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## FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost.

## IMITATION OF THE SAINTS.

My fellow-laborers, whose names are in the book of life. (Phil. iv. 3.)

Thus does St. Paul in the Epistle of to-day speak of St. Clement and the others who had "labored with him in the Gospel." Do you wish that your name, too, should be written in the book of life? Follow the path trodden here below by the saints of God, and then, even while yet on earth, your name will be recorded in heaven. For Holy Church commands us to observe this festival of All Saints, not only in honor of those whose names are in the calendar, and whose feasts come round in the course of each year, but also in praise of that great multitude which no man can number—of all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues—who stand before the throne and in sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands. The saints whom the Church has honored with canonization are but a small number in that vast multitude. They were the heroes of the Christian army, but the great majority of those who are now receiving the homage of the Church were rank and file—common everyday Christians, like ourselves. The festival of All Saints, therefore, especially appeals to us by showing us that sanctity is not something away off out of our reach and entirely beyond our powers, but that it is what we must each strive after if we hope to win heaven. For nothing defiled can enter there, and without holiness no man shall see God. As, then, we hope to be one day saints in heaven, we must try now to be saints on earth. That is why St. Paul addresses all the faithful as "beloved of God, called to be saints." Yet many Christians are forgetful of this high vocation. They seem to think that God has laid down one rule, one course of life, for saints, and quite another for ordinary people. This is all a mistake. God's law is the same for every one. There are, indeed, special duties belonging to particular states of life, but apart from these there is no difference in what is required of every Christian. We are all of us bound to follow the straight and narrow way which leadeth unto life. The chief happiness of that life will consist in the sight of God, to be always in His presence, serving Him continually in joy and thanksgiving. And the way to this life our Lord has told us in the sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God."

So, then, in order to attain to this life, to dwell for ever in the sight of God, it is not necessary to imitate the saints in their extraordinary deeds, their heroic acts of penance and self-sacrifice, their suffering for the faith. Some of us are, indeed, called upon to stand out conspicuously among other Christians, as they did, and show to the world an example of courage and heroism. But for all of us the hidden virtues are the ones required, and if we cultivate these God, who seeth in secret, will Himself reward us openly in the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed. The one thing needful for each one of us is purity of heart, to cleanse our hearts from sin and from all affection towards sin. "Dearly beloved," says St. John, "if our heart do not reprehend us, we have confidence towards God." See to it, then, that your heart is all right towards God. Cleanse your soul from mortal sin by turning your heart away from the sin you have committed by sincere and hearty contrition and by a good confession. Then keep your heart right towards God by giving it to Him who says to you, "My son, give me thy heart." God alone is worthy of the full love of our hearts, and He alone can satisfy the heart of man. If we set our affections upon sin or upon the passing things of this world there is reserved for us in the end nothing but unsatisfied longings and bitterness of heart. But if we purify our hearts from every affection that would lead us away from God we shall indeed be called "blessed," and our names shall be written in the book of life.

There is no better medicine for family use than Ayer's Cathartic Pills. Their sugar-coating makes them easy and even agreeable to take, and as they contain no calomel or other injurious drug, they are perfectly safe for patients of any age.

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## How They Worked Their Way.

By MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN, LL. D.

## III.

It only wanted a few days of the great feast when the children of the parish, in which the Dorans lived, were to make their First Communion. There was much preparation in many households. The boys were to wear new suits, if possible, with white rosettes on their breasts; and the girls to have white frocks with blue sashes.

Anna Doran had passed her examination for that happy circle that was to approach the altar. Anna was thirteen years old and large for her age—in fact she was quite as stout and a little taller than Mary Beresford. She had lived in the country, far from a church, and her First Communion had been postponed. The Dorans were very poor. Dick, Anna's elder brother, lay on a lounge in their little parlor, unable to speak. He had been thrown from a wagon and internally injured. Mrs. Doran went out to people's houses and acted as laundress.

Anna was obliged to stay at home to nurse Dick.

To-day Anna was unusually silent. She was a ruddy-cheeked girl, with dark brown hair, dark blue eyes, and a good-humored expression. Generally, she was very gay and cheerful; but to-day her fits of quietness made her brother wonder.

Anna had a deep grief in her heart. It may seem as small to you as Mary's, for in both cases a frock was concerned. Anna's was much the greater. She had only two worn and patched dresses. They might be made to do in the street, for they were always neat and clean; but they were so old and rust-colored, from hard wear, that she could not wear either of them in church on the great day. Oh, if she only had a white frock! But it was useless to wish for such an impossible thing. Her mother could scarcely get sufficient money to pay the rent and Dick's medicine bill. Dick would have given her a frock, if he were well and able to earn money. And her dear father could not do it. They had never let him know how poor they were. He was looking forward to see Anna come to his bedside at the hospital, in her white dress, after the function at the church. Tears came into Anna's eyes when she thought of his disappointment.

Her mother had thought of asking Mrs. Howe for an old frock of Alice's. We know how that turned out. The time was so near, and nobody would lend her to the thing she most wanted—though it was a little thing! She saw many girls in the street carelessly wearing white dresses. And she said a Hail Mary to save herself from envying them. While Dick slept, after she had tenderly washed his face and hands and combed his hair, she took out her rosary and prayed that she might be allowed to make her First Communion with the others.

After all, she thought, "Our dear Lord will know best." And then the fear and anxiousness left her. She busied herself in arranging a few flowers on the table, sent to Dick by a neighboring market-woman. There was a knock.

Anna opened the door and Mary stood on the threshold, smiling a little. "May I come in?"

"Certainly," answered Anna, recognizing her guest, for she had seen her at church. "You are Miss Beresford, are you not?"

"I am Mary Beresford." And, catching sight of the covered figure on the sofa, "is your brother sick?"

"Yes," said Anna, "he is better now; he is asleep."

"I must talk softly, then."

Anna gave her a chair, and, as she noticed how neat and tasteful her guest's dress was, she wished hers was less shabby. Then the remembrance of her own trouble which so nearly concerned a dress, came to her and she sighed.

Mary's quick ear caught the sigh. "I must tell you why I came, I hope you will not be offended. I was told that you were to make your First Communion with the others in a few days."

"Not with the others, I'm afraid."

An eager question rose to Mary's lips; but she did not speak it. She waited for Anna to go on. But Anna paused. Mary felt the difficulty of alluding to the frock, now that she had come.

Suddenly, Dick who had been dozing and not aware that a stranger was present, spoke—

"If I were rich, Anna, do you know what I'd do? Why, I'd just buy you a new dress, so that you could look like the other girls."

"Hush, Dick, Miss Beresford is here."

Dick looked up and smiled at Mary. He was very pale; but sickness could not take the expression of good nature entirely out of his face. His half-open eyes, his stiff red hair, and even his weak voice expressed good nature. Dick nodded towards Mary and then relapsed into a doze again.

"I came to ask you if I might give you a frock I have," said Mary, plunging into the subject in desperation, "I haven't worn it, and if you would please take it, I would be obliged—"

Anna could scarcely credit the words.

"It is a nice white frock and I think it will fit you."

Anna hid her face in her hands, and Mary saw tears trickling through her fingers.

"I am so sorry—I hope you are not offended. Indeed—indeed—"

"Offended!" cried Anna, taking away her hands and looking at Mary with

tear-filled eyes, "you don't know how happy you have made me! It seemed so dreadful not to be able to go with the others. And father would be so disappointed, if I did not go in white. Oh, dear, if you will only lend me your dress, I shall be very, very happy!"

Mary's face glowed with pleasure. "I will give it to you, if you will take it. Let me see. You are just about my size. I'll send it over this afternoon. I must go now. Good-bye!"

Mary hurried away, to escape Anna's thanks. All her forebodings were forgotten—all her desire to wear her pretty frock was gone—she almost ran home. She met Alice Howe coming out of a confectioner's shop, with a big box of chocolate bon-bons. Alice called to her to stop and have some, but Mary shook her head; she was eager to get home.

It did not take her long to rip off the silver lace from the white gown. She hid it, singing cheerfully. She knew now how sweet it is to make others happy. It is really the most solid pleasure in this world of fading joys.

Her mother gave her some thin stuff for a veil for Anna, and some blue ribbon. In the afternoon, Mary put the precious frock in its box, and with the veil and ribbon wrapped in tissue paper, went with Kathleen to Wilbert's Court.

Kathleen talked quite gaily to Dick and amused herself with a cat, while Anna tried on the frock and Mary critically inspected it in the kitchen. A little pinning and a few stitches made the dress just right.

Anna forgot her bashfulness in the excitement of the process, and Mary had so many suggestions to make, that she talked very much and very fast—an unusual thing with her.

At last Anna stood arrayed in the new dress. Dick almost jumped from his sofa in delight.

"She is prettier than Alice Howe," cried Kathleen, clapping her hands.

"And much nicer, if she is poor," thought Mary.

Smiling and blushing, Anna let them admire. While they were thus employed, Mrs. Doran entered, tired and worn out, laden with brooms, brushes and a bucket. She understood the situation at a glance.

She sat down on a chair near the door and looked at Anna. Then she looked at Mary and tried to speak.

"God bless you, my dear," she tried to say and her voice choked. She began to sob. "You don't know what a kindness you've done."

When Mrs. Doran had wiped her eyes, she asked Mary to have tea with the family. Mary said she would, partly because she feared to offend Mrs. Doran, and partly because she wanted to see how poor people live. She expected to be very poor herself, and she would like to know how the poor lived.

Anna was not long in getting tea ready. A round table was moved over near Dick's sofa, so that he could sit up and have his tea, too. A tea-pot and five cups and saucers were produced and put on the white cloth, with some bread and raspberry jam. Mary, who expected to see tin cups and perhaps wooden spoons, was agreeably surprised. Everything was as clean and as shining as at home. Kathleen laughed and chatted away, and enjoyed her tea very much.

Some paper roses on a stand struck Mary as very pretty. She admired them.

"I almost thought they were real." Anna put them in her hand.

"Take them, please," she said, "I made them when I had to watch Dick, during the long winter nights."

Mary thanked and brought a vivid look of delight to Anna's face, by putting them in her belt. After a pleasant hour, Mary and Kathleen said good-bye.

In the evening, Mary told her father all about her visits. He was very much interested.

"And so you gave up your new dress?"

"It wasn't much loss to me, father; I didn't need it."

"Well, my dear," said her father, smiling—how that smile on his pale face cheered her in after years!—"I have heard that Carmelite Nuns say, when they heard of a good deed, 'God reward you!' I say, with all my heart, 'God reward you, little girl!'"

Dermott and Brian were eager to know more about their new home.



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"I am going to take you out to see it to-morrow," their father said. "Now let us have some singing." "The air shall be filled with music—"

Kathleen broke in with great pride—

"And the cares that infest the day Shall fold their tents like the Arabs, And silently steal away."

"Shakespeare!" said Brian.

"Longfellow!" cried Kathleen, triumphantly. "You boys don't know anything!"

They laughed. Song followed song until Mrs. Beresford gave Gounod's "Ave Maria." After that they sat quiet, as the moonlight stole into the room.

They were all fond of music. There was one fear that oppressed Brian;—would they be too poor in the country to have their piano? The rest were pondering over the same question. Kathleen suddenly asked it.

"No," Mr. Beresford said, "we shall take the piano with us, and Brian's fiddle, too."

Brian's spirits rose. He went to the piano and began—

"I love to play the violin. And hear its sounds so sweet, It gently rests beneath my chin, My weary heart to greet."

"I cannot play it very well. I have not learned it long; And when I play, as you can tell, I get a little wrong."

"Those stupid folks who live next door. They hate the violin; But will practice mine and I more."

"My dear old violin!" cried Dermott.

"Isn't it, Kathleen?"

Kathleen looked puzzled.

"I found it in my scrap-book the other day—out of the *Keynote*, I think. It expresses my feelings to a T."

Mr. Beresford was very quiet; but he was happy. He looked at the little group and thanked God that poverty could not make them poorer in love for one another. They said good night, after the rosary had been recited, and went to dream of their new, strange "home."

TO BE CONTINUED.

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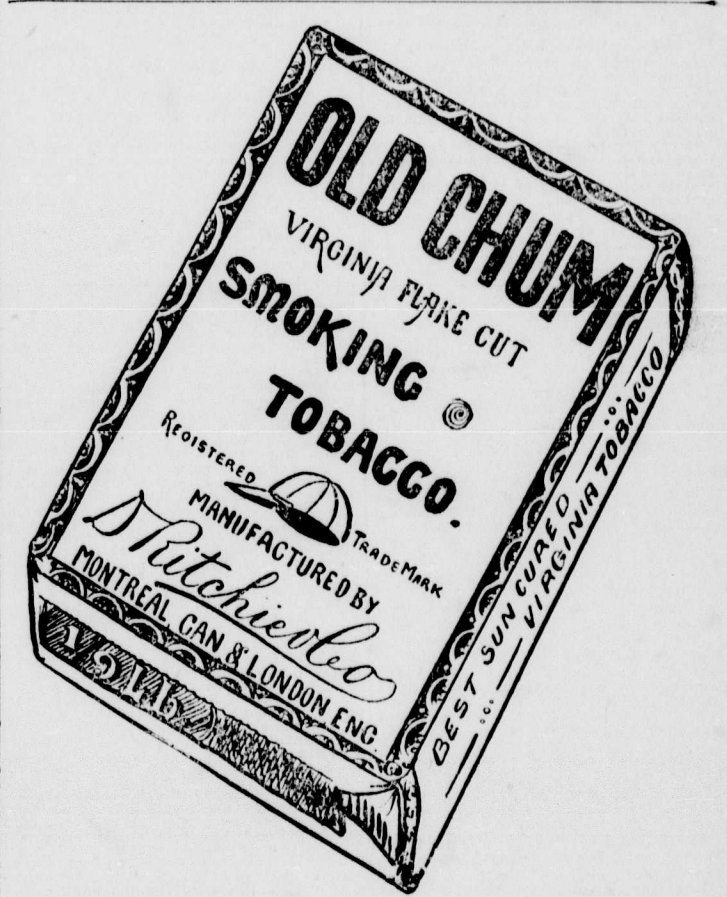
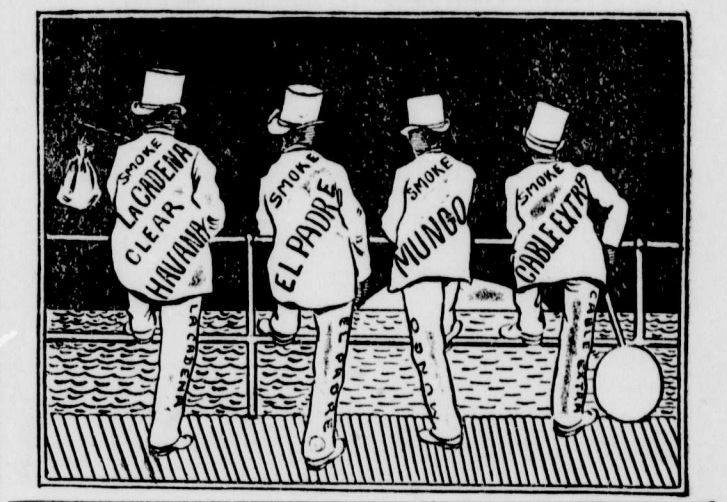
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