

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

BEARING JUSTICE
Who, when He was reviled, did not revile when He suffered. He threatened not; but delivered Himself to him that judged Him unjustly." (1 St. Peter 2:23.)

One of the hardest trials, my dear brethren, to which we can be exposed; indeed, perhaps the hardest one of all, is to be condemned unjustly. And the condemnation need not be pronounced in court, and published to the world. It need not even be given by public opinion; no, there may be only a few who share in it, perhaps only one, and that may be one whose judgment is not of much weight; still, to be falsely judged, to be accused of what we have not done, to have even our motives misinterpreted, is a pretty heavy cross to bear. How often will you hear people alleging as a reason for a permanent breach of friendship with some one, that that one has belied them? It is of little use to point out that the person who is or seems to be a false accuser, may really not intend to be guilty of falsehood, nor be conscious of rash judgment, but may in his or her heart actually believe the charge, and feel not only justified, but even under an obligation of conscience in making it, and thus be guiltless before God. No, the sting is perhaps even greater, that he should believe a thing about us that we feel is not true, and could not be.

Nor is it enough to say that there are many things which we ought to be judged guilty of, but are not; and that so we can afford to take some punishment that we do not deserve, as we escape a good deal that we do. No, we say to ourselves: "I would not mind it so much if it were true; I would rather take the burden of all the many wrong things that I have done, than of one that I have not." Perhaps that would not really be the fact, but we feel as if it were.

I think, then, that to find a real cure for our heartache about matters of this kind, we must take the one which St. Peter gives us in this epistle of to-day. We must take refuge under the shadow of the cross of Him, Who, as the apostles says, "suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps." The cross of Christ is the only remedy in the last resort for all the pain and misery of the world, as well as for its sins; and we may as well come to it at once as wait till other consolations have failed.

Let us, then, lay to heart our Lord's example in this matter, as St. Peter tells us: let us keep it always by us, to be ready for use at the first moment. Let us consider the slight and insignificant are the false judgments that can be made about us, miserable sinners that we are, compared with that which was passed on Him, the saint of saints; on Him Who was not merely holy, but holiness itself, the source of all sanctity, the Giver of every virtue that we can have. Let us consider how He was reckoned with the malefactors, how He was condemned not merely to death, but to the shameful death of a criminal; and how not merely one or two, but the crowd of His own people, whom He had come to save, turned against Him and believed all the false charges which His accusers made.

And let us not imagine that, being in truth God, His human nature was made insensible to all this outrageous injustice by its essential sanctity, or by the homage of the angels, or of those on earth who really knew and loved Him and remained faithful to Him. No; it was no more rendered in this way insensible to it, as was to the sharp piercing of the nails driven through His hands and feet. Indeed, that He could much better have borne. His infinite purity and sensitiveness to sin only made these suspicions and accusations of it the more intolerable; physical suffering was little in comparison.

Yet, as the apostle says, in this He did not defend Himself. He was willing to drink this bitter chalice to the dregs. When He was reviled, He reviled not again. He neither cleared Himself, which He could easily have done, nor took the poor remedy which sinners are apt to take, of accusing His accusers.

Let us then, when thus tried in our poor way, ask Him to give us the grace to do as He did, and even, if it be possible, to resist for a time at least under accusations which we might remove, when the honor of God is not concerned. And let us remember not to be guilty of rash judgment in our turn but make, as He did, every possible excuse for those who believe us; let us believe that, so far as they are wrong, they know not what they do. And, lastly, let us take the greater pains to abstain from uncharitable thoughts or words about our neighbors, thus exposing them to a trial which we have found so hard to bear.

COL. DAWSON A CONVERT

Washington, Feb. 17.—Of late years many of the ranking officers of the United States army and navy have been converted to the Catholic faith, and many of these say that these conversions are greatly due to the good work that is being done by the corps of chaplains.

The average officer, on account of his world-wide life, is naturally most broad-minded, and coming into daily contact with a Catholic chaplain of the service, is open to reason, for he soon realizes that the heart and soul of the priest are for the betterment of humanity and the salvation of the soul.

The latest of the prominent officers to embrace the Catholic faith is Lieut. Col. William Charles Dawson, assistant paymaster United States Marine Corps, and his wife and four children, who were formerly Episcopalians.

Col. Dawson has been on duty in the assistant paymaster's office at New York city.

He is a native of Kentucky, and was born March 26, 1871, and was appointed to the Marine Corps from the United States Naval Academy July 1, 1894.

GENERAL INTENTION FOR APRIL

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS PIUS X.

YOUNG CATHOLIC WORKINGMEN

When our Divine Saviour came into this world, He was free to choose any condition of life He pleased, but desiring from the outset to give human society an example of humility and resignation, He appeared among us as the Child of a workingman. As the reputed son of Joseph the carpenter, He spent thirty years of His life in the little village of Nazareth, in order to enable the condition of the laboring classes and to teach the millions of whom those classes are made up, how to render meritorious for eternity the daily fatigues and poverty and privations they must submit to in this present life.

Before the advent of Christ workingmen were mostly slaves. They were merely the chattels of their owners, deprived of their rights and even of their dignity as men. But the example of the Young Carpenter of Nazareth, founded by and for nearly two thousand years the Christian world has been adoring a God under the guise of a Workingman. In the long span of years that has elapsed since His return to heaven, His spouse on earth, the Catholic Church has never ceased to raise her protecting arm over the working classes. During the centuries in which they were deprived of their political and social rights, they found in her a firm defender, who, in the name of religion, founded by a Workingman, fought their oppressors to exercise justice and charity.

The more one studies the dim past the more one is convinced of the fact that when the influence of the Church was dominant, workingmen enjoyed a well-being, a security a happiness which is unknown to them at the present day. Employer and employee felt themselves bound to treat each other according to the eternal and unchangeable laws of justice and charity. Under the influence of those laws mutual understanding was easily arrived at and difficulties softened down. Each element accepted its lot with resignation, and peace and harmony were the result.

This would still be the result if the Church were free, as in the past, to exercise her mediation between master and underling. But conditions have changed since workingmen emancipated themselves from the influence of religion. Other motives besides those of resignation and sacrifice swayed them in their activities. In the present age it is the craving for wealth, and for the ease and comfort of life that wealth brings with it, that is uppermost in the thoughts of workingmen; and in order to attain these ends, regardless too often of the moral aspect of the cause, they use the strength that numbers give to press their demands. The master, on his side, untempered by sympathy, and with wealth and cunning in abundance, is only too prone to resent the haughtiness of the workingman. When this resentment takes practical shape the result is distrust, strikes, lock-outs, injustice, bitter controversy, starvation, and even bloodshed. What a change from the ideal conditions of the past!

And yet the Church perseveres in her heavenly task. If the workingmen refuse to recognize her mediation, she still continues her endeavors to bring them to better sentiments. She prays for them, advises, counsels, urges them to peace, instills sound principles into them, so that they may recognize their dignity without losing their immortal souls.

During the present month we are invited to give prayerful consideration to the cause of our young Catholic workingmen, on account of the dangers to which they are exposed from Socialistic principles and other perverse theories. There is a special reason for singling out this class. Demagogues are more prone to address their harangues to men who are still lacking in the knowledge that experience gives and who are readily won over to accept as practical doctrines that are wicked and unjust. Demagogues are quite aware that the minds of youths of the present age are easily moulded, and that any appeal to their latent ambition for wealth and ease will meet with a prompt response. With all plausibility, they put before young workingmen especially, doctrines that excite selfishness, cupidity, hat-

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red of the rich, contempt of authority, etc. Mature age, taught by experience, knows how unsubstantial are the vapourings of demagogues, but young men have not yet learned the lesson. In the question of Socialism, for instance, mature age taught and directed by religion, knows there are human rights that are inviolable; but young and inexperienced workingmen are easily led away by the plausible platitudes of Socialists. The attractiveness of Socialist sophistry warps the minds of our intelligent young Catholic workingmen, and when their appetites for a deeper knowledge of Socialist theories. Schooling of this character will have its after-effects. If the antidote is not applied, a time soon arrives when they themselves become inoculated with doctrines and principles subversive of human society, with the usual itching that all such perverts have to impart their fatal knowledge to others.

This is not a fancy picture. One has only to scan the public press to meet rabid Socialist writers and orators with well-known Catholic names, young men probably of good talents whose little knowledge was for them a "dangerous thing," and whose craving for more was not slaked at the right source. They steeped themselves in Socialistic literature and then turning their backs on the religion of their childhood, began their propaganda in the interests of Socialism.

And yet those young Catholics should have been taught that the Church, while condemning Socialism and other perverse doctrines, does not look askance at any effort that laboring classes make to obtain their rights. No one better than the Catholic Church recognizes the deep abyss

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that has opened up, in recent years, between Capital and Labor; no one deplores more bitterly than she the unchristian spirit that guides the movements of Capital in this age. She urges workmen to protect themselves by means of organization and trade unions. She tells them they need not ignore the principles of justice and charity in their endeavor to attain their end, and that she is willing and ready to guide them. And yet while leaving them their independence, and while giving them every opportunity to exercise it, she impresses on them that there are higher interests that must also be considered.

The recent Encyclical of the Sovereign Pontiff Pius X. to the Bishops of Germany contains principles that should appeal to Catholic workingmen, and we feel that we can do nothing better in this age of Socialism, Syndicalism, Trade unionism, etc., than to give our readers the substance of it. To begin with, the Holy Father considers it a sacred duty imposed on all Catholic workmen, young and old, to keep the Catholic doctrine unadulterated and entire, and on no account to allow their faith to be endangered by mingling with neutral or anti-religious agents. Workingmen must hold firmly and profess unshrinkingly the principles of Christian truth entrusted to the keeping of the Catholic Church. Unconsciously, by their membership in neutral societies, they are prone to adopt a species of vague and indefinite Christianity called "Interconfessionalism," so common in an age when all forms of belief are tolerated. This is bad enough, but when the vague belief issues forth in acts in daily life, we know what the results must be. And yet a workingman's actions, in so far as they are good or bad in the moral order come under the judgment and jurisdiction of the Church. The Social Question and the various controversies arising therefrom regarding the conditions and hours of labor, salaries, strikes, etc., are not purely economic in character; they must be governed by principles in harmony with the moral law, and therefore they cannot be settled without reference to the authority of the Church. Besides, Catholics, whether workingmen or not, should promote among all classes of society not enmities and hidden grudges, but rather mutual peace and charity.

While the object of unions and workingmen's societies is to secure temporal advantages for their members, naturally those societies are to be preferred by Catholics which are directly under the leadership of the Church, but when this cannot be secured, owing to the fewness of Catholic organization, the Holy Father declares that it is allowable for Catholics to join mixed societies, provided suitable precautions are taken to obviate dangers to faith. In Germany, according to this Encyclical, Catholic workingmen must also enroll themselves in some Catholic society even though doing the same in an indirect expenditure; the interests at stake should make them willing to submit to this sacrifice.

There may possibly be less danger to faith in the labor unions of Canada where workingmen are for the most part enrolled for merely temporal reasons, but there is always the danger of Socialism getting a footing therein. Socialist leaders are easily found who are only too willing to instill their doctrines into the minds of workingmen; and with their flowing gift of speech, it is so easy for them to make the unenlightened accept as true all the grievances that Labor has against Capital. It is an easy matter for our young Catholic men to assimilate objectionable doctrines which are set before them with all the conviction that truth would call for. If they are not instructed and solidly anchored in sound Catholic principles, they are easily led away by sophistry and lies. Our young workingmen should take these precautions against surprises of this character by reading what has been written on the Catholic side, by studying Catholic authors on Socialism, by seeing and hearing for themselves what the Church thinks of this depraved system. We have no exclusive Catholic trades unions and syndicates in this country such as exist in Germany, but our young workingmen who belong to unions should make up for this deficiency by joining some Catholic society or other, where the atmosphere is Catholic and where the influence of fellow-members will be felt. Debating clubs, reading circles, and other societies organized for mutual improvement are excellent things, and if patronized by our young workingmen will do much to nullify the baneful influences of anti-Catholic writers and speakers.

E. J. DEVINE, S. J.

CATHOLICITY'S PROGRESS IN NON-CATHOLIC COUNTRIES

The Liberte of Friburg, publishes an interesting article on the gratifying progress which the Church is making in non-Catholic countries. According to its statistics in Germany, where in 1800 there were fewer than 10,000,000 Catholics in 1904 there were 20,380,000. Holland in 1800, had 300,000 Catholics, no bishop and relatively few priests; its census for 1907 gives 1,822,000 Catholics, with 3,758 priests, one archbishop, four bishops and more than 18,000 religious. In Denmark, Norway and Sweden, a hundred years ago, there were practically no Catholics at all; in each of these countries Catholics now number some thousands with conversions steadily increasing from

PRESIDENT SUSPENDER NONE SO EASY

year to year. The most marvelous progress has been made in Australia. Catholicism was non-existent there a century ago; freedom of worship was granted in 1820, and two Irish missionaries began the work of evangelizing the country. To-day there are in Australia more than 1,500,000 of Catholics, with 3 archbishops, 14 bishops, 1,400 priests, 5,500 religious and 35 Catholic colleges. Verily the grain of mustard seed has developed into a mighty tree.—Ave Maria.

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