

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

Rev. J. J. BURKE, PHOENIX, ILL.
PALM SUNDAY

THE LESSON OF THE CROSS

"My soul is sorrowful even unto death; stay you here and watch with Me. And going a little further He fell upon His face, praying and saying: My Father! if it be possible let this chalice pass from Me." (St. Matt. xxvi, 39, 39)

During the last days of the holy season of Lent we commemorate the sorrowful passion of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Until the day of His glorious resurrection summons us to joy, our hearts should dwell with His in the desolation of Gethsemani, in the cruelty of Jerusalem and in the ignominy of Calvary. We should bid farewell to Thabor and follow Jesus to Golgotha; forget His glories and reflect on His sorrows. There we will find abundance of solace for our grief, consolation for our afflictions and encouragement for our trials and tribulations.

The Passion of Jesus may be divided into five parts corresponding to the five sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary—The Agony of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemani, The Scourging of Jesus at the Pillar, The Crowning of Jesus with Thorns, The Carrying of the Cross by Jesus to Mount Calvary, The Crucifixion of Jesus on Mount Calvary.

First let us follow Him into the Garden of Olives, and witness the agony, that frightful mental suffering which was the beginning of His Passion. The Gospel account of the Agony is pathetic in the extreme. (St. Matt. xxvi, 37). "And Jesus taking with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee He began to grow sorrowful and to be sad. Then He said to them: My soul is sorrowful even unto death; stay here and watch with Me."

If in His death on the cross He was like a God, in His Agony He was like a man. Falling on His face and remembering all the sins of the world, a bloody sweat oozed from His sacred body.

The moon with pale light never beheld such a sad spectacle as she gazed upon that awful night in the garden of Olives.

There passed before His mind in a sort of panoramic view all the treachery of the Jews, the hypocrisy of Judas, the denial of Peter, the sins of His dearest disciples and all those for whom through their own fault His blood would be shed in vain. How agonizing this must have been to the sensitive feelings of the amiable Jesus. How it caused the blood to trickle from every pore in His sacred body! Who can imagine the fearfulness of the conflict that caused that sweat of blood! Did you ever think that when you have offended God by sin, each offence was an additional pang to the heart of Jesus increasing the tortures of His agony? Grieve for those who have thus caused that blood to flow and resolve for the future to drink of that bitter chalice consecrated sacred lips—to drink of by His who resignedly and penitently in trials and afflictions, in sorrow and contrition.

After Our Lord received the traitor's kiss and was seized by His enemies He was led to the city, where the scenes in that terrible tragedy follow one another in rapid succession. Denied by the Princes of the Apostles, presented to the high priests, scourged at Pilate's tribunal, mocked by Herod, He is finally scourged. "I find no cause in this man," says Pilate, "I will chastise Him, therefore, and let Him go." What a blasphemous thought! Chastise Him who is innocence, holiness, perfection itself! He is then scourged—a punishment reserved for the vilest of mankind. Imagine you see the innocent Lamb of God surrounded by that mob of ruffians, stripped with rudeness, His wrists bound, and tied to a pillar. He seems to be abandoned to the anger of God and the fury of men.

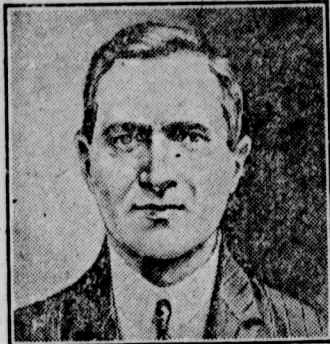
The brutal executioners shower on Him their cruel blows till He is covered with blood, gashed and swollen from head to foot. Every part of His sacred body is covered with one continuous bruise. Gash has run into gash and the flesh is torn in flakes from His bones. What a piteous spectacle Jesus now presents! What a contrast with what He was the day before, when seated at the table of His love with the twelve and John reposing on His bosom! What a tender sorrow we should feel and how we should deplore that sad change!

But another scene of barbarity yet remains. The fierce desires of the cruel soldiers are not yet exhausted. They know that Jesus had declared Himself King of the Jews, so they proceed to crown Him in mockery. They weave a crown of hard, sharp thorns and place it upon His sacred head. Then they press upon it until its points pierce the skin and penetrate the flesh.

The blood trickles down His face and neck and mingles with that of the scourge. In civilized countries everything possible is done to spare the suffering of one condemned to death. But these heartless, cruel, hardened ruffians, after placing in His tied and bleeding hands a reed as a scepter, passing before Him bent their knee in mockery, spit in His sacred face, struck His thorn-crowned head while they in derision saluted Him with the words "Hail, King of the Jews." Did refinement of cruelty ever exceed that of the Roman soldier? Jesus standing there covered with blood, His face disfigured with the marks of blows and spit and blood, His eyes weary, His sacred body lacerated and mangled—even then in such an ab-

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J. A. CORRIVEAU

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ject condition a Godlike nobleness shown all over Him, causing Pilate to exclaim "Behold the man."

This appeal caused the mob to cry out "Crucify Him, crucify Him." "Take ye Him and crucify Him," said Pilate, "for I find no fault in Him." Then began His sorrowful journey with His cross to Calvary.

When we consider that Jesus after having been scourged and crowned with thorns was unjustly condemned by Pilate to die on the cross; that He was so weakened from loss of blood that He could scarcely walk with His heavy load; that falling several times the soldiers rudely struck Him; that stripping Him of His garments they treated Him so roughly that the torn flesh came with them; that these barbarians fastened Him with nails on the cross and allowed Him to die with anguish on that infamous gibbet; when, I say, we consider all these things and that He suffered all for our sins, can we help feeling compassion for Him and remorse for having by our sins been the cause of so much suffering, and will we not say with our whole heart "O my Jesus, I love Thee more than myself. I repent with my whole heart of having offended Thee. Grant that I may never offend Thee again, but that I may love Thee always and then do with me what Thou wilt."

What cruel torments He must have suffered during the time He remained on the cross. If it is wearying for us to remain a few hours in one position upon a soft bed, what must Jesus have suffered hanging on that hard cross with His body in such a condition? His body is one continuous wound against which His hard bed presses. Each of His hands, each of His feet, is pierced with a long nail, which, on account of the weight of His body, tears wider and wider the rent it has made. O what a smarting, torturing, pain He endured during the three hours of the crucifixion! Who can imagine all the King of martyrs suffered for the sake of others during that short time? "Surely He hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows." (Isaiah liii, 4.) Man sins and the Son of God in order to make satisfaction for him is pleased to be condemned to death upon the cross. He was wounded for our iniquities. He was bruised for our sins. (Isaiah liii, 5.) If we had no other proof of the Divinity of Christ than His first words on the cross, they would be amply sufficient to convince us that He was God. Hanging on the cross surrounded by His murderers, before thinking of His mother, His friends or Himself He prays for His very executioners, His murderers. "Father forgive them." Can you look upon your Saviour and your God dying for His enemies and asking His Father to forgive them and to refuse to forgive those who may have injured you? After this brief consideration of the sorrows and afflictions of our God, suffering a bloody sweat in that garden of Gethsemani, scourged at a pillar in Pilate's hall, crowned with thorns, wounded from head to foot, His whole body mangled and streaming with blood, and all for us, will we not resolve to do something for Him?

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to give up some sin or sinful habit, to suffer something for Him and to have recourse to His sacraments especially to confession and Communion during the Paschal season? Such love for us as manifested by His great suffering and cruel death should cause us to love Him. Hard, indeed, must be the heart which, contemplating the Passion of Jesus Christ, will not be moved to compassion—to contrition, and to say "O my suffering Jesus, who hast endured so much for me and on account of my sins, I am sorry for having offended Thee. I love Thee more than myself, and to show my love for Thee and appreciation of Thy love and benefits I resolve to amend my life, to frequent the sacraments and to keep the commandments."

TEMPERANCE

HOW ALCOHOL RUINS MEMORIES

Dr. Smith of Heidelberg has recently conducted some experiments which show how alcohol thoroughly disturbs the memory. A number of persons were given three or four glasses of beer a day and required to memorize certain sentences, and write them down on paper. Half a dozen experiments were made with each person. No sentence was longer than four lines. The person was given the sentence and told to go and write it out; in fifteen or twenty minutes another sentence was given and the process repeated. For twenty days these experiments were carried on. The same amount of beer was given daily. After the sixth day the errors and losses in memory increased and on the twentieth day the losses amounted to 70 per cent; that is, in 100 experiments over 70 of them were errors and mistakes. The faults of memory steadily increased. The first day's experiments showed a small amount of errors. Then there was a steady increase.

This experiment confirms Prof. Kraepelin's test of remembering numbers and words. He found that without alcohol 100 figures could be remembered after 40 repetitions, an average of 2½ numbers to each repetition. With alcohol the same person could only remember 60 figures after 60 repetitions, an average of 100 for each repetition. This showed a diminution of normal memory to the extent of over 40 per cent.

In every day life, where accuracy of memory is called for, it is a common fact that alcohol drinkers are the most unreliable. Events which the person had intense interest in seemed to make little or no impression on the brain when under the influence of spirits, and only with difficulty could be recalled. Even when remembered they were distorted and inaccurate.

These experiments bring out the astonishing fact that the memory, of all the brain functions, suffers most pronouncedly from the use of alcohol.—Copyright 1914, by the Star Company.

BEER BREWING IN OLDEN TIMES

Lecturing at Newington, Edinburgh, recently, Councillor Hutchinson dealt with "Ancient Licensing Regulations and Their Effects." Among other things, says "Law Notes," the councillor observed that it was well established by The Book of the Dead that brewing was carried on in Egypt five thousand years ago, and what was also of great interest in view of recent legislation, and of bills in project to reduce the number of licensed houses, if not suppress them altogether, more than four thousand years ago demands arose in Egypt for a reduction of the number of places for the sale of beer, a sort of temperance (Egypt) bill, like the Scottish Temperance Bill.

SAVED WIFE FROM DRINK

WINNIPEG MAN SAVES HIS WIFE THROUGH SAMARIA PRESCRIPTION

How terrible the effects of the curse of drink when a woman is afflicted. Wives and daughters often save their husbands or fathers from the drink habit through giving tasteless Samaria to them in their tea, coffee or food. But this is the story of a young husband in Winnipeg who overcame all difficulties and saved his wife.

Winnipeg, March 18th.
"The treatment of Samaria Prescription which I bought at Gordon Mitchell's Drug Store has saved my wife, who is still a young woman. It was only twelve months ago that she took to drink through trouble. I cannot thank you enough, for she never even thinks of it now, and if she goes near anyone who has had a drink, she always says how sick she feels. Do not use my name, as we are so well known."

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FOES TO ALCOHOL

Narcisse Quimet, the young French-Canadian, who stands champion among the golfers of the world, is a water-drinker. And so is every other sportsman of mark. Every club for golf or polo, lacrosse, cricket or football, is linked to teetotalism whether it knows it or not. No bar-room thus far has ever thriven close to a gymnasium, where the boys are well aware that beer and spirits never yet befriended hard muscles and stony nerves. A victors to-day as sportsmen lead the van in skill and daring. To a man they leave strong drinks alone.

Inventors in fields less hazardous than those of flight have been busy as apostles of cold water. These are days of swift motor cars, fast passenger elevators, of trains often speeded at more than a mile a minute. Our factories are crowded with quick and complex machines which demand, every moment, the utmost clearness of eye and certainty of touch. For security to life and limb, for celerity and quality in output, no dalliance with the beer mug is admissible. And here a word from Germany deserves attention. In Berlin the General Electric Company five years ago established a canteen for its thousands of hands. Of course, beer was provided, in addition, tea, coffee, seltzer and lemonade were furnished, all of capital quality, at the only 2½ cents per pint. Mark the reward which attended purveying soft drinks with nicety and care. At first their sale was but one-third as much as that of beer. To-day non-alcoholic drinks enjoy a demand more than twice as large as that of beer. Yet more: the Company's record shows a steady diminution in "accidents," standing plainly to the credit of its water-wagons. It has long been demonstrated that in all cases of bodily injury, treatment is simplified when the patient is a water-drinker, while his recovery is hastened and assured.

THE SALOON MUST GO

The country is tired of the liquor traffic, says "The Coal Dealer." The Church is fighting it. Temperance organizations are united for its overthrow and congress has recently dealt it some heavy blows. About one-half of its population now live in dry territory and two-thirds of the area of the United States is free from the legalized saloon.

If business men will admit it and give the matter unbiased investigation, it will be found that liquor enters into the present day economic problem more than any other phase of life. There is no doubt but that the manufacturer and mine owner would get better results from labor employed free from booze, and it is a dead certainty that the merchant and retailer at large would find his collections easier and better if the vast amount expended for liquor was directed into the channel of trade and the purchase of necessities.

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