

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

LOVE OF OUR NEIGHBOR

He that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. (Epistle of the Day)

There can be no doubt, my brethren, that the saving of our souls sometimes seems to be a very troublesome business. There are so many laws and commandments binding on us, so many sins which we are likely to commit, and if we break any of these laws in any grievous way—if we are guilty, that is to say, of mortal sin—our salvation is lost till such time as we repair our fault. Yet it may seem that we are surrounded by so many rocks on our voyage through life that it is almost useless to try to steer clear of them; and, if we may judge by their actions, many Christians actually come to the conclusions that there is no use in trying to keep their ship off these rocks. They make up their minds that spiritual shipwreck is unavoidable, and that the only way to reach the port of heaven is to be towed in on a raft which can be made out of the sacraments at the last moment.

But really our salvation is not such a complicated and intricate affair if we would only look at it in the right way. The course which we have to follow is not such a difficult one to bear in mind and to keep. There are many commandments, it is true; but they all have the same spirit, and if we have that spirit they will all come quite easy.

What is the spirit? Our Lord has told us. It is the love of God and of our neighbor. The love of God and of our neighbor gives us a short cut to the kingdom of heaven; if we are guided by it, we shall not come near the dangers that seem so many and so threatening.

Let us see how this is; how is this love going to work to keep us in the safe and sure track? It is not so hard to see. For what is it to love any one; how do we act towards one whom we really and truly love? Are we always trying to give him no more than we can help, and keep as much as we can for ourselves? Do we try to have our own way as much as possible, and never to step out of it for his sake, unless compelled by force or threats?

No, of course not. We keep far away from what will offend him. We always are trying to find out what will please him best. So if he is not unreasonable, and if he knows our desire and intention the danger of offending him disappears. Well, it is just so in the matter of serving God and keeping His law. The continual mortal sins into which Christians fall, and which it seems to have to avoid are due to their trying to run too near the rocks. No wonder they so often get wrecked in these dangerous waters. They are all the time striking on the commandments, and the whole sea seems full of them because they try to sail as near them as they can. If they would only give them a wide berth, and keep out in the deep ocean of the love of God and His forgiveness would not cause so much anxiety and trouble.

If we would only ask ourselves what will please God best, and try to give Him all that He desires, as we should if we loved Him as He deserves to be loved, and as we do this instead of trying how far we can have our own way and yet come out right in the end, the whole matter of saving our souls would have a very different aspect. Now, why not try to follow this line? It is no fanciful thing beyond our power. Plenty of Christians have done it before us, and are doing it all the time.

But if we do not feel prepared, or are a little afraid to commit ourselves to this course just yet, at least we could endeavor to have some love for our neighbor and make some sacrifice for him. We have St. Paul's word for it, you see, that even he who loves his neighbor will be sure to fulfill the law. Yes, we may feel quite sure, if by a generous love of our neighbor, we keep far off being wrecked on the last part of the Ten Commandments, that we shall run clear of the first part as well.

A SPIRITUAL BIRTH IN THE PRESENCE OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

A YOUNG MAN'S LIFE STORY

From the Missionary

I have been asked to write the story of my conversion. This is for me a rather difficult task because I am not at all easy for the average young man (and I am just the "average") to express in either writing or speech those thoughts which lie deep in his heart, buried beneath the work and play of his daily life. But if my literary inexperience is overlooked, and my story read just because it is true, I hope it will not only read with interest, but will also give the "native" Catholic a deeper and ever-deepening sense of gratitude for that Faith in which it has been his glorious privilege to be born.

I was born of Episcopalian parents, and was baptized as an infant in that church. From earliest childhood I was in church every Sunday morning (and generally in the evening, too) and also Sunday school, for my mother was a "High Church" Episcopalian, and we were taught that it was a sin not to go to church every Sunday when possible.

When I was about nine my mother began to talk to me of her desire that I should be a "priest" when I grew to be a man. (The High Church calls their ministers "priests.") I was taken to a church one day, and with some ceremony was made an "Oblate of the Order of the Holy Cross," by the superior of the Order. This is a "religious order" in the Episcopal Church, and every member is without doubt sincere, devout and holy in his life of service and self-sacrifice. The Oblates are young boys who are offered to God by their parents in the Order of the Holy Cross, with the mutual understanding that "vocation" is to be fostered by the parents, and that the Order will pray daily for their Oblates with the same intention.

I spent the most of one summer at "Holy Cross House," and served as altar boy every morning, as I had been

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You decide if I could not do this with my Drafts didn't satisfy you. Wouldn't you mail a coupon to know for yourself, when I know as I do, risk my dollar treatment on your verdict? Address: Magic Foot Draft Co., P.O. Box 101, Building, Jackson, Mich. Send no money—only coupon. Do it now.

accustomed to in our own parish church. While there the belief in the Real Presence, which I had been taught at home, became a most vital belief, so much so that when I became a Catholic I needed little instruction on the fundamental Catholic doctrine.

I would like to say here, that a recent convert from this Order (Father Sargent, lately ordained a Catholic priest) a few weeks ago said Mass in the Cathedral. Many of them all been the grace of conversion.

I went regularly to confession after I was made an Oblate as long as I was at home, but when about eleven I was sent to an Episcopal boarding school and no confessions were heard there, but at home during vacation I went.

About four years ago my mother went to Pittsburgh to live. I do not think any minister of the Episcopal Church hears confessions. There does not seem to be a belief in the Real Presence, or perhaps I should say there is no definite public teaching from their pulpits on this doctrine, it is merely the Protestant "memorial" idea. I was still at the same boarding school, though not as a pupil, having a position in the office, etc. I, of course, was at home during vacation.

During the second Christmas holiday I spent in Pittsburgh, my mother was received into the Catholic Church. To say I was surprised but faintly expressed what I felt. I simply could not understand it. I said as much to my mother, and added: "Mother, do not expect me to follow you. I will never be a Roman Catholic." To which she replied: "I am not asking you to follow me, my son; all I ask is that you will be faithful to all that you have been taught and believe." Mother said little about her new faith to me, and never urged me to go to Church with her, although when I occasionally asked a question or two she answered, them but that was all.

The third Christmas vacation came (last Christmas) and I was home again. On Christmas Eve my mother said: "Would you like to go to the High Mass to-morrow? You will enjoy the music—the Cathedral choir is a great treat." I said I would be glad to go. I went with my sister to an "Early celebration" (Episcopals are afraid to say "Mass" out loud) at an Episcopal Church and later with my mother to the Cathedral for High Mass.

I watched my mother's face as she knelt beside me, and there was something new to me in her look of complete isolation—she seemed unconscious of the presence of another human being. I had never seen such a look on her face in an Episcopal Church. Whether she stood, sat or knelt at the different parts of the Mass, that look never left her face—such perfect, loving belief—there could be no question of the meaning. I was impressed without realizing how much. Then began the sermon when I forgot all about my mother.

My mother has often said that sermon (Fr. Coakley preached) seemed to her just an ordinary Christmas sermon, and in trying to remember it and understand why it impressed me so much, she could not bring to mind even one phrase which one would expect to arouse a dormant soul. I really do not know myself. However, in leaving the Church I said: "Mother, that sermon was certainly worth listening to; there was a lot of 'old facts' there." In a half-absorbed way mother answered: "Yes; it was a good sermon."

I was full of new, burning thoughts, and would have gladly poured out a stream of talk to her, but as she said nothing more, my enthusiasm felt a little dampened. That night, to mother's surprise, I offered to go to Benediction with a young Catholic friend. As I knelt during the singing I experienced a tumult of feeling, although without any

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HORSE USELESS 2 YEARS Till Cured by 2 Bottles of Douglas' Egyptian Liniment

A peculiar case and remarkable cure is described by Mr. E. J. Horwood of St. John's, Newfoundland, who writes: "I have a horse which suffered from fractured ribs. Symptoms—a large swelling in the side, very prominent, uniting the horse for any work. It was treated by a Veterinary. Pus had formed. An incision was made, a continuous running took place, the swelling getting very little less. My attention was attracted by the label attached to a bottle containing Douglas' Egyptian Liniment, which read, 'For Man or Beast.' I was induced to give it a trial. Directions were strictly adhered to, and I had much pleasure in stating that my horse is completely cured, after having used two bottles only of Egyptian Liniment."

The horse referred to was suffering for nearly two years before Douglas' Egyptian Liniment was brought into use. Those who have never used it before are astonished to see how quickly Egyptian Liniment cleans out festering wounds and running sores, removes the unhealthy conditions, and permanently heals. 25c. at dealers. Free sample on request. Douglas & Co., Napanee, Ont.

Africa. Why, these people are savages. Why are they so brutal, so destitute of the finer and nobler feelings? Their hearts are pagan. They have not Christianity.

"You do not know what the Catholic faith really is, because you do not sufficiently study its blessings. We must live the faith; translate it into our very lives so that they shall become Christ-like. Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," says St. Paul. Put Him on as you do your dress, and as your dress goes out into the world with you so will Christ go with you. Carry with you His Gospel. His truths His faith. Listen to St. Paul in to-day's Epistle: 'We cease not to pray for you, and to beg that you will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of God in all things pleasing; being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.' You are the children of God. Never forget it. When others not of the faith see you daily living your Catholic faith they will be edified and be drawn towards you. They will see something in you that they have not got, a power that draws man from his low passions and turns his thoughts toward God.

"Your vocation is to live truly Catholic lives. Oh, that we Catholics always remembered our duty in our daily lives and holy obligations. There is a great responsibility resting on Catholics in regard to those outside the Church. You say it is the priest's duty to preach the faith. No! it is your business to preach to the world the most eloquent of all sermons—the sermon of the true Catholic life."

The Bishop told the story of the conversion to the Catholic faith of an Episcopal minister who was stationed at Manistee, Mich. when the Bishop was a pastor in the diocese of Grand Rapids, Mich.

"He came to me for instruction in the Catholic faith," said the Bishop, "and it was a pleasant surprise to find a little Catholic child, an Irish servant girl. I saw that poor girl leading such a pure and beautiful life that I began to reverence her. I asked myself what it was that governed her daily life and action and I resolved to find out. And here I am in the Church." It was not until I made humble enquiry into the instructions at all the brought this minister into the Church; that came afterwards. It was the beautiful example of the daily Catholic life of an uneducated servant girl. O, if Catholics would only be true to their faith, what a change you would see in this country. Unfortunately one of the commonest objections against the Church heard again and again by priests is the bad lives of unfaithful Catholics. 'Your Church! Look at them!' I see some of these unfaithful Catholics at times when I walk along the streets and I feel like covering my face with my hands in shame when they come tottering toward me with their looting faces. They do not know what St. Paul means when he speaks of walking worthy of God and of being fruitful in every good work. The fruits of the Holy Ghost are virtue, charity, humility, patience, long suffering and sobriety. These are the fruits God will demand of you at the judgment. And these fruits, St. Paul says, you must produce.

AT THE DEVIL'S LUNCH COUNTER "Why are so many Catholics cold in the faith? Because they do not know the faith. Yes, they have studied the catechism, but that is only a beginning. O, friends, dear people! your Catholic faith is a storehouse of most beautiful truths. You never can fathom them. The most learned of theologians can meditate on the treasures of Catholic faith for years and then discover new beauties day after day. Why is that it is the well-instructed convert who is the most fervent Catholic? Converts, especially adult converts, never seem to get enough of the faith. The reason is

DEMANDS A REVIVAL OF FAITH

THE STORY OF THE MINISTER CONVERTED BY EXAMPLE OF HIS SERVANT

In comparing the ardent faith of the well-instructed convert with the indifference of many who are gifted with an inheritance of the true faith, Bishop Schrems of Toledo preached a powerful appeal to Catholics to study their religion and to practice its precepts in their daily lives. He said in part: "Would you know what this holy Catholic faith has done? Then look around you. It has changed the face of the world. It has given us the Christian civilization we enjoy to-day. If you would understand what this faith has done look at the nations that have cast it out or at the nations that have cast it out. There is France. It is only 100 years since the French revolution, the darkest record of the world. In that day the faith was cast out for a new brand of infidelity and atheism. The streets of Paris ran with blood and the mob of the street elevated to the throne of the Church of Notre Dame a woman and a street. In our day we have only look at Portugal. The reports from there are censored, but we know this much, that the government is run by a handful of unbelievers.

"There were glorious days for Portugal when letters and science flourished and the Catholic faith was strong there. To-day they have driven Christ from the homes and the courts and the schools. What have they left? Tyranny and despotism.

"Look at the nations that never had the faith, at China, Japan and darkest DRUNKENNESS CAN BE CURED

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BEFORE THE YEAR CLOSES

It would be advisable for you to carry out some of those good intentions which have remained so long unfulfilled.

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