

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

THE ROBE OF JUSTICE.

My dear Brethren,—The Gospel of this Sunday is a parable intended to impress upon our minds the great truth that God has called each and every one of us to the marriage-feast of His eternal Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. The bride is the Church He established on earth. Each one of us is called to be present at this feast. Each one of us has accepted that call. Hosts of others who remain outside of His Church have failed to accept that call and invitation. Of these the Gospel declares they are unworthy. Of ourselves what does it say? "The wedding was filled with guests." After they had gathered together both bad and good. "The King went in to see the guests, and he saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment."

We are then present at a feast. We form a part of the great crowd of good and bad who are there. The King is at hand, Almighty God the Eternal Father. Whose all seeing eye penetrates even the inmost thoughts of every heart. From Him nothing is concealed. He comes. He is here. That all reaching eye is penetrating into the depths of our souls. He wants to find out if all is ready for the presence of His Son before He will permit Him to enter and be present in our midst. Are we adorned properly to meet that Son? Has each one of us been careful to come clothed in the wedding-garment? If so, then we are all ready for His approval, to rejoice with Him in this time of His eternal union and marriage with His Church, His spotless Bride.

But is each one of us clothed in that wedding-garment? Each one is baptized and has received upon his soul the character of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby we were made sons of God and have secured a right to an invitation to this wedding-feast. But this is not all. This wedding-garment must not only be of God's making, but it must at least be clean, white and spotless. It must also be shining with the glory of the virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity, be perfumed with the odors of sanctifying grace. The soul of him who wears it must be unstained by mortal sin. How many of us can say we are now ready for the approach of the King's Son, and clothed in a manner suitable to all that is required to be present at His marriage?

Again, at this marriage we are expected to rejoice with the bridegroom. Can any one rejoice with a bridegroom unless he is a friend and in sympathy with him? Unless he have the same spirit within him who the occasion requires? It is simply impossible if our feelings are not one with his on such an occasion.

Have we, then, that spirit? If we have, we are filled and moved by the Spirit of God at this moment. His Holy Spirit is in our hearts, uniting us to Him as our Eternal Father and claiming for us the rights of His children. The seven gifts of the Holy Ghost are ours, and all the virtues of heavenly beings are present within us at least in some degree. Then we have the spirit of the bride also, His Church. She is also the most cherished object of our affections. Her spirit is also our spirit, and with her we love most devotedly our Bridegroom and all whom He loves. We serve, obey her, and follow her least directions. We are anxious even to anticipate her wishes and oppose all who oppose her, even to death for her sake.

But if we have not this spirit there is but one other to possess our minds—the spirit of the seven capital sins, of pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth. If our souls are possessed by this spirit our wedding-garment has been thrown off and we are worse off than was the man who had none, for the garment made by God and given to us in order that we might be suitably adorned for the marriage of His Son has been soiled and bedraggled with the mire of sin, and in that costume we have come to the marriage.

To many of us, my dear brethren, the call to go to God, to be present at the eternal wedding of His Son in heaven, will be as sudden, and more so, than the questions that have been asked to-day. It will then be too late to answer, if, then, we have on the glorious wedding-garment, we shall rejoice forever with the King's Son. If not, we shall then be cast out where there shall be only wailing and gnashing of teeth for ever.

LETTERS TO MY NON-CATHOLIC RELATIVES.

THE CENTRAL RITE OF CATHOLIC WORSHIP.

By a Convert.

My Dear Relatives,—No doubt you have often wished to know accurately what are the beliefs of Catholics. What you have seen of them and their Church has interested you, because you have witnessed much that is wanting in other faiths. Perhaps what has struck you most forcibly is the practical way in which they show how deeply they cherish their religion. To see the large numbers of all classes of people who frequent the churches every Sunday—no matter how inclement the weather may be—is clear evidence that in the Catholic Church there is something of a very unusual character, something not to be found in any other church. Men judge of human institutions from the results obtained from them. So in estimating the worth of a church we rightly look to the religious life of those who compose it. When we know they attend the services with unwearied regularity and edifying devotion, we reasonably conclude that the practices of such a church are eminently conducive to the upbuilding of man's spiritual nature.

Now, I invite you to go with me in spirit to a Catholic Church on a Sunday evening, that you may see what it is that draws people to the services there. It is a little before the appointed hour for Holy Mass—as the principal rite of the Catholic Church is called. The people enter quietly and genuflect towards the altar before going into their pews. This action is to show their belief in the Real Presence of our Divine Saviour

upon the altar. When they have knelt, they remain for a shorter or longer time in sweet communion with their Sacramental God. What a fitting preparation for assisting at the angelic sacrifice of the Mass, which is a continuation of the sacrifice of the Cross on Calvary.

Presently the priest enters, clad in his vestments, and at the foot of the altar begins Mass. The people, thoroughly imbued with a sense of the awfulness of the action they are participating in, follow the priest with intense devotion. They may or may not use the liturgical prayers, each one using whatever he finds most helpful or satisfying. The sacred rite proceeds with solemn dignity until the moment of consecration, when, with the words, "This is My Body; this is My Blood," the substance of bread is changed into the substance of the Body of Christ and the substance of wine into the Blood of Christ. The people are bowed in profoundest adoration before their God, Who has descended upon the altar to offer Himself to His Eternal Father as a victim of propitiation for their sins. How soul-subduing it all is; and what deep peace fills the heart of each worshipper! God has visited His people, bringing heaven as near to earth as it can be.

The Mass is continued until the Communion, when the priest consumes the offering and the sacrifice is completed. He may also give Communion to some of the people; in which case they receive only under the form of bread—the Body and Blood of Christ being contained whole and entire under either species.

Should any one of you have been really present at the divine service, and followed sympathetically through it all, you would doubtless have experienced an unthought-of feeling of awe and reverence. And perhaps you would have been keenly sensible of the great deprivation which was yours. Maybe the prayer which rose unbidden to your lips was: "Oh my God! Would that I did believe as do these Catholics."

Continue to pray and your desire shall be granted. Catholics are praying for you and for all others who are without the true fold. In the meantime, read and reflect on what you read, and you will gradually come to see the Catholic Church's teachings and practices in a different light from that in which you see them now. Be honest with yourself and in God's good time all will be well with you.—Catholic Universe.

GLADSTONE ELOQUENT TRIBUTE TO THE CHURCH.

To the editor, Sir,—The history of Christianity since the days of the Apostles, the formidable trials the Church suffered in the early days and her unimpaired vitality to-day, make us feel sure that the storms now raging around the Rock of Peter will leave it, as all others have done, boldly outlined against a clear horizon and washed clean of the seaweed and barnacles which a sea of human imperfection inevitably deposits, with time, on its adamantine sides.

The Church of Rome—the Catholic Church—must ever triumph till time shall be no more. The Divine arm sustaining and protecting the Church is visible in Rome itself. Jerusalem, that accomplished her destiny and calmed the passions and prodigious services, was, in its time, a no more striking example of Divine guardianship than is Rome to-day. Her spiritual supremacy shows through all vicissitudes, and is conclusive proof of her providential mission. Is it not the doom of everything earthly to decay and perish—the fate of the works of man to wax old and fall to pieces like a moth-eaten garment?

The Church of Rome alone remains unchanged by time and retains after a long existence of twenty centuries the unimpaired vigor of early manhood. Around her are the ruins of empires and behind her is the cemetery of royal dynasties.

Since the time when her rebel sons turned on her early in the sixteenth century, she has been attacked as the enemy of human enlightenment and Japhetic civilization. Yet what are the facts? The Roman Pontiff is to-day, in his Vatican palace and in St. Peter's Basilica, surrounded by more treasures of art and monuments of human skill and human genius than any living man, than any sovereign or any corporate society in the world.

If, to-morrow, some appalling catastrophe were to sweep from off the earth into a bottomless sea, every work of art and science, every monument of human knowledge and human skill, and every record and heirloom of the whole family of mankind, yet leave the Roman Vatican untouched the Pope of Rome, from the treasures of his own household, could restock the world. No art institute that existed in the past or that exists to-day can approach it in all that makes for the glory and pride of our race.

Has the modern non-Catholic intellect so completely lost the sense of reasoning and the appreciating of great things as not to understand the weight and value of this one fact and this protection of the productions of our civilization?

Fifty years ago that great statesman and man of giant intellect, William Ewart Gladstone, writing aside his inherited prejudices, publicly acknowledged the indissoluble union of the Catholic Church and Christian civilization.

"Since the days of the persecution by Pagan emperors," writes Mr. Gladstone, "the Roman Catholic Church has marched for fifteen hundred years at the head of human civilization and has driven, harnessed to its chariot as the horses of a triumphal car, the chief intellectual and material forces of the world. Its learning has been the learn-

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ing of the world, its glory, grandeur and majesty have been almost thought not absolutely, all that in these respects the world has had to boast of." (Studies of Homer, vol. 11 p. 331.)

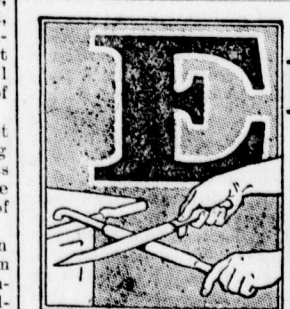
To me, dispassionately and calmly surveying the ground the past offers no problem more difficult of solution than the persistence in heresy of great and morally clean men like Gladstone. His bowed to the call, entered the Church, and died a nun at Bruges. Many of his intimate friends, Dalglair, Frederick Oakley, Faber, Cardinals Newman and Manning and others, returned to the faith, but for some reason, known only to God, Gladstone died in, at least, material heresy.

His persistence in error would seem incredible were we not too familiar with the subtle influence of pantheistic philosophy in perverting the vision and the will of highly educated men. Agrippa's challenge to Paul was not altogether idle or unmeaning. Much learning does indeed often make men mad, and we have a deplorable example of it in the case of the former president of Harvard. Or it may be that Gladstone's controversy with Cardinal Manning on the prerogatives of the Holy See soured him. Manning was better armed for the contest, and Gladstone may have felt—more keenly by reason of his European reputation—the humiliation of his defeat. Many a fervent prayer has gone up to God for his soul, and, though we cannot plead "invincible ignorance" on his behalf, let us hope that by the operation of some mysterious law, unknown to us, he may in the end enjoy the Beatific Vision of God.—Intermountain Catholic.

"NO BABIES, NO BALLOTS."

Father Phelan of the Western Watchman of St. Louis, has set the daily papers all agog with a new scheme of woman suffrage, which he proposes to embody in a bill to be presented to the Missouri legislature next winter. "No babies, no ballots" is the head given the report of the new scheme. Father Phelan says of his proposed measure:

"In many countries the right to vote is based on property. A man of property is supposed to have more interest in the welfare of the country than one who has no such stake. And the larger the stake the greater the interest. There is much truth in that view. But we think a man who gives to the nation a new citizen offers a greater pledge than the richest landowner. Political econo-



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mists can tell us in dollars and cents the economic value of an immigrant. They could also tell us the value to the commonwealth of a new-born babe. To our mind a man who gives to the state a new citizen places that civic recruit as a hostage of his own loyalty, and also adds materially to the wealth of the nation. On this principle we would have three kinds of suffrage, mankind suffrage, family suffrage and property suffrage. Of the first and last we need say nothing, as they are well-worn themes. But we have a good deal to say of family suffrage. We would give every family an additional vote for every child born into it. If a couple have ten children we would give the family twelve votes; two for the parents and ten for the offspring. In case the couple agreed politically we would permit the father to cast all twelve votes. If the couple were divided in their views of politics we would give the wife her own vote and the vote of all her daughters; and the husband his own vote and those of the boys. This would give the female suffragists all that they now demand and more; but it would disfranchise utterly the childless and seceding sisterhood. It would encourage large families."

The novel plan was explained to Msgr. Falconio, the Apostolic Delegate, in Chicago recently and he looked a bit puzzled. Then he smiled and said: "You'll have to enlighten me a little. Just what does 'no babies, no ballots' mean?"

Thereupon the interviewer handed the Archbishop a clipping containing the suggestion. Archbishop Falconio took the clipping and began to read. Then he began to smile. The more he read the more he smiled. By the time he had come to the end he was laughing.

"Now, that is really a very good idea," he declared, handing back the clipping. "It has the elements of an excellent plan."

The Archbishop reflected a moment. "Indeed, why not?" he inquired. "Women in some states are given a vote on a property qualification. Surely children are far more valuable than property. It would thus be reasonable to give votes to married persons on the basis of the number of their children. However—" and here the Archbishop sighed slightly. "I fear that Father Phelan will have some difficulty in getting his plan adopted as a law, as he suggests he will try to do."—True Voice.

PULPIT, PRESS AND PLATFORM.

Sixty years ago Cardinal Wiseman formally established, for the first time since the reformation, a Jesuit community in London, by the opening of the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Farm Street. Commenting on the recent celebration of this anniversary the Liverpool Catholic Times says:

If the old houses and hiding places of the city had tongues to tell their history they could tales unfold of the courage and trials and sufferings of Jesuits for the faith in former times—in the dark penal days. It is curious that no matter how self-sacrificing their lives may be, and however pure their motives of action, the Jesuits are never without critics of their conduct, and so, despite their noble fight for the faith,



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criticism of the part they played, even during the era of fierce persecution, has not been absent in this country. But happily the Jesuits of these islands have lived down the prejudice. The people who have been in close touch with them for these sixty years know them—know that they are open and straightforward as they are bold and fearless, that their learning, their energies, their whole thought and work are devoted to promoting the welfare of their fellowmen. Thanks to the examples which they have given by word and deed, and upon which they are one and all to be congratulated to-day, there is now no country in which the Jesuits are more highly esteemed than in England, where they were hunted down like beasts on their first arrival in 1580, and where so many members of the Order have suffered martyrdom."—From America.

As one lamp kindles another, nor grows less, so nobleness enkindles nobleness.—Lowell.

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