

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

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

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE CHARACTER OF THE MESSIAS

"There hath stood One in the midst of you, whom you know not." (John 1: 26.)

The prophets had foretold and partially described the Messiah that was to come. But it was not most appropriate that the most explicit testimony of Him and revelation of His character should be given us by and through means of the Baptist? Therefore we find in Advent that St. John is brought before us in the gospels. His preaching, his works had led men to think that he himself was perhaps the Messiah. But "he confessed, I am not the Christ," to the priests and levites, who had been sent to question him. "And the next day," says the gospel, "John saw Jesus coming to him and he saith: Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world." "And John gave testimony, saying: I saw the Spirit coming down as a dove from heaven, and He remained upon Him, and I saw and gave testimony that this is the Son of God" (John 1).

Moreover, the Baptist later on, when cast into prison by Herod, sent two of his disciples to our Lord, and by his questions causes our Blessed Lord to reveal Himself openly to us—the character and description of our divine Lord given us by Himself! What excuse can man have not to know Him; and knowing Him, not to love Him and follow Him? John's disciples gave his message, Art Thou He that art to come, or look we for another? "And Jesus making answer, said to them: Go and relate to John what you have heard and seen. The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he that shall not be scandalized in Me" (Matt. xi. 3.). Then the Baptist drew from Christ the description of the character by which He would be known by man. The God of Truth made Man gave testimony of Himself.

How blessed are we, preparing to celebrate the anniversary of the coming of that divine Redeemer, to look upon Him portrayed so clearly by His own Blessed Self! As in those days, so now, there are countless ones that need Him. And He comes to us with the same benevolence, the same readiness, the same power to do us good. Have we not ourselves been amongst the crowd, and have we not ourselves felt the divine touch of His mercy? Perhaps we were blind, and He opened our eyes to the Faith! We may have been lying helpless on the road to heaven, powerless to proceed, and the lame have been made to walk. Lepers in sin, more than once—yes, many—times—have been cleansed and forgiven. Alas! perhaps for years, our souls, dead to God through sinful habits, have been raised to life again by His grace. And our hard, laborious lives have been sweetened and filled with hope of eternal joy in heaven, because we poor have had the gospel preached to us.

It is well for us to realize this merciful character of the Saviour. It was not always thus. Formerly, under the old Law, the Almighty was the God of justice. His wrath flamed out; His vengeance overtook the wicked. But now with the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, how different! And this is why the Baptist gave testimony of Him and our Lord revealed Himself, so that no one could mistake the object of His coming, and no one feel that he was too utter an outcast not to be forgiven.

Then why did the Redeemer thus come, filled with compassion, ready and longing to befriend and forgive? Becoming Man Himself, He wished to be one with us, to dwell amongst us, to share our sorrows, to take upon Himself our sins and miseries: for He remembered that we were but the dust of the earth—poor, weak, and helpless creatures. He had in His mercy created us for Himself, and He came to restore us, to re-establish us, that we once again might be "the sons of God and heirs with Christ." He is the Saviour, who "loves the souls of men."

And again, He came pitying us, ready to help us, for He knew the enemies that would plot our ruin. He could not leave us helpless amidst such perils. It was through spite and hatred against Himself that the devil would never cease from trying to work our ruin. The envy of the evil one is our constant danger. Envy because the Redeemer came to raise us up and fit us for the thrones left empty by the fallen angels. To know that we are meant through the Redemption of Christ to reign in glory, whilst the fallen spirits pine in the abyss of misery, is the cause of the enmity, which can never cease, between the devil and the souls of men.

The Blessed Redeemer came to do all that even an Almighty and allowing God could do to save poor mankind from eternal death. He came "to save His people from their sins." Will it not, then, be all our own sad, miserable fault if the evil one prevails against us? Shall we not, then, welcome Him at this holy time, and offer Him loyalty and loving obedience? Trust in His goodness, for He came "to seek and to save that which was lost."

EDUCATION

PUBLIC SCHOOL OFFICIALS HEAR CATHOLIC VIEW

Baltimore, October 16.—Speaking from a platform on which sat two prominent officials of the Public School system, Archbishop Curley outlined the Catholic position with regard to education and entered a vigorous denial that the Church is in any way opposed to the welfare of the Public schools. He spoke at the dedication of the new St. Ambrose parochial school here after Isaac S. Field, President of the Baltimore Board of School Commissioners, and Dr. David E. Weglein, Acting Superintendent of Public Education for the city, had delivered addresses congratulating the Church authorities on their development of education and expressing a desire for cooperation between Public school authorities and private schools in matters of common interest. The occasion is believed to be the first in Baltimore on which prominent Public school officials have spoken at the dedication of a parochial school.

NOT FOE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL

"The Catholic Church is not antagonistic to the Public school," the Archbishop asserted. "It has never been antagonistic. Catholics cheerfully pay their quota of taxes for the support of the Public school system. As citizens of this country we wish that system well and want to see the children of their neighbors given an education that will equip them for the battle of life. "The Catholic school authorities wish to cooperate in every possible way with the Public school officials in everything that pertains to the advancement of education. We Catholics are desirous of having our stand in this matter made perfectly clear. That stand has been misunderstood, and even misrepresented at times. It seems to me that this occasion is a fitting time to make known our attitude.

"We Catholics are candid and open concerning our views on education. We believe that the Public school is a splendid institution as far as it goes, but we feel that it does not go far enough for us. I mean this: We Catholics believe that the great essential of education is religious training. We believe that our children ought to be taught not only reading, writing, mathematics, geography, history, and the other branches taught in the Public schools, but also the doctrines of their religion. We believe that our children ought to have kept before them always the duties which their religion teaches—the duties of loving God and their fellowmen, of placing the salvation of their souls before all else.

"Surely, if we believe in such an education, and are willing to build schools and to conduct them for the sake of such principles, if we are willing to do such things, the while we cheerfully and readily pay for the building and upkeep of our Public schools, none can say us nay. We ask nothing of others when we carry out our convictions. We trench not on the rights of our fellow-citizens. We shirk no duty in assuming further duties. We, who do not use the Public schools, pay as much in the support of them as our fellow-citizens who avail themselves of all the opportunities such schools afford.

RESPECT RIGHTS OF ALL

"Our non-Catholic friends who give serious thought to our insistence upon parochial schools are fair enough to say that we have the courage of our convictions. What we teach in our schools may be seen by all men. We teach, as I have said—love of God, love of country, love of fellow men. "A few minutes ago you who are gathered here witnessed the raising of an American flag in front of this new school. Above this building is the Cross of Christ, the symbol of our religion. Every morning as the child enters this school he will look up to that Cross and see in it a reminder that his great purpose in life is to save his soul, to serve God faithfully and loyally always. Every morning as he looks up at that flag and salutes it he will be reminded that he is to serve that flag in peace and war—to live unselfishly and patriotically for that flag and die in the defense of its honor, if ever such a sacrifice shall be asked of him. He will remember it is the flag of Protestant, Jew and Catholic. He will remember that while he asks all men to respect his rights to worship his God according to the dictates of his conscience, he in turn recognizes the rights of Protestant and Jew to serve God as their consciences tell them. He will respect that right. Respect for the rights of all men will be taught in this building for it is the nursery of religion, patriotism and tolerance."

CALIFORNIA THIS WINTER

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CATHOLIC RESEARCH FACTS

LOWEST OF PRIMITIVE TRIBES HAS A RELIGION DECLARES PRIEST-SCIENTIST

By Mrs. Enrico Paoletti (Home Correspondent, N. C. W. C.)

The thesis that there exist peoples anywhere on the earth without any religion whatever, has been contradicted finally and solemnly by Catholic scientific research. Father Schmidt, S. V. D., missionary and eminent ethnologist, declared at the Religious Ethnology Week held at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan. This gathering, wholly Catholic, is one of the most important scientific congresses in its field, and is so recognized by ethnologists the world over. Father Schmidt ridiculed the "Freudian Theory" and with pleasant irony labeled the Viennese a dealer in phantasms which scientific facts dispel. Research among primitive tribes disproves his exaggerated sex speculations utterly, he said.

UNION OF MORALS AND RELIGION

Contrary to the theory now widely held, the priest-scientist asserted, actual investigation shows that the union of morals with religion is very close among the most primitive peoples. In the most ancient tribes, he said, there are found very simple moral ideas, but ideas which are definite and elevated. There is an identical conception of fundamental principles in all peoples and through all phases of their development, he added. It is in observance of moral laws that the tribes differ. At the same time, the most backward tribes are more highly developed in certain religious beliefs than the most advanced of peoples.

Tracing the cultural development of ancient civilizations and examining their geographical locations, inter-mixtures and resurgence, Father Schmidt, considered the pygmies in particular. Purity and family institutions among these people are on a very high plane, he said.

CATHOLIC SCIENTIFIC LEADERSHIP

The Religious Ethnology Week was another striking evidence of the Catholic Church's deep interest and leadership in scientific fields. Of world-wide scope and purely Catholic, it counts among its scientist members many priests, notably from the mission fields. They come from all parts of the globe. To such eminence has the gathering attained that secular ethnological journals give it prominent place. The researches and studies that it records annually have been of immense importance to the science generally. This is the fourth Week to be held. Cardinal Mercier and the University of Louvain were among its first and most ardent patrons.

This year a particular significance was lent the Week by virtue of the Vatican Missionary Exhibit. At this Exhibit are gathered data of the most intense interest to the ethnologist, scientifically collected and arranged. The Exhibit and the Week, then, are complementary, the one showing forth the valuable ethnological material collected by Catholic scientists, the other giving to the world the thought and the facts evoked therefrom.

Particularly the Catholic scientists who foster and attend the Weeks are engaged in the ethnological study of the religious, customs and usages of savage and little-known peoples to whom Catholic missionaries penetrate. At the Milan gathering reports were made on researches conducted among such widely varying peoples as the Terra del Fuegians in South America, the Negritos in the Philippines, the Ruandans of Central Africa and the Pygmies of the Island of Malacca.

HOLY FATHER'S BLESSING

Addresses were delivered in the course of the Week by eminent scholars of Italy, Germany, Austria, France, Yugoslavia and other countries. Some of the widely diversified subjects were: "The History of Religions in Italy," "Causality in Primitive Peoples," "The Freud Theory," "The Influence of Economics on the Development of Civilization," "The Malacca Pygmies," "The Terra del Fuegians," "Christianity and Pagan Mysteries," "The Morals of the Semites," "The Bloody and Bloodless Sacrifices of the People of the Altaia Regions," "The Pygmies of Ruanda," "Christian Ideas in Koran and Islam," "The Idea of Redemption in Humanity," "The Unity of Moral Conscience in Humanity" and "Supposed Relations Between the Eucharist and Pagan Mysteries."

Cardinal Tosi, Archbishop of Milan, opened the Week after celebrating the Mass of the Holy Ghost, and Father Gemelli, O. F. M., Rector of the Catholic University of Milan, read a warm message of blessing and encouragement from the Holy Father praising the eagerness for study among learned Catholic men. Father Schmidt, who has been the soul of the gathering since it was first instituted, reviewed its history, and a telegram

of felicitation was read from the Italian Minister of Education. Recent publications, notably "Comparative Study of Religions" by Father Pinard de la Boulaye, S. J., and "Peoples and Civilization" by Father Schmidt, were then discussed.

ETHNOLOGY MUSEUM AT ROME

Father Schmidt, after expressing the gratitude of the scientists to the Holy Father and praising the Vatican Exhibit, announced that the section of the Exhibit prepared by two secretaries of the Week will not be dispersed, but will constitute an ethnological museum in Rome at the side of the Mission Museum. Father de la Boulaye in an address declared there has been a general reaction against the arbitrary attitude of the evolutionists, and urged the employment of historical criticism in ethnological research.

Cardinal Ragonese presided at the final session. Father Schmidt suggested that National Religious Ethnology Weeks be instituted in all countries. As the meeting closed, the scientists voted to make Father Schmidt President, instead of Secretary-General, the title he has held since his able and vigorous labors helped bring the Week into existence. The next international Week will be held in 1928.

"SPECIALS" FIRST, THEN WIDOWS AND ORPHANS

Joseph Devlin, former member of the Irish Parliamentary Party and now a Nationalist member of the Belfast Parliament, protested vehemently before that assembly regarding the paltry amount which it was providing for pensions to widows and orphans. The maximum sum for the whole area of North East Ireland was \$725,000. Criticism was rendered specially appropriate by the poverty and unemployment prevailing in all parts of the county governed by the Belfast Legislature.

The Minister responsible for the proposal admitted the inadequacy of the provision, and stated that it was impossible to do better "in the present condition of the Government's finances." Mr. Devlin pointed out, however, that \$1,500,000 was being spent on a partisan police force that was a menace to a large part of the population. He was proceeding to compare this figure with the sum proposed for the widows and orphans when the Speaker intervened to disallow "arguments based on certain analogies."

The Minister reiterated his admission that the Government was in low financial water, and added: "We could make savings in the direction of the police if we thought it right. But we don't because we believe our first duty as a Government is to make ourselves absolutely sure that the territory over which we are guardians is perfectly free from attack."

This statement is taken as implying that the Special Constabulary which is so intimidatory to the Catholic citizens will be maintained regardless of cost till the Boundary question is finally put to rest.

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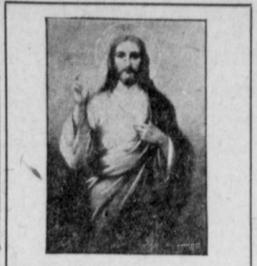
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