

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost.

GOOD WORKS DONE IN MORTAL SIN.
Master, we have labored all the night, and have taken nothing. (Gospel of the Day.)

The Gospel of to-day tells us, my dear brethren, how St. Peter and his companions, after wearying themselves with dragging their heavy nets for all the night, and having caught nothing for all their pains; and how, as soon as our Lord appeared, and they were able to work with His guidance and help, they took more fish than their boats would hold.

There is a most important spiritual lesson contained in this simple story. This miraculous draught of fish is, as it were, a parable, acted out instead of told by our Divine Saviour. And its meaning is this: that those who work in the night of the soul which is caused by mortal sin have indeed much trouble, sorrow and labor, but it is all for nothing. All that they do and suffer while remaining in this state counts for nothing in their favor in the eternal account of God. Whereas, on the other hand, the slightest action of one who is in the state of grace, and who, therefore, works in union with Christ, has attached to it a great and imperishable glory in the kingdom of heaven.

St. Paul also teaches us this quite explicitly. "If I should distribute," says he, "all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity" (that is, the love of God, which makes the state of grace), "it profiteth me nothing."

Whereas, on the other hand, he says, for himself and others who are united to God by grace, that "what is at present momentary and light of our tribulation worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory."

This, I say, my brethren, a most important truth. Do you fairly understand it? Do you take in its full meaning and application? Let us look at and study it as much as possible in these few minutes; then let us take it home with us, meditate on it, and make it thoroughly our own.

All of us have our labors, trials and pains; some are heavily burdened with them. To work and to suffer is the lot of all, from which there is no escape. We cannot avoid our destiny; we must make the best of it.

Yes, that is just it; we must make the best of it; if we have any prudence, any true love or care for our happiness, we will make the best of it, and not the worst. Why suffer this poverty, this sickness, this worry and distress of mind? Why do all this hard work? Why go through all these long and weary days, and get nothing in reward for all our labor and suffering but the mere means with which to keep up this painful and toilsome life, and to sweeten it, perhaps, with some fleeting sensual pleasures? Why not have something to show for all our trouble at the end of our time here on earth? Why not make it, as we may, into a crown to take with us into that life which has no end?

This is what those who remain in the grace of God, who commit no mortal sin, or who, if they ever fall into it, repent and free themselves from it without delay. All their pains and all their labors are recorded in heaven, and treasured up to be woven into a crown of merit for such perseverers at the end. God is with them, as with St. Peter on the lake of Gennesareth; they work for Him, and in the light of His presence, and their slightest actions obtain a rich reward.

But those who foolishly think that to remain thus is a task beyond their strength, who pass their lives in mortal sin, and only seldom and for a short time rise from it, have the same trouble; and at the end, if indeed they come to God then and enter heaven, being saved as by fire, they find no treasure of good works gone before them. "Master," they have to say, "we have worked all night and have taken nothing. We have worked in the night of sin all our life."

Let us not, then, follow their example. Let us not run their fearful race of not obtaining salvation at all; and let us determine that when we are saved we will have a life well filled with the fruits of grace to lay at our Saviour's feet, for which we may merit to hear Him say: "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

TALKS ON RELIGION.

"THE WAY OF THE CROSS," THE STATIONS IN JERUSALEM.

We are called upon at all times "to take up our cross and to follow our suffering Lord, but the call comes with especial emphasis during Lent—the penitential season. The fruitful and the beautiful devotion of the Stations of the Cross brings the passion and the Crucifixion of our Saviour graphically to our attention.

The devotion of the "Way of the Cross" is a book that all can read with spiritual profit. The learned will find precious wisdom in its pages, and the unlettered will find in it a book that they can read at all times and obtain therefrom spiritual refreshment. There is no better way of meditating on our passion.

The "Way of the Cross" is a popular devotion, at least during Lent, and it ought to be popular at all times. It attracts more strongly than a sermon, because it is a talk to the heart by our Lord Himself. In it He shows us His wounds and impresses upon us His great love, and the great value of our souls is brought home to us by the manifestation of the great price paid for them.

There are fourteen Stations, the pictures of which are seen in almost every Catholic church. Yet the picture is not the essential part of the Station; the wooden cross that surmounts the picture is really the Station and its essential part.

A few years ago we made the Stations on Good Friday afternoon in Jerusalem. There the scenes or places actually sanctified by our Lord during His journey from Pilate's palace to Calvary are the Stations. A large crowd of all nations and peoples went in procession, accompanied by a priest, to the court-

yard of Pilate. A short instruction and an exhortation were given and the first Station was begun. The Turkish soldiers stood in the doorway of the barracks as the Christians knelt and prayed. There is the spot where our Lord stood wearing His crown of thorns. "From the sole of the foot unto the top of the head there is no soundness in Him." (Isaiah i, 6.) We could, as it were, hear the shouts of the mob: "Not this Man but Barabbas!" "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" "We have no King but Caesar." There stood Pilate, weak and washing his hands and hypocritically saying: "I am innocent of the blood of this just Man, look ye to it." This declaration was answered back with the cry and the curse: "His blood be upon us and our children."

Those shouts are mingled with the voices of men's sins, past, present and future. "The Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah liii, 6.) Many in that vast crowd bowed their heads and shed tears of sympathy and of compunction.

Out in the courtyard and near by to the place of the condemnation, our Lord was laden with the heavy cross and here began the second Station. We were reminded of the physical and mental condition of the Man God. Spent with the loss of blood and exhausted by the pain and cruel treatment of the night, He takes up the cross cheerfully for man's salvation. Should not we be willing to bear some part of the cross? "He that will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."

We went out of the court yard singing the Stabat Mater and entered upon the Via Dolorosa. We came to the place where our Lord, weak and exhausted, fell under the cross and we knelt at the third Station. There He fell alone for our sins and our raptures. Our Lord fell that we might rise. He took up His cross again to bear it to the end. We, too, must take up our cross and our burdens for His sake, though sometimes they may appear too heavy to carry.

As we entered the Via Dolorosa, we passed the place where our Lord, crowned with thorns and bearing the marks of the cruel scourging, was shown to the populace with the words: "Ecce Homo." But the hard-hearted people were not moved to compassion.

We passed on, and near the house of Dives, we knelt at the fourth Station, where our blessed Lord met His most holy Mother. The tender pathos of that sad meeting might be imagined, but it could not be described. Holy Simeon had predicted that a sword of sorrow would pierce the heart of Mary. She shared the passion of her Son and became the Queen of Sorrows and the Queen of Martyrs.

While at this Station a carriage with outriders came clattering over the pavement. It stopped and a distinguished looking man alighted and joined the procession and knelt on the cobbles with the rest of us. He was the Austrian Consul. Near us there knelt a Count and Countess on the pavement in a street not over-crowded.

We had come down the hill from Pilate's court-yard, and were about to turn into a narrow street when we came to the fifth Station. "And going out, they found a man of Cyrene, named Simon; him they forced to take up the cross." The Jews did not compel this man to bear the cross through compassion, but because they feared that Jesus might die before they could reach Calvary, the place of execution. Simon bore the cross unwillingly and hence without profit. St. Paul says: "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord, Jesus Christ."

At the sixth station we knelt on the spot where Veronica presented the towel or handkerchief in compassion to our Lord, and received it back with the miraculous image of His sacred face impressed upon it.

On the narrow way we went until we reached the scene of the seventh Station—the second fall of Jesus under the cross. The procession evidently anguished the Jews and the Mohammedans, as they broke in from a cross street with a tumult, seeking to impede or to destroy the procession. It made the scene more realistic as it recalled the rabble of the first Good Friday. Guards had to be called to repress the disturbance, but the procession of pilgrims continued on toward Calvary. We soon reached the spot where is the eighth Station. Our Lord met and consoled the weeping women of Jerusalem. The ninth Station is near the gate of the Copt Convent. The other Stations—the removal of His garments, tenth; the nailing to the cross, eleventh; the raising of the cross and the death of Jesus, twelfth; and taking down from the cross, thirteenth; the placing of His sacred body in the Holy Sepulchre, fourteenth, are all enclosed in the large basilica of the Holy Sepulchre.

"O love of God! O sin of man! This dread act your strength is tried; For He, our Love, is crucified."

The distance from the court of Pilate to Calvary is about two thirds of a mile. Several Bishops, many priests, a number of nuns and members of the nobility knelt side by side with artisans and laborers in the pavement in making that way of the cross. The Church in the plenitude of her power has arranged that the "Way of the Cross" may be performed in our churches. To this devotion innumerable indulgences are attached.—Catholic Univers.

The grace of God, health, a sufficient income for frugal comfort, congenial work and peace of mind at home—if you have these, be happy, enjoy your blessings and count yourself among the fortunate; for you will never have any greater happiness on earth and very few have so much.

How dark and sad the world would be if there had never been sin and sorrow and we had to lose Christ from the cross.

If Christ is not the promised Saviour of mankind, then is the promise vain, for the time of its fulfillment has passed away.

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY.

PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN—SERMON BY FATHER HENRY OF THE ORATORY. London Catholic Herald.

Preaching at the Brompton Oratory Rev. Father Best said:

I.—Because God is our Creator He has a right to our gratitude and obedience: the voice of nature, and the light of reason make this evident. His right over us as Redeemer is the same. Only made obligatory on the redeemed to a thousandfold greater degree. The first and greatest commandment inculcates this. And the second commandment is like the first, and it tells us that our relation to our neighbor must be like our relation to our God, we must be just and accord to our neighbor all to which he has a right, and we must do this with benevolence or kindly feeling in our heart.

II.—That we have neighbors is because by the will of our Creator the life of man was to be social, a family life, a domestic life. "It is not good for man to live alone," and so Eve was given to him as a partner; and those two founded the first of the countless families which fill the earth.

III.—Thus it comes to pass that the human beings with whom we are first in relation are our parents; to them, as to God Himself, obedience and gratitude are due; they are, under the Divine Providence, the source of our existence; to their care we are indebted for our preservation, in helpless infancy; from them during adolescence we receive that instruction, education, those helps which enable us to pass through life. It is evident by the light of nature alone, it is inculcated as a Divine Commandment that God has transferred to them His authority, since He has made them the channels of His benefits and protection. So long as they continue to be to us in the relation of protectors, disobedience to them is nothing but an unnatural vice; even when we emerge from childhood, they retain by virtue of the fourth commandment a right to our obedience; nor does the independence of manhood release us from the obligation of gratitude. The parents pass through infancy towards death; the misery of old age is alleviated, the closing scene brightened by filial piety, by services which repay those done to the children themselves on their entrance into this life.

IV.—There is no express command laid on parents to love their children. It is unnecessary, for rarely do parents neglect or forsake the children. The "descending affection," as they are called, are stronger than the ascending; and parents are more frequently excessive in indulgence, through ill-ordered love, than deficient in kindness towards their children. The mother gathers her children under her wings, the pelican nourishes her young with her blood, these strong instincts in the brute creation are outdone by the maternal tenderness in the human race.

V.—The existence of a family ought to be—and for the most part is—the cause of increasing and intensifying the love which there has its home. The larger the family the happier and the better for parents and children alike.

The teaching of the Old Testament has not been contradicted by the New. Modern ideas on this point as on so many other points are entirely different to the law of nature, the commandments of God, the teaching of the Church of Christ, and do not deserve to be mentioned in this sacred place. Fraternal affection is then one of the chief ornaments of a family, especially of a Christian family. Among these children of nearly the same age, between these brothers and sisters is formed a friendship which may last during the greater portion of the natural life of the parties; and yet it is formed under circumstances that render it once intimate and sincere. The family character is displayed without disguise. Children ask not of interest whom to love or hate.

Each one of those associated by family union desires the welfare of all. Many recollections in common, many scenes of joy and grief in which all have borne a part, common objects of kindness, veneration, similar habits, the same prejudices, a solidarity or united share in the reputation and consideration in which each member of the family is held in society—all these elements foster and promote the amiable affections of domestic life. But above all is the love and close union which grows as the children and parents of a family kneel and pray together in the morning and evening of each day. Many perhaps cannot accompany the family morning prayer, but each evening it could and should be done in every Christian family.

VI.—There is an ever-increasing obstacle to the happiness and holiness of Christian families. The voluntary surrender by rich parents of their children to schoolmasters and professors, and the seizure by the State of the children of the poor under the pretext of elementary education. At the present time the Government proposes to invade not the actual homes of the poor, but the schools where the Christian child spends so many hours of its life, and overriding parental rights, it claims to decide how much or how little religion, whether some religion or no religion, shall be taught, and what kind of religion, dogmatic anti-dogmatic, shall be taught. Practically the government has set on its Minister of Education to expel Christianity from

the schools to which parents are compelled to send their Christian children. The absence from home, the daily drudgery of school life, the substitution of others instead of parents for so many hours during childhood—this is in itself an unavoidable weakening of the family feeling and the domestic love, but when to this is added the prohibition of the Catholic faith to Catholic children, it is time to protest! It is to be as if there were no fathers and mothers, that the children are to be dealt with at school like so many chickens hatched in Mr. Birrell's new patent incubator, plenty of food, but no nest, no mother to gather them under her wings. The Church of Christ has never, could never, so interfere with the rights of parents. She can urge them to fulfill their duty, she can and does assist them, she encourages various orders of men and women to dedicate themselves to the work of Christian education, but only as supplemental and subsidiary to what parents ought to do themselves were it in their power. You hear of Ecclesiastical tyranny, of clerical despots, who are told all manner of such nonsense day after day in the newspapers; but, believe me, it is the State that is now arrogating an authority over Christian schools just as anti-Catholic, just as monstrous as was the attempt of Henry and Elizabeth to change the Catholic churches of this unhappy land into Protestant churches. The school is only an annex to the home. Each must be truly Christian, and you and your children in your family life be like the Holy Family at Nazareth.

THE IDEALS OF ST. FRANCIS. Father Cuthbert, O. S. F. C., writes in the Catholic World for June on the present need and efficacy of the ideals of St. Francis of Assisi:

"But first I would remark that St. Francis belongs to the order of those who bear witness to large ideals; he must not be taken as a propounder of small regulations. He was a prophet pointing the way of life, rather than an official regulating the traffic. He was not, strictly speaking, an administrator, but a logician. He was a man born to live rather than to rule. He was an apostle rather than a director of souls in the modern sense of that word. Hence we do not come to him for petty rules of daily life, but for those higher principles which underlie exterior action and passing circumstance. The Poverello's teaching has this in common with that of the Divine Master, that it deals with the more elementary motives and forms of conduct, rather than with the mere problems of the hour. He was neither theologian nor lawyer, but a prophet setting forth fundamental truths which endure under all changes of time. It is the duty of lawyers and theologians to apply great principles to the needs of the moment, and to clothe the truths in the language of the hour; but the prophet has the higher task of witnessing to the elemental truth itself and of appealing to the deeper humanity which abides."

"The message of St. Francis is commonly summed up in the phrase *Holy Poverty*—and if one must have a good word sign for the saint's teaching, undoubtedly no better can be found than this; for St. Francis himself often spoke of 'Most High Poverty'—*Altissima Paupertas*—as the sum of his ambition and the object of his deepest affection. As St. Bonaventure puts it: 'None was ever so greedy of gold as he was of poverty, nor did any man ever guard treasures more anxiously than this Gospel pearl' (Legenda Major vii). And yet it is easy to misunderstand the word, and to take it in a significance alien to St. Francis' mind. Poverty was, in truth, the rule of his life, but 'Most High Poverty' meant for him a good deal more than the absence of material comfort or lack of this world's goods. Poverty—the state of the poor—was to him a sacramental sign of an abundant spiritual life."

"What our religion most needs to-day is just that element which St. Francis revived so marvelously in his own day—the sense of the living Christ, the sense of the visible Church, the sense of our immediate relationship with Him. To the multitude Christ is the Christ Who lived and died; hardly the Christ Who lives. We need to knit all our religious exercises and forms more closely with the consciousness of His presence amongst us, whether in the sacramental life of the Church or in the ordinary life of the world; for 'the earth is His and the fullness thereof.'"

"The sense of discipleship—of our immediate dependence upon Him—needs to be more cultivated. And this dependence must be one not only or chiefly of external acts, but a dependence of spirit—the informing of our spirit with the spirit of Christ. What ever conduct flows from this informing of a man's spirit with the spirit of His Lord is Christian conduct; unless informed by Christ's spirit our deeds may bear a resemblance to Christian conduct, but they lack the living force, they are not the real thing, and serve but to delude the unsprited. To bring to an unsprited generation the 'life in Christ,' to make Christ live as the informing principle in the individual and in society—that is the Franciscan mission."

"And the way to this is by the Gospel of Holy Poverty, by that in difference to our modern materialism, that poverty of the senses—which Christ taught so unmistakably in his life and words, and by that meekness and humility—that poverty of the will—in which Christ came to His own creatures, making Himself the servant of all."

"A contrite heart makes joy in heaven." It also makes joy on earth. The father, mother, son, daughter who have approached the holy table are always supremely happy. To retain this happiness goes to Communion often.

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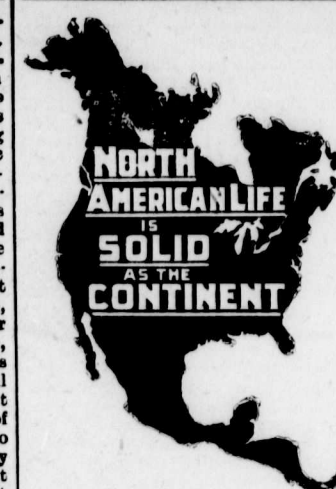
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W. B. TAYLOR, B.A., LL.B., Secretary.

100 PER CENT.

The stability of a Company may be gauged by the class of securities in which its funds are invested. Those of

THE MUTUAL LIFE OF CANADA

are all gilt-edged, as may be seen from the following list:

LEDGER ASSETS		PERCENTAGE
Mortgages	\$4,265,533 86	48.22
Debentures and First Mortgage Bonds	3,245,401 89	36.68
Loans on Policies	1,017,480 99	11.50
Cash on hand and in Banks	261,960 60	2.96
Real Estate	56,281 08	.64
Total Ledger Assets	\$9,846,658 42	100%

TAKE HEED WHAT YOU SOW—

BY THEODORE CLINTON FOOTE

In childhood and youth we have the most precious opportunities. Youth is the springtime of life, when the sower goes forth to sow and when the spiritual life, if present at all, is a tender seedling, struggling with the crop of lusty thorns so sure to appear in us all. But it is possible to weed them out. It is not difficult at first to give the spiritual life a chance to grow. The plant may be bent, but it can be straightened again. There are abundant opportunities to foster its growth, to supply the requisite nourishment, to cultivate and irrigate with the quickening streams of grace.

Remember, then, how your youth was passed. How easy it is to form habits in early days; how certain it is that habits of some kind are being formed all the time, bad ones or good ones—habits that will be your environment throughout life. If they are good habits, of regular, recognized, religious duties—habits of prayer and worship, of maintaining honorable dealings and honest self-respect—then they will be a bulwark against sin, a refuge in stormy days and a comfortable assurance for the future. If they are bad habits, of unfaithfulness to conscience, of frequent yielding to temptation, of careless indifference to that which is best, of recognizing no master but your own desires, then they will be like the serpent in Laocoon, like the fetters of the galley slave, but ten thousand times more galling; for the one can imprison but the body, while the other has forged shackles for the immortal soul.

Remember the advice of too indulgent parents; remember the warnings of true friends, of those whom God has set to care for your soul; remember the neglect of prayer, of the priceless privileges of religion and the many opportunities cast aside, and then recall the influence your neglect has exerted over others. It will be vain to cry out with Cain "Am I my brother's keeper?" Do we not hold others responsible for the influence which they exert upon those dear to us? Surely, we are all called to be careful of those around us, to set no evil example, but rather to be living instruments in God's hands by which He may reclaim the fallen and strengthen those that stand. How have you answered this call? "Son, remember!"

THE SOUL OF THE CHURCH.

While heartily rejoicing over the establishment among non-Catholics of a confraternity of prayer with the object to promote Christian unity, we dislike its appeal to the soul of the church, a phrase which though frequently used, is to our mind both unwarranted and misleading. It is often said of deceased non-Catholics, even though unbaptized he (or she) belonged to the soul of the church and outsiders are frequently heard to say of themselves, "At heart I am a Catholic." "If I were to join any church it would be the Catholic," etc. To belong to the soul of the church is to belong to its body as well for they are inseparable. The separation of the soul and body of the church would be its death. The sin of unbelief consists in being culpably, not geographically, outside of the church. No doubt a great many non-Catholics die in good faith, but they can not be said to have belonged to the soul of the church. It belongs to the church to hear its voice and submit to its authority. Of course we do not forget God's unenvied mercies to those who never belonged to, or who strayed from, the fold of Christ.

"The men of good will form the soul of the church," is another expression to which we object. No; the men of good will are they who form its body—who remain united to the vine. To say "I am a Catholic at heart," or "If I were to join any church it would be the Catholic," are assertions that may be utterly empty or a cloak for indecision or inincerity. Any one who really

loves the church will take steps to fulfill its commands—one who feels that he ought to submit to it and fails to do so, simply sins against his conscience.

"Perfect submission of each to the will of God is the one thing that can make reunion possible." This we like. Light to discern and strength to follow the divine will are assured to all who petition for them—who are sincerely desirous of knowing and firmly resolved upon doing. St. Paul's son of prayer, "Lord what wouldst Thou have me do?" was answered as soon as uttered. We heartily echo this petition of the new confraternity: "That the entanglements occasioned by past sins, by self-love, wilfulness, historical incidents, rival