at the end of the world in venial sin?—It must be remembered that sincere repentance, one act of love for God, is sufficient to atone for venial sin. Besides, the sufferings caused by the world coming to an end would blot out venial sin.

There is one all important truth which I desire to impress upon you, and that is that there must be on earth a divine, infallible teacher; that it must be living and have lived from the time of Christ, and must live till the end of time; and that there must be only one true, divine, infallible Church. If that is not so, (Continued on Page Five.)

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