

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. WILLIAM DEMOUY, D. D.

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

EXTERIOR CONDUCT

And entering into the temple, He began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought, saying to them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves. And He was teaching daily in the temple. (Luke xix, 46-47)

Man can assume innumerable roles in this life. He should assume no more than one, but one that is consonant with righteousness which should really be found in his heart. Rather than a role, perhaps it should be called exterior conduct. But whatever we term it, it should be conformable to God's law and be a real reflection of what is in the heart.

As a rule, the exterior will reflect the interior. But this is not always so, owing to the fact that man can, if he desires, conceal what is within him, and because circumstances sometimes urge a man to act otherwise than his heart dictates. It can not be said that simulation is an evil practice in all cases. Sometimes there are reasons for assuming an exterior that is not in reality our own. A mother will sometimes appear what she is not in order to correct her child; a detective will assume various characters in order to capture the malefactor. Nay, do we not in fun often assume various roles? Certainly only the pessimist would condemn these and many other blameless deceptions of man. The most extreme rigorist would not consider them grave failings, even though, perhaps, he would be inclined to call them imperfections.

But we must admit there exists in the world too much of the tendency to appear what we are not. It is, no doubt, often excusable on various grounds, but in the greater number of cases it is reprehensible. Where can you find a class of men or women among whom pretense does not make itself manifest? The rich, the poor, the ignorant, the learned—all classes are affected by it. In fact, the greater the worldly blessing, the more pretense there is with it. It is manifested in dress; it is shown in society; it exists at home; it is apparent everywhere. Though it may not be entirely ruinous, its effects are certainly not desirable; though it may be excused by people, as it generally is, it does not thereby lose its malice. The lessons of humility, which repeatedly are taught in the Gospels, can neither be learned nor assimilated by such people; and, as a consequence true holiness can not exist in their lives.

But this practice of assuming a role not befitting our interior, or making use of ourselves for a work in no way meritorious, is not by any means confined to persons alone. We also manifest the things around us. The Gospel gives us a glaring example of the abuse of something exterior to man. It is good to be in the temple or church; it is lawful to buy or sell. But it is not good to be in the temple or church to buy or sell; and it is incomparably worse to be in the temple and to be buying and selling dishonestly. Perhaps it was the intention of those who bought and sold to go into the temple for their negotiations and carry them on justly, thinking the people would be inclined to do the same because it was done there, it was just dealing. The scheme worked, for they did deceive the people; but He to whose eyes all things are open, could not be deceived, and He did not pass them by. He made manifest their wickedness and began then daily to teach in the temple, using it for the purpose for which it was intended.

The motto of the Christian should be to be right and real—or to be really right. In other words, we should keep the law and when we keep it. There are many people in the world who are right, but who unfortunately, always do not appear real. They are those who always do not manifest their beliefs, or who sometimes are inclined to hide them. Catholics often are to be blamed in this respect, even though in their hearts they feel that they have not committed a fault of any serious nature. But they should remember that they are not living a life apart from the rest of the members of Christ's Church. They are parts of a whole; they make up a unit of the great society of the Church. Now, it is evident that, unless the parts function rightly and really, sometimes the society made up of these parts will suffer in many respects. To be more explicit, it is not a fact that thousands of our people become very indifferent about political elections? Individually, it may be true, for the result of the election would make little difference to each one. But often the whole Church, or at least some members of it, are made to suffer because of this indifference. However, it is not because the outcome of an election will not affect many of our people that so large a number of them are indifferent; in the majority of cases, it is because they are imbued with a false sense of tolerance. We would never urge our people to be other than tolerant, but tolerance will not conquer the armed enemy on the firing-line. Hence, where tolerance consistently can be exercised, we should practice it; where it can not, we are guilty if we use it. When principles and rights are in question, and where experience has taught that tolerance only makes the situation worse, then another course must be pursued.

Let us remember, therefore, to use everything as it should be used. When something—no matter how

holy or sanctified it be—is used for any other end than that for which it was created, its use is put to naught from a moral standpoint. Everything wrong that exists in the world today is here because some means have been used for wrong ends. They have even so distorted Scripture as to pretend to prove from it the hundreds of false religions now prevalent in the world. Hence, the correct use of God's gifts and of man's just products will make us right and real.

AFRAID OF THE TRUTH

Quite recently a committee of Protestants approached the Board of Education with a complaint against the use of certain textbooks of history in our Public schools.

They have complained against history being taught in such a way that prejudices would be created in the minds of the children in favor of the Catholic Church!

They joined to their complaint the insinuation that a secret "propaganda" existed, which was working to undermine the principles of Protestantism! They accused this insidious influence of introducing certain manuals of history into our Public schools.

When they came to specific accusations, will it be believed that they could only quote a certain passage, found in slightly different phrasing in two books by Miss Alice M. Atkinson? These two books are very popular, and rightly so. "An Introduction to American History" and an earlier work of much the same character, "Beginnings of American History," have been written with the utmost attention to the feelings of our mixed population.

There are periods of history, such as the time of the so-called Reformation, which are full of difficulties. Miss Atkinson has told the facts without injury to reasonable sensibilities. It is plain that she is not a Catholic, but it is also plain that she has succeeded in giving a sense of impartiality to what she has compiled. It is also plain that she is not anti-Catholic, and this is the reason that her books are attacked.

That this is so, can easily be gathered from the alleged reason of complaint. A passage was singled out as a sample of her methods. In slightly different wording it appears in both books. We give quotations in full. From the earlier book:

"Of all the Bishops, the most important, of course, was the Bishop of Rome, who came to be recognized as the head of the whole Church, because he was held to be the successor of Peter, the prince of the apostles, whom every one believed to have founded the Christian Church of Rome. His title, Pope, came from the Latin word papa, meaning 'father.'"

And from the later book:

"At his head was the Pope. His title, 'Pope,' came from the Latin word papa, meaning father. He was the successor of St. Peter, whom every one believed to have been the first head of the Christian Church of Rome."

The italics are ours. We use them to show how careful the writer is to avoid any statement that would seem to settle anything that savors of controversy.

It is true that Protestants used to deny (1) That St. Peter was the head of the Church; (2) That he was the first head of the Christian Church of Rome; (3) That the Pope was his successor. But this was in the days when they had complete control of everything written in English. They must know that this country is no longer Protestant. But see how tender Miss Atkinson is to their feelings. She does not assert, with all the modern scholarly non-Catholics, that St. Peter lived in Rome. She says, "Every one believed Peter to have founded the Christian Church of Rome" — whom every one believed to be the head of the Christian Church of Rome."

Note the avoidance of the word "Catholic."

In one book she does appear to assert that the Pope is the successor of St. Peter. But her meaning is plain from the earlier book, which distinctly says: "He was held to be the successor of Peter." Indeed, it is evident that she has made use of every possible expression to avoid the accusation of partiality.

But the old-fashioned Protestant (who, after all is said, is the only live type) does not want even Catholic children to know anything about the early Church, except the lies that have been "propagated" since the time of Foxe's "Book of Martyrs"; that is, the real cause of offense.

That St. Peter was in Rome is now admitted by all scholars, Catholic and Protestant. Among the latter, the most eminent of modern days is Harnack, who was German Minister of Religion in the Imperial Cabinet. It is the universally admitted facts of history are to be suppressed in the way that these Protestants suggest, then the Public schools must cease teaching history altogether. For example, the Jews might prefer that no reference should be made to the Crucifixion. And surely Catholics would also be entitled to similar rights. They might object to any reference to Martin Luther or John Calvin.

"(some Protestants) were called Puritans because they wanted a purer form of religion, entirely free from any of the Catholic forms!" Why not accuse Miss Atkinson of instilling into children's minds the thought that Catholicism is "formal" and "impure." Again, we are told that Philip II. of Spain persecuted the people of The Netherlands because "it was there that the Protestants made their strongest fight for liberty of belief." Is such a passage not an instance of propaganda work? Ought we not to protest against the notion that Catholics were tyrants, while Protestants were heralds of religious liberty, which they certainly were not!

There are similar passages which betray the unconscious bias of the English-speaking person towards Protestantism. Catholics, however, will offer no complaint, because they have become inured to misrepresentation. Our Protestant friends should be the last persons in the world to object to the use of "history" for the purpose of propaganda.

For three hundred and fifty years they have been poisoning the wells of knowledge. No wonder that in their day of defeat they accuse the victors of using their methods. — Catholic Standard and Times.

SAPPING FOUNDATIONS

The foundations of human society are the convictions of the human beings that constitute society. Such foundations cannot be built of material things, however true they may be that they determine the character of the superstructure that appears to the eye. However impressive or otherwise the superstructure may appear to the passerby, its real value and stability will be known only to him who looks into the souls of men.

The most essential props of human society are seriously endangered in these times of confusion. None question the fact that the home is one of the cornerstones of society, but few realize that the home does not depend upon the material of which dwelling places are built, but upon the convictions and conduct of those who enter into wedlock. The quality of the home depends upon the character of those that make it. They may lay foundations who degrade the conceptions of marriage or who repudiate its sacred obligations at the behest of the baser instincts.

Of all the evils that threaten human society at the present time, nothing is so menacing as the prevalence of divorce. We were recently told that in one great State there were last year ten divorces for every thirty marriages. Such a condition is appalling. It ought to arouse all who have not lost all appreciation of the ideal things of life. Above all it ought to demand that to open minds to the wisdom of the Church of God in setting its face against divorce. Our present experience is proof beyond dispute that a break in the dike raised against human passion is the beginning of destruction.

They are rather the victims than the enemies of human society who yield to the temptation of availing themselves of wicked concessions to human passions. They are its worst enemies who advocate false principles. Those who do not comprehend the vital importance of human and divine law cannot be expected to appraise correctly their guilt in promoting laws of divorce and teaching the wicked principles that justify divorce. They that poison the wells are incomparably more guilty than individuals who attack personal enemies. No offense is greater than preaching false doctrines about divorce or anything else.

Not only are they sapping the foundations of human society who justify divorce, but they also who despise the laws of God and man. All authority is of God and law is the utterance of that authority and should be revered as such. However inadequate human law may be it must be obeyed as long as it is not in contradiction to the higher laws of God. They do not appreciate the sanction which all law has for Christian souls who encourage contempt for law. They have but small reverence for the Source of all law who declares that law cannot make men moral. They cannot comprehend their obligations to human society and to the Father of us all who despise law and are utterly lacking in a sense of its supreme importance.

They are sapping the foundations of human society who do not respect the rights under the law of the weakest child or the wickedest negro or the most abandoned criminal. Whatever condemnation there may be for the hysteria which negligently incites the mob to a community act of murder, the attempt at its justification in calmer moments is unpardonable. In fact, it is this attempt at justification of group crimes that inspires the repetition of such crimes. Abominable as the offense often is that arouses the mad indignation of the mob, it is not so abominable as the crime in which a whole community is made to share. It is lamentable that individuals, white or black, are guilty of crime. It is incomparably more lamentable that whole groups of men should deteriorate as to become capable of murder, or even to think in terms of murder.

They are sapping the foundations of human society who are unwilling to carry to completion the execution of law. One of the evidences of our deterioration as a people is the indifference that is manifest on many

occasions to the enforcement of law. No man's rights are secure as long as the rights of the weakest are not defended to the hilt. Human society cannot prosper unless it is ready to devote all its resources to the upholding of law. Law is the bulwark of society. It is the only protection of individual rights that is feasible. If it fails, human society falls. At any cost and at every hazard law must be upheld and the execution of its decrees be made sure and swift as well as just.

Above all they are sapping the foundations of human society who undermine the faith of men in God and the reverence of men for the moral order. The breaking of a single commandment in which is but the contempt for all commandments is ominous of ruin. The far-reaching effects of false religion and false morality cannot be adequately understood by those who look with equal composure upon truth and error. No man can love justice without hating iniquity. If human society is destroyed the beginning of its destruction may be traced to the enervating effects of false doctrines.

The chief underpinnings of human society are religion, its moral principles. If society is to stand and all that is worth while to continue we must return to first principles and build again upon the sure and lasting foundation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. — The Missionary.

DIFFIDENCE AND SERVICE

The recurrence of the feast of St. John the Baptist reminds us how admirably inspirational the life and character of this great saint should be to the Catholic men of today. In this period of distracted souls the man who knows Christ, has a real mission to be a herald of His God to those who have not heard His message.

In entrusting so much of the spread of His Gospel to human agency, our Lord must intend every Catholic, according to one's individual sphere of influence, to be the instrument of a wider diffusion of faith and trust in the religion and the Church which He founded. Nor is any Catholic justified in dismissing this high call to be a herald of Christ with the statement that He can accomplish nothing of this kind. The man beside him in the workshop, or on the doorstep near his home, may be needing just the frank word of encouragement or of explanation to lead him to the knowledge of his Creator's love.

The reserve felt by so many Catholics in speaking of religion should be deliberately set aside, and the earnest Catholic should watch for opportunities to speak of God's goodness as he has learned it in the intimate ways of personal religion. An invitation to attend a Holy Name Society meeting, the seizing of an opportunity to bring a non-Catholic into friendly relations with a priest, a plain, simple explanation of the meaning of the Mass and Holy Communion, may easily rise from a casual friendly act into a real service of religious importance and perhaps of utmost benefit to at least one soul.

The diffidence and reserve which withhold so many Catholics from this missionary effort should certainly be dissolved at the thought of the fearlessness manifested in the glorious work of St. John the Baptist. — Catholic Standard and Times.

SEARCHING ANALYSIS OF "TRENT"

PROTESTANTISM'S ROOTS AND TENDENCIES

The former Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Delaware, but a Catholic layman now, Dr. Frederick Joseph Kiesman, in his excellent book on "Trent," subjects to a searching analysis the early character and the present tendencies of Protestantism. He reaches the conclusion that the great religious revolt of the sixteenth century was chiefly due to three deep-seated disorders: restiveness at spiritual authority, restiveness at the demands of asceticism, restiveness at the supernatural, tendencies, in other words, "to a spirit of anarchy, to the habit of self-indulgence, and to the philosophy of materialism," and tendencies, be it noted, that seem stronger in our day than ever. Developing his thought, Dr. Kiesman writes:

"There was rebellion against authority as such. To begin with, it was revolt of the laity against the clergy on the assumption that none had right to exercise authority over another in spiritual things; and this in spite of the fact that the overthrow of constituted authority resulted in setting up some intolerable tyranny. As often happens, the removal of legitimate authority was destructive of freedom. 'Priestcraft' was milder than presbyterianism; and both of them trifles compared to kingly rule. Luther, Calvin, and Henry VIII. were in their respective ways more intolerably tyrannical than Pops and Curia. Lay usurpation in matters of religion proved a terrible evil in its first exhibitions, and futile for its ostensible purpose in its milder and later forms. . . .

"There was also a common hatred of asceticism, a revolt of human passions against the Church's strict control. Henry VIII. and Luther found many to back them in their war on monks. Instances of monastic corruption there undoubtedly

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were; but the clamor against corruption was mere pretext for pillage. Greed for monastic wealth was the determining cause of most attacks; but there was also root-hatred of the ascetic principle. The standards of the religious life, as of the celibate clergy, were a rebuke to an ease-loving people. In an age keen for physical well-being, no matter how some might disparage the beauty of the world, there was hatred of a discipline which conflicted with the gospel of solid comfort." Protestantism always explained away the Evangelical Councils.

"There was, in the third place, a restiveness at the supernatural. Reformers might begin with denouncing indulgences or something else; they invariably ended by assailing the Priesthood and the Mass. It was always the Mass that mattered, and always the Mass that was marred. The Mass was a miracle, and as such rejected. Modes and degrees of rejection might vary; but in some way or other there was charge of "superstition," by which was meant practical recognition of the supernatural. It was only possible to believe in God, if He kept His distance. The minimizing of the supernatural in the early stages has led to complete denial of the miraculous in many of the later. The campaign against the Mass as guarantee of God's perpetual presence led on to denials of the Incarnation, the ultimate goal of the process being atheism. The overthrow of Sacraments in the sixteenth century led to overthrow of Creeds in the eighteenth; and both happened for the reason that self-sufficient man had ceased to feel the need of Divine grace and Divine truth."

No thoughtful person can fail to see to what a sad and indulgent state it had then fallen the religious laws brought the world of today. The lawless Bolsheviks and the greedy capitalists of the year 1921 are the legitimate successors of the Protestant rebels and tyrants of four centuries ago. Our much married millionaires and our preachers and practitioners of "free love" are the heirs of the subversive principles "bluff King Hal" and Dr. Martin Luther bequeathed to posterity. And the countless, ever increasing sects, and the millions and millions of "unanchored" men and women now in the United States are a melancholy indication of what has resulted from the "right of private judgment" to rid every-day life of the supernatural and to keep Almighty God "at a safe distance."—America.

THE CHURCH AND THE BIBLE

The Catholic Bishop of Northampton, England, neatly turned the tables on Bible Protestants when, from his Cathedral pulpit, he urged upon them that if they wish to retain the Bible or any logical principles at all, they must come back to the Catholic position and accept the authority of the Church.

We have seen, Bishop Keating said to the Protestants, what have Higher Criticism has made of the Bible, because it has been handled as a book and not as an authentic document of the Church. Rationalists, the Bishop went on, are out to destroy revealed religion and the Bible, however much they may express a kind of artistic reverence for it; but the case of the pious Protestant is a sad and deplorable one.

Falling into the language of the war; the Bishop pointed out that in these days when the dogmas of religion seem to be falling into ruin, the one army that holds the trenches is the Army of the Pope.

The Catholic Church, Bishop Keating concluded, has defended the Catechism of the Bible, because the Church alone, with its principles, is capable of defending the Bible.—Southern Cross.

Prayer is speaking to God from the heart.

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