

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. WILLIAM DEMOUY, D. D.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR RELIGION "Thou art My beloved Son: in Thee I am well pleased." (Luke III, 22)

It at first sight appears strange that God the Father should have expressed His delight in the person of Christ. He was God's Son—therefore, God—and hence, necessarily must be perfect in all His qualities. Whatever perfection was found in the Almighty Father—and it was infinite—existed in no less a degree in Jesus Christ Himself, who was of the substance of the Father, begotten from all eternity. A moment's reasoning is enough to convince any one of this truth.

In a sense, this statement from God the Father was needed. Not, however, because there could be any real, well-founded doubt concerning the infinite perfections of Christ, but because the people needed this instruction, in order that they might have the proper idea of Christ and of the truth of His mission. They were yet infants in Christianity. The sublime truths regarding it and its Author had to be taught them, so that they could grow into strong adults in the knowledge of their faith. Christ appeared to be a human being like themselves, and they might have considered Him only a simple man. So God, His Heavenly Father, made it clear to them that He was His Son. This action of God the Father was also a consolation to Our Saviour in His humanity. He was doing His Father's work well, both as God and as man. As God He enjoyed the beatific vision and no happiness on earth could come to Him that would be new. But as man He could suffer; He could, as it were, yearn for a word of cheer and appreciation from His Father, to accomplish whose ends He had descended to earth. It was, therefore, a demonstration of God's goodness, both in sight of the people and before His divine Son, when He said those sweet encouraging words to Christ.

But it was also done for another reason, with another purpose in view. It was to serve as practically a command to us to learn well who Christ is, and to become familiar with the doctrines of our faith. In other words, we must take an intellectual pleasure and delight in the great truths that God has revealed to us, through His divine Son. These revelations were not made known to us in order to be forgotten, nor was there lacking on the part of God an intention that we take a lively interest in them. We must realize their importance, for they are the noblest of all truths, and our minds may profitably dwell a lifetime upon them. It is true that they may not help us in our material welfare, but we never should forget that there is a higher, spiritual welfare to be kept always in view. We must endeavor to learn everything that can relate to it, in order to attend to it in the best way possible. We were made principally for this latter life, and we have the eternal command to value the more highly than the material. In other words, we must care more for our souls than for our bodies.

It is not pleasant to note the numbers of people of all classes, even Catholics, who are ignorant of so many of the great truths of God and religion. And it becomes more unpleasant to observe how the majority of them make no real attempt to light; nay, it is quite evident that they have no such desire. The heart does not occupy itself with the things of which it knows little or nothing. Attachment comes really from knowledge. The knowledge upon which we base our attachment may sometimes be false; but even then the attachment remains until this fact becomes known to us. With regard to religious truths, they cannot be false, since God is their author, and he who we form for them never can discover any reason for their discontinuance. Through these truths, in a certain sense we pass to the love of God, whose infinite qualities of amiability never can be anything but true. This mutual affection is so strong that it never will lessen, unless we render false the qualities that cause God to love us as friends, or destroy their goodness. Where there is no interest manifested, or even only a passing one, no real love is found. So it is true of our connection with God. And what are we, bereft of God's love?

We can not exactly blame all those who are ignorant of the Faith, since many never were given opportunities of learning it. They may have lived in distant places, which were but seldom visited by a priest. Some have been prevented from learning the truth through the negligence of their parents. But this can not be said of those who are ignorant of their religion in the present generation. Literature, treating all the phases of our holy faith, and written in language that all can understand, is within easy reach at a nominal price. There are numerous Catholic publications overflowing with instruction for old and young, which can be brought into the home at regular intervals at little expense. There are the sermons of the pastors, and of missionaries who come at regular periods, to instruct and arouse the people. All these help wonderfully

in this direction. In the recitatives, instruction will be given cheerfully and willingly to any one who needs it. For the young, there are the parochial schools, the maintenance of which necessitates sacrifices being made by teachers and people. Yet how many send their children to other schools where they are never taught, even indirectly, anything that would tend to lead their thoughts toward God and religion. Ignorance today regarding the tenets of religion is in the most cases due to carelessness and sin. It is no wonder that so many will stand by deaf, dumb, and mute, when they should be raising a voice of defense. And how can it be otherwise, for, not having weapons with which to fight their enemies, they must yield. Shame on them! Christ has said that He who refuses to confess Him before men He would not confess before His Father in heaven. Those who fail to confess Him through culpable ignorance are no doubt as guilty as those who fail to do so through negligence.

Let Catholics arm themselves for the fight against ignorance, errors, and prejudice, by filling their minds with the truths of their religion, and, as far as possible, with solid reasons for the faith that is in them. Their interest, too, in the God who made them and who they expect will reward them, should urge them on to the work necessary to acquire this knowledge. To be good Christians, in the true sense of the word, they must be acquainted with their religion. Otherwise they become like quacks in the worldly professions, though even lower, for the latter make a pretense at true knowledge and often deceive people into believing them. The quack Christian, however, can do nothing, for sincerity and love of his greatest blessing should be his only arms; but these he is absolutely unable to have if God's grace reigns not in his heart and a true knowledge of religion dwells not in his mind.

MOTHER'S DAY

RECALLS GLORIOUS HISTORY OF THREE GREATEST MOTHERS

Denver Catholic Register

Mother's Day! What a wealth of meaning is summed up in the word Mother! The Church has a ceremony called canonization when, after long investigation, one of her children conspicuous for holiness of life and virtue is declared to be among the saved in heaven, and worthy of special honor. But there is another form of canonization with which we are all familiar—the canonization of our own mothers in our hearts. When a grown man or woman thinks of virtue, it is generally in connection with Mother.

God loves this trait in us. He has given us the special command to honor our fathers and our mothers, and He has given His Church a very special devotion to His Mother. The Catholic Church loves Mother's Day, because it recalls to her children's minds the Great Mother whose memory the faithful so tenderly treasure all during this month. The Blessed Virgin Mary could truly be called the Mother of God, because she was the Mother of Jesus Christ, who was the eternal Second Person of the Blessed Trinity become man. She was the Mother of God, because she was the Mother of a Person who is God. That Person is our second Adam, our Father in the spiritual life, because she is His Mother, Mary is the Mother of us all.

She was sinless, never having been stained in the slightest way. She was, therefore, the special Queen of Mothers. We love to think of our mothers as angels of purity; sweet souls who would sacrifice everything but God for us. Mary was such a Mother. Perhaps the next greatest mother in Christian history was St. Monica. Her beloved son Augustine had fallen into the heresy of the Manicheans and was leading a life of wretched immorality. For many years she prayed and wept for him, and although he even dared to insult her in order to escape her importunities, her prayers went out, and he became, like her, one of the greatest saints who has ever adorned the Church. "Such a mother!" he says of her. And well he might; for as great writers have declared, she bore him twice, once in the womb, once in the spiritual life.

Going back into the Old Law perhaps the greatest mother we meet was that of the Machabees. "Now the mother was to be admired above measure," says the inspired word of God about her, (II. Mach. 7, 20-21) "and worthy to be remembered by good men, who beheld her seven sons slain in the space of one day, and bore it with a good courage, for the hope that she had in God; and she bravely exhorted every one of them in her own language, being filled with wisdom; and joining a man's heart to a woman's thought." They were going to death as martyrs for the Jewish religion, then the true Church. "And last of all after the sons, the mother also was consumed." History does not record a braver spectacle, with the single exception of Mary's vigil at the foot of the cross, while the Son of God hung dying and a mob of maybe a million people surged around insulting Him. The supreme palm of bravery among women, therefore, goes to two mothers. Could anything be

more sublime than the tribute of the Holy Ghost to the Machabees' mother—"Joining a man's heart to a woman's thought?"

It is true, indeed, that the life of a consecrated virgin is the noblest a woman can lead, as St. Paul distinctly teaches, but the mother instinct is as noble as the faithful queen of a family must be very high. What more glorious picture is there than that of a mother and child? William Gilmore Simms, the poet, says on this:

The wind blew wide the casement, and within— It was the loveliest picture!— a sweet child. Lay in its mother's arms, and drew its life.

In pauses, from the fountain—the white round Part shaded by loose tresses, soft and dark. Concealing, but still showing, the fair realm Of so much rapture, as green shadowing trees With beauty shroud the brooklet. The red lips Were parted, and the cheek upon the breast Lay close, and, like the young leaf of the flower,

Wore the same color, rich and warm and fresh:— And such alone are beautiful. Its eye. A full blue gem, most exquisitely set, Looked archly on its world—the little imp. As if it knew even then that such a wreath Were not for all; and with its playful hands It drew aside the robe that hid its realm.

And peeped and laughed aloud, and so it laid Its head upon the shrine of such pure joys. And, laughing, slept. And while it slept, the tears Of the sweet mother fell upon its cheek— Tears such as fall from April skies, and bring The sunlight after. They were tears of joy!

And the true heart of that young mother then Grew lighter, and she sang unconsciously The silliest ballad-song that ever yet Subdued the nursery's voices, and brought sleep To fold her sabbath wings above its couch.

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AT THE THRESHOLD OF CHRISTIANITY

Floyd Kenner in America

While denominations here have been discussing the terms on which they would consider uniting with one another, while they have been setting forth all sorts of programs, all preceded by an "if," some of them even suggesting that they would unite with Rome, if only the Pope would resign or something of that sort, while all their well-meaning but futile schemes have been going up in the air, their representatives in the foreign mission field have been taking some very practical steps along these lines. With them it is not merely an academic question, nor has it been even a matter of greater efficiency in administration alone, it has been a matter of life and death. "The heathen in his blindness" is not always such a dumb fetish worshiper as we have at times been wont to think. The mere fact that he is not a Christian does not prevent the intelligent East Indian or Japanese or Chinaman from being quite on a par with his Western neighbors in his knowledge in general, or even of religion in particular. In India especially the Christian is met by a well-educated gentleman who says quite calmly and with a sense of

superiority that he is a Hindu because Christianity seems to him too much concerned with material advantages and too little concerned with the soul of man! No wonder that those denominations which lay the greatest stress upon what they are pleased to designate as "practical Christianity" are confronted with the necessity for some sort of change in their methods. Moreover, the almost unbroken rivalry which is all too evident between sects repels rather than attracts the non-Christian.

We are so accustomed in this country to the idea of keen competition along every line that we deprecate the existence of those dual systems which there is a manifest overcrowding of a field, and only where world prudence dictates the withdrawal of some, or the merging of other sects, does the problem come home to us. In the mission field, however, problems too large for any single denominational group to handle effectively are bound to arise, and the baneful effect of inter-denominational strife must be kept in the background, if converts are to be made at all. The mission leaders have realized these things and have set about with no small degree of statesmanship to remedy them.

Several problems at once confront a person who advocates anything which looks like a reunion among the scattered forces of Christendom. All agree that such a reunion is desirable, even essential, but few agree as to the terms upon which it may be brought about. And not only does this come into prominence one had almost said, loom up as an impassable barrier, when the question of reuniting the separated bodies to form one organic whole comes up, but it obtrudes itself even when cooperation is the point at issue. How great a difficulty it is, and what steps have been taken to overcome it, are able to furnish two articles which appeared in the International Review of Missions for October, 1923, entitled "Is Identity of Doctrinal Opinion Necessary to Continued Missionary Cooperation?" and "The Practicability of Missionary Cooperation in the Face of Doctrinal Differences."

In the second of these the Anglican bishop of Bombay sets forth *mutatis mutandis* without which, to his way of thinking, there can be no measure of cooperation. He says: "I do not see how cooperation in propagating the belief in Jesus Christ as the determining factor in life can possibly be carried on together by persons who affirm Him to be God, and others who deny that He is God. . . . Missionary cooperation in any sphere is cooperation in bringing to men a revelation about God, and, before we can cooperate in doing that, we must agree in general what revelation of Himself God has made and we are to preach."

These, which appear eminently reasonable, are the bishop's answers to certain questions which were raised in these articles, and Dr. Robert E. Speer, who wrote the first-named paper has much the same to say. Though he has not hesitated to set forth the difficulties he has found, he believes that "Any institution whose work does not involve divisive doctrinal issues, it would seem, might as truly be a cooperative undertaking, providing the cooperators trust one another as fellow-Christians, as that those parties should go out to China or India on the same steamship."

And even where doctrinal questions do divide he feels that in "cooperative missionary undertakings and associations identity of opinion on the whole body of Christian doctrine is not requisite," though, in his view, it is essential that all "should hold a fundamentally unitary faith in and about our Lord Jesus Christ as He is set forth in the New Testament, and what he means by that is further made clear when he states his own belief. Speaking in the third person he tells us:

"He accepts the whole of Christianity as set forth in the New Testament. He believes unqualifiedly in every article of the Apostles' Creed. No language is adequate to state his conception of Christ. He believes that He is more and greater than any words can ever express, 'the Word made flesh.' God incarnate, reconciling the world to Himself, the only Saviour, our Lord and our God. He believes in the truthfulness of His miracles, and rejoices with great joy in the miracle of the Virgin birth, and of the real resurrection of Christ and of His future personal advent."

But, he rather woefully concludes, "I am afraid this may seem to many very antiquated and unmodern." It would seem, therefore, as though anything approaching organic unity among the various non-Catholic bodies is, indeed, remote, but in their mission interests they are already finding it possible to join together in various pure philanthropic, educational or medical enterprises, and out of these are growing up native "united Churches" which are developing a nationalistic tone in the Christianity of their respective countries and are becoming a force which must be taken into consideration. We cannot wave these phenomena aside as the ebullitions of an immature enthusiasm. They are the practical expression of an earnest desire, an intense yearning for what the

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Oriental converts see as a necessary fundamental in the Christian religion, unity. That they are misguided in their efforts to reach it, is, unfortunately, only too true, but that they will reach something that satisfies them in this regard is very evident, and if they do reach that stage of satisfaction apart from that Divine unity which the Catholic church alone knows, then we shall find ourselves confronted with an obstacle far greater than any which now meets us. A united Protestantism in the mission field will be a formidable antagonist, not only in its active opposition to the Catholic system, but also in its breeding of self-satisfaction, and in its consequent inability to see the necessity for anything further.

Now is the time, if ever, to show the excellencies of the Church's way before this cooperative movement gains too much headway. The opportunity is before us. Our missionaries are the only ones who can point the way, and because Catholic missionaries from English-speaking lands are the ones who have the most knowledge of the conditions which have brought about cooperative associations and movements, they are the men who must take the lead in showing the "more excellent way," the Divine Plan. It is, perhaps, the greatest thing they have to do, yet they must choose just the right occasion for doing it. In this theirs is a situation of great delicacy. We must support them even when we do not know exactly why they are doing the things they do. The plain duty of every American Catholic is to give to his missionary representative every ounce of spir-

Ontario's Minerals

The Province of Ontario contains 407,382 square miles, over three times the area of the British Isles. Seventy per cent. of this vast area is underlain by igneous rocks, which are pre-eminently the metal-bearing formation of the Province. Much the larger part of the Province lies to the north and west of Lake Nipissing. The goldfields of Porcupine, Kirkland Lake, the Cobalt, and the Lorrain and Gowganda, the silver-copper deposits of Sudbury, which supply over 96 per cent. of the world's nickel, testify to the mineral richness of this vast region. Much of this great stretch of territory is only partly explored and it is doubtful whether a more attractive field for prospectors can be found anywhere in the world. The climate is invigorating, there is plenty of wood and water, and though the average height is only 200 feet, the prospector can go anywhere in his case. Working conditions underground are most favorable, the rock is solid, water gives little trouble, and the temperature varies from about 45 degrees F. in winter to 48 F. in summer.

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Table with 2 columns: Mineral, Value. Includes items like Pig Iron (\$83,329,000), Nickel (\$18,300,000), Copper (\$11,900,000), Silver (\$1,200,000), Cobalt (\$1,100,000), and various other metals and minerals.

For lists of publications, maps, geological reports on mining areas and other information apply to: Hon. Charles McCrear or Thos. W. Gibson, Minister of Mines, Dep. Min. of Mines, Toronto, Canada.

itual support he can lend, and also, which is of even more immediate need in this case, make it possible to have our missions so materially equipped that they can, without making themselves seem ridiculous, point to the excellencies in the very matters which the non-Catholic cooperative plans seem to produce and at the same time can show unquestioned superiority in the things of the Spirit. Thus they can appeal to the better classes among the native populations with some assurance that their plea will be heeded. A quarter of the world's population is at the threshold of Christianity. Will it be the spurious kind which has all but broken down in Western lands within the past decade or so, or will it be that variety which we know Christ Himself left us to perpetuate? You, reader, have no small share in determining.

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