

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. WILLIAM DEMOUY, D. D.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE CHURCH AND THE SINNER

"So I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance." (Luke xv. 10.)

Man's weakness is well known to God; and it is recognized by Him in His great mercy. He made us and knows better than any one else how far we are from perfection, how untrained are our passions, and how terrible is the fight we are forced to make against the enemies of our salvation.

We should always bear in mind, however, that man especially in his youth when he is without experience and when the battle is hardest to wage, is liable to forget God's aid or not to place the proper reliance upon it. This is especially true of those whose religious training has been neglected.

So it happens that much of the wickedness in the part of many is not so willful as it may first appear. Nature untrained, unconquered, led them to excesses and the formation of a habit; and then, as a habit becomes so strong in nature, they find it too difficult to rid themselves of it.

Next to "mother," Father Scott says, "there is no word which recalls all that is hallowed more than 'daughter.' Whether it be parents who speak of her as their child, or brothers who call her sister, the daughter is one of God's special gifts and blessings to mankind."

The attitude of very many people toward sinners, is really different from the attitude of God toward His erring children. Many are slow to show mercy, and unwilling to forgive if another has injured them. How little do they rejoice when one who has deserted the paths of wickedness, returns to righteousness.

Through God's mercy alone can any of us be saved? We know He will not deny mercy to us if we struggle perseveringly for justice. Despairation would ever stare us in the face, could we not raise our eyes upward and behold the merciful countenance of our Heavenly Father.

love than this no one can show for his neighbor.

Because the world and former friends have manifested no interest in a prodigal's return and have shown no mercy to him, many a sinner in despair has plunged himself into sterility. When adverse winds are about to shiver our neighbor, then above all we must offer him safety.

Real mercy, true compassion, and love for the sinner are shown most perfectly in this world by the Catholic Church in the tribunal of penance. Day after day the gentle voice of the Saviour, re-echoed through His priests, reaches the ear of the poor sinner.

In a series of excellent articles on the obligations of the various members of the Christian family, which he has contributed to Queen's Work, Father Martin J. Scott, S. J., has pointed out the ideal attributes of the father, mother, husband, wife and son.

THE CATHOLIC DAUGHTER

"You might possibly make a marriage by frequenting places of that character, but it will be a marriage that you will rue. If a girl, by being what a good daughter should be, does not attract a man, it is far better for her never to marry."

"Either you will get married or not. If you marry and do not know how to cook, you will be a dreadful imposition on your husband, unless you marry a millionaire. Many a marriage has been made a tragedy because of bad meals. And if you do not marry, you will need to know the art of cooking just as much. For the time will depend on you to take her place."

Your first field of operation is the home, and your first duty is to your parents. Nothing, except a spiritual call from God, may take precedence of your home duties. And what a beautiful field you have for your activities! You have in your power to be the greatest comfort to father and mother. That in itself must be a wonderful joy to a nature so exquisitely good as yours.

One of the most deplorable features of our social life is this gradual disappearing of the sense of shame. The sense of shame has been given man for their protection. It is a wonderful safeguard of virtue. Christianity has brought it to a high degree of development. It has sensitized man's inborn sense of shame so that it reacts quickly and unerringly. In our own days the sense of shame seems to have fled from the earth.

"Some young women act as if they owed neither obedience, respect or submission to their parents."

The path of these undutiful daughters is filled with thorns, and ends frequently in misery. For a short period of what they call independence they pay a life-long penalty. The number of women who wear out their lives in wretchedness because they had their fling in their youth is beyond estimate.

"Other girls seek their pleasure in going to questionable places of amusement. Public dance halls and such places lure many thoughtless girls to lifelong unhappiness. Young women, let me tell you something which most of you know. A man, as a rule, has no good opinion of a girl he meets in such places. Men will go to these resorts for purposes of their own, but if they saw their sisters there they would order them home at once."

"A good Catholic daughter will be serviceable in the home, as well as the lovable and devoted. Even if you are a business woman, there are duties at home which, for your own sake, you cannot afford to omit. Every woman should be expert at housekeeping and cooking."

"Every girl, no matter what her place or position, should know how to take hold and manage her home. I have known charming girls who considered it beneath them to bend to home tasks. Later on, as wives, it was a source of regret to them."

"No matter what your station in life, you do not know where its ups and downs may land you ten or twelve years hence. Your failure to be able to supply your husband with a proper meal may be the opening wedge which will split asunder your marriage happiness. A hungry man will do anything to get his stomach full in a fine condition. And this is in line with other tendencies of our age, which has also lost the sense of privacy and the fine reticence of former ages."

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arrive at a point where he glories in his disgrace.

This coarsening of manners is particularly apparent in the proceedings of the divorce courts. There was a time when men kept their family skeletons to themselves and carefully screened their scandals from public view. If a man was unfortunate enough to have a wife who disregarded her vows, he regarded the conduct of his wife as a disgrace of his own and was anxious public property. He shielded the name of his spouse, because her name was his name and her dishonor was his dishonor.

This lack of shame, more than anything else, shows the depths to which we have fallen. The stench of some of the things that have been revealed and openly aired in our divorce courts of late is intolerable. It poisons and pollutes the general atmosphere and tends to lower our moral standards still more.

Honor is more than happiness. It is the characteristic of a soft and unmanly generation to sacrifice honor to happiness. Sensuality has robbed us of that fine sense of shame, which is the glory of man and which lifts him above the mere brute that knows no other law but that of the satisfaction of animal instincts.—Catholic Standard and Times.

The world is celebrating this year the one hundredth anniversary of the death of Napoleon in exile on the island of St. Helena as a British prisoner on May 5, 1821. The French world in particular is proud of its great hero and incomparable general who possessed nearly every talent in a superlative degree but lacked moral greatness. In one sense Napoleon Bonaparte incarnated the French imperialistic spirit which animated the reign of Louis XIV. and reached its apogee in the "Little Corporal" who, lowly born in Corsica, rose from lieutenant of artillery to be in a few years Emperor of France and the dominant ruler on the Continent of Europe.

Even the Catholic bishops of France are lauding the name of Napoleon today and Masses are being chanted in honor of a very recalcitrant child of the Church. Some claim that Napoleon was an atheist and an enemy of Christianity, but a glance at history will demonstrate that the devil is not always as black as he is represented. Although he did not practice his religion when things went well with him and even persecuted the Holy Father who would not bow to his autocratic will, Napoleon, chastened in exile, had a chaplain sent to his prison island by the Pope, and died in the Catholic faith as he had been born.

At the height of his glory Napoleon was indifferent to religion, although always a believer in God. He said to the parish priests in Milan in 1797: "Society without religion is like a ship without a compass; there is no morality without religion." When he became First Consul in 1799 the non-juring priests exiled by the Revolution were allowed to return. Napoleon then respected the spiritual authority of the Pope, and hastened to restore religion and reorganize the status of the Catholic faith in France. He re-established the Church by the Concordat of 1801 and the Organic Articles of 1802. In fact, this work was one of his important achievements of his career. His plan, of course, involved interference of the State in the life of the Church. Hastening towards omnipotence, his autocratic mind could conceive of no man or power greater than himself. He desired to make the Church the tool of the State, a branch of the government subsidiary to Napoleon.

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NAPOLEON AND THE CHURCH

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Papacy the tool of French Imperialism. His downfall came close on the heels of his attempt to make himself greater than the Pope. Napoleon seemed to go to pieces intellectually and morally at this time, and the curtain was soon rung down on his marvelous and meteoric career.

It is well to know these things, as there is a resurgence of Napoleonism today in Europe. The Napoleons of finance and secret diplomacy now rule with a rod of iron, and the old spirit of Napoleon animates the French capitalists who govern France and control the Continent. It required a Coalition of European Powers to dethrone Napoleon in 1815, as the Associated Powers combined to overthrow the Kaiser in 1914.—The Monitor.

Commune with yourself once in a while; the result will be surprising and inspiring. When ingratitude comes to us it is usually a lesson that we may not shoulder other people's problems.

PREPARED FOR DANGER

The following news carries a large amount of religious edification: "In New York, recently, two thousand members of the police force of New York received Holy Communion. It was an edifying sight. Men who must be manly to be admitted to such an organization, who must be ready to face danger at all times, and who must have a sturdy faith about them that will cause the most timid of those whom they protect to have every confidence in them, knelt in all humility before God's banquet table and asked for His strength to carry on their work. We are sure that every one of the 2,000 policemen is a braver man today because of the reception of that sacrament. Conscience makes cowards of us all. If we are at peace with God, we need not fear for if God is with us, why should any man fear who else may be against him. Almost invariably we find that the bravest heart is the purest heart.—Catholic Transcript.

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