

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN. Go and do thou in like manner. (St. Luke x, 27.)

How few of us, brethren, are really naturally of a self-sacrificing disposition! How few actually enjoy, for example, the offices of the sick-room, or so much as a little visit of condolence to an afflicted friend!

That is why our Blessed Lord, in this day's gospel, has given us the beautiful parable of the good Samaritan. Although a heretic and schismatic against the law of Moses, he is chosen as a model because he had a tender, compassionate heart, and was willing to put himself to trouble and expense for his neighbor's welfare.

The corporal works of mercy, brethren, are the easiest of the ways to the love of God. People are fond of admiring the members of religious orders, who, for the love of God, serve the sick and the aged, the insane and the orphans; often forgetting that if this is good as a life-work for them, it is not bad as an occasional practise of virtue for us living in the world.

How often do men deny their wives the pleasure of their company; when Sunday comes, going off with any chance companions, and leaving the poor mother to mind the children, to miss Mass, and sit lonely at home the livelong day. How very often do young men think of taking anybody's sisters to some respectable place of amusement rather than their own sisters! I think that if a spiritual thermometer were dipped into such men's hearts they would be found pretty near the freezing point.

But, brethren, the sick-room—ah! that is the place on the road between Jerusalem and Jericho where men and women are oftenest found lying in the direst distress. Have you ever been very sick? If so, you know the value of a little good nursing. A man who was just recovering from a very dangerous sickness told me once that when his head was burning with the fever he would willingly have given a hundred thousand dollars for the cooling, restful relief he enjoyed every time the nurse rearranged the pillows for him.

And if you cannot be a regular nurse for the sick, there is no reason you should not pay an occasional visit to the sick-room. You can spend a pleasant quarter of an hour in cheerful conversation. You can relieve some poor, weary watcher, so that she or he may get a little rest. You can take the ailing child from the worn-out mother's arms and let her lie down and rest her stiffened limb, or go to the church and refresh her anxious soul. You can bring some little delicacy to soothe the sick person's palate. You can read some prayers beside the sickbed morning or night; for we all know that in time of illness it is almost impossible to pray one's self. You can lend a hand to set things to rights, to cook a meal of victual, or wash the dishes, or run an errand to the drug-store or grocery; and ever and always you can say a word of comfort, of hope, of resignation to the divine will—words cheap to give but precious to receive.

And when at last death comes, your presence may be of the deepest comfort. Then is the time to come forward promptly and help to lay out the Christian corpse; to set up for a night beside that strange, silent guest in the coffin; and, when you find two or three gathered about it, to have the courage to lead in reciting the rosary for the soul's happy repose.

I know, brethren, that there are many kind hearts who zealously practise these lovely virtues. But there are others, especially among the men, who nearly quite forget them. And others still who do them grudgingly, and only after many entreaties. To obtain a kind act from an unwilling heart, and after encountering many excuses, is like blowing a dying fire; before you see the bright coals your face is pretty well covered with ashes and cinders.

Brethren, let us not be put to shame by the Samaritan. When confronted with persons suffering from poverty, sickness, death, or any misfortune, do like the Samaritan—forget all about their nationality, or acquaintance, or religion; say something or do something in charity and for the love of God. Your neighbor's deepest gratitude and God's sure reward will amply repay you.

Few children can be induced to take physic without a struggle, and no wonder—most drugs are extremely nauseating. Ayer's Pills, on the contrary, being sugar-coated, are easily swallowed by the little ones, and are, therefore, the favorite family medicine.

Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil commands a large and increasing sale, which it richly merits. I have always found it exceedingly helpful; I use it in all cases of rheumatism, as well as fractures and dislocations. I made use of it myself to relieve the pains of a broken leg with dislocations of the foot, and in two days I was entirely relieved of the pain.

For the thorough and speedy cure of all Blood Diseases and Eruptions of the Skin, take Northrop's Vegetable Disinfectant. Mrs. E. Forbes, Detroit, had a running sore on her leg for a long time; commenced using Northrop's Vegetable Disinfectant, and she is now completely cured. Her husband thinks there is nothing equal to it for Ague or any low Fever.

A Perfect Cook. A perfect cook never gives us with indigestible food. There are few perfect cooks and consequently indigestion is very prevalent. You can eat what you like and as much as you want after you use Burdock Blood Bitters, the natural specific for indigestion or dyspepsia in any form.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

Right Kind of a Girl.

An Eastern paper tells of a pretty and talented girl who had completed her school course with credit, and by reason of rather special talents had received more attention and admiration than falls to the lot of most girls, was asked the other day how she was enjoying her vacation.

"Oh, I'm enjoying it very much," she answered brightly. "I'm doing the housework and letting mother have a little rest."

"Your mother is away on a vacation, then?" was the natural question. "Oh, no," was the reply, "she's at home, but I'm giving her a chance to rest in the morning, and to dress up and sit out on the piazza when she feels like it. I think it will do her good to have a little change."

Self Forgetfulness. We all possess some little talent—or rather let us call it accomplishment, for talent is a rare gift akin to genius. We have a portfolio of drawings; we can recite a pleasing poem; we can play or sing; we have perhaps only some fine sewing. Well, one and all, let us banish the "I can't, excuse me," system, and adopt the preferable one that forgets one's self in the desire to give pleasure to those who surround us in social intercourse. I have heard the remark, "She sings very nicely, but it is not worth all the coaxing."

Our accomplishments may be well in themselves, but they are not worth the weariness of body and mind it costs to make them give pleasure to others when begging and teasing is the price paid for them. This is what we call selfishness. Half the so-called bashfulness is nothing more than the constant thinking of one's self. Let us be thankful if we can give a moment's enjoyment to our friends by thinking of them instead of ourselves.

A Great Unwritten Law. Promptness at meals is a virtue of which absence has caused deep anguish of spirit to countless long-suffering housewives. The tardiness at breakfast from indulgence in a last nap, or at luncheon from a too protracted shopping expedition, or at a dinner from an over-extended round of calls, may seem a trifle to the dilettante, but Harper's Bazar reminds sinners in this respect that to the housekeeper it means injury to the food and disturbance of her own peace of mind. The habit of always being ready when a meal is announced should be especially binding upon a guest. For one who is receiving the hospitality of a home to require it by disregarding its customs is the extreme of ill breeding. Conformity to the rules of the house in this respect, and in the particular of not presenting one's self in the drawing room at an uncanny hour in the morning, should be observed by all visitors, while the duty of being always ready on time when invited to take a drive or to go to some entertainment would seem too obvious to be mentioned were it not that one sees this unwritten law so constantly violated.

"Thank You." It is so easy to say these simple words. The effort it costs is so little, and yet the expression means so much. It not only indicates due gratitude for favors received, but it shows a proper observance of those small courtesies of life which distinguish the true lady and gentleman.

There are, of course, things of far greater value than mere polish or glitter. Solid deeds are of vastly more consequence. But even the best deeds acquire added worth when performed with gentleness and grace, rather than in a rude, uncouth manner. The diamond possesses intrinsic value in the rough, but its worth is immensely heightened when the gem is polished. The gold from the mine is also valuable, but how greatly is its worth increased when it is purified and stamped into coin, or wrought into ornaments by the skill of the artist.

A kindly "Thank you," to your parents, to your brothers and sisters, to anyone to whom you may be indebted for the slightest attention, will tell greatly upon yourself in making you more gentle and refined, and encouraging a proper degree of respect in the estimation of others for you; and this habit once formed you will find it very easy of practice; indeed, the difficulty will become to omit rather than express obligation for courtesy received.

To cultivate this habitual politeness you should constantly address those in the home circle precisely as you would strangers to whom you wished to be particularly well behaved. When this habit of constant politeness is well established at home, you will be freed in society from a hundred awkward embarrassments to which young people are often subject because of their defective training in the home.

No Wonder. Why should it be so often repeated that it is the surest, promptest, best remedy, when doctors are surprised at its effects. Lawrence, Kans., U. S. "George Patton son fell from a second story window striking a fence. I found him using St. Jacobs Oil. He used it freely all over his hurts, and I saw him next morning at work. All the blue spots finally disappeared, leaving neither pain, scar nor swelling."

The people of this country have spoken. They declare by their patronage of Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil, that they believe it to be an article of genuine merit, adapted to the cure of rheumatism, as well as relieves the pains of fractures and dislocations, external injuries, corns, bunions, piles, and other maladies.

COUGHS LEAD TO COPPIN unless stopped by Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup. The best cure for Cough, Colds and Lung Troubles.

Ask for Minard's, and take no other.

"Open, Dear Lord! 'Tis Only I!"

BY ANGELIQUE DE LANDE.

A little blue-eyed child of four, With gleams of sunshine in his hair, Entered the lowly chapel door Between the Mass and Vesper prayer.

He looked not to the left nor right, But trod the aisle with eager pace, Past the dim sanctuary light, Until he reached the holy place.

Then at the tabernacle door, His chubby hand uplifted high, He knelt, repeating over and over, "Open, dear Lord! 'Tis only I!"

While he paused, then turned aside, With happy smile yet thoughtful mind A light in heaven gladdened, As though a vision he had seen.

Who knows? Perchance the Holy Face With loving glance looked into his, And for a blissful moment space His baby lips met Jesus' kiss.

O little, guileless, trusting child, Would that thy perfect faith were mine. That I might meet the Undeiled, And look into His sweet divine.

So let me live the world within, Yet far above its mortal strife, Clinging to Him who knew no sin, Yet calls the sinner back to life:

That I, life's weary exile here, With loving trust may gladly cry, Knocking at heaven's high entrance door, "Open, dear Lord! 'Tis only I!"

THE UNREASONABLENESS OF INFIDELITY.

Infidels boast of their devotion to reason. Christianity, in their view, is a system of superstition. They plume themselves on their superiority to the "slave" of a professed supernatural system, which is quite contrary to their superior wisdom, and contrary to nature and to reason. The very assumption is the height of unreason. For what is the meaning of it? Why, it is simply the assumption on the part of the infidel that his reason is superior to mine. There is not the slightest a priori probability in his favor. He has absolutely no reasonable right to assume that he is wiser than I am, or that he is more likely to be right in his conclusions than I am in mine. It is not because he forms different conclusions from mine that I object, but simply that assumed air of superiority—that spirit of sneering contempt with which he presumes to look down upon me, and ridicule my opinions, and belittles as unreasonable and superstitious, as if the mere assertion of superior reasonableness on his part gave him the right to put me in the wrong. As between man and man I have just as much right to claim reason for my opinion as he has for his, and I have more right to charge him with being unreasonable than he has with bringing charge against me.

If it be a matter of authority, I think I have the advantage of him. Admitting that infidelity is as old as Christianity, I have the weight of numbers and of intellect in my favor. Compared with the great lights of the Church, infidels are "nowhere"—they are absolutely of no account. In the first place there is no positive system of truth taught by infidels. The work of the infidel is personal and it is negative—criticising, finding fault, raising objections against that grand system of truth taught by the Church. It is easy to start objections and find fault with every system of truth—even with the order of Providence as manifested in the constitution and course of nature.

One reason, no doubt, why infidels find fault with Christianity is that they do not understand it. They do not comprehend it, because they have never taken the trouble to investigate it. They judge from what they have learned from the inconsistent, fragmentary and contradictory teachings of Protestantism. If Protestantism were indeed true Christianity they could not be blamed, for there is nothing more unreasonable than Protestantism, and it gives a fair handle to infidels with which to attack it, and to support themselves in their opposition. But they have no right to take for granted that Protestantism is true Christianity. The Catholic Church is the exponent and embodiment of true Christianity. She is in possession of the original, and she is in possession of the burden of proof lies upon it. To an unprejudiced enquirer the a priori probability lies with the Catholic Church.

By the acknowledgment of all, she was the original Church, and has come down to us in regular and unbroken succession from the beginning. Her system of teaching is the grandest intellectual development the world has ever produced. It is unique, harmonious, and perfectly consistent and dove-tailed in all its parts. It is the embodiment of the combined wisdom of the ages, and has commanded the assent of the greatest minds, the profoundest thinkers, that has ever contributed to the instruction and enlightenment of mankind. In spite of the fearful persecution of three hundred years, that glorious system still survives in pristine vigor, and still commands the homage of the candid, the intellectual and sincere lovers of truth, who are daily declaring their adhesion to it.

But our infidel friends refuse to acknowledge or to have anything to do with it. To them, looking at it

through the distorted and blinding medium of prejudice, it is a gigantic system of superstition. There are indeed certain a priori arguments in its favor, which lie upon the surface, which really impose upon all candid men the obligation of at least honest enquiry and investigation. There are, for instance, the miraculous demonstrations which are occurring in different places and at different times, furnishing convincing testimony to the supernatural character of the Church. But all these things are passed over, ignored, and even sneered at, by our infidel friends as only additional proofs of the superstition of our Church.

The fact is they do not want to believe, and they would not be convinced though one rose from the dead. Their case reminds us of the effect of the miracle of healing performed by our Lord in the presence of the Scribes and Pharisees. He had offended the prejudices of these self-sufficient, hide-bound people by doing works of mercy on the Sabbath day, and they watched Him to see whether He would heal a poor paralytic. He appealed to their reason; their sense of propriety and their better feelings, but it had no effect upon them. It was a foregone conclusion with them that He was an impostor. He went against their prejudices, which they, no doubt, like our modern infidels, mistook for reason; and when our Lord actually performed the miracle of healing before their eyes, it is said: "They were filled with madness, and they talked one with the other what they ought to do to Jesus." He had established His claim to divine authority against their "reason," and He must, of course, be an impostor. At any rate they were bound to deal with Him as such, and if He had not made His escape, no doubt they would have made Him feel the weight of their anger. They were primitive infidels—ante-types of their legitimate descendants in our day.

We do not mean to say there are not some honest infidels. Their infidelity is perhaps more their misfortune than their fault. They were born to the sad inheritance, or were led to it by legitimate conclusions from the false premises with which they were deceived. We only say they must not take for granted that they alone have reason on their side. One of the highest dictates of reason and common sense is that they should not feel at liberty to denounce Christianity as unreasonable and superstitious until they have made a thorough investigation of its claims, where alone those claims exist in their integrity, in the authorized teachings of the Holy Catholic Church.—Sacred Heart Review.

Heavenly Riches. No one envies you a sorrow or a pain, as they certainly would a legacy of silver or gold. Covetousness never rises to poison the friendship of two hearts over the misfortune of one of them. Not so the sudden heir-loom of broad acres and a palace. Your friends will never suspect you of being proud of your wounds; never gratuitously attribute haughty self-gratulation, asserting that you feel your superiority, plume yourself as one grown vain over grief and afflictions. Of all the sudden acquisitions which you may make, none can cause so little disturbance among brothers, sisters, cousins, and "best of friends," as great increments of chastening. And yet it is not true that these may be the greatest blessings which a kind Heavenly Father can bestow? "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth."

Yet nearly all your friends look on so generously at your enriching, each one saying within himself, "You may grow very, very rich in these heavenly riches and not excite my envy." Indeed, suppose you sit bowed over your sorrow, perhaps with the open Bible on your knees, your comforting neighbor enters to say, "The Lord must love you very much, since He so distinguishes you with the chastenings that make eternal wealth." Something may be, dear old believer, would rise within you to whisper, "Tell him that he is welcome to your share, if he could only take it and leave you a poor man again."

Still, if we had faith, would we not be eager for heavenly riches.

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