

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY THE REV. F. P. HICKEY, O. S. B.

PASSION SUNDAY

ETERNITY

"If any man keep My word, he shall not stand death for ever." John viii. 52.

The thought of eternity is repeatedly brought before us and thrust upon us as a means to our salvation. How often from our Lord's own lips do we hear such words—"for ever," "eternal life" and "life everlasting." The prayers of the Church continually instill the thought into our souls, concluding "world without end. Amen."

It is not to make life and miserable that the thought of eternity is thus obtruded on us, but that it may steady us in our temptations, in our wandering from the path of duty, in our frailties and seeking self-indulgence. The thought of eternity should make us despise this world, "for the world passeth away," but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever." (1 John ii. 17). This thought is meant to make us earnest and strenuous, striving our very utmost to gain heaven, the home of our eternity.

And yet, what do we find? Is the thought welcomed as the repeated warning of an anxious Father, lest we should stray and be lost? Alas! no; for the majority of men shun the thought, banish it, dread it. And why? Because instead of being pilgrims in this world, they have settled down in it and have grown fond of it. They know it, it is a pleasant world; it is good enough for them. They have forgotten the words of St. James:

"Know you not that the friendship of this world is the enemy of God?" (James iv. 4).

And others fear the thought of eternity, knowing in their hearts that the lives they are leading are not tending to heaven, for tepidity, self-ease, forgetfulness of prayer, neglect of the sacraments, are with out doubt proofs that they are being borne along the road that leads to everlasting death. Therefore the thought of "for ever" is a dread to them; and they cowardly try to shirk it and forget it. The voice of conscience may be drowned for a time in the turmoil of life, but the misery and wretchedness of such an existence—eternal death drawing nearer and nearer. Yea, there are to be found some who, in spite of the lurking fear in their hearts, dare to maintain that there is no eternity, that their souls are not immortal. How few, when they come to die, will dare to brazen this denial out to the end!

Whereas instead of this fear and resentment towards God's warning of eternity, we should learn to love and cherish the thought of "for ever and for ever." Then the light of God's grace would stream down upon our path through life and make us discern the footsteps of the saints—yea, our Lord's own footsteps, who carried His Cross along that way before us. Each day its memory would strengthen us to attempt, and give us zeal to persevere. Oh! precious time, short and uncertain indeed, for the past cannot be recalled, and the future cannot be counted on; there is only the present, wherewith to secure an eternity of happiness and glory.

How generously, then, should we undertake to keep the commandments of God, buoyed up with this assurance, that if we do so—and we can with the help of God's grace—we "shall not taste death for ever." The hope of life for ever should enkindle in our souls a noble impulse, loyalty to do our utmost to obey, to undertake every duty, to grapple with every difficulty that would bar our path as we follow whither our Lord's words direct us, "laboring for that which endureth to life everlasting" (John vi. 27).

Let us look back to the past, and we shall be forced humbly to acknowledge how little practical influence the thought of eternity has had upon our lives. Please God, like an angel with a flaming sword, it has seared us from grievous sins and daring trespasses against the laws of God. But in our ordinary lives, when the love of Christ has failed to urge us on, when we have loitered and lingered on the way to heaven, unwilling to toil, exaggerating to our souls the difficulties and hardships of the journey, has the thought of eternity roused us to be up and doing, resolute and strong as befits the soldiers of Christ?

It is all our own fault if this thought of eternity has not impressed us and aroused us. The warning heard so often; the thought pondered over so seldom! The word of the Lord has been spoken in mercy: how ungrateful of us to give it so scanty a welcome! Let us pray that we may be mindful of every word that recalls "eternity." The thought is meant to make us earnest, and raise up our minds to God. We are His children, destined to live with Him for all eternity. Why should we shun the thought? It should give us hope, founded on His promise that we shall not taste death for ever. Surely this should be our comfort, our strength, our happiness.

ST. JOSEPH CAN HELP LIFT MANY BURDENS

If you are burdened by debt, weighted down by the cares of a family, anxious about your vocation, or uncertain about which method to pursue in matters of a

material nature, go to St. Joseph. He is in an especial manner the model for people who live in the world, and many and varied are the interesting accounts given of his mediation in behalf of the people who have sought his aid in matters of a temporal nature. But it is not only in matters temporal that we should go to St. Joseph; he is also a powerful intercessor for those who seek his help in spiritual matters. The patron of the Church Universal, he has a special claim upon every member of the Faith.

As the month of March is in an especial manner devoted to him, let us during the ensuing days perform some extra acts of piety in his honor. The guardian of Mary and the foster-father of Jesus, while they were on earth, what better evidence could we have of his close relation to those loving hearts? Surely, anything he asks of them will be answered.

Let us not neglect, then, during this month, to often petition St. Joseph. Since he is the patron of a happy death, let us ask him that he will more than all else obtain for us the grace of dying in the loving friendship of Jesus and Mary.

ST. PATRICK APOSTLE OF IRELAND

The feast of St. Patrick this year occasions mingled feelings of joy and sadness. Joy will reign on that day in the heart of every loyal son and daughter of Ireland in the contemplation of the grace and glory that have descended upon them as a result of the ministrations of St. Patrick. But sadness also will fill their hearts as they see their beloved but unhappy country in the throes of sorrow and suffering. St. Patrick's day comes as an annual messenger of hope to the Irish people.

It proclaims in undying accents that a nation which is founded on faith and which lives by faith can never die. Men may grind to powder the material elements that compose a nation, but if it is based upon the moral law, and lives by purity, justice, and fortitude it will revive and continue its activity. And this has been characteristic of the Irish nation, that its national life has been securely grounded upon its supernatural foundation.

This characteristic is the heritage of St. Patrick. Fifteen centuries ago was the time of Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Augustine. The Church was then beset by the great heresiarchs, Arius who denied the Divinity of Christ and Nestorius who denied that the Blessed Virgin was the Mother of God. The lives of the great doctors of the Church were spent in defending the rights of the Church. Their only thought was to extend Christianity, or to preserve and to purify what there was of it, in the Roman Empire.

Few thought of carrying the light of the Gospel outside the Roman Empire. Then St. Patrick came, and with the voice of Erin ringing in his ears, wandered through Gaul, Italy and the Islands of the Mediterranean waiting for the word and authority that would send him to the island on the fringe of civilization, where he had been a captive many years before.

When word did come, his youth and middle age had passed, and he had come to a time of life when most men have either succeeded or failed in their life's work. Yet with the weight of sixty years upon him he set out upon his hazardous enterprise to make God known to a nation where idols were worshipped and to bring peace to a people who were given over to war. He passed over the country, proposed new ways of life. He taught mysterious doctrines. The people listened reverently to him. They yielded to the sway of his eloquence. They opened their hearts to workings of Divine Grace. And without revolution or bloodshed the entire nation became Catholic.

St. Patrick did his work so completely that he could not have a successor. He made Ireland a land of saints and scholars; he made it a missionary centre whence went forth zealous apostles to convert the rest of the heathen world. Fifty years after his death, pioneers of faith poured out from Ireland, penetrated the forests of Gaul and Germany, and infused new life into the nations that were tainted with Arianism.

St. Patrick has left on record his confidence that the people whom God had given him in the ends of the earth would never lose their inheritance. That confidence has been signally justified. Fifteen hundred years ago the Irish people were baptized and born into the faith of Christ. Since the moment that the film of paganism dropped from their eyes they never lost the supernatural life that has been the mainstay of their national existence.

This is the secret of Ireland's power. As Father Lockington in the *Soul of Ireland* has so eloquently expressed it: "Ireland is Irish in her Catholicity and in her Catholic history. The divine gift of faith, that St. Patrick threw like a white mantle over the whole land covers it today as pure and untarnished as when he walked the earth. Wicked men strove to rend and sully it; they did but beautify it with the glorious red of the martyr's blood. All through the land Christ sits enthroned amid the ceaseless prayers of His loved and loving people. This is the secret of her undying vitality. This vivid,

fervent love of God, gilding and ennobling her poverty, strengthening her in danger, comforting her in sorrow, uniting her to the tabernacle of the Crucified One. Is the heart-beat of Ireland, God bless her."

Let us breathe the fervent hope and prayer on the feast of Ireland's patron saint, that his dear country has seen the end of her long martyrdom, that her dark night is over and her day dawn is night, that God in His infinite wisdom and mercy may see fit to accept her sacrifice and lead her to peace and national happiness.—The Pilot.

JOURNALISM URGED AS PROFESSION

MSGR. NOLL AT NOTRE DAME DECLARES PRESS NEEDS CATHOLIC INFLUENCE

Notre Dame, Ind., February 19.—In an address to the students of the School of Journalism at Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Indiana, the Right Rev. Msgr. J. F. Noll, editor of Our Sunday Visitor, urged that Catholic students in large numbers should take up journalism as their life work. He pointed out the importance of the press in molding the morals and lives of the people and declared that the Church often suffers in accounts of Catholic events carried in the secular papers because the editors and writers of those papers lack a proper understanding of the Church.

Msgr. Noll said in part:

"Journalism is one of the most modern of all professions, yet it has become the greatest power, in the natural order, in all the world, unless we except the power of capital, which controls and abuses it. The world has had physicians, and lawyers, and clergymen, and scientists, for thousands of years, but it has had journalists less than two hundred years. The *London Courant*, started in 1702, was the first daily paper, and it consisted of a single small sheet, printed on one side. It contained no editorials, no news stories. It merely published, without comment, brief items of local news. The first Catholic paper of any consequence was started one hundred and one years ago today (February 19th, 1829). It was Bishop England's *Catholic Miscellany*, and its character was the same as that of Our Sunday Visitor; it had religious instruction as its object.

"Because there is scarcely any illiteracy today in our country, because present day papers contain something for everybody, everybody reads them. They are the one piece of literature in universal demand. Hence it is safe to declare that the journalist is more indispensable, in the estimate of the masses of today, than any other person. Few books find as many readers in a generation as the newspaper. Some journalists have day after day, Chicago's *Daily Tribune* reaches more families than dwell in the great State of Indiana. The importance of the journalistic profession, therefore, is as incalculable as its responsibility is staggering.

SITUATION ABROAD

"I concede that, in itself, the printing press is an indifferent tool; it is as ready to serve the cause of truth as of error, of the Church as of the world. But those, whose lives are devoted to the spread of truth and morality are not in possession of it. Invented by a Catholic, and first employed in the interests of God and His Church, the printing press is now being employed against the Church, has become a foe, against which all the human efforts of churchmen are powerless.

"In Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Central America, in nearly all the South American Republics, secular journalism is two thirds irreligious journalism. While it is true that Italy has several excellent Catholic dailies, their combined circulation does not exceed 300,000. Granting that each copy is read by five persons, the total number reached is 1,500,000 or about 5% of the population. The situation is quite similar in France. In other Latin countries the showing is even poorer for the Church. In the new Republics of Austria, Czech-Slovakia, of Jugo-Slavia, as elsewhere, enemies of Christianity are in practical control of the press.

EDITORS BAR BELIGION

"The greatest harm is not done by the professed anti-Christian journalist, but by the worldly-minded editor who, for the sake of greater gain, serves the kind of daily literature diet, which will interest the greatest number of people.

"In the United States, for instance, the strictly anti-Christian press is not prominent. Even the anti-Catholic press might be passed over, though it reaches millions of non-Catholics, whom Catholic journalism does not reach. Less than 10,000,000 among 110,000,000 people of our land, are reached by Catholic papers and periodicals, and this 10% represents our own people.

"Editors take account of the fact that 60,000,000 people, who remain aloof from all churches, are not interested in religion, and therefore it is not served to them. Doctrinal religion, or anything that would incite even controversial thoughts in the 24,000,000, who belong to 600 different brands of Protestantism, must be kept under cover. Then, because we live in an age when it is regarded as fashionable, as a mark

of culture, to discredit what was believed in the misnamed "Dark Ages" the editor today must defend all the unproved theories of higher criticism. Imagine the editor of a New York or Chicago Daily defending the Genesis account of creation, even when quite liberally interpreted.

CITES INCOMPLETE REPORTING

"Secular papers often help intensify the existing prejudices against the Catholic Church by what they do not print in connection with a news story. We have a case in point in the account of the expulsion of the Papal Delegate from Mexico last month. The press report left the impression that he was expelled because he had violated a basic law of the country. The uninformed reader saw therein confirmation of the lie that the Catholic Church is a danger to the State. Had the editors taken the trouble to express their contempt at the silly intolerance of the governing power in Mexico, the news report would have left a favorable, rather than an unfavorable impression.

"It should be more generally known that a wonderful news-gathering agency, the National Catholic Welfare Council, has been established. It has reporters in all the capital cities of Europe, and in each instance they are men who are noted equally well for their scholarship and fairness. The representatives of the Associated Press cannot compare with them for the truth about happenings, religious, or otherwise, in all the countries in Europe. Were these men reporting for a string of Catholic dailies, read by our people generally, much of the world news as reported by the A. P., and by the N. C. W. C. would be quite conflicting.

"Is it to be implied, from what I have said, that the Catholic student should abstain from the pursuit of a journalistic career? Most emphatically 'No.' On the contrary, it is precisely because journalism, as at present conducted, serves the cause

of error and irreligion rather than truth that the profession should be embraced by many more Catholic students, in the hope that they might influence it for the better. Catholic aloofness in this, as in other particulars, would only make a bad situation worse. Nearly every organization of men, which numbers few Catholics, is led in an anti-Catholic way, while the presence of Catholics in large numbers saves an organization from becoming the tool of bigotry. The daily press, the secular magazine, the modern novel, are seldom on the right side of moral questions. Their editors lack a proper conception of the Church; they are poorly versed in history; they assume that the spirit of the world is always right; yet they pretend to speak with infallible authority as scientists, historians, theologians. A Harvard professor, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly* last year, truly stated that, 'the public is at the mercy of the lords of the press.' This is certainly pitiful, but it is a fact with which we have to reckon, and a condition which it seems humanly impossible to overcome. Only the Catholic Church can steer society safely, and only the sound philosophy taught in Catholic schools of journalism can counteract the false views on moral and social questions so widely circulated by editors who are now in control of the press. My advice to a large number of Catholic young men is to select journalism as a life's profession, and then to aspire to come to the front."

Don't be discouraged; it is often the last key in the bunch that opens the lock.

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CHARLIE CHAPLIN HIMSELF IS HONORARY JUDGE!

Frankly the contest is intended to further advertise and introduce EVERYWOMAN'S WORLD, Canada's Greatest Magazine, which we will send you post paid to just four friends or neighbors who will appreciate this really worth while Canadian publication and want it to come to them every month. The contest will close at 6 p.m. June 30th 1928, immediately after which the winners will be judged and prizes awarded. We reserve the right to alter the qualifying conditions from time to time as may appear necessary, though of course any such change will not affect anyone who has already qualified their entry. Don't delay sending your answer. This announcement may not appear in this paper again. Address: Charlie Chaplin Contest Editor, Continental Publishing Co., Ltd., Dept. 606, Toronto, Ont.

gaining 250 points will win First prize. You will get 20 points for each picture you name correctly. 40 points will be awarded for the general answer, punctuation, spelling, etc., of your answer. 10 points for handwriting and 100 points for fulfilling a simple condition of the contest. This condition is only that you assist in this great advertising campaign by showing a copy of EVERYWOMAN'S WORLD, Canada's Greatest Magazine (which we will send you post paid) to just four friends or neighbors who will appreciate this really worth while Canadian publication and want it to come to them every month. The contest will close at 6 p.m. June 30th 1928, immediately after which the winners will be judged and prizes awarded. We reserve the right to alter the qualifying conditions from time to time as may appear necessary, though of course any such change will not affect anyone who has already qualified their entry. Don't delay sending your answer. This announcement may not appear in this paper again. Address: Charlie Chaplin Contest Editor, Continental Publishing Co., Ltd., Dept. 606, Toronto, Ont.

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