

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

REV. F. F. HICKY, O. S. B. TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE GOOD SAMARITAN THE TYPE OF OUR LORD

But a certain Samaritan, being on his journey came near, and seeing him, was moved with compassion. (Luke x. 33.)

The very name of this parable has passed into a proverb; one word recalls it all—the good Samaritan.

The parable being given as an answer to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" we are struck by the infinite skill with which Our Blessed Lord embodied so much in a seemingly simple answer.

He explained to the lawyer; He rebuked the Pharisees with a life-like sketch of their own days and doings; He praised the poor outcast Samaritan; to future ages He withdrew the veil, and disclosed Himself as the Samaritan; to the eyes of faith He showed the scheme of redemption, the sacramental powers, the refuge the Church was to be to the souls of men.

The scene was well known to our Blessed Lord's hearers. The inn they had passed many a time. They knew why He mentioned priests and Levites as the travellers, because of the great college at Jericho, whence they came and returned after their ministrations in the temple at Jerusalem. They knew why the place was subject to robbers, as it lay on the borders of the desert; and that it was the route for the Samaritan's journey.

Thus they saw the splendid answer to "Who is my neighbor?" "He that showed mercy." They smiled under the covert rebuke, that priests and Levites should know not charity, but that a despised Samaritan should teach them the lesson.

But there is a wider and more sacred significance than this. It is a picture of Christ by Christ Himself! No wonder our Blessed Lady kept all such words in her heart, and that St. Luke narrates them so beautifully.

Who is the original good Samaritan? Our Blessed Lord. The traveller was mankind, and his enemy the devil met him, robbed him, stripped him, and left him half dead. Former religions, the priests and Levites, passed by; they could give no redemption to fallen man. But at length Christ came on His journey from heaven through the world; "being on his journey came near him, and seeing him was moved with compassion . . . bound up his wounds . . . and took care of him." (Luke x, 33, 34.)

The Jews only saw the rebuke about their want of charity, but all Christians can see this application. But here Protestant and Nonconformist stop, or see but little more. To us Catholics every word has a meaning and a value.

In the remedies we see the Sacraments—oil and wine—sacred symbols are they to us. Into our wounds Christ pours the oil. Twice at Baptism is the child anointed with holy oil, again at Confirmation. The sacred chrism again used at the ordination of a priest, blessing his hands to offer the Holy Mass, and at the consecration of a bishop, giving him the fulness of sacerdotal grace. And again the holy oil is used to strengthen the dying in their last conflict, to cleanse and comfort their souls, in the sacrament of Extreme Unction.

And the wine to revive the poor, half-dead traveller tells us of the Precious Blood of Jesus—the Blood that redeemed us, the Blood which is on our altar, when the wine is consecrated during Mass.

And he took him to the inn. The Church is the inn, for our home is heaven. The Church, then, is a shelter, a house, where we travellers find rest, food, comfort, medicine at the sole charge of Christ. "Take care of him; and whatsoever thou shalt spend over and above, I at my return will repay thee." (Ibid., v. 35.) The treasures and the merits of Christ's Redemption to be used for us by the Church, till He returns.

Does not this parable, then, contain the scheme of our redemption? Is it not good for us to understand and ponder over this parable? What else could teach us and instruct us as well as the words of Christ Himself? The fall of man; our ruin by sin; our enemy the devil; our helplessness only for the mercy of God, which came down from heaven, journeying through this valley of tears, and seeing our utter desolation, was moved with compassion—is not all this brought home to us in a word? And the mention of the elements of the Sacraments—oil and wine—fill us with consternation at the thought of how little remembrance and gratitude we have had for them. And the safe shelter and guardianship of the Church—have we thanked God for that? And every grace and favor we need; to be given us from the merits of Jesus Christ. In our dark hours and trials, it comforts us to know all this and to remember it. The good Samaritan is our own Blessed Lord. We know it and believe it.

Just before this parable our Lord had said: "Blessed are the eyes that see the things that you see." (Ibid., v. 23.) Ay, that see God's mercy; that see the Good Samaritan is indeed our Lord; that see how often He came near and befriended us. For willfully we have left the shelter of the Church, and ventured into the paths of the wicked, and fallen again among thieves; and yet we have been searched for and found

by the Good Samaritan, and brought back again and cared for, and never a word of reproach, not a harsh look, but only pity and tenderness from a loving heart.

But what meanness and ingratitude to treat in this way our good Neighbor, the Saviour, Who has shown mercy to us. Let it be our life's work, humbly to keep near Him, to follow Him, to be faithful to Him.

THE POPE AND COMING PEACE

By Rev. John T. Smith, LL.D.

Cardinal Gibbons has surely added to his fame by his recent letter in defence of Pope Benedict XV., which appeared several months ago in America. His Eminence in public questions has always been outspoken and has hit the nail on the head every time. When one recalls the many delicate matters with which he has been compelled to deal since 1896, and the success with which he has steered between Scylla and Charybdis, while always retaining the respect and admiration of the country, one can hardly admire too much the skill which has escaped even a single blunder. His Eminence has sought counsel and has never been ashamed to take it. His advisers have been the most notable people of the time. His skill and his success have made him the spokesman of American Catholics. His defense of the present Pope against the slanders, the prejudiced, and the hostile is as fine as anything he has ever done; and it will remind Catholics of their duty to the Pontiff and call their attention to many things which otherwise might have escaped notice and study. Curious facts in connection with the Papacy are now becoming public property and are disturbing the consciousness of mankind. One has always been before the public; the determination of the ultra-Protestant party to prove Pope Benedict a tool of the Central Powers. Another became public when Russian archives revealed the conspiracy to keep the Pope out of future peace conferences in order to please certain Italian officials. A third is becoming more apparent every day, that in some obscure fashion the Pope is advancing in the esteem of the suffering world, that alone of the rulers hope and peace radiate from his throne, whereas despair and murder seem to flow from all the others; and that the human race is turning instinctively to him for the peace which the world cannot give.

HOW COULD THE POPE TAKE SIDES? Evidently European diplomacy saw much of this years ago; hence the readiness of its agents to conspire against him. If the Papacy were of little or no importance, as in the piping times of peace we are taught to believe by the wayside orators and the sneering press, why the Italian demand to make the Pope a cipher, why the steady calumny that he is a tool of the Central Powers, why the willingness of the diplomats to shut him out of conferences? Do the great usually pay so much attention to the trivial and the negligible? Will it convince the world of the Papal impotence to take so much trouble to hedge it in by hard conditions? Do the diplomats see so much green in the eyes of the common people as to think they will accept their explanations? We are enclosing the Pope in a cement cell, surrounding the cell with parks of artillery, and informing us of these facts, because he is a monarch of no consequence, but may escape to the Central Powers, where he cannot do any mischief, of course too weak, but in a War like this trifles often count, and we cannot be too careful, the diplomats explain to the people. Do the people believe them? It is certain many of them do; hence the defense and explanation of Cardinal Gibbons as to the Pope's policy during the present War. Catholics do not believe the slanders, because they understand the situation; Catholics forming a part of each army, in Austria, in Germany, in Italy and France, infidel as they are, in England and her colonies, and in America, while Poland and Belgium, the two heaviest sufferers by the War, the martyrs of modern military barbarism are entirely Catholic. How could the Pope take sides in such a mess?

POPE BENEDICT THE STRONGEST MONARCH OF A TOTTERING WORLD Why is it that in spite of the slanders and the diplomats the Pope stands forth so prominently in the midst of the struggle? He has no army, no money, nothing of external power. He could not, as in the days of the Temporal Power, send help to an ally, or join in the diplomacy of the time. He is the prisoner of Italy with the consent of the Powers. Why do they not make an end of him and his irritating insignificance? Because he happens to be the strongest monarch of the tottering world at this precise moment when all the thrones are wobbling. Mankind gazes upon the everlasting confusion of battle, the debts piling up along with the dead, and no end in sight, and asks: "Did we not put up rulers to rule, and whence this ruin? Only that the wise dread that alternative of besotted monarchy, a differently besotted Socialism, the kings and kaisers would go tomorrow to Siberia. This Pope Benedict owns a throne which stands upon the rock of Peter, and is outside the fluctuations of this world. He has a follow-

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ing of over 370,000,000 scattered among the nations. That Italy which fears him while it hates him—I mean its political parties and leaders—dare not let him out of its boundaries for fear of the deluge. When statesmen suggest Malta, or Spain, or America as a refuge for the Pope, the men in power protest openly and vigorously against his departure. And wherefore? Because Rome would lose its prestige without him, and the dollars of the million pilgrims to Italy; because commercial Italy would complain in consequence; because peasant Italy, which is satisfied while the Pope is in the Vatican, might get boisterous and revengeful to learn that other countries had won the Holy Father; because Italian statesmen would no longer enjoy his influence in critical moments, for it is no secret that the Pope has frequently come to their aid; because the Reds would grow stronger and hatefuller were the Pope out of the Italian peninsula.

MILLIONS IN ALL THE WARRING COUNTRIES DEVOTED TO BENEDICT XV.

Even in France the Pope is a power, despite the machinations of an infidel government, whose entire aim is to avoid crucial questions, which would wake the intelligence, the conscience and the sympathy of the common people too suddenly. It is said the War has done this for the multitude, and that the men in power are preparing for the reaction when the War is ended. Austria is entirely Catholic, and Germany owns the celebrated Centre Party, the bulwark of the Church against oppression and persecution. These all listen to the words of the Pontiff. As to our own country and the British dominions we are fifty million there, and perhaps the most devoted section of the universal Church in loyalty to the Pope. Just look at that shining fact, that these millions in the warring countries are the devoted children of Benedict XV., and learn at once the nature of his singular power at this terrible hour. He is the most powerful monarch on earth, his position is the surest, it is the only position which is sure. It is not to the interest of uncertain kings to attack the only monarch of a sure kingdom. While French rulers would like to make an end of him in order to prove that Christ was a false prophet, others oppose for their own sake his immediate destruction. They are content to help in making and keeping him a nullity.

THE ONLY MONARCH THAT DARES TO TALK OF PEACE

The question with them, however, is, how long can he be kept a nullity? His present power looms large through one indisputable and shining fact; he is the only monarch that dares to talk of peace. All the others must talk war or keep silent. If they have taken sides in the struggle, their language must be bloodthirsty. If they are neutrals, they can starve, but they cannot plead for peace. This one man, claiming to be the Vicar of Christ, who is the Prince of Peace, proves his claim by his steady appeal for an end to this War and all wars. The Socialist may talk and plead for peace, but he must go to jail for his temerity. The press may talk of the golden day when peace shall come again, but beyond that rainbow it dares not go. The high prelates of the national churches in all their public announcements must first talk loudly of determination to keep up the War before they are permitted to speak of a possible peace. Individuals who preach peace in any form are classed as traitors or copperheads, no matter what their country. This solitary man, Benedict XV., serene upon the throne of the Fisherman, alone has the power to fulfill the command the command of His Master, and to demand peace in the name of Christ, in the name of civilization, in the name of common sense, in the name of the common people. His voice resounds in the desert of war, crying the woe of the people and voicing their demand for peace.

TRUMPET OF PEACE RESOUNDS ONLY FROM THE VATICAN

Consequently the suffering, grieving, starving, frightened peoples of the world are looking towards Benedict the Pope for salvation. They have given up their trust in chancelleries and rulers, who have emphati-

cally convinced mankind of their inability to stop the War. Even those who dislike the Papacy, and interpret its history as malevolent, turn to this singular power, this blessed light, which still shines through the storm, all other lights extinguished in blood. Why should they not turn to him? How can they help it? All over the earth the war trumpets are sounding. At this moment Japan may have sounded hers on the Siberian shore. Only from the heights of the Vatican the trumpets of peace resound. Belgium under the heel of the conqueror sees no hope but in the Pope, who has already protested against the barbarities of German rule, which have revived the worst features of ancient wars. Most innocent and most wretched Poland has no other friend and advocate in the courts of the kings. Between Russian and German her children have perished by the million. The nations who are in fear that war will seize them soon look towards the Pope for rescue. The prayers of millions are rising that God may strengthen his arm, and give him the grip that will break the kings of finance and force, who direct the war. It is this concentration of human fear and prayer upon this man, which has made him so powerful at this moment. The kings and the other tricksters playing the war-game must listen to him now above all other times. He represents the common people on our globe. He alone feels their anguish, knows their desires, speaks their will. It is an astounding consequence of this world-war that it has revealed the Pope once more as the spokesman of the nations against the barbarians.

POPE BENEDICT'S PLACE IN PEACE CONFERENCE IS ASSURED

History has set him forth often enough in this marvelous fashion, but its modern interpreters have taken pains to prove the phenomena accidental and insignificant. Napoleon, called the Great, lifted a Pope of mediocre ability out of comparative obscurity and by grotesque persuasion made him an immense political force for his time. That was Pius VIII. When the Russian diplomatic records exposed the Italian intrigue against admitting the Pope into the next peace conference the world laughed at the situation; impecunious and helpless Italy snarling at the heels of the one real man in the peace situation! Baron Sonnino had to make his apology of explanation for it in the Italian Parliament, but no explanation will conceal his ridiculousness. His intrigue was a confession, quite unnecessary now, that the Pope is a power for peace not to be ignored. His place in the peace conference is assured. It is the one seat already engaged. Cardinal Bourne has reproved the English government for listening to the words of the Pontiff, and several Irish Bishops have done likewise; and an English secretary has explained that the intrigue meant nothing, only a little bribe to secure Italian assistance in the War; but the experienced king perfectly the meaning of all these said and sayings. They mean that the next peace conference must be a game like the war game, and that craft must take the place of force. Instead of force and blood, craft and language. Nothing so sincere, nothing so representative, nothing so unbiased as the Pope must be admitted. His candor as the representative of the common people would spoil everything. He knows that the common people want arbitration to replace war; that they desire so to restrict and display the activities of rulers and diplomats that war cannot be sprung upon them without full notice and full debate, and in the conference he will deliver that information with all the power of his high office. It would be an effective measure if the common people, now fully aware of the Pope's relation to their welfare, should formulate by nations a demand for his admission into the peace conference as their representative.—Irish World.

DO CATHOLICS THINK?

In some quarters the taunt that the Catholic Church does all the thinking for her members may still pass current. But the English non-Catholic writer, G. K. Chesterton, has answered it so concisely and so completely that it should be heard no more. A certain Mr. Dell, having stated that "a man becoming a Catholic leaves his individuality on the threshold and is converted to saved the trouble of thinking," Mr. Chesterton declares that the assertion constitutes "a very thoughtless and threadbare argument." Continuing in this characteristically Chestertonian style, he says: "Mr. Dell must know better. He must know whether men like Newman and Brunetiere left off thinking when they joined the Roman Church. Moreover, because he is a man of lucid and active mind, he must know that the whole phrase about being saved the trouble of thinking is a boyish fallacy. Euclid does not save geometers from the trouble of thinking when he insists on absolute definitions and unaltered axioms. On the contrary, he gives them the great trouble of thinking logically. The dogma of the Church limits thought about as much as the dogma of the solar system limits physical science. It is not an arrest of thought, but a fertile basis and constant provocation of thought. But of course, Mr. Dell really knows his as well as I do. He has merely fall-

on back (in that mixture of fatigue and hurry in which all fads are made) upon some journalistic phrases. He cannot really think that men joined the most fighting army upon earth merely to find rest. It is on a par with the old Protestant fiction that monks decided to be ascetics because they wanted to be luxurious. I should keep out of a monastery for exactly the same motives that prevent me from going into the mountains to shoot bears. I am not active enough for a monastery."—Parish Monthly.

THE UPPERMOST THOUGHT

Do not we owe to all those who live under the same heaven as ourselves the aid not only of our acts but of our purpose? Ought not every life to us like a vessel that we accompany with our prayers for a safe and happy voyage? It is not enough that men do not harm one another; they must also help one another. The Papal Benediction, "Urbi et Orbi" should be the constant cry from all hearts.—Catholic Columbian.

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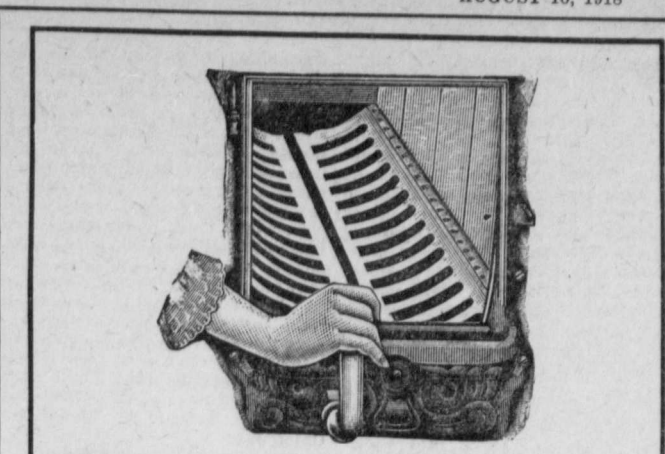
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