

FIVE-MINUTES' SERMON.

Third Sunday of Advent. PREPARATION FOR CHRISTMAS.

"All flesh shall see the salvation of God." (Luke 3, 6)

All flesh shall see the salvation of God. This is the cry of the Church, this is the salutation with which she greets us to day before the great feast of the Nativity of our Lord. What a happy, what a consoling, what a joyful promise! Once more that glorious day returns, for which the patriarchs hoped, which the prophets foretold, and for which the whole world anxiously sighed for four thousand years—that memorable day on which the heavenly Father will reveal the glory of His infinite love, in the birth of His only begotten Son. How anxious He is that none shall be lost, but that all shall obtain life everlasting! Oh, let us rejoice and be glad, and with our whole heart, thank the Father of infinite mercy!

If you wish to comprehend what a day of joy the feast of Christmas is consider the disconsolate state into which sin has plunged mankind. Our first parents, the representatives of the whole human race, had fallen in the garden of Paradise, and had contracted an enormous debt by their sin of disobedience—a debt which barred Heaven against us, and every new sin which we added to this inherited debt was an additional bolt, which closed to us the doors of the heavenly mansion. No man was able to unlock the door, no angel could remove the bolt, no creature could save us from eternal perdition. The sentence had already been pronounced, the arm of divine justice had been raised to hurl us into the abyss of everlasting despair, when the only begotten Son of God approached the eternal Father and said: "Father of justice, have mercy on the unhappy children of men! They have sinned and deserved your anger, but I will be their Mediator and Saviour: I will atone for the wrongs they have committed, and will suffer for their crimes. I will become man, will be born in a stable amidst cold and privations, for thirty three years I will bear all sufferings and on the cross I will give up my last drop of blood for their ransom. O Father, hear my cry for sinners, and once more, let mercy prevail, instead of justice!"

The Heavenly Father permitted Himself to be moved to mercy, and accepted the sacrifice of His only begotten Son, in satisfaction for the sins of men. The heavens opened, and the Son of God descended into this miserable world. He became our brother, our teacher, our mediator and Saviour, He brought to us the lost treasures of divine grace, and enabled us to become the beloved children of God and heirs of Heaven.

Behold, this is the sublime and memorable mystery which we are going to celebrate. This is the benefit of the incarnation, as seen in the light of faith. Our hearts must be hardened to faith if we are not moved by such love, stone if we are not moved by such love, standing before the crib of our self-sacrificing God, will not awaken in us the deepest sentiments of love, gratitude and contrition. See, God has loved us with an infinite love, and has loved Himself wholly up, to make us happy here and hereafter, and will we still continue to hate such a Redeemer, and by our sins make Him an object of scorn and contempt? He has brought us heavenly peace, the happiness of divine filiation, and will we prefer the slavery of sin and the devil? Oh! no, let this not be said of any of us.

We will listen to the warning and pleading voice of the Church, who assures us not to let the gracious feast of Christmas pass without receiving a liberal share of spiritual favors. We will open our ear and heart to the voice of St. John the Baptist, the great forerunner of Christ, who cries out for the last time: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough ways made plain and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." (Luke 3: 4, 5). Oh! yes, let us prepare the way for our Lord, that He may enter our heart with His graces, when we receive Him in our Christmas Communion. The mountains and hills are our sins. Let us bring them low, and obliterate them by a sincere and a good confession. The valleys in our soul are the virtues which are wanting. Let us plant therein humility, meekness, the angelic virtues of charity and purity of heart, so that the Saviour may find a worthy habitation in our soul. The crooked and rough ways in our hearts are the inordinate desires, wicked passions and sinful habits. Let us wage constant war against them, and try to root them out entirely, by mortification, self-denial, vigilance and prayer. Then, indeed, shall we see the salvation of God according to the promise of St. John, and become partakers of that peace which the angels, on that holy night, announced to all men of good will. Amen.

Catarrh and Hay Fever.

It is Hay Fever that is the bug-bear of your life, you won't know the pleasure of freedom from it till you've tried Dr. Chase's Catarrh Cure.

There are cases of consumption so far advanced that Bickel's Anti-Consumptive Syrup will not cure, but none so bad that it will not give relief. For coughs, colds and all affections of the throat, lungs and chest, it is a specific which has never been known to fail. It promotes a free and easy expectoration, thereby removing the phlegm, and gives the diseased parts a chance to heal.

Do not delay in getting relief for the little folks. Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator is a pleasant and sure cure. If you love your child why do you let it suffer when a remedy is so near at hand?

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

"Arise, and take the child and His mother into Egypt," and Joseph with his family fled through the solemn darkness of the night.

The next day they came upon a man sowing corn. Some mysterious influence attracted him to the travelers. From the countenance of the mother, or from the earnest eyes of the Child she bore in her arms, a softening glance of grace descended into his heart. He was very kind to them, and permitted them to cross his field, and the young mother, folding her Babe yet more closely to her heart, leaped forward, explaining to him that they were pursued by enemies. "And if you come this way," said the sweet, low voice, "and ask if you have seen us?"

"I shall say you did not pass this way," was the eager interruption. "Nay," said the blessed mother, "you must speak only the truth. Say: 'They passed me while I was sowing this corn.'"

And the travelers pursued their journey. The next morning the sower was amazed to find that his corn had sprung up and ripened in the night. While he was gazing at it in astonishment, Herod's officers rode up and questioned an enormous debt by their sin of disobedience—a debt which barred Heaven against us, and every new sin which we added to this inherited debt was an additional bolt, which closed to us the doors of the heavenly mansion. No man was able to unlock the door, no angel could remove the bolt, no creature could save us from eternal perdition. The sentence had already been pronounced, the arm of divine justice had been raised to hurl us into the abyss of everlasting despair, when the only begotten Son of God approached the eternal Father and said: "Father of justice, have mercy on the unhappy children of men! They have sinned and deserved your anger, but I will be their Mediator and Saviour: I will atone for the wrongs they have committed, and will suffer for their crimes. I will become man, will be born in a stable amidst cold and privations, for thirty three years I will bear all sufferings and on the cross I will give up my last drop of blood for their ransom. O Father, hear my cry for sinners, and once more, let mercy prevail, instead of justice!"

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Then the angel said: "I have pity on you, and as for your modesty you humble yourself, I will raise you and adorn you more beautifully than your sisters." Thereupon the angel looked toward the blue sky, where countless little golden stars were twinkling. He made a sign, and behold one little star after another came down towards the earth, and they rested on the green branches of the fir, which now with thousands of lights shining on it, was far more beautiful than the other trees.

Now the Child Jesus awoke, but He took no notice of the palm-leaf fan that lay at His feet, nor of the delicious odor that filled the stable. His little eyes turned to the beautiful, shining fir tree. Then He smiled, and reached out His tiny arms towards it. The fir tree was hereupon very glad and happy.

Then the angel said: "You shall be rewarded for this, simple green tree! Henceforth, you shall be employed to adorn the Feast of the Nativity of Jesus with your evergreen branches, which men will light up year after year in memory of this holy and blessed night. You shall rejoice the hearts of the little ones; and the parents, too, who are pure of heart, shall be reminded by you of the golden days of their childhood. This shall henceforth be your task and your reward, most beautiful and glorious 'Christmas Tree.'"

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

A man's character must be founded upon truth, and he must have God's word engraved on his heart. No matter how devoted he may be in other respects, if he is wanting in truth disaster awaits him.—Felix R. Hill.

Your Small Change.

Propriety now demands that the jingle of small change shall no longer be heard issuing from a man's pockets. Neither in the pockets of his waistcoat nor in the pockets of his trousers can coins be allowed to lie. All must be kept in a pocketbook, too, of a certain style. This is of the old-fashioned walletshape, oblong, and has a band around it. Every penny, nickel and silver piece, as well as every bill, must go into this, and even if a newspaper is being purchased, the pocketbook must be brought forth.

Ingratitude to Officials.

It often happens that one man in a society takes an active interest in its welfare. He gives time and pains and money to promote its interests. He is always willing to act on committees. When elected to office he works like a slave. He makes personal sacrifices to attend meetings. He thinks that there is nothing in all the world like the organization. What is usually his reward for all this? The "kickers" growl at his prominence, the listless sneer at his enthusiasm, the selfish conspire against him as a self-seeker studying his own aggrandizement. This ingratitude, this lack of appreciation, this enmity to the energetic worker seems to be one of the curses of human nature common to all organizations. Don't be guilty of it!

Take Stock of Yourself Now.

However we may scoff at New Year's resolutions, it is impossible to get away from the stock taking, the billing and dunning, the review and preview, the moralizing and the purposing. It is all around us and we might as well fall in line and do some figuring on our own account. There never will be an easier time of year for it, and a general stock-taking of physical, moral, social and spiritual progress or retrogression, ought to be taken fearlessly at least once a year. It is not easy to believe harder of one's self, and certainly it is not pleasant. However mean a sinner one may confess himself to be in a general way, where nothing specific is mentioned, and humility is always highly commended, it has a different aspect when, in the privacy of one's own judgment seat, one weighs himself for what he is actually worth. But it is well to be frank and do no shrinking from the truth about one's own self. It may be unpleasant but it is salutary.

Slight not the smallest loss, whether it be in love or honor; take account of all; Shine like the sun in every corner; see Whether thy stock of credit swell or fall. Who say, "I care not," those I give for lost! And to instruct them 'twill not quit the cost.

Immoral Banana Skins.

Fruit stands display the sign "\$10 fine for throwing banana skins on the sidewalk," and it is a good law that should be enforced without mercy to the careless person who "did not think where he was throwing the skin and never meant any harm." It would be a righteous thing to impose a heavier fine on any man who willfully or carelessly puts occasion of stumbling in his fellows' way, who tempts to do evil, tempts to drink, invites into vile places, tells a smutty story. Don't drop immoral banana skins in your path for those who follow you to go to smash on.

Two Points for Purity.

1. Let your mind and heart be open to the best things and the best influences. Isaiah says: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is immagnation—is stayed on Thee." The Psalmist says: "Thy word have I laid up in mine heart that I might not sin against Thee." Paul, writing to Timothy, says: "Keep thyself pure." Our Divine Lord says: "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Accustom the mind to dwelling on pure things. Have lofty ideals. Shun the low. Seek strength from God through prayer.

2. Avoid all books, pictures and companionships that appeal to the lower nature. Shun indecent pleasures as you would a venomous reptile. The sting of an unclean story or an unclean act is worse than the sting of an adder. Hell will be full of unclean story tellers. Flee youthful lusts.

The Men Are to Blame.

In the North American Review recently there was a discussion of the "Abdication of Man," by Miss E. Bisland, who undertakes to show that the tyrant man has lost his position of ruler of the family and society, not by reason of the rebellion of the "unquiet sex," but by reason of his own abdication of the position of lord and master. Time was when man was a hero. He went to war, he faced danger and brought back the spoils upon which his admiring women folks subsisted. As sole protector and benefactor, the husband in old times deserved and received the plaudits of submissive dependents. The circumstances of life gave him a glorious role, and he supported the dignity of his position by suitable dress. Our great grandfathers wore silks and satins, powdered their hair, sported gold buckles, rattled their swords and put on lordly airs, which greatly impressed the weaker sex. They appreciated the value of a handsome personal appearance, and took great pains to soffit their hold upon womanhood by the studied charm of courteous manners. The individual man thought highly of himself and tried at all times to sustain in dress. In conversation and conduct, the character of a hero, or at any rate of a chivalrous gentleman.

So long as the tyrant held himself up to this ideal, his mastery, according to Miss Bisland, was cheerfully conceded; but during the last four score years the average man has been taking a commonplace view of himself and life. He has become a slouch. Women sees with sorrow and disdain the transformation of the hero into "the unromantic man who goes patiently to business every morning in a cable car, sits on a stool at a desk, weighs tea or measures ribbon." The hero in his habits, more industrious, a better provided and more reliable in money matters than his predecessor of the same class eighty years ago, but all that was heroic about him has collapsed. The idea is lost and the idol is shattered. Man no longer fascinates woman by his masterfulness and splendor, but, bent solely upon his ease and comfort, sets himself against this need of the female. "He alone," says the writer, "fatuously prides himself on the dark bifurcated simplicity of his attire, intended only for warmth and ease and constructed with a calculated avoidance of adornment. He carries further this democracy of sex by adding rigid plainness of behavior to ugliness of appearance, forgetting that a woman, like a child and the savage, loves pomp of manner as well as a garment. What she does not see she finds it hard to believe. Every wise lover knows that tenderness of manner must be enforced by definite assurances of affection several times in every twenty-four hours."

The heroes of romance studied the female heart, and every woman wants her life gilded with some romance. Yet the modern man does not take the trouble to please woman's imagination. Hence the revolt. Woman has thrown off the yoke of a tyrant who discards the trappings and habiliments proper to a despot. She was prepared to obey a monarch who would dress and act the part of a monarch, but "man," says the writer, "has been seized with a democratic ideal, and after applying it to political institutions has attempted to carry it into domestic application. He is relentlessly forcing a democracy of sex on woman, industrially, mentally and sentimentally. He refuses to gratify her imagination; he insists upon her development of that logical selfishness which underlies all democracy." But this has results. Women are beginning to accept these stern theories—to look out for themselves by discarding domestic burdens. "The only considerations that can reconcile human beings to unattractive labors," Miss Bisland says, "are, first, the sentiment of loyalty—that such labors are for one who is loved and admired—and second the fine old habit of submission. These incentives to duty, these helps to happiness, man has taken from woman by weakly shuffling off his mastership." Such is the indictment. It seems to be well-founded. But if the glamour of chivalry has been cast off, has not the reign of real merit succeeded?—Catholic Columbian.

PRIEST STOPPED A RUN ON A BANK.

An incipient, unwarranted run on a Waterbury (Conn.) bank, which threatened to cost depositors the loss of their interest money, was neatly stopped last week by Rev. Father Sluicum, pastor of the Immaculate Conception Church. Knowing that the bank was thoroughly sound, Father Sluicum, as soon as he heard of the run stopped the institution and ostentatiously deposited \$1,000, and this action arrested the run at once, for the depositors argued that Father Sluicum had confidence enough in the bank to put \$1,000 into it, they would run no risk in leaving their money there.

How it Hurts!

Rheumatism, with its sharp twinges, aches and pains. Do you know the cause? Acid in the blood has accumulated in your joints. The cure is found in Hood's Sarsaparilla, which neutralizes this acid. Thousands write that they have been completely cured of rheumatism by Hood's Sarsaparilla.

Chronic Derangements of the Stomach.

Liver and Blood are speedily removed by the active principle of the ingredients entering into the composition of Paroel's Vegetable Pills. These pills act specifically on the deranged organs, stimulating to action the dormant energies of the system, thereby removing disease and renewing life and vitality to the afflicted. In this lies the great secret of the popularity of Paroel's Vegetable Pills.

That Pale Face.

For nervous Prostration and Anæmia there is no medicine that will so promptly and infallibly restore vigor and strength as Scott's Emulsion.

Look out for the first signs of impure blood—Hood's Sarsaparilla is your safeguard. It will purify, enrich and vitalize your blood.

VERY CLEVER.

One frequently wonders when some crucial test, such as the denial of all Scriptural authority or a protest against the main article of belief, causes a convulsion in one of the sects, why after a spasm of wonder it is no more heard of. Hereby is a matter of almost monthly recurrence in many of these communions, and after a brief wrangle it is put aside as a matter of no consequence. Nothing could more clearly show the want of a living faith in these makeshift religions, and while we may marvel at the tenacity with which some of them hold together despite those periodical shocks, we must conclude that the mere fact of an elementary belief in God, despite all provocations to doubt, suffices to preserve them from lapsing into sheer infidelity collectively. Individually there must be an immense deal of it, as witnessed by the comparatively small number of churchgoers in the whole country. Some clue to the means by which the full mischief of heretical and agnostic teaching is averted is obtained from Christian Work. We find that interesting organ of many sorts strongly advising the non-Catholic religious press to take no notice of dangerous preachers.

A minister recently declared that Presbyterianism is waging a losing battle. Leave him alone, this astute counsellor advises; only the Catholic papers take any notice of him; when nothing is known of his pessimistic views among Presbyterians, why bother about him? So, too, we dare say, with regard to Rev. Mr. De Costa. Hardy a line was given to him by any but the Catholic press. In other words, Christian Work shows that there is a conspiracy of silence as to the failure of the sects, and advises that the blockade of truth be rigidly maintained. This is fine policy—as fine as that of the ostrich who cleverly hides his head in the sand and turns his tail to the hunters. It may succeed for a little while, but what is now going on in England must convince those non-Catholics who are not so very astute that it is not a policy for permanency. The steam of truth will at last percolate the thickest embankment of obscurantism. The Church has not exhausted all her Wisemans; another Newman is yet possible. When their successors arise in the United States a conspiracy of silence on the part of the non-Catholic press will hardly save the embankment or preserve the blockade.—Philadelphia Catholic Standard and Times.

READ YOUR CHURCH PAPER.

The following paragraph from the Christian Standard gives us an idea of how Protestants talk to each other about reading their Church paper: "The Church member who does not read his denominational paper will soon become shrivelled, narrow, antimissionary, and then go into 'innocent desuetude.'" On the other hand, a Church member who reads and becomes an agent in his Church for a religious paper is a benefactor. He is performing a service for Christ and the Church which is second to none. A pastor who will from time to time call the attention of his people to important articles, special numbers and will urge upon his congregation the value and need of taking a religious paper, and will then follow it up with a little earnest solicitation, will strengthen himself among them. They will become informed, appreciative and responsive to the denomination and to Christ."

THE SHRINE OF SILENCE.

I understand that, in the Trappist cemetery at Gethsemane, there is one holy woman's grave, that of Mrs. Bradford, a kinswoman of Jefferson Davis. She had been a benefactress of the order and requested to be buried there. Her last wish was gratefully allowed. Her son told me how he had spent some meditating days with the monks. He was awakened betimes during the night to remember that he had to die some day. He shared some of the rigors of the ritual and partook of the lean fare. He declared that these silent and hidden, as well as self-denying monks, were the healthiest, the brightest-eyed and most cheerful men he ever knew. He went out into the world where he belonged and became acquainted with sorrow, ultimately winning success; but I am sure that one of the happiest and most profitable times he ever knew was at Gethsemane, and that he comprehends how sanctity and cheerfulness may be allied supremely and that "The saints shall rejoice in glory; they shall be joyful in their beds."—James R. Randall.

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Rheumatism, with its sharp twinges, aches and pains. Do you know the cause? Acid in the blood has accumulated in your joints. The cure is found in Hood's Sarsaparilla, which neutralizes this acid. Thousands write that they have been completely cured of rheumatism by Hood's Sarsaparilla.

Chronic Derangements of the Stomach.

Liver and Blood are speedily removed by the active principle of the ingredients entering into the composition of Paroel's Vegetable Pills. These pills act specifically on the deranged organs, stimulating to action the dormant energies of the system, thereby removing disease and renewing life and vitality to the afflicted. In this lies the great secret of the popularity of Paroel's Vegetable Pills.

That Pale Face.

For nervous Prostration and Anæmia there is no medicine that will so promptly and infallibly restore vigor and strength as Scott's Emulsion.

Look out for the first signs of impure blood—Hood's Sarsaparilla is your safeguard. It will purify, enrich and vitalize your blood.

EX-REEVE CRAGG

A Prominent Dresden Citizen Tells an Interesting Story.

How Dodd's Kidney Pills Cured Him of Rheumatism and Gout, after the Best Doctors and Many Medicines had Failed.

Dresden, Dec. 12.—This town boasts a peculiarity of which its people may well be proud, as it proves beyond dispute, that they possess that desirable attribute, common sense, in no small degree. That peculiarity is the remarkable decrease in the number of cases of Rheumatism during the past few years.

Eight years ago, Dresden was afflicted by that curse of modern civilization, Rheumatism, to as great an extent, as any other place of its size in the Dominion. To-day such a complaint is practically unknown here.

A clue to the means by which this desirable condition has been brought about may be found in the following statement, given for publication by W. G. Cragg, Esq., ex-reeve of the town, and one of our most prominent merchants.

"For eight years I was a martyr to Rheumatism, of the inflammatory type, and during that period my sufferings beggared description. To add to my misery I was attacked by Gout. The best doctors failed to benefit me, and no good was done by the many patent medicines I used.

"At times I could not get about at all, and at the best, it was a severe task for me to make my way about my store.

"Hearing that Dodd's Kidney Pills had cured a Dresden lady of Rheumatism, I decided to try the medicine. Imagine my delighted surprise when after having taken half-a-dozen doses, I used six boxes of the pills and am now as sound and well as ever I was. Dodd's Kidney Pills cured me. This I am ready and willing to swear to." Dodd's Kidney Pills are the surest, quickest and best cure for Rheumatism ever known. They never fail. And they cost only fifty cents a box, at all drug stores.

HOLIDAY GIFTS.

As the holiday season approaches we begin to think about presenting our friends with suitable gifts—and what can be more appropriate than a good book? Here are a few which we have in stock and which we should be pleased to send to any one, at prices given below:

Table listing various books for sale, including titles like 'Episodes of the Paris Commune in 1871', 'The Shrine of Silence', and 'The Fair Maid of Connaught', with their respective authors and prices.

CATHOLIC BOOKS Office, London, Ontario, Can.

C. M. B. A.—Branch No. 4, London, Meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month, at 8 o'clock, at their hall, 4100 Block, Richmond Street, James F. Murray, President; P. F. Boyle, Secretary.

Advertisement for Colman's Salt, featuring the brand name in a stylized font and the text 'THE BEST'.