

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

TAKING ACCOUNT

"Brethren: Know that it is now the hour for us to rise from sleep." (Epistle of the day, Rom. xiii, 11.)

There are certain times and seasons in the religious year as well as in the business year that call for special action and attention, and the season of Advent that we enter upon to-day is one of them. Merchants, as you all know, take an account of stock at regular intervals; business concerns of every kind count up their gains and losses at stated times and bankers and brokers strike their balances.

This special time of accounting is regarded in commercial circles as essential not only to safety but to success. He who works without a man indeed who would let his affairs run on from year to year without an overhauling, and his business credit as well as his business capacity would be rated very low. The truth is, there is no success attainable in any walk of life without the application of this principle. And it must also be applied to the affairs of eternity if we would make a success of the supreme business of life. Now, Lent and Advent are our seasons of religious accounting, and their importance as a help to working out our salvation need not be questioned. Our Divine Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the author of our redemption, and the source of all our profit and gain in the concerns of the soul. And so Holy Church, guided by an instinct that is manifestly divine, has set apart the season before His coming and the season before His crucifixion as the special times for us to pause and consider what progress we are making in the way of His salvation.

To day we are specially appealed to as loyal Christians to prepare for the coming of Our Lord. The voice of Advent is the voice of John the Baptist crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths," and the spirit of repentance is the response that is sought for in every Christian soul. We cannot, therefore, be in harmony with this holy season, unless, as St. Paul puts it in to-day's epistle, "we cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light," unless "we walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting or drunkenness, not in chambering or impurities, not in envy and contention."

It is now the hour for us to arise, make our special accounting, and put on the Lord Jesus Christ by putting off the defilements of sin. If Advent does not mean this much to us it means nothing. We can have no part in its spirit if we continue in a sinful course and refuse to hearken to the inspired voice crying out in the wilderness and demanding repentance. What meaning can this sacred season have to the besotted drunkard who goes right on in his abominable dissipation? What meaning can it have to the soul creature that goes on wallowing in filthy lust? What meaning can it have to the evil tempered and the evil tongued who, in the clamor of their own passions, fail to hear the voice of conscience? What meaning can it have to any soul in the state of mortal sin that does not immediately resolve on repentance? If the spirit of Advent touches us at all, it should make the sinful pause in the career of sin, the lukewarm fervent and the fervent more fervent still.

People are accustomed to flock to the Advent services; they seem to take a special interest in their religion at this season; but where is the fruit? We see a throng around the pulpit, but do we see a throng around the confessional? All real religion in the Catholic Church leads directly to the sacraments, for the sacraments are the divine antidote against sin; religious observances that do not produce this result are of little practical value. Give proof, then, that you really enter into the spirit of Advent not only by going to church, but by going to the sacraments. You know that it is a season consecrated in a particular manner to the service of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and you are in sympathy with it by a worthy reception of the sacraments. Let the crowds of men whom we see in the church now prove their faith and approach the Holy Table. Let the women show their love for Our Blessed Lord by drawing nigh to the Divine Banquet. Let every soul seek purification in the Blood of the Lamb, and thus be prepared to offer due homage to the Babe of Bethlehem. What Christmas joy can be ours if our Advent is misspent? "Brethren, know that now is the hour for us to arise from sleep."

THE FLAG OF MEXICO

Mexico's flag is the mate of the Italian tricolor, although the green of Italy is paler than that of Mexico. The three colors are green, white and red. On the white in the Mexican flag is the seal of Mexico. It shows an eagle on a bush or a vran of opal a common cactus, holding a serpent in its beak.

The interpretation is sometimes given that this is the serpent of despotism, but the legend of the seal goes further back than the government of the Spaniards. The story is that during the time of the Aztecs the people were looking for a place to found their city. They came to the borders of Lake Texcoco, and there they halted. They saw before them an immense golden eagle, some

say a small eagle, on cactus with a serpent in its talons and its wings spread to the rising sun. Forwith they laid there the foundation of the great city of Mexico to-day. The date set for this, of course conjectural, is about 1325.—Church Progress.

TEMPERANCE

THE RED GLASS

"A temperance advocate mounted a chair in strike headquarters and urged a boycott on the saloons.

"To keep sober means to keep cool heads," he said to the strikers, "and to keep cool means to win in the fight of life, no matter what it is. Now," he said, "are there any real good union men in this crowd? Even the sleepy ones jumped to their feet and cheered. 'Well every man that is really interested in this fight, and is determined to win, will step forward and sign this.' He produced a long sheet of paper. It was the pledge. Twenty-four names were signed."

What this union man urged as useful in the emergency of a strike, is, of course, equally wise in times of industrial peace. We believe the drinking habits of men in the ranks of toil and commerce have greatly improved. But thousands are still kept with their noses to the grindstone because of the tribute they pay to the red glass and the black cigar. These things delay or prevent the habit of saving. And the habit of saving is the real road to emancipation from the toil.

There is a good time coming, no doubt, for Labor. Perhaps a millennium. It is not in this generation, then in 1960 or in 2020. But, while we are waiting for it let us make our selves as comfortable and independent as we can under present conditions.—Catholic Citizen.

A DRUNKARD'S HOME

Dr. Frank O'Hara, writing in the Catholic World gives an incident in real life of the consequences of drink. It involves a sequence of suffering and sorrow that should not be tolerated amongst Christian people. He says:

"The father of the family in question is an engineer, who earns about \$75 or \$80 a month when he works. He drinks steadily, however, and finds it impossible to hold a position for any length of time. He lives with his wife and daughter. He has three married sons, drinkers like himself, who contribute nothing to the support of their parents and sister. When out of work, these sons and their wives live with their parents. The daughter adds \$8 a week to the family income by working in a department store. She might have been earning a little higher wages if her education had not been cut short at the sixth grade. The mother and daughter are refined people and Christians. The daughter is good-looking, and of much charm of manner. Three or four years ago she met a college student at a church gathering, and in the course of time the two developed a considerable affection for each other. She invited him to dinner one day, when, unluckily, the family skeleton was stalking around the house. It was too much for the young man, and there the romance ended.

A couple of years ago the father was coming home one night on the street car, drunk, and in getting off the car he fell to the ground, and was unable to rise. A crowd gathered and a policeman came to the scene, and sent in a call for the patrol wagon. The daughter had been at church that evening, and as she came near her home, and saw the crowd gathered around she was moved by the usual curiosity, and wished to see what was going on. She was startled to find that her drunken father was the cause of the commotion, and he was about to be taken to the police station. She pleaded with the policeman to let her take her father home, but to no avail. The officer insisted that, since he had rung up the patrol wagon, he would have to keep the man until the wagon arrived; otherwise it would go against his record at headquarters. She renewed her entreaties, and as a compromise he suggested that she might try to influence the officer in charge of the wagon when he came. And so this high-strung, fine-natured girl waited, and furnished a target for the remarks of the crowd until the wagon arrived. Then she had to go all through the process of expostulation again with the officer, and finally she was allowed to take her drunken father home.

A few months ago, the father had been drinking and got into a quarrel with a boy who worked in the same

shop and struck him with an iron bar. Thereupon the employer discharged the engineer, and ever since that time the family has been living upon the \$8 a week earned by the department store girl. The furniture has been gradually disappearing from the home, and now the vital problem is: How long will the landlord allow the family to occupy the house before he ejects them for non-payment of rent?

DELICACY OF CONSCIENCE

A good conscience is an inestimable treasure, a pearl without price. It is easy to stain it and almost as easy to spoil it. For, deny it as we may, every faculty of the soul takes color from environment and deteriorates under abuse.

These are the reasons that send men of letters back to ancient Greece and artists back to medieval Rome. Those who love art and letters cross the centuries to sit at the feet of the masters; they will not take their standards from the little men about them, they will not drink except from the wells that are undefiled.

Why should it be otherwise with Catholics in the matter of delicacy of conscience? Why should they be willing to accept their standard of morality from a godless world? Have they no Masters in Israel to whom they may have recourse in order to keep their judgment sound on matters that are vital for their supernatural life? Are they less concerned about moral principles than the painter about color schemes, perspective and light and shade? Or do they think that they are exempt from the tendency of all life to yield, to conform, to take with the ways that suit a particular environment and make life easy? Surely better is expected of them. It cost Christ so much to teach us the truth that we should be jealous of its purity. It cost our forebears so much to keep it intact, that we should be watchful lest we lose even the slightest portion of it. It is a precious heritage that has been vouchsafed us, this seeing the things that others have longed to see and have not seen. Much has been revealed to us that has been hidden from the worldly-wise. Are we viewing things in the white light of divine revelation, or are we forming our judgments according to the tenets of the world, the world, that is, in our Lord's sense of the word, whose teacher is the father of lies? Is our general Catholic conscience losing tone? Its purity is in the keeping of the individual. Are we safeguarding it?—America.

GIVING TIME TO DEVOTION

The Rosary may be recited in the ordinary manner within ten minutes. Out of the entire twenty-four hours, it would seem that the average Christian ought to be liberal enough to devote fifteen minutes to prayer according to the tenets of the world, the world, that is, in our Lord's sense of the word, whose teacher is the father of lies? Is our general Catholic conscience losing tone? Its purity is in the keeping of the individual. Are we safeguarding it?—America.

Not only is God, the Giver of all good, praised and worshipped less than ten minutes during the day, but this fragment of time even is indifferently given Him. Other thoughts engage the mind while the lips mechanically utter the words of prayer.

There is no sincerity in the thanksgiving; no reverence in the worship; no earnestness in the petition. It would seem a sin to venture to address God with no more sense of His majesty and goodness than such praying manifests. It would seem better not to pray at all; in the spirit of the rough fisherman, who, as the story goes, being caught in a storm at sea, was moved to pray for his life: "O Lord, Thou knowest," he said, "I have not asked Thee anything these thirteen years. Grant me but the shore out of this safety, and I promise never again to pray for anything so long as I live."

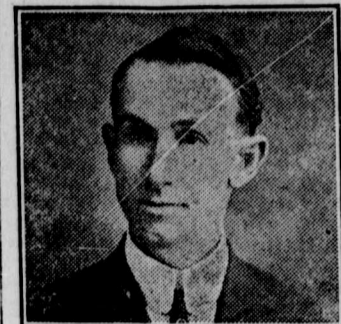
Shortening the time of prayer from ten to five minutes does not reach the essence of the evil; for the devotion is not due to the length of the prayer, but to the fault of the Christian; to his want of piety; to his want of food for devout thought; to his moral shallowness and overworldliness. He does not live in the presence of God. He does not feel that he is enjoying a welfare that comes from a beneficent Providence. He does not rely upon the aid that this kind Providence will bestow if its guidance is sincerely asked.

That in the recitation of a devotion like the Rosary, it is not needful to keep in mind the meaning of the words uttered, but that a contemplation of the mysteries, joyous, dolorous and glorious, is sufficient, all Catholics are aware. It is in like manner sufficient, in the recitation of other prayers, to have in mind some religious subject for meditation.

A crucifix, a picture or a statue, suggests such thoughts. So also does a frequent perusal of the lives

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of the saints; of the contemplation of saintly writers and of religious literature, generally. It is dearth of devotional culture that so largely accounts for the distraction that people experience in prayer.—Catholic Citizen.

SUNDAY ACTIVITIES

Mechanically going to church on Sunday, staying the services out—during the sermon—and experiencing no access of devotion, does not touch or strengthen any moral faculty.

It may be a compliance with the precepts of the Church, but it lacks the spirit required by the lawmaker.

Then the Sunday newspaper—with its plethoric pages, devoid of anything like the spirit of Sunday, brings the rush of the secular world in upon us. The rest of the day is one of desultory, aimless idleness; if indeed it is not taken up with thoughts of worldly concerns to be encountered during the ensuing week.

Has Sunday no moral duties of man to man, of parent to child, or the Christian to his own soul? There are good works to be discharged; there are good books suitable for Sunday reading; there are church associations whose meetings and missions are for Sunday attendance.

It is a day of rest—the only day in the week when the average man does not have to work. It is also a day of devotion—the only day in the week when worldly concerns are not calling imperatively for exclusive attention.

Let the mind of the soul be cultivated and enriched by Communion with the story of the saints or the

Drunkenness Can be Cured

It is a Disease, Not a Habit

"Some years ago I was a heavy drinker. His majesty and goodness than such praying manifests. It would seem better not to pray at all; in the spirit of the rough fisherman, who, as the story goes, being caught in a storm at sea, was moved to pray for his life: 'O Lord, Thou knowest,' he said, 'I have not asked Thee anything these thirteen years. Grant me but the shore out of this safety, and I promise never again to pray for anything so long as I live.'"

I WAS SAVED "This man had made a scientific study of drunkenness as a disease. He had found a cure for it."

It was a case like this that made me realize how many others were in need of aid and determined me if possible, to offer Samaritan Prescription to the world. The treatment is absolutely different from others. It can be given without the patient's knowledge if desired. Thousands of wives, mothers, daughters, sisters, have saved their men-folk from the curse of alcohol through it.

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Just send me your name and address, saying "Please tell me how I can cure drunkenness." That is all you need to say. I will understand and will write you at once and send you my free book telling you all about my wonderful cure for DRUNKENNESS and will also send you a TRIAL PACKAGE, which will show you how the treatment can be given without the patient's knowledge. All this I will send you ABSOLUTELY FREE in a plain sealed package at once. Do not delay; send me a post-card or write me a letter to day. Do not be afraid to send in your name. Always treat correspondence as secretly confidential. WRITE NOW.

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meditations of their serene lives, left to us by a Kempis and many others. Let the spirit of the Church, its works and its aims, fill the place of the world and its struggles. Let the sense of good deeds done further invigorate for the week days following; and a perfect Sunday will be recorded.—Milwaukee Catholic Citizen.

LOUVAIN ASSOCIATED WITH EMERALD ISLE

FAMOUS IRISHMEN FOLLOW THE COURSES OF ITS CELEBRATED UNIVERSITY

The civilized world at large and the Catholic Church in particular, has suffered a loss which can never be made good by the destruction of the ancient Catholic University town of Louvain, which was razed to the ground by German troops.

No outrage to compare with this has been known since the Vandals destroyed the great library of Alexandria. The loss of Louvain is a disaster to the whole of humanity, but to Catholics the loss is immeasurably greater than to any other, for Louvain was, with Rome, the greatest of our seats of learning. It was at Louvain that all the finest work of Catholic scholars in science, in philosophy, in the study of comparative religions and in sociology has been done of recent years.

Louvain and its Irish College—what did they mean for Ireland? Let us take a glance into the past. To Louvain in a large measure we owe it that, by the grace of God, Ireland has been preserved to the Catholic faith. In the dreadful Penal Law days Ireland would have been almost priestless and her people without the ministrations of religion but for Louvain. The illustrious Florence Conroy, Archbishop of Tuam, a native of Galway, who was born in the year 1560, was one of the first, if not the very first, who started the project of an Irish college on the continent. He successfully exerted his influence with King Philip of Spain for the accomplishment of this scheme, and it was arranged that Louvain should be the site of the college, and that its patron should be St. Anthony of Padua. In 1616 the cornerstone was laid, the ceremonial being conducted with all the magnificent pomp so natural to Spain and to Catholicism.

It was within the halls of the Irish College of Louvain that the future Emancipator of the Irish Catholic, Daniel O'Connell, almost two centuries after the university was brought into existence, learned lessons which made him the strenuous orator and debater which he afterwards became. Prior to O'Connell's student days, Donegal, Colgar, and O'Clery, three of "Donegal's" Four Masters, the compiler of the "Annals" were familiar with the corridors and cloisters of St. Anthony.

Rev. Professor Corcoran, S. J., D. Litt., National University of Ireland, who spent three years in the University of Louvain, said he was in hopes that from the detached position of the historical Irish Franciscan College it had escaped destruction.

"It was in this college," said Father Corcoran, "that kept the faith alive in Ireland, and down through the centuries it has been closely associated with the Emerald Isle." The Church of St. Peter was one of the finest Gothic structures in the north of Europe. One of the monuments in the sacred edifice commemorated Thomas Stapleton of Fethard, Tipperary, who was Professor of Canon Law, and who was elected rector for ten consecutive years. Father Stapleton provided a fund of the type to print books for circulation in Ireland, and left very wealthy foundations for scholarships which are now held by Maynooth, having been transferred thirty years ago by the late King of the Belgians.

The library contained many rare and historical Irish books, including a beautiful copy of John Colgan's work on the Irish saints.

The University had five Irish rectors—Fathers John Shinnick of Cork, Thomas Stapleton and Hugh Brady, Ballybay, and John O'Sullivan and Francis O'Sullivan, both of Kerry. Other famous Irish names connected with the university are Peter Lombard, Archbishop of Armagh; Dermot O'Hurley, the martyred Archbishop of Cashel; and Thomas Fleming, Archbishop of Dublin.

In the old Franciscan College, there is buried Lady Rosa O'Doherty, grand daughter of Shane O'Neill, first wife of Colgar O'Donnell of Treconan and after his death wife of Owen Roe O'Neill.

There are two living Irishmen on whom honorary degrees have been conferred by the Louvain University, Dr. Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin, and Prof. Mahaffy of Trinity College—Northwest Review.

AN UNFAVORABLE VIEW

"Ask the average young Catholic what is the Catholic point of view on any one you may choose of the great social questions, so much discussed, and you will find," says the Casket, "that he doesn't know there is a Catholic point of view—unless he happens to be one of the few who read a Catholic paper. He doesn't know that any principle of Catholic theology is involved in the matter at all unless he be such a reader or has had more than the usual amount of education. The point may be so broad of course, that his conscience or his catechism may supply the answer. But frequently the point is not such; and then he gives you his

opinion from some article he has chanced to read—he is not sure where, by some author whose name he has forgotten."

Always Keep Them In The House

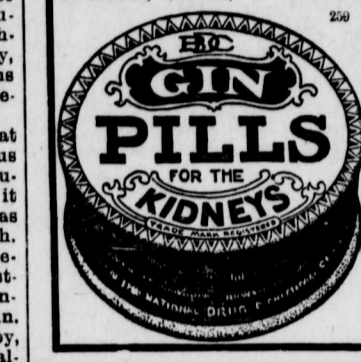
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TO THE Wives and Mothers of Canada

There are in our Dominion one hundred and eighty thousand widowed women, of whom doubtless, many, on the death of their husbands, were left on their own resources.

And in addition there were, doubtless, in numerous cases children left to be supported at an education fortunate indeed were those women whose responsibilities were lightened by life insurance.

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