SIX

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT THE STANDARD OF THE CROSS

emies of the Cross of Christ." (Phi. iii, 18.) It anything should stop us in a sinful course of life, my dear breth-ren, it is to find ourselves branded as "enemies of the Cross of Christ." St. Paul is not afraid to speak out and thus he stigmatizes men who, within living memory of the Death on the Cross so far forget themselves as to bring this rebuke upon them selves — "enemies of the Cross of selves — " enemies of the Cross of Christ." If there were men, even in those early days, within thirty years of the Crucifixion, who deserved this title, how likely that now there are many-perhaps who little think it who deserve the same for their crimes and misdeeds.

What a foul and treacherous thing it is to be the enemy of that by which we have been saved! It is not of those who knew no better—of heathens or pagans—that St. Paul speaks, but of those who have been redeemed by the Death on the Cross. There, then, is the rebellion, the malice of such men. Let us examine who they may be, what has led them astray, lest we too, contaminated by evil, should find ourselves amongs them.

Who are they, then ? St. Paul tells us: "For many walk, of whom I have told you often (and now tell you weeping) that they are enemies of the Cross of Christ; whose end is destruction; whose God is their belly; and whose glory is in their shame; who mind earthly things." They have perverted their mind, their glory, even their God, whose end is destruction. The Apostle seems to account for their wicked-

ness by their minding earthly things. Their mind, which had been puri-fied from sin, illuminated by faitb, trained to look up to Heaven by blessed hope, now seeking, content with, grovelling amongst earthly things. Luxury and drunkenness usurp the place of God, and to indulge their impure passions is their boast, making their shame their glory. Such a life soon wrecks body and soul; their end is destruction. Even nations cannot stand when people indulge in such a life, their and great cities once the pride of the world, for such crimes are now obliterated by the sands of time.

How common is it in our own day, alas! for men who have been bap tized, instructed, have made their first Communion, have been con-firmed, to get carried away on the tide of worldliness. They lose their hold of God, and the things of God. They begin only to mind earthly things, to be engrossed by them, to be misled by them. There are they who, in a spirit of independence and self-sufficiency, have contracted a mixed marriage; in hopes of a legacy have let a child or two be christened in some other faith; have loose views of dogmas and doctrines, speak lightly of the Church and its rulers, of priests and nuns; who, as long as they are outwardly respectable, think nothing of secret sin; who never think of curbing their pleasures, their appetites, their sinful desires; who are out of the Church, for their Easter Communion may not have been made for years—these are the modern specim nodern specimens whom St Paul would call "enemies of the Cross of Christ "How much more, do you tion. think he deserveth worse punish ments, who hath trodden under foot Son of God the Son of God . . . and hath offered an effront to the Spirit of

Grace?" (Heb. x. 29). Lest we should be led astray by such as these, listen to the lesson of the Cross, to the words of Him Who died for us on that Cross. " If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself." (Matt. xvi. 24) Self deon to the spirit of this world ! Instead of minding earthly things, we have to despise them, deny ourselves of anything that savours of sin-yea, and to obtain the power over ourselves of doing that, we have to practise selfdenial even in things that are no. harm. Let him take up his cross" (ibid.) submission and obedience demanued We do not choose our cross. of us. but we have to take up and carry the one that is given us. And we cannot do as we like, we are not Christ's unless we obey, for He says, "And unless we obey, for He says, "And he that taketh not up his cross . . . is not worthy of Me." (Matt. x. 38.) Cut off from the world by solf-denial, loaded with our cross, whither shall we turn? The third word is "and follow Me." No fear, no doubt, no hesitation need be ours in follow-ing the footsteps of Jesus hrist. It is the sure nath to Heaven It. is the sure path to Heaven. It is well worn now, for how many thou-sands have bravely followed after Open the works of the Fathers and sands have bravely followed after Him. And if it is weary and long we cannot, should not complain, for He pages. The writing of St. Irenaeus, The speakers of the evening outdid went first. Our L rd had a heavier cross, for He bore the sins of us all. With a good heart, my dear brethren, let us follow our Lord and Master. We want not to be of the spirit of this world, but to be like Him. To grow like unto Him we must often think of Him, visit Him, see Him near, and study His blessed words and deeds and ways; ponder over how He suffered, and why He suf-fered. Having learned this lesson, we shall despise earthly things, we

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pletely with earthly things and to be

APROPOS OF MARCH TWENTY-FIFTH

Tuesday, March twenty fifth, is the

Blessed Virgin Mary. Mariolatry is the Protestant's deworship; witness the feasts of Mary and the frequent devotions to Mary. Besides, it is said, there is little or nothing to distinguish this homege from a real worship of one of God's

creatures. To this objection M. J. Hill, S. J., responds: The truth is that de devotion to Mary the less devotion to votion to Mary, ho sever prominent her Son." in the services of the Church, plays in the services of the Church, plays an essentially subordinate part in the entire system of Catholic de-votion: and, what is more to the purpose, it is an essentially different thing from the worship paid to God. God, as being the supreme Lord of the universe, is adored or worshipped only as the most power(ul intercessor before the throne of God. Between only as the most power'ul intercessor ab-orbed in something that is taking before the throne of God. Between place at the altar. At the ringing of the worship of God and the veneration of Mary there is a gulf as wide as the one between God and His creatures-between the Infinite and the finite.

And yet, God Himself has designed to associate Mary so intimately with Himself in the work of the Redemp-tion that no Christian can realize what is told us in the Gospels with-out giving a prominence in hit. out giving a prominence in his thoughts to the human instrument employed by the Almighty for the accomplishments of His designs. Think of the essential dignity of the Mother of the Incarnate Word. Think of the praises lavished upon her by the inspired voices of angels and men. "Hall, full of grace," or, if you will, "Hail, thou who art so highly favored"—" The Lord is with thee; bl-ssed art thou among

us nearer to Christ. The f the Blessed Virgin mark a

with humble and sincere

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And St. Ambrose: "Let the vir-ginity and life of the Blessed Mary be drawn before you as in a picture, from whom as if in a mirror is re-flected the face of Chastity and Virtue's figure. . . In learning, the prime stimulus is to be found in the nobleness of the teacher, now what has more nobleness than God's Mother?" Mother ?'

Mother?" Not only praise and veneration were betowed on Mary by the Father; they also invoked her inter-cession. One among several in-statices is found in the Sornament ary of Pope Gelasius : "We beseech Thee, O-Almighty God, that the glor-"We beseech ious intercession of the blessed and ever glo ious Virgin Mary, Mother of God, may protect us and bring us to eternal life."

us to eternal life." This was the doctrine and practice of an age which our separated breth-ren generally regard as an age of pure wor-hip. The Blessed Virgin is honored as the most higaly favored of God's creatures, but only as such. "She is prayed to only as one who can pray for us. Tois, which is the genuine Catholic doctrine, is taught in all our prayed to for us. Tois, which is the genuine Catholic doctrine, is taught in all our children's catechisms. If in Catholic children's there occur any expresdevotions there occur any expres-sions that seem to non-Catholics to attribute to Mary anything more pletely with earthly unings and to be attribute to many unything more all for Jesus. But, fearing now to become enemies of the Cross of Christ, let us give ourselves wholly and manfully to the service of God, that she obtains from God everything and manually to the service of God, denying ou selves, taking up our excess and following our Lord. In "But one thing I do: forgetting the things that are behind, and stretch ing forth myself to those that are before, I press towards the mark, to the prize of the supernal vocation of God in Christ Jesus." (Pnil. iii. 13, 14.) not realize as Catholics do the un-epeakable dignity of one who was made the Mother of the Word Incarnate; nor do they appreciate as Catholics do what it is to have so great a friend at court as the Mother of the glorified Jesus. Though at the same time it should be borne in Feast of the Annunciation to the mind that in all devotions apart from the direct worship of God even Mariolatry le the Protestants de scription of our veneration of Curfs's mother. To a non-Catholic, devotion to the Virgin Mary seems to be given a very undge prominence in Catholic Catholics have their personal tastes. honoring them and praying to them. But, a non-Catholic convinced of this, will answer: "Devotion to the Blessed Virgin may be reasonable

enough when practiced in modera tion, but in Catholic practice it ob-trudes itself everywhere. The more Such an object may have dropped

a little bell the silence is solemn and all heads are bowed in adoration. Some minutes later a number of persons approach the altar rail to receive the Bread of Heaven. Here is the central act of Catholic workhip in comparison with which all things else are insignificant, or rather, it is through this that all things else have any value. The week day scene just described is repeated on Sunday, only with more solemnity. On that day the churches are thronged, and are filled again and again in successive hours, whils the churches of other depominations are often half empty. Evidently devotion to the Blessed Virg n' does not draw us away from Onrist.

But its effect in this regard is not merely negative : it positively draws

present at the holy sacrifice of the

Innumerable converts to the Church,

who now see the Church from within

DUE TO MOTHER

general

contrition

less dare devil, one who faced death in peace as well as in war. His action at this banquet showed that back of it all there is the heart of a man. There is no man worthy of the name that may not say with Abraham Lincoln, as did Eddis Rick-enhacker "All that I am and all them, have any weight towards win-ning the rights of citizenship again when peace is declared ?" is the ques-tion asked by F. Wondlock, S. J. C. F., in the London Tablet, to which he communicates the following in-teresting statistics teresting statistics:

enbacker, "All that I am and all that I hope to be, I owe to my angel mother."—Syracuse Catholic Sun. French Jesuits engaged in the war up to armistice day: 841 were mobi-lized. Of these, 98 were officers, 2 commanders, one lieutenant com-mander, 11 captains, 4 naval lieuten-ants, 24 lieutenants, 50 second lieu-tenants, 1 naval ensign, 5 cfloers in-the service of the fict and wounded. THE HONOR ROLL OF FRENCH "Will the splendid patriotism of these exile priests who returned freely to serve and die for the coun-try whose Government has outlawed

8 received the Medal of Morocco or Tunis, 3 gained English decorations, 11 gained other foreign decorations, 519 were mentioned in the Order of the Day, 154 were killed. These in-clude 23 chaplains, 29 officers, 86 sous-officers, 16 corporals, 50 priv-ates.

If the statistics of other Religious Orders and of the French secular clergy were available, Father Wood-lock is convinced that they would re veal the same heroic spirit .- Amer ica.

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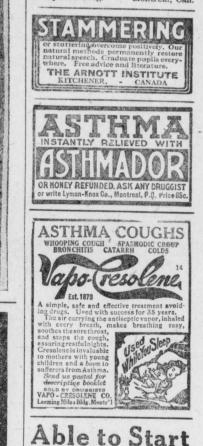
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women;" these are the words of the Angel sabriel, who added: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon these and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thes. And therefore also the Holy One that shall be born of these full he milled the state of the increase of fervor. The faithful are Mass, and ver many receive Com-munion after confessing their sins thee shall be called the Son of God' (Luke i. 28 35).—" And it came to pass that when Elizabeth heard the saluta who how see the Church from within known from experience that true and sincere worship of God is promoted by devotion to the Mother of the Incarnate Son of tion of Mary the infant leard the saith womb. And Elizabeth was filed with the Holy G nost. And she oried out with a loud voice and said: Blessed art thou among women and God.-New World. blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me that the Mother of my Lord should come to

me?" (Luke i. 41 43). When apgels and saints unite in sounding the me ?" (Luke i. 41 43). When apgels and saints unite in sounding the praises of Mary, the Church of God cannot be silent. The recognition of her dignity and of her personal merits was one of the

members of the Congress, a former United States Ami assador, and many officers of the Army and Navy assem. pages. The writing of St. Irenaeus, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Epbrem (Syrus). St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Pasil of Seleucie, contain passages relating to Mary that are worded like any typical passages that may be taken from Catholic writings of our own day. The speakers of the evening outdid Catholic writings of our own day. eyes looked out through gold-rimmed "Through her," says St. Proclus, "all women are blessed. . . thrilling adventures, brought his Eve is healed. . . Mary is hands to salute and said—' My Moth-Eve is healed. . . Mary is hands to salute and said-' My Moth-venerated as becomes the Mother, the er.' The great ace was no longer handmaid, * the cloud, the hride. the guest of honor. He abdicated chamber, the Ark of the Lord. . . his place to her to whom he rightwe shall despise earbhy things, we shall glory in the lessons of the Cross of Christ, cheerfully denying ourselves, obediently taking up our Lord. Most of us, alas I in looking back, must own that we have wasted per-haps yfars of our lifetime. We could not bring ourselves to break com-

pays-because it lasts and protects.

208

Hog Pen

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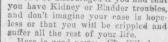
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