

## FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost.

## THE DIVINE BOUNTY.

And they did eat and were filled, and they took up that which was left of the fragments, seven baskets. (St. Mark viii 9)

The Gospel today tells us of the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, whereby our Lord fed the multitude in the wilderness. Not only did seven loaves and a few little fishes satisfy the hunger of four thousand, but seven baskets were filled with the fragments that were left. This is the way in which God always works in the dealings of His providence with mankind. He is not content with giving us enough: He gives us more than enough—"full measure, pressed down, and running over." He hath opened His hand and filled all things living with plentifulness. Look at the earth which He had prepared as a dwelling for the children of men, and see how bountifully He has provided for all their necessities. On that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men, and cry out with David: "How great are Thy works, O Lord! Thou hast made all things in wisdom: the earth is filled with Thy riches."

But if God has thus lavishly provided for the bodily wants of man, he has been even more bountiful in providing for the needs of his soul. "He hath satisfied the empty soul and filled the hungry soul with good things." Just as air, water, and food, the things necessary for the sustenance of our bodies, are found in the world in great abundance, so also does God's grace abound, which is necessary for the life of our souls. Just as we must breathe the air in order to live, so we have but to open our mouths in prayer, the breath of the soul and God's grace, which is as plentiful as the air of heaven, is poured into our hearts, filling us with new life. And as we must breathe the breath of prayer, so also we must drink the water of salvation which, mingled with blood, flowed from the wounded side of Jesus. That living water which He promised to give is His Precious Blood, shed for all upon the cross, yet continually flowing in copious streams through the sacraments to cleanse and refresh the souls of men. We have but to approach and drink and our thirsty souls shall be satisfied. "He that shall drink of the water that I shall give him," said Jesus, "shall not thirst for ever. But the water that I shall give him shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." Draw near, then with joy and draw this water from the Saviour's fountains, the sacraments which He has ordained in His Church. Wash therein, and you shall be clean; drink thereof, and your soul shall be refreshed.

And for food He gives us the Bread of life, the living Bread which came down from heaven, even His own most Precious Body and Blood in the blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist. "He that eateth of this Bread shall live forever," but unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you. His grace would have been enough to sustain us; but He is not content with giving us His grace alone, He must give us also Himself. This is the greatest instance of the wonderful prodigality of God towards us. After creating the world, and providing it with all that is needful for our bodily life, after giving us His grace in an almost overwhelming abundance, we might think that His generosity would have spent itself. But no, He goes still further, and His last and greatest gift is Himself to be the food of our souls. Surely there is nothing beyond this. God could not do more than He has done. In giving us Himself He has done the utmost that is possible.

When, therefore, we behold the wonderful works of God in our behalf, our hearts should swell with thankfulness to Him, who gives so abundantly unto us, above all that we could ask or think. Since God had been so generous towards us, let us not be guilty of the base ingratitude of despising His gifts, and rejecting the mercies He holds out to us! Rather be generous towards Him, and as He gives us Himself so let us give ourselves wholly to Him, striving in all things to please Him, offering ourselves daily unto Him soul and body, as "a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing to God, our reasonable service."

## FAITH AND ITS ENEMIES.

The question frequently asked is, Why does religion meet with so much opposition in the world to-day? In Germany, Rationalists have recourse to every species of argument to destroy all forms of religion. In France, infidelity is animated with an intense hostility against the religious training of its youth, whilst at home, agnosticism is the prevailing religious sentiment of our university graduates, business and professional men of all ranks and states. Yet with all the opposition, hostility and indifference, we see and read of it, it can not be said that the religious instinct in man's nature is entirely dead. In many a man's mind, and in what is termed the spirit of the age, or it may be like the ears of corn, smothered and stunted in its growth by cares and pleasures of life, but entirely dead, no. The age, with its various attempts at reform, the introduction almost daily of new religions, the changing of creeds, is a proof of this.

Philosophy and science claim to have won a victory over all forms of religious belief, yet all philosophy divorced from faith has no principle to rest its arguments on. It claims that reason and the intelligible world suffice, and that there is no need of revelation, or faith in the super-intelligible will give at best only negative conclusions, or the "I do not know" of the agnostic. Science in so far as it is science and not theory, has not, in all its discoveries, opposed what faith teaches. The quarrel of our world-beleaguers and scientists is not always against faith, but what assumes the garb of faith, and may be termed theology. In

the Catholic sense, faith is the revealed word. It is in harmony with reason and furnishes philosophy with principles to operate on. No known scientific discovery contradicts its teaching. Theology is a human science which has revelation and reason for its foundation. It has all that philosophy has, plus revelation, for its principles. But theology is not faith and arguments, used to disprove the teachings of theology, do not affect faith.

Faith is not responsible for the speculations of the theologian, nor is a Catholic bound to defend the opinions, speculations or what may have been accepted as the current belief of her theologians in any age or country, if these opinions are not a part of the deposit of faith. Yet much of the opposition to Catholic faith rests on the false assumption that we Catholics claim for these opinions, and what is sometimes justly termed "speculation," the same authority as we do for the revealed word of God. Hence the prejudice, even amongst intelligent and religiously inclined persons, against making an honest and fair examination of Catholic belief. There are old traditions, too, which may have been handed down from generation to generation, and to which people attach a religious character, but for these traditions which have no connection with Catholic faith, and which the Church disowns, she is sometimes, by those who misapprehend her faith, held responsible. If certain people believe in fairies or will of the wisp, the Church is no more responsible for their traditional belief than was Christ for the charge of being seditions, a blasphemer and in league with the devil, made against Him by His accusers: for these "human traditions" as designated by Christ, that may exist amongst a simple-minded and unsophisticated people, are claimed by persons, said to be actuated by a love of truth, the assumption and misapprehension rest on their contention that our faith is vain, and that her claims to be the Church of God are without foundation; but there are divine traditions, revealed by the prophets of old, by Christ and His Apostles, which form a part of the deposit of faith and are sanctioned by the authority of the Church. Catholic faith which binds the conscience, is confined to the revealed word of God. Theology directed by the light of reason, and having for its basis revelation, may go too far or fall short of the truth. In any case its conclusions may be accepted or rejected. Not so with what is of Catholic faith which embraces all religious truths. What the Church as an organization does in temporal or disciplinary matters does not come under the head of Catholic faith. They belong to the human side of the Church and are often changed to suit the exigencies of times and places, whereas the faith itself is always and everywhere the same, unchangeable and contained implicitly in the original revelation made to our first parents in Paradise. The very word "Catholic" means universal in time and space. What the descendants of Adam believed for two thousand years was committed to writing by Moses after the great Gentile apostasy in order to preserve the original revelation, and bring back, if possible, to the true fold those who had strayed away and worshipped gods fashioned by their own hands, and liable to the cravings, weaknesses and corruptions of human nature. The synagogue preserved the faith in its purity and catholicity, till its hopes and aspirations were realized in the advent of the Messiah. The same faith, without change, diminution or enlargement, has continued in the Church for the last nineteen hundred years. What may be defined in time belonged to the original deposit of faith, the definition becoming a necessity because of its denial. The Church, commissioned and commanded by her Founder to teach "all truth," jealously guards that faith and preserves intact the revealed principle. Her definitions are simply to guard against false interpretations or denials of any articles of the true faith. The first articles of the Apostles' Creed brings us back to the root of the human family to whom it was first revealed by our Heavenly Father. "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and all things." Have modern Rationalists by their supposed philosophy disproved this first article of faith? Or it might be asked, have they without this faith any real philosophy, or may they not be compared to "the fool who said in his heart there is no God." Science makes no pretensions to have made any discoveries which would lead to a denial of this first article of the creed. But this article of faith does not oblige or demand that we believe that the universe was created from nothing about seven thousand years ago, or that it was originally as we now find it. Modern unbelievers, like the Gentile philosophers against whom Moses defined the true faith, teach that the world was not created from nothing by God, but simply evolved from His own Eternal Being, or formed and fashioned from pre-existing matter. With the definition of faith, philosophy has principles to guide and direct it, without the definition or starting with a denial Creator and creature, it can never reach any positive, much less any logical conclusion, and at best, all they can give us is simply guessing at what might have taken place in the beginning when time began. Again faith says, God created in the beginning the heavens and the earth and all things visible and invisible, but as to the original form, and how it existed before Infinite wisdom considered it suitable for a habitation for man, faith has no quarrel with geologists and men of science, because it says nothing on these topics. Nor does faith oblige us to accept in a literal and historical sense the order of creation as given in Genesis. The demands of faith when narrowed down to its essentials are very small, so small that most unbelievers, when imagining that they are aiming at a deadly blow at its teaching, are shooting entirely wide of the mark.

Faith teaches the angels were created before man, that they are the noblest of God's works. Here the exactions of

faith end. It does not oblige us to believe that angels are incorporeal, or that they are divided into a certain number of choirs. The mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation belong to the deposit of faith. This profession of faith means that God is three distinct persons in one divine substance or essence; whilst the Incarnation means what the Gospel declared it to be in the words addressed by the angel to Mary: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be the Son of God."

Then, who labor to prove that the doctrine of the Trinity is a contradiction, suppose that its real meaning is that there are one, and one is three, which is a false supposition. The orthodox teaching is and always has been that there is one God and only one God, and that in God inwardly, not externally, there is the distinction of three divine persons, and that these three divine persons without vitiating the simplicity and absolute unity of the divine essence do subsist.—F. D., in Inter-mountain Catholic.

## THE CHURCH AND LABOR.

"So the House of Commons is swamped with Labor members," began the Doctor, at our next meeting. "I suppose we shall have two parties of obstruction now, instead of one."

The doctor looked around the room provocatively over his gold-rimmed spectacles. I was reminded of the distinguished Irishman of other days, who, when he found himself dining with non-Catholics, used to make an exceptionally large sign of the Cross at grace, glancing at the company meanwhile with the purpose of "calling out" any of the guests who might betray the smallest inclination to smile.

Here was a trailing of the coat, with a vengeance! Hitherto "no politics" had been a tacit understanding among the "Sowers"—in fact, the oldest rule in the book, as the King of Hearts would have said. And before I could intervene with a discreet red herring (to use a dubious phrase), the scent was being hotly followed up by Harry.

"Obstruction! Why there's a prospect of some work being done in the House at last. These men mean business. And isn't it high time that in a Chamber which claims to be representative of the biggest class in the country should be adequately represented?"

"Precisely," replied the Doctor, wheeling his chair round to the speaker adequately represented. And, in the interests of the men themselves, I say that they are better represented by members drawn from the upper classes. It is a mistake to suppose that a man who has worked all his life in a coal mine is thereby the person best fitted to uphold the interests of miners. He has no perspective. He won't be able to see how legislation about mines must square with other legislation. He will rush in with narrow-minded notions when it is a question of legislating about education or drink. What is wanted in a legislator is not technical knowledge, but a general education and good judgment."

"That might be so," answered Harry. "If we could be sure of securing disinterestedness as well. But can honestly say that the working man has been adequately represented in the past?"

"Surely. There has been an amount of legislation in his favor during the past thirty years."

"Yes a certain amount of playing to the gallery. But are the results such as may reasonably satisfy him? Is there no sweating? Is child-labor adequately protected? Does anyone pretend that our liquor laws are satisfactory? At least you will find our new Labor members alive to the importance of those things; and I don't see why they should be lacking in judgment."

"Socialism," growled the doctor, "and the materialism that always goes with it. That's what we are in for."

"The moral seems to be," put in Father Murphy, "that we should win the working classes and their leaders before materialism sets in. The Labor movement will certainly spread. So much the better. We have nothing to fear from it—if we will but go to the people. The Catholic church is the church of the people."

"But the whole trouble is," objected the doctor, "that the Labor movement is going on not inside the church, but outside. It is drifting away from all Christianity, following the example of the Continent."

"Then we must bring it back. It is not too late. There is no real hatred of Christianity among the working classes. Let them see that the church cares about their welfare (here as well as hereafter), and they will come to her. We are the only church with a message for the poor. If we deliver it they will hearken, as they have always done. But we must go to them, and not wait for them to come to us, for they do not know the message we have for them, and often look upon the church as an institution for producing soothing Sunday morning emotions in those that can afford to pay benevolent and wear showy clothes. And when I say we must go to them I mean, largely that you laymen must go to them, for priests have our hands full enough already."

"I don't find that the clergy always

## LIQUOR AND TOBACCO HABITS

A. McTAGGART, M. D., C. M.

References are made to the following standing and personal integrity permitted by:

W. R. Meredith, Chief Justice, Hon. G. W. Ross, ex-Chancellor of Ontario, Rev. John Potts D. D., Victoria College, Rev. Father Duffy, President of St. Michael's College, Toronto.

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give much encouragement to lay activity," objected the doctor from amid a cloud of tobacco smoke.

"Perhaps not always. There have been difficulties on both sides. But I believe that the clergy are coming to recognize the need of lay help more and more, and to welcome it. As the Bishop of Salford wrote the other day, the present century is going to be the century of the layman."

"Of course it is," said Harry. "The chief thing about the century will be the organization of labor. The labor world is becoming confluent. It is realizing its great strength, and is determined to use it. And it looks to its not to the churches. So that even if the priest had time he could not hope to influence the Labor movement in this country to any appreciable degree. But the Catholic layman might do much in way of organization—with the advice, of course, of the clergy."

"Do you contemplate a Catholic Labor party?" asked the doctor grimly.

"Dear me, no. The thing is unthinkable in England, and the attempt to create it would only divide our forces and make us ridiculous. But we can make use of the existing organizations, and try to christianize them. I believe we might do this if we set our selves resolutely to the work."

"So you would make common cause with Socialism?"

"Say, rather, I would try to save the country from materialism. I believe we Catholics take up quite a wrong attitude towards Socialism. We forget that, as Mr. Devas said some time ago, nine Socialists out of every ten in England would make very good Christian democrats if they had the matter properly put before them. We have plenty of textbooks dealing with Socialism, but they are singularly unconvincing to the man who is bitten with it. They seem formal and academic to him, not to say unsympathetic and irritating. They make him think that we Catholics ignore the social evils for which he thinks he has found a remedy. What we want is not so much to attack his beliefs and upset his theories by argument, but to show him that we have something better to give him. We want to show him that we are less alive to the social evils of the day than he is, no less concerned for the poor and the helpless. Let him see that the Catholic church is, above all, the church of the working man: and let him be warned how ruinous to society is the hard, bitter materialism that so often goes, in practice, with Socialism—now 'the visible becomes the bestial unless it rest on the invisible.' I do believe that we laymen are called upon by writing and intercourse to spread this knowledge of the church. We can so often reach where the priest cannot."

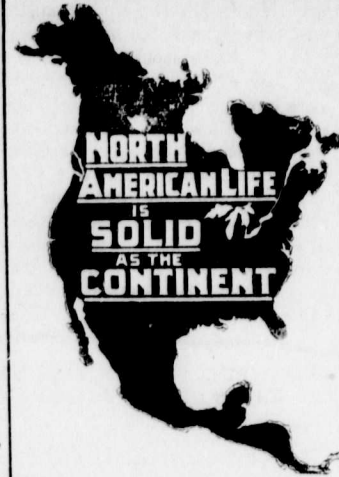
"True," said Father Murphy. "But it's none too easy to get the laymen to take up the work. Many are too busy, and very many will not take the trouble. I think," said I, "that the chief thing wanting is interest in the business. It has not been brought home to the Catholic lay conscience that there is work of this sort to be done. We have to educate public opinion in the matter. Personally I know a good many generous-hearted Catholic laymen who would enthrone about the thing if it were once put before them. If only we could get little groups of Catholics all over the country to meet as we are doing, and realize the possibilities of action, I think much might be done. It would give new life and meaning to the existing social clubs, debating societies, and the like, which are so often unprofitable and dull. Meanwhile let us be practical, and see what we here can do to promote this lay activity. I am going up North tomorrow, and while I am there I shall give a talk on the subject of 'The Church and Labour' to a Catholic working-men's club. I wrote to the rector of the place a few days ago offering to do it, as I should be in the neighborhood, and he jumped at it. I was afraid that he might jump on me. I am glad of the chance, for I believe socialism is rampant in those parts, and I am anxious to learn from the local clergy what chance they think there is of meeting it on its own ground. I have a notion that if we could get hold of a number of intelligent Catholic workmen and prime them up on the subject we could start a really apostolic movement in the big centres of industry. That is what the Catholics are doing in the socialistic towns of Belgium, and the success has been marvellous. Anyhow, I'll report progress next week, and let you know what I can pick up."

"That's the first practical step we have taken so far," said the doctor, smiling. "Only hope you don't come back a confirmed Socialist."—Paterfamilias in Catholic Weekly.

## THE SCRIPTURES.

Our Divine Master might have communicated to us as heavenly truths without telling us that they came from Him, as it is commonly thought He has done in the case of heathen nations, but He willed the Gospel to be a revelation acknowledged and authorized, to be public fixed and permanent, and accordingly as Catholics hold, He framed a society of men to be its home, its instrument and its guarantee. The rulers of that association are the legal trustees, so to say, of the sacred truths which He spoke to the apostles by word of mouth. As He was leaving them He gave them their great commission and bade them teach their converts all over the earth to "observe all things whatever He had commanded them," and then He added "I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

Here, then, He told them to "teach" His revealed truth; next, "to the consumption of all things;" thirdly, for the encouragement of all; thirdly, He would be with them "all days," all along, on every emergency and occasion, until, that consummation, [They had a duty upon them of teaching their Master's words, a duty which they could not fulfil in the perfection which



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facility required without His help. Therefore came His promise to be with them in their performance of it; nor did that promise of supernatural help end with the apostles personally, for He adds, "To the consummation of the world," implying that the apostles would have successors and engaging as He had been with those successors.

The same safeguard of the revelation, viz., an authoritative, permanent tradition of teaching—is insisted upon by an informant of equal authority with St. Matthew, but altogether independent of him. I mean St. Paul. He calls the Church the "pillar and ground of truth," and he bids his convert, Timothy, when he had become a ruler in that Church, to "take heed unto his doctrine," to "keep the deposit" of the faith and to "commit" the things which he had heard from himself "to faithful men who should be fit to teach others."

This is how Catholics understand the Scripture record. Nor does it appear how it can otherwise be understood.—Cardinal Newman in Letter to Duke of Norfolk.

## CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

Our Lord has well shown us that it is not necessary that we should choose our crosses, but that it is necessary we should take and carry such as are presented to us; for when He was about to die in order to redeem us, and satisfy the will of His Heavenly Father, He did not choose His cross, but humbly received that which the Jews had prepared for Him—Behold true virtue, and how it ought to be practised. Seneca showed it a long time ago in a beautiful expression—I wish it were St. Augustine who had uttered the words: "The perfection of man consists in suffering all things well, as if they happened to him of his own choice." To suffer for God is to all our hands with the purest and most precious gold wherewith to purchase heaven. A single package, if I may so speak, of this divine gold, suffices to put us in possession of the glory of paradise. "A moment of light tribulation," says St. Paul, "worketh for us an immense weight of glory." The same observation hardly applies to our ordinary actions. We may say that the most virtuous, compared with afflictions, are only common money, a gross

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