

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost.

SYMPATHY FOR SINNERS.

Oh God, I give thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, nor such as this publican. (St. Luke xviii, 11.)

Did you never notice that pride and hardness of heart go together? That miserable Pharisee could not enjoy his self-glorification without condemning his neighbor, a person, as it happened, far more deserving than himself. Indeed, the worst vices seem to love each other's company as if they were all blood relatives. Coveting our neighbor's goods, for example, goes along with stinginess of our own; gluttony and lust are twins. Almost the same may be said of oppressing others and disobeying lawful authority; and in this hateful Pharisee we behold the union of pride in one's self and contempt for one's neighbor. The sinner seems to be bound with a chain every link of which is double.

Now, brethren, this is a fault often found in far better souls than this hateful Pharisee. Many of us have too little sympathy for persons whom we know to be in mortal sin. To be sure, it is no harm to rejoice that we are at friendship with heaven. But the worst of it is that some of us are never really happy at the thought of our own virtues till we are quite miserable over our neighbor's wickedness; and when we say with our lips, How wicked So-and-so is! our heart whispers and how good I am!

The spirit of correction possesses many good people, and it is commonly the sign of hidden pride. No sooner do we take the first steps in amendment of life than we are divided between rejoicing in our own goodness and lamenting over other folk's vice. I know not what we good people should do for something to talk about were it not for our neighbor's shortcomings.

Brethren, this vanity is very foolish and very dangerous. Who dare say that he has nothing to fear from the judgments of God? Who can count himself safe so much as one day from his own natural feebleness, or from the wiles of Satan, or from human respect?

And if we do rightly trust in God's favor, how can we forget that progress in virtue is a necessary condition of our remaining in the state of grace? Now this progress means simply a right knowledge of our remaining defects and a solid purpose to overcome them; something with which the vice of the Pharisee is quite incompatible. Nothing so blinds us to our own little faults as too much regard for our neighbor's big ones. Doubtless it would have been just as difficult for the Pharisee to correct his harshness of voice, or his lofty bearing, or his patronizing airs as to overcome his great sin of pride itself; and such is the case with many of us.

The beam in our neighbor's eye looks so shocking that we quite forget that we have quite a squint in our own eye from various little notes in it.

Be certain, therefore, brethren, that, if you find hard feelings in your heart toward sinners, you have no long journey to make before you discover the capital sin of pride in your own.

Why can we not leave judgment to God, and treat poor sinners after our Lord's example, praying and suffering for them? I do not mean to say that we should forget to mention to them the awful chastisements of God; indeed, a true friend does not exist until one who warns us of our future destruction, and warns such as parents, are in duty bound to give such admonition. But in the treatment of moral maladies we should bear in mind that bitter words and harsh looks spoil good medicine. And especially should we bear in mind that we have had our own wicked days.

Let us, therefore, regard sinners with much tenderness, dropping out of our view while we deal with them our own darling selves. Let us realize that we ourselves are poor souls, quite capable, but for God's singular favor, of falling into the worst state of sinfulness.

Worth Twenty Dollars.

From the Catholic Citizen.

Do not say you "can not afford a Catholic paper." There is no expense outside of the absolute necessities of life that is more justifiable than one which aims to cultivate intelligence and interest in Catholic affairs. Do not starve your souls or the souls of your children by stopping an influence which will make yourself and them better and more intelligent Catholics. It is false economy to deprive yourself of reading that you and they are entitled to. If a good Catholic paper cost you \$20 a year, instead of \$2, it would be worth the outlay.

At this season of the year the effects of catarrh and cold in the head are most likely to be felt, and danger to life and health will result if not promptly treated. For this purpose there is no remedy equals Nasal Balm. It is prompt in giving relief and never fails to cure. Beware of imitations and substitutes. Sold by all dealers, 50 cents a bottle.

Monthly Prizes for Boys and Girls.

The "Sunlight" Soap Co., Toronto, offer the following prizes every month till further notice, to boys and girls under 16, residing in the Province of Ontario, who send the greatest number of "Sunlight" wrappers: 1st, \$50; 2nd, \$25; 3rd, \$10; 4th, \$5; 5th, \$2.50; 6th, \$1.25; 7th, 50c; 8th, 25c; 9th, 10c; 10th, 5c. Send wrappers to "Sunlight" Soap Office, 4 Scott St., Toronto, not later than 25th of each month, and marked "Competition," also give full name, address, age, and number of wrappers. Winners' names will be published in *The Toronto Daily Mail* on first Saturday of each month.

Suddenly Prostrated.

GENTLEMEN, I was suddenly prostrated while at work by a severe attack of cholera morbus. We sent at once for a doctor, but he seemed unable to help. An evacuation about every forty minutes was fast wearing me out, when we sent for a bottle of Wild Strawberry, which saved my life.

MRS. J. N. VAN NATTER.

Mount Prydzles, Ont.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

Peter First and Last Voyage.

Peter Lincoln wanted to be a sailor. His father and mother, without actually forbidding him to think of it, did all they could to discourage him in what they knew to be a foolish idea. Mr. Lincoln's grandfather had been a sea captain; they lived in a small town on the bay, and had some curious shells and old-fashioned stuff brought from foreign shores.

But Peter had lived to be fifteen without feeling any great longing to be a sailor, when suddenly the taste seemed to develop, and nothing could divert his boyish mind from its purpose. The truth was that a library had lately been established in the place, and Peter's head was filled with the romantic stuff about a sailor's life which he had gathered from the various sea stories which had fallen into his hand. Unfortunately, "Two Years Before the Mast" had not been included in the catalogue; it would have counteracted many a wild and foolish impression made by the improbable stories he had devoured.

One winter evening he sat beside the fire with his father and mother, his little sister Fanny on his knee. Peter loved Fanny dearly, and petted her a great deal. She was only four years old, and he thought nothing of carrying her on his back half a mile to the beach, where he would fill her little basket with shells, and her brother told her of all the beautiful things he intended to buy her when he should be captain of a large vessel.

This evening Mr. Lincoln had been busy with some papers, but his work being finished, he drew his chair close to the fire.

"What curious shapes the coals seem to take," he said after a short silence.

His wife put down her knitting as she answered:

"They do, I have often observed it, more particularly in my younger days, when I had more time to watch them than I have now."

"They all look like ships to me," said Peter abruptly.

"But that nonsense out of your head at once and finally, said his father more sharply than was his custom to speak. "I am tired of hearing only ships and schooners and men-of-war for breakfast, dinner and supper. One voyage would be enough to cure you of your delusions, foolish boy."

A lump rose in Peter's throat, but he saw a shade of hope in his father's last words.

"Oh let me take that one voyage, then," he said. "The Sally Ann will sail on Monday for South America; they want a cabin boy; I have seen the advertisement posted on the docks. Do let me go, father. O mother please don't let him, won't you!"

"I, Peter?" said his mother with trembling lips. "It would break my heart to see it."

"Go to bed, sir!" said his father sternly, "and never let me hear the word ship from your lips again till I give you leave to say it, which will only be after I am satisfied that you are cured of your insane folly."

Peter arose in silence, tears in his eyes and rank rebellion in his heart. "Goodnight," he said sullenly, and he left the room without looking around, though Fanny besought him not to forget her good night kiss.

We will follow him to his chamber. For a long time he sat on the side of the bed, his face buried in his hands. After a couple of hours spent thus he got up, and going softly from closet to drawer and drawer to closet, he collected a few articles of clothing, which he tied in a large bandanna handkerchief that had lain around in the bureau ever since he could remember.

In all the books he had read sea-faring men invariably carried their baggage in this way, and he meant to be true to their time-honored traditions. Then, taking a long discarded sailor cap from a peg in the closet, he set it well back on his head, looking in the glass to see the effect. After removing his shoes he was about to steal down stairs, when he remembered that they creaked badly, and his father and mother might not be asleep.

"Discretion is the better part of valor," said the misguided boy, in a tragic tone, also learned from his visits to the library. "I will bide my time," by which preparations it will be easily inferred that he meant to run away. He sat down on the bed again and waited till he heard the town clock strike midnight, then he took a quick look at his watch, and seeing it was half past twelve, he slipped out of the house and was soon on board the Sally Ann, duly indentured as cabin boy on the ship's log. The captain, a rough, unscrupulous man, kept him out of sight for a couple of days, and made a show of kindness to the lad until the ship was well under way, and then began a life of hardship and privation for Peter, the like of which he had never imagined in his romantic visions of a sailor's free and happy life.

The next five years seemed like a terrible dream. Heat and cold, work and blows, starvation and misery were all jumbled together in one fearful whole, for Peter had the misfortune to fall in with a monster whose name was another word for cruelty and injustice for those under his command. But all things earthly pass away, and at the expiration of the voyage Peter found himself in sight of his home and weary and repentant; only fearing that he might not be welcomed like the other prodigal, of whose story he had often been reminded by his own. It was night when they had arrived, and he was soon in sight of his father's house, clothed in a shabby suit, the red bandanna, with the few things it contained, forming the bulk

of his worldly goods; for, with the exception of a few curious stones in his pocket, the treasures he promised to little Fanny had proven nothing but empty air.

As he strode up the garden path he pulled a twig from the sassafras bush and bit off the pungent end. He had often done this before, and smiled to himself that the habit so soon returned. His heart beat wildly, and he drew a long breath—how delightful it was to be at home once more! He would never run away again, he would be a lawyer like his father. The dear mother would see how helpful and obedient he had become; and sweet little Fanny, she must be a great big girl now. The window blind was up, he peeped in; his father sat by the fire alone. His back was to the door but he thought he looked much older than when he had seen him last.

He knocked at the door, but heard no response. His heart beat more rapidly than ever, as he opened it, ashamed and afraid as he was to enter his father's house.

Mr. Lincoln turned around, still holding the paper in his hand. Peter stood in the shadow; his father did not know him, for he inquired, "Who is it?"

"It is I, father. Peter come back to you and mother. Will you forgive me, father, dear?" As he spoke he came nearer and stood by his father's side.

Mr. Lincoln looked up into his son's face and the boy saw that he was careworn and troubled.

Had he done this, was it his work! he thought, and a great sob rose in his throat.

"Yes, it is Peter," said his father, gravely regarding him. "It is Peter come home again to his father, but his mother is not here."

"Where—where is she, father?" asked the boy.

"She is in heaven, I hope," was the reply coldly given, as his eyes met those of his son. "In heaven, where hearts never break as they did. Where there are no ungrateful sons, where, no doubt, she is still praying for you."

"Oh father, father, do not look at me like that," said the boy, falling on his knees, and burying his face on his father's shoulder. "And—little Fanny," he said, through blinding tears. "Where is she?"

"She went to heaven soon after her mother—nearly a year ago—was the reply, but now he had his hand on the boy's head, and was softly stroking his curly hair.

"But I saw her hat and cape hanging on a chair when I came in," he said.

"She hung it there herself the day before she was taken ill in bed, and told me to leave it there so that Peter might remember her when he came home."

Peter could endure no more. Throwing himself prone upon the floor he burst into loud weeping.

"Peter, Peter, what ails you, my boy? Why are you crying in your sleep?"

It was his mother's voice! He sprang up in bed. He could see her in the moonlight, standing at his bedside.

"Why, you are not undressed," she said. "For once I forgot to come in before I went to bed, and here you are lying on the bed without the clothes. And with that old sailor cap beside you. Well, well, undress quickly now and get into bed."

"Mother," said the boy, clasping her tightly in his arms and kissing her again and again. "I have had a horrid dream. I do not want to go to sea. I shall never want to go again. Tell father so, and sleep in peace."

Before she left him, he had told her all; how in waiting for midnight he had fallen asleep and had dreamed the dream in which he made his first and last voyage as a sailor.

He could not sleep again until he had untied the red bandanna and replaced the articles he had intended to take with him; for now and ever after the thought of going to sea became as repugnant to him, as it had been delightful—*Catholic Youth*.

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IN A DAY.

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CONVERSION TO CATHOLICITY.

Encouraging Evidence of Accessions to the Faith—Means for Promoting the Good Work.

There are encouraging indications in many localities of a large return of Protestants to the one fold of the Catholic Church. Our separated brethren—not only separated from us, but sadly divided among themselves—are deeply feeling that if they will keep the Christian faith they must have the safeguard which can come alone from a recognized divine authority. They are finding that if they will hold the idea of a Church at all it must be in the one Christian body which presents that idea with strength and consistency. Further, they are owing, perforce, the wonderful power for charity and good works which the Catholic Church is exercising in the world. So they are looking away from the city of confusion in which they have dwelt and perhaps are still dwelling, and their eyes are turned toward the City of God standing in beauty and dignity before them, and inviting all without to enter its open gates.

Everywhere intelligent people are, to a remarkable degree, laying aside prejudices which their fathers so long and stubbornly held and handed down to them, and are coming to see how ignorant and foolish they have been. They are inquiring about the teaching of the Church; they are learning the meaning of her promises; they are questioning her worship; they are admiring the holy examples of her faithful disciples. To be sure, they may stop at this point; but many are going further, and themselves entering into possession of the high privileges which the Church is offering them.

To give instances from our own community, it is most interesting to note the gain of Catholicity from Protestantism right here in this diocese. From the statistics of the chancery we have obtained the reliable information that out of an aggregate of about nine thousand baptisms in the Archdiocese of Baltimore last year, six hundred and sixty-five were those of converts. The baptisms of converts at the cathedral alone throughout the year usually number about twenty-five per cent. of the whole; while in the English-speaking churches of the archdiocese from eight to ten per cent. of the confirmations are those of converts. These are hopeful facts, and, believing that to a considerable degree they correspond to similar facts elsewhere throughout the country, we are happy to lay them before our readers.

MEANS OF PROMOTING CONVERSIONS.

It becomes a practical question for clergy and laity. What are the best means of promoting conversions? How can the number be increased? Among the various ways which suggest themselves, one is through the spread of good Catholic prayers and good books. The Church has a strong resource in the many writings, popular or exhaustive, to which she can refer, and which whenever opportunity offers, she may put into the hands of those who are seeking the truth. It is matter for rejoicing that nowadays so many interesting books explaining the Catholic faith are being written.

Not in a controversial spirit, but with candor, fairness and wise moderation setting forth clearly and positively, what Catholics believe and practice. Let this apostolate of the press go on. By God's blessing there will be greater results than any yet seen. The American people are largely a Christian people. They are well disposed towards the Church. Let the appeal be made to the intelligence and the conscience of the non-Catholic community.

Personal influence and the power of example must help on this great work. The lives of those who live as the Church bids them, in purity, humility and self-sacrifice, are of more avail than all the weight of voice or pen can possibly be without them. And in this view how much may depend upon converts themselves! And while they may and do have their trials from the surroundings in which they are placed, what an influence they possess, and how much they can do simply by the quiet example of their lives for the holy Church whose disciples they have become!

And let none forget the continual use of that other means—prayer. "It is prayer that converts souls," writes that holy man, Father Augustus Law.

A familiar truth it is, but one the force of which we may forget. To remember it and put it in use is Christian and Catholic, and will receive rich reward of merit hereafter in the souls whom we may be thus the means of bringing out of darkness into light.—*Catholic Mirror*.

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