

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

Rev. F. P. Hickey, O. S. B. THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

A TYPE OF OURSELVES There is no one found to return and give glory to God, but this stranger. (Luke xvii. 1b.)

We cannot afford, my dear brethren, to pass by the Gospel read today. It is a picture in which we shall find ourselves. Which likeness is ours? That is just the question.

At the entrance of a certain town ten men, who were lepers, lifted up their voice, saying: "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." Whom when He saw He said: "Go, show yourselves to the priests."

My dear brethren, repeatedly in the Scripture leprosy is spoken of as the type of sin. So we must not be offended, when we are told that these ten lepers represent ourselves, for we are all sinners.

But what happened when they were made clean, that so hurt the Sacred Heart of our Lord that He complained? He freely cured them at a word. Yes, God's grace is given freely; the only price is thanks.

If ingratitude were not a common sin, this miracle would not have happened so. We must not say nine ungrateful out of ten, that were cured, is out of all proportion. If it were not true, our Blessed Lord would not have drawn notice to it in so marked a manner.

Are we clasped by God amongst the nine, or, happily, are we pictured by the grateful one? Let us test ourselves and see. Many pray a good deal, but is not the asking, begging, petitioning out of all proportion to the thanksgiving?

And another way we can test our spirit of thankfulness is this: is our gratitude as fervent after confession and absolution, as our anxiety was keen before? There is an old saying: "Eaten bread is soon forgotten." And God's favors, once received, are soon forgotten too.

The practice of being thankful has a good effect on our own heart. Selfishness naturally makes us hard. Gratitude takes us out of self, by referring the good we have received to the kindness of another.

Such a heart receives and imbibes fresh graces from God. The graces do not run like thunder-rain from parched ground; they sink in, and make it more and more fertile in piety and goodness.

But the wonderful power of gratitude is over God. Yes, over the Almighty. Why, from the very first, did God demand sacrifices and holocausts to be offered Him?

When he was ready, at God's word to sacrifice his only son. And there is one sacrifice that God never rejected. Sometimes He turned away His face from holocausts and burnt-offerings, but never from a contrite and humble heart, returning its love and thanks and devotedness to Him who made it.

Being grateful makes our own hearts happy; pleases God, and causes Him to shower down His choicest blessings on our soul. We have not been sufficiently grateful

in the past; be humble, and afraid that we have actually been ungrateful. Nine out of ten never thanked the good Saviour for their cure. The only price for fresh blessings is thankfulness and gratitude for past ones. After every blessing "return and give glory to God."

TEMPERANCE

WHAT A GLASS OF WHISKY DOES TO YOU

What are the facts regarding the action of alcohol? Precisely how does the normal individual react to a glass of whisky? What does it do to his blood, his digestion, his circulation, his nervous system, his mental efficiency, and his physical endurance?

We must look to science for the answer. Statistics cannot be relied upon in reaching any conclusions in this matter, because industrial, social and hygienic data are all more or less warped and twisted in the gathering, owing to the prejudices and preconceived ideas of the persons who make these compilations.

Alcohol never acts as a true stimulant to the brain, the spinal cord, or the nerves. On the contrary, its dominant influence is depressant. The increased activity of thought and speech after its use is not due to stimulation, but to depression of the inhibitory nervous apparatus.

The effect of moderate doses differs from the effect of large ones in degree, but not in kind. In large doses alcohol produces lack of co-ordination by depression of the brain and lower nervous system, largely due to impairment of sensation.

Alcohol is in no sense a true stimulant to the circulation. If the dose is large enough to cause any appreciable change in the circulation, it is in the nature of depression rather than stimulation. These results are obtained in the laboratory and at the bedside. Respiration is not materially affected. Alcohol never increases the heat in the body, for though in its oxidation more heat is made than when no alcohol is used, the increased radiation, or loss of heat, from skin or lungs under its influence more than counterbalances any such gain.

By its irritating effect upon the mucous membrane of the mouth and stomach it produces a sensation of warmth, and it warms the extremities at the expense of the body. If used to excess the body temperature falls. Being burned up in the body, in limited quantity, alcohol yields energy. When taken in excess of the body's oxidizing power it is eliminated by the lungs, skin, kidneys, and intestines.

In other words, if an odor of alcohol can be detected on the breath that is direct evidence of an overdose, an excess which cannot possibly be utilized to produce energy, but which does produce definite depression of all the physical and mental faculties.

Perhaps the least sentimental of all human sources of information upon alcohol is the life insurance corporation. A life insurance company takes a chance upon a human life with the same cold calculation a horse trader employs in buying a horse.

The experience of American life insurance companies was recently analyzed in respect to the mortality among three classes of policyholders, viz., abstainers, temperate or occasional drinkers, and moderate or habitual users of alcohol.

Of course the heavy drinker cannot be insured, so he is not included in the list. It was found that the death rate among the total abstainers was 12% less than the rate among the occasional or temperate drinkers and the rate among the temperate drinkers was 25% lower than the rate among the moderate or habitual drinkers.

In the experience of one company the total abstainers showed a death rate 40% lower than the general mortality rate. Thus it is evident that the total abstainer is a distinctly longer-lived individual than the temperate drinker, a better investment for the life insurance company. And teetotalism is an asset to the individual for his premiums are less than the premiums his temperate drinking friends must pay.

Life is not so short but that there is always time for courtesy.—Emerson.

SAINT LOUIS

FEAST, AUGUST 25 Sir James Stephen, in his "Lectures on the History of France"

In that long succession of eulogists on the Royal Saint, none have been more enthusiastic than Voltaire. Yet it was impossible, even to their subtle intellects, as it had been difficult to many students in a far nobler school than theirs, to trace the movements of that benign Providence which planted and brought to a prolific maturity in the mind of Louis, as in a genial soil, the seeds of an habitual holiness, and of a wisdom which was at once elevated and profound.

The more distinctly will it, I think, appear, that his natural dispositions received from the associates and teachers of his youth the training which rendered them fruitful of so many virtues. Exquisitely alive to every domestic affection—often oppressed with a constitutional melancholy, which laid bare to him the illusions of life, yet occasionally animated with a constitutional gaiety which enabled him for a while to cherish and play with those illusions—enamored of the beautiful, and revering the sublime—his temper though thus sympathetic, pensive, and imaginative, was allied to it in no common alliance to a courage which rose and exulted in the presence of danger, and to a fortitude which was unshaken in the lowest depths of calamity.

His mother, Blanche of Castile, watched over the royal boy (for he had not completed his thirteenth year when he ascended the throne of France) with all a mother's tenderness, united to a discipline more inflexible, and perhaps more stern, than most fathers have courage to exercise. In Isabella of France, his sister who had preferred the cloister to the imperial crown, he had another kinswoman who bestowed on him all the thoughts, the time, and the affection which she ventured to divert from the object of her almost ceaseless worship.

At his eighteenth year he married Marguerite of Provence, who after having been the idol of the Troubadours of her native land, herself became almost an idolater of him, cleaving to him with the same constancy of love in their quiet home at Poissy, and amid his disasters at Massourah and Damietta.

But the sagacity of Blanche foresaw that these filial, fraternal and conjugal affections might evaporate even while they purified the spirit of her son, and she therefore selected for his tutor a man possessing, as she judged, the qualifications best adapted to counteract that danger. His name was Pacifico. He was an Italian gentleman, who, having been one of the first followers of St. Francis of Assisi, was animated by the profound and fervent devotion which characterized his master. He instructed his pupil in ancient and in more recent history, caused him to ride boldly in the chase, and required him to cultivate every martial exercise and courtly grace which was then regarded as indispensable in a gentleman and a cavalier. Nor did the lowliness of the Franciscan institute prevent the friar from instilling into the soul of Louis the loftiest conceptions of his own royal dignity.

Other and far different associates contributed to form the character of the pupil of Pacifico. In the halls of the Louvre, then a fortress rather than a palace, veteran captains described to him the battles which they had fought with Saladin, and the victories which had expelled the English from Normandy. Beneath the same royal roof, grey-headed counsellors of Philippe Auguste explained to him the methods by which that prince had enlarged the domains and powers of the kings of France; and there, also, civic bailiffs and provincial seneschals interpreted to their young sovereign the motives which had induced his ancestors to increase the number and to extend the franchises of the communes. Thus imbibing from aged men the hereditary maxims of his house, he learned to adopt them as the laws by which his future reign was to be directed.

But the yet higher laws by which his own personal conduct was to be governed, seem to have been derived from a far more eminent teacher than any of these. St. Thomas Aquinas who had migrated from his native Italy into Northern France, was passing there a life which may be said to have been one of deep and uninterrupted meditation; for the results of which he found utterance sometimes in acts of public or solitary worship and at other times in interpreting to mankind the mysteries and the duties of their relations to the Deity and to each other. To the inquiry of Bonaventura as to the sources of his studious learning, he answered by pointing to the crucifix which stood upon his table; and, when seated at the table of the king, or introduced into his closet, he still directed to the same inexhaustible fountain of divine and human wisdom. From his intercourse with St. Thomas, Louis seems to have acquired his acquaintance with that science which the devout Pacifico could not have taught—the sacred science of Christian morality, in all the amplitude and in all the minuteness of its application to the offices of a legislator and a king.

St. Louis occupies in History a place apart from that of all the other

moral heroes of our race. It is his peculiar praise to have combined in his own person the virtues which are apparently the most incompatible with each other, and with the state and trials of a king. Seated on the noblest of the thrones of Europe, and justly jealous of his high prerogatives, he was as meek and gentle as if he had been undistinguished from the meanness of his brethren of mankind. Endowed from his boyhood, by the lavish bounties of nature, with rank, wealth, power, health, and personal beauty he was as compassionate as if sorrow had been his daily companion from his youth. An enthusiast in music, architecture, and polite learning, he applied himself to all the details of public business with the assiduity of one who had no other means of subsistence. Surpassed by no monarch in modern Europe in the munificence of his bounties or in the splendor of his public works, those purest and most sumptuous of the luxuries of royalty were in no single instance detracted from the tributes levied from his people. Passionately attached to his kindred, he never enriched or exalted them at the public expense. The heir of conquests and territorial acquisitions of which the responsibility rested with his grandfather, the inestimable advantages with himself, he restored to his rivals and his adversaries every bit and province which upon the strictest scrutiny by the most impartial umpires, appeared to have been added to the royal domain by unjust or even by unquestionable means.

What, then, was the basis of this sacred harmony in the character of Louis? I answer, or rather every page of his history answers, that it flowed from his constant devotion to that holy canon, and to that divine model in which every utterance and every action are harmonious. His eye was continually turned to that eternal fountain of light with all the docility of childhood. He had early attained to that maturity of moral stature in which the abdication of self-will to the supreme will becomes at once a habit and a delight. In the service of his Creator he found and enjoyed a perfect freedom. It was a service often rendered in pain, but ever rendered with a heart full of cheerfulness and confidence and hope.—Sunday Visitor.

thoroughly too. In the end the good and faithful are rewarded and the wicked, both men and nations perish. The nations of the world are undergoing punishment most severe, just now, perhaps because they have offended grievously against the Church of God. Church history shows, too, how faithfully our Lord keeps His promise to be with His Church always. The gates of hell do not prevail against her. Indeed the Church is Our Lord's Bride, our spiritual mother and her history so glorious should be of the greatest interest to us.—Our Sunday Visitor.

From the Pontiff who is seated on Peter's throne, first to the child who makes his first Act of Faith, the belief is one and identical. That oneness of faith is a fact, forcing itself on the world's notice, and influencing the lives of its people.—Father Gwynn, S. J.

Paintful Swollen Veins Quickly Relieved and Reduced Mrs. R. M. Remier, of Federal, Kansas, writes an interesting account of her success in reducing a severe case of enlarged veins that should be encouraging to others similarly afflicted. She suffered with badly swollen and inflamed veins (in fact one had broken), for more than seven years before she became acquainted with Absorbine, Jr., and used it. Absorbine, Jr., was faithfully applied for several weeks and, to quote from her letter, "The large knots in the veins left, it was all nicely healed, and has not bothered me since."

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Church History THE JUSTICE OF GOD CLEARLY SEEN IN CHURCH HISTORY By Rev. H. C. Hengell, Madison, Wis.

A heart cold and indifferent to religion is often due to a head devoid of elementary religious knowledge. In such a case the remedy is to cultivate an interest in the acquisition of religious knowledge. Not to be interested in religious, although sincerely alert in other matters, indicates a narrow, one-sided mental development. Many university students are notoriously narrow minded because they neglect to cultivate an interest in anything except in their pleasures and the few studies that enable them to get a degree. Most Americans of our day seem to be very narrow minded. They pursue business and pleasure and practical worldly knowledge with eager restlessness but very few of them penetrate beyond that to the absorbingly interesting subject of religion. Some of them even imagine that the religious question is settled and exhausted by talk about progress and humanity and Service with a big S.

There are several ways by which a Catholic can arouse his interest in the acquisition of religious knowledge. A good beginning can be made by reading and studying the history of the Church. History has the advantage of dealing with the concrete. Its disadvantage is that it must be incomplete. History cannot present all the facts dealing with a single country during fifty years. The writer of history must select his facts and disregard what he considers irrelevant. In selecting and rejecting facts, the historian applies some rule or some criterion of his own selection. That is why all books on history are more or less partial. They cannot help it. There is no such thing as a complete and impartial presentation of history. A man has some kind of a theory by which he selects or rejects facts. He selects what fits in with his theory and rejects what does not. Sometimes he leaves the realm of facts entirely, in order to bolster up his theory which is only another word for prejudice. For example, those who want to bolster up a materialistic theory of history or sociology include mere guesses as to prehistoric man. Facts about prehistoric man they have none. We know nothing about so-called prehistoric man for the simple reason that he is prehistoric.

Yet in spite of its disadvantages history gives a broad Catholic training to those who pursue its study as thoroughly as they can. Just as the study of American history tends to make us better patriots, so the study of Church history tends to make us better Catholics.

Church history deserves our warmest interest because it reveals so clearly the wisdom of Our Lord in guiding His Church. Even persecution and the conduct of the occasional judges in the higher ranks of the clergy show how powerless they were to ruin the work of Christ.

Church history shows forth the justice of Our Lord. His mills grind slowly sometimes, but they grind

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