

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

PASSION SUNDAY

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. (1 Epi. 3: 7.)

We all know, my dear brethren, that when a man is born into the world he is born clean before God. He is then so clean that he is not fit to associate with the sons of God and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. He is then so clean that he can never be anything but an outcast from God until he is made clean.

Is there any way in which he can be made clean? Yes, for when he is baptized he is made a new creature he is cleansed from the stain of original sin, made a child of God and heir of the kingdom of heaven. He is then so pure and holy that if he die immediately he will go to a certainty, straight to heaven. For baptism applies the Blood of Christ to his soul, and he becomes truly clean. But suppose he does not die immediately after baptism, how is it with him then? If he keep his baptismal innocence, so far as never to commit a mortal sin, he still has a right to go to heaven. He can then demand of God permission to enter heaven.

Can he, however, demand this permission to enter heaven immediately after his death if he has committed only venial sin? That depends entirely upon his contrition at the moment of death. If he is not sorry for all his sins that his contrition is perfect; then he can't enter heaven immediately, but must go to purgatory to be made perfectly pure, so that he can be taken into heaven.

I have said that baptism applies the Blood of Christ to the soul and makes man pure and innocent. Now, baptism is a sacrament. It is the first one and is necessary to salvation. Without it no man can enter heaven or even purgatory, for the purgatorial state is the first and lowest state of the blessed and holy souls who must go to heaven in the end. But the Blood of Christ is applied to the soul of man in other ways, although baptism must come in the first place.

In what other ways is the Blood of Christ applied?

First, by the Sacrifice of the Mass. For by the Mass we repair our sins, get grace to keep from sin, and make our purgatory shorter in consequence. He who hears Mass daily makes the best prayer that a man can make, and he is more certain to have his prayer answered. He also helps the living and the dead, and brings down upon himself and his own, special graces from God.

Secondly, the Blood of Christ is applied to our souls by the sacrament of penance. Men defile their souls by sin, by mortal sin after baptism. He who receives the sacrament of penance worthily—that is, with true sorrow for all mortal sins, with a firm determination to lead a good life and repair the wrong he has done—that man receives again the grace of God that restores his soul to eternal life.

Thirdly, in Holy Communion we receive the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ in a hidden manner, but in deed and in truth. The consecrated Host is the eternal and ever-living God Himself. You know, my dear brethren, the strength of this divine food. How it gives new energy to the soul, destroys the power of concupiscence, banishes or at least weakens temptation, always giving us the grace to hold our own against the world, the flesh, and the devil. And there are Catholics who refuse to make this communion at least once a year.

But there is one thing that ought to be said here. A Catholic ought never to consider as useless, or as almost useless, any one of the sacraments. This too many do as regards confession. They under-rate it. They think, therefore, it is no good unless they receive Communion every time they go to confession. Now this is a grave error. One is not obliged to go to Communion every time he goes to confession. Those who cannot go to Mass nor Communion, on account of their business or employment or work keeping them away, can at least go to confession very often during the year. All such as one has to do is to prepare himself carefully, step into the confessor's house, make his confession, and go on to work again. If he but make an arrangement with some one of the priests he can always be heard at once. Frequent confession is a wonderful help to a good life and a happy death.

TEMPERANCE

"DEATH DUE TO ALCOHOLISM"

"Death in Ambulance Due to Alcoholism" was the head-line of a brief paragraph in a daily paper one morning recently. The item had no special interest for the public; such deaths are recorded frequently. What mattered the passing of one more human derelict? And yet what a story is told in those six words—the story of a wasted life. One wonders what was the beginning. These victims of alcohol are drawn from every class, and represent every age.

The unfortunate may be a wayward boy whose loving parents could not reclaim him, a husband for whom a devoted wife worked and prayed, a father whose sons and daughters breathe a sigh of relief that he is dead—even though the cause of death was an orgy of drink. What an end!

On a wet dreary morning a wagon was driven to the door of an undertaker's room, in a miserably poor neighborhood, and from the room

STRONGLY ADVISES
"FRUIT-A-TIVES"

Because They Cured Him, And They Will Cure You



MR. ALEX. MCCARTER

WALKERTON, ONT., MAY 9th, 1911.
"I have been in Walkerton in business for a good many years and many of my townsmen know that my health, for long periods was precarious. My trouble was extreme Nervousness, brought on by Indigestion and Dyspepsia, from which I suffered in the most severe form. It was so bad that I could not sleep before about four in the morning. I noticed one of your published testimonials of how someone had used 'Fruit-a-tives' for similar complaints, to commence using 'Fruit-a-tives'. I immediately procured several boxes and I am pleased to say that I now enjoy splendid health and could not possibly feel better. I can eat with every degree of satisfaction and sleep without an effort. I strongly advise anyone suffering from like complaints, to commence using 'Fruit-a-tives'." ALEX. MCCARTER.
Age, a box, 6 for \$2.50—trial size, 25c. Address or Fruit-a-tives Limited, Ottawa.

two men bore a pine box containing all that drink had left of what had been a man.

"Poor Jim, it's the only time he ever begged for a drink," said an on-looker, as the coffin was shoved into the wagon. "There was many a time he never begged for a drink," said another, in kindly defense of the dead; "Jim was a good man and earned good pay before the drink got him." The driver urged on the horse, to get rid of the burden as quickly as possible, but it was not so easy to get the incident off one's mind.

The body of the outcast was soon disposed of, but what of the soul that had entered on an eternity of living? And he had been a good man "before the drink got him." Drink is getting too many victims, despite all that is being done to lessen the traffic. There is an appalling waste of young lives in our big cities, and drink has much to do with it. Some boys in their teens work only to get money to spend in drink; others will not work at all, but wring money from those at home, or even pawn the household goods; yes, or steal; anything to get the price of an orgy. "Give him up," said an indignant citizen to a mother whose dissolute son was dragging the entire family financial ruin. "You'll never make anything of him now."

For twenty years this mother had lavished love and care on her son; the home life was exemplary; liquor was never seen in the house, yet the boy was drawn into the circle of youthful loafers, drunkards, and gamblers, that seems to be a feature of every neighborhood. What an awful thing it is that at twenty, when a youth's foot is on the threshold of manhood, he elects to be an outcast from society and that conditions assist him to realize his wretched ambition. It would seem that something more could be done to prevent minors from getting liquor, some more drastic measures taken to break up the "gang," and thus lessen the number of ruined lives, and also the number of deaths "due to alcoholism."—Sacred Heart Review.

TEMPERANCE NOTES

The Lenten regulations of almost every diocese in the United States contain some reference to the propriety of refraining from intoxicating liquor during Lent. The regulations for the Pittsburgh diocese contain this sentence:

"The praiseworthy custom of abstaining from intoxicating drink in honor of the Sacred Thirst of our Lord, so warmly recommended by the late Sovereign Pontiff, is suggested to the piety of the faithful of this diocese as a means of penance and merit, during the holy season of Lent."

Writing of a railway accident caused by drunkenness on the part of the engineer—a cause happily not frequent—the Intermountain says: "It is the publicity given the cause of such accidents that has led many railroads to adopt an ironclad rule against the use of intoxicants by its train crews. It is this publicity which eventually will compel all railroads to adopt such a rule and see the representative every age."

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that it is enforced. The railroad corporations may be disposed to deal leniently with their men, knowing the harsh criticism which follows the promulgation of any rule affecting such a large body of men as constitutes their operating force, but the people have a right to know when they get on a railroad train there will be a steady, sober man on duty in the cab. Railroad and whisky will not mix.

THE MOVEMENT FOR UNITY

Everyone taking interest in religious matters knows of the movement for unity on foot among the Protestant denominations and of the World Conference on Faith and Order proposed by the Episcopalians of this country to further it. A circular issued by the committee on the plan and scope of the conference recommends that while the preliminary arrangements are being made, Christians should dispose themselves for the work to come. For this purpose "there must be created a more general and intense desire for reunion and a warmed atmosphere of Christian love and humility." Meetings are recommended for prayer that the way to reunion may be made plain and that one may have the grace to follow it. Discussions also are to be held in these meetings, and the subjects to be discussed are indicated in the following passage:

"The first question is whether we Christians really deserve reunion. Have we that deep and definite faith in the one Lord which must fill us with the desire to reunite in His one Body? What are faith and membership in Christ? Is the relation of the Christian to Christ merely individual or does it constitute membership in a body? Is that body merely a human organization, self-originating, or is it the living, continuous Body of the one Lord? Do we know whether or not the brethren, for whom we have been separated for centuries, possess any of the precious things of which we are stewards or which, perhaps we do not ourselves possess? Can we learn anything from each other? What is the Church? Has it any authority, and if so, what? What is the basis of its claims? What is its mission? Is there any sufficient reason for the continued separate existence of the communions to which we severally belong?"

All this is good, as far as it goes, and must have the sympathy of every Catholic. The trend of the questions suggested is evident, and the term to which they lead every prayerful enquirer. Such a one cannot fail to reach some concept of the Church founded by Christ. But the study should be pushed further. Having gained by God's grace the desire to be reunited with all Christians in Christ's one Body, and determined that the Church is indeed no mere "human organization," but "the living, continuous Body of the one Lord," one must ask himself whether Christ can be divided by any human defection. Can the Church bear that sublime title unless it shows forth on earth the perfect image of the immortal, indivisible Christ in heaven, its life corresponding to His life, its activity to His activity, its sanctity to His sanctity, its mission universal as His mission, its teaching infallible as His teaching? Our Lord did not play with words. When He said: "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you." He communicated His mission to the apostles or else He did nothing at all. When He made eternal life or eternal death depend upon the accepting or rejecting of the apostles' teaching, He endowed them with infallibility. When He bade them teach all nations and promised to be with them all days, He empowered them to transmit to their successors their mission and their infallible authority as He had given it to them. The actual exercise of this mission in its essential infallibility is the vital activity of the Church; take it away and the Church is dead, a dead Christ on earth and a living Christ in heaven—the thing is inconceivable. Unity demands infallibility. Infallibility ensures unity. A division of Christ's Body on earth is as impossible to-day as when the apostles lived and taught as impossible as the division, the destruction the suspended animation—call it what you will—of the glorious Christ in heaven.

This is confirmed by the text of St. John which the promoters of the conference have made their motto: "That they all may be one, as Thou Father in me, and I in Thee; that they may also be one in us; that the world may know that Thou hast sent me." It is part of Our Lord's prayer after the Last Supper. Hardly had He uttered the words than He set out for Gethsemane to enter into His Passion. So intimately connected with the Sacrifice of Calvary were they, that, even though by an impossibility, one could conceive Our Lord's other prayers unanswered, this would be inconceivable here. The prayer is clearly and concisely expressed. There can be no mistake about it. Unity is asked, a union such as will correspond on earth to the union of the Persons of the Trinity in God in heaven, a supernatural union in the Holy Ghost, a visible union that can convince the world of Christ's divine mission, a union enduring as long as the world lasts, for it is to be a testimony to the world unrestricted as to time or place.

Such unity can be considered from two points of view, as it regards the Church and as it regards mankind.

Considered from the first, it is prayed for absolutely and without condition. The Church is Our Lord's absolute creation and is perfect in the being He gave her. The unity He prayed for belongs to her essence. It cannot be destroyed without destroying the Church. Such destruction, were it possible, would not restrict its work to earth, but would pass beyond to heaven itself. The unity of the Church is a testimony to men. All may see it. The Catholic Church is a fact unique in the world's history. Sects that cut themselves off from her waver, totter and perish. The teaching voice is dumb in their sanctuaries. They change with the times, and in time of change they hardly know what they hold, even as regards the great fundamental truths of Christianity. Their members are divided among themselves. The Catholic Church teaches. She teaches the same doctrine at all times. Her children hear her voice and are united in faith and obedience. She lives always with the fullness of life, for she alone has the vital power to cast out the poison of heresy and error. No state is high enough, no learning deep enough, no influence strong enough to save the obstinate. She cuts them off with God's authority: they sink into obscurity and she goes on her way serenely. This the world sees. This unity in faith and obedience, the work of the Holy

PRESIDENT
SUSPENDER

NONE SO EASY

Ghost dwelling in her, is Christ's testimony to the world of His mission.

With regard to mankind at large, union with the Church touches her salvation rather than her essence though we do not deny this the return of the nations to the Church would be the full complement of her actual and visible unity. As regards this unity Our Lord's prayer was not absolute, though it was efficacious. It obtained for everyone grace sufficient, directly or indirectly, to attain to union in the Church, but the actual attaining by the individual, a means of salvation, like salvation itself, depends on his free will. Should those who are looking to the conference for great results of unity follow up the considerations suggested by the committee on plan and scope to a logical conclusion, they will find the unity they desire, not indeed as they think at the present hour, but in the only way in which it is possible.—Henry Woods, S. J., in America.

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