

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

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

EASTER

THE RESURRECTION

"You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified; He is risen." (Mark xvi. 6.)

With joyful hearts we hail our risen Saviour on this Easter morning. Not like the doubting, disheartened Apostles, wondering whether the glad tidings were true, but with full faith and "lively hope," as St. Peter says, we proclaim the glorious Conqueror of sin and death. Risen, glorious, impassible and immortal, we salute the God made man, our Redeemer, Christ Jesus.

"He is risen," said the angel to the holy women at the sepulchre. He denotes Who it is that has risen, so that there could be no mistake or error of any kind. "You seek Jesus of Nazareth." Yes, the child born of the Virgin Mary, Who was brought up at Nazareth, well known by His kinsmen and acquaintance. The same one Who came forth to preach the way of life, Who went about doing good to all; Whose fame was throughout the land for the cures of the infirm, the cleansing of the lepers, by the raising of the very dead to life. That is Jesus of Nazareth! But He was crucified. Yes, so the angel said, "Who was crucified; He is risen!" Ah, His enemies, urged on by the powers of evil, had vented their full malice upon Him! And He was crucified. He died and He was buried. And they set their guard around His tomb, lest His disciples should steal away His Body and say that He was risen from the dead, as He had prophesied. His enemies had been forewarned and had taken all precaution; but they had plotted against their God in vain. The tomb was empty; the holy women entered into the sepulchre and there was the angel sitting—the glorious messenger of the glad tidings—who declared to them, "You seek Jesus of Nazareth, Who was crucified; He is risen." Christ had raised Himself to life to prove that He was God; that the Redemption that He worked was infinite; that His Victory was for all time, and for all men who sought to share it; and the glory of it in heaven would last for all eternity.

We know the dear, loving Saviour so well from His words and actions in life; we were not afraid of Him as He was then, for He said, "Come to Me, all ye that labor and are burdened," but will He be the same to us now? The Victor in His glory, will He still be "meek and humble of heart?" Will He still be "the friend of sinners?" How can we expect it, for our sins had crucified Him? Blessed be God! Magdalen tells us a different tale. She was the first recorded to have seen Him! and she had been a sinner, and it was for our sakes that He appeared and spoke so gently to her. Again this very day He walked with two disciples who were doubting Him; and He explained the Scriptures to them and why Christ had to suffer. And they knew Him not. He allowed them to press Him to stay with them, and as they were at table, He blessed the Bread and gave them of it! And their eyes were opened, and they knew the Lord. Oh! the first blessed Easter Communion! Happy disciples! and it was given to you, for us to learn the lesson that the Sacred Heart in its glory in heaven loves us as tenderly as at the Last Supper or on the Cross of Calvary. Should not our "hearts be burning within us," as these disciples said one to another afterwards, when we find thus proved to us that the risen King of Glory is still the same gentle Jesus Whom we have known and trusted, and Who has forgiven us so often in His mercy?

These remembrances should inflame our hearts and redouble our devotion and our fervor. He died for us to prove His love; He rose again to prove that His love had redeemed us. Gratitude must bind our hearts to His more firmly than ever. Though risen, and immortal and glorious, He is still with us in the Sacrament of His love, and there, united to Him day after day, He wishes to give us that strength and holiness that we may be worthy to be united to Him hereafter. Every Communion is a pledge of future glory. He would have us remember our future destiny, and live so united to Him in will and desire, that we may attain it. What is that destiny?

Easter proclaims it. He is risen, and so "we shall be also in the likeness of His Resurrection" (Rom. vi. 5). After this short life is over, we humbly and trustfully hope, through God's mercy, to be welcomed to the Kingdom of heaven. And, more than that, when this world passes away, and Christ appears at the great judgment day, the bodies of the saved will also rise in glory. His Resurrection is an earnest of ours; for by a man came death, and by a Man the resurrection of the dead" (I Cor. xv. 21). When Christ shall appear, Who is your life, then you also shall appear with Him in glory" (Col. iii. 4).

Thank God for this glorious hope that is enkindled in our hearts by the remembrance of the Resurrection of Christ our Lord. With renewed fervor let us press on faithfully to do His holy Will; seeking in all things to please Him only; using with every care the graces and blessings that He bestows upon us; trying to make sure

of our vocation. Hardships and fatigue, sufferings and sorrows must not appal us. If our bodies bear the Cross of Christ now, let us rejoice for the more we are like Him now, the more we shall be hereafter. Take heart and trust in this belief: "By the Resurrection of Jesus Christ we shall be made heirs of life everlasting." (I Pet. iii. 21).

HE MADE US FREE

As flame streams upward, so my longing thought
Flies up with thee,
Thou God and Saviour who hast truly wrought
Life out of death, and to us loving brought
A fresh new world; and in thy sweet chains caught,
And made us free!

As hyacinths make way from out the dark,
My soul awakes
At thought of thee, like sap beneath the bark;
As little violets in field and park
Rise to the trilling thrush and meadow-lark,
New hope it takes.

As thou goest upward through the nameless space
We call the sky,
Like jonquil perfume softly falls thy grace;
It seems to touch and brighten every place;
Fresh flowers crown our wan and weary race,
O thou on high.

Hadst thou not risen there would be no more joy
Upon earth's sod;
Life would still be with us a wound or toy,
A cloud without the sun—O babe, O boy,
A man of mother pure with no alloy,
O risen God!

Thou, God and king, didst "mingle in the game,"
(Cease, all fears; cease!)
For love of us—not to give Virgil's fame
Or Cæsar's wealth, not to make well the lame,
Or save the sinner from deserved shame!
But for sweet peace!

For peace, for joy—not that the slave might lie
In luxury,
Not that all woe from us should always fly,
Or golden crops with Syrian roses vie
In every field; but in thy peace to die
And rise—be free!

—MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN

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GERMAN CENTRISTS FACE CRISIS

By Rev. Dr. Wilhelm Baron von Capitaine

Cologne, Jan. 29.—Preparations are already being made for the 63rd Catholic General Assembly which is to be held here in August and which, it is anticipated, will mark the climax of a struggle between the Centrists and the German Nationalists between whom an ever widening political breach is developing. Catholics of the Rhineland, notwithstanding their impoverishment, are making every effort to insure that the Assembly to be held in Cologne will be the equal in every respect of that held last summer in Munich. While the Center Party is not, strictly speaking, a Catholic organization, it has always been closely associated with Catholic interests and an overwhelming majority of its members profess that faith. Hence the party leaders are co-operating in every way to make the coming assembly a success.

Their efforts have been stimulated by an unprecedented campaign of propaganda carried on by the German Nationalist Party throughout Germany but particularly in the Rhineland, with the object of attracting Catholic voters to the Nationalist ranks. A special division of the Nationalist Party has been organized to include all of its Catholic members. Meetings are being held throughout the Cologne and Aix-la-Chapelle districts and every inducement is being offered to the citizens to become Nationalists. Nationalist speakers, one of whom is the former Lord Mayor Waltraut of Cologne, have been addressing audiences throughout this territory. On the other hand the Centrists are pointing out to the electorate that the establishment of a Catholic branch of the Nationalist party is unnecessary and useless, since the Center Party itself has stood for Catholic interests and desires for many years and is in a position to continue to do so today.

There is no denying that the Center is face to face with a serious situation. It lost many of its members at the time it decided to work in cooperation with the Socialists. Moreover it is constantly being described disparagingly as the "party of the workmen" which tends to alienate the support of other classes. Those who leave the party on that account, as well as those who objected to the working arrangement with the Socialists, are most likely to join the Nationalists when they leave the Center and the consequence has been that the former party has gained almost directly as the latter has lost.

The Centrists' Deputy, Dr. Lauscher, a Catholic priest and a Professor at the University of Bonn, speaking at a recent meeting here, outlined the situation as follows: "The German political body has become ill, deathly ill, and the most horrible thing about it is the apostasy of the masses from the ethical order, from the vivifying principles of Christianity. The Center Party in the first place is the party of Christian culture and civilization. To defend Christian principles is its primary purpose. We need the Center today more than ever before; we need it because the political, economic and social necessities of the day imperiously call for a strong party representing the moderate elements.

"We must thank the Center Party that after the Revolution—with which the Center had nothing to do—Christian principles and Christian doctrines were immediately put into operation in the reorganization of the government and thus German unity was saved and civil war avoided. Today we have to fight another 'Kulturkampf.' We have to fight a defensive battle against the war that is being waged upon any positive religion, that is being waged against the whole of Christianity and Christian civilization.

"This is brought about by the disaffection of the masses from the ideals of religion coupled with the gigantic increases made by Socialism, which in its attacks upon religious ideals and culture, can always be assured of the support of all the liberal groups of the Left.

"The situation for the Center Party is tragic because, impelled by undeniable political necessity, it has been compelled to form a working partnership with Socialism and that agreement cannot be dissolved without bringing on disaster to the government. The alliance has been the source of many dangerous complications, but they must be surmounted and in surmounting them the Center cannot break faith with the millions who support it."

Citing some of the specific points of disagreement which imperil the alliance between the Center and the Socialists, Dr. Lauscher continued: "Never will the Center Party lend its aid to the passage of laws that will facilitate divorce, that will legitimize children born out of wedlock, that would grant immunity to the crime of birth control. Attacks such as these, which are being made upon the Christian conception of marriage, are sufficient to show the difficulty of maintaining a working agreement between the Center and the Socialists."

MARY'S SHRINE IN WASHINGTON

By the Right Rev. Thomas J. Shahan, Rector of the Catholic University

On the northeastern edge of the National Capital, in the heart of a broad suburban space, free forever from all encroachments, the Crypt of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception is now rising.

The faith and hope of over one hundred thousand subscribers to the holy work are being translated into realities. The love of Mary Immaculate, characteristic of American Catholics since the time of Columbus, is now beginning one of the noblest churches of the Christian world. Its plan is complete, and ready for execution in the smallest details. If the men of genius who have designed this monument of American Catholic faith were suddenly called to their reward, their splendid vision is ready to pass from the region of mind to the beautiful form which it will fill for centuries, even as the soil fills and enlivens the body of man.

For more than three years the offices of the architects have been strewn with almost a million drawings, sketches and calculations for which an edifice of such large proportions is constantly calling. Today there is a substantial beginning of the great common work. Many generous men and women, the architects, engineers, builders, and devoted co-workers in great numbers have put their hands to it right joyfully, with childlike confidence they have believed that this first national religious monument of divine worship, under the invocation of Mary Immaculate, will soon lift its head proudly among the many historic edifices of the Nation's Capital, and will assert with apostolic freedom the Divinity of Jesus Christ, the mission of His Church to mankind, and the law and the spirit of Christian purity of life.

CENTER OF GREAT RELIGIOUS GROUP
They know that from this great church will go forth at all times the fearless assertion of the sinless birth of the ever-glorious creature

who was to become the Mother of God, and as such to cooperate forever with the divine plan of redemption. On all sides of this noble site stretch the imposing buildings of the University and the houses of the fifteen religious orders now located around this great Catholic educational center. Other religious houses will arise from year to year, and ere long we shall behold the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, rising amid Mary's numerous children of the priesthood, secular and religious, all trained to sound the praises of God's loveliest handmaiden and to preach the saving gospel of her Divine Son.

Washington is surely the natural place for this great monument of Mary Immaculate. Our nation is conscious of a new grandeur and assured of an unparalleled development. This city of one half million will in a few decades pass the million mark, and already the imagination of enthusiasts conjures up architectural glories and splendors in keeping with the free genius of the American people. In coming years Catholic visitors to Washington will grow in number and to all of them the appeal of Mary's great temple will be irresistible. Beyond the many beautiful parish churches, they will find a religious edifice of striking grandeur, meant for all, and exhibiting in its proportions and majesty an image of the Catholic Church in the fullness of its strength and beauty.

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It is certain that as the work progresses, similar donations of altars, pillars, windows, and decorated floor space, will be made by faithful clients of Mary Immaculate. It is hoped that the Crypt may be opened for worship in about two years.

Beware of much talk, remain in secret, and enjoy the God, for thou hast Him Whom all the world cannot take from thee.—Thomas a Kempis.

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