

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY THE REV. F. P. HICKEY, O. S. B.

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

THE GOOD WILL OF CHRIST

God's Will is mercy. And twice in the gospel just read, we hear our Blessed Lord say, "I will," and immediately mercy followed. The leper besought, Him, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." And Jesus, stretching forth His hand, touched him, saying, "I will, be thou made clean."

Nothing can do our souls more good than to remember this ready Will of our Lord in showing mercy. The Book of Wisdom tells us the reason of this loving Will. Thou sparest all, because they are Thine, O Lord, Who lovest souls (cf. 4.) How vile of us oftentimes, without a thought of gratitude, to take God's mercies as if they were our due! There are people who may even say, How does God show His good Will and spare us! Our life is hard enough; our pleasures few; our miseries and pains afflictions frequent.

Are not such people a proof of our Lord's good Will? They seek no mercy from Him, and yet he spares them. Do we not all provoke Him by our sins? Do not many remain careless and enthralled in bad habits for years; with no sorrow, or fear of God, or prayer on their lips? Yet the good Lord is waiting patiently for that prayer for forgiveness to be uttered, and then at once, as He answered the leper, He would say, "I will," and their soul would be cleansed.

But why, O Lord, is Thy good Will so patient and so ready to respond to the cry of a penitent heart? Because we "are Thine." Yes, God created us, and He hated nothing that He has made. God is our Father, we are His children; though often, alas! ungrateful disobedient, rebellious children. Yet the infinitely good Father loves us still, simply because we are His children.

Moreover, O Lord, we are Thine because Thou hast purchased us by Thy precious Blood. By our sins we have sold ourselves to the devil, we have become his slaves, but Thy good Will has paid the ransom for us. And this not once, but perhaps many and many a time, when we have relapsed all through our own fault, through not seeking help and strength from above. Looking at our past life, who can doubt the patient, loving good Will of Christ our Lord?

We may well wonder how it is; what is the secret of this bearing with us so long, and this readiness to forgive. God loves us. That is the secret of it all. God loves us, for what else could account for such long-suffering patience towards us in sinfulness, and such readiness to forgive, when the grace of contrition, which is His gift, moves us to repent? And what else could account for the multitude of His graces, and the generosity that knows no bounds?

Let us try to learn to bear this remembrance of the good Will of our Lord in our hearts. Nothing could do us more good. We should never then doubt or despair; we should have hope of forgiveness however great our sinfulness, however long we might have abandoned our religious duties. Remembering it, hope would burst forth into love and gratitude. A new life would spring up in our souls; devout prayer, repentance, attending Mass, receiving Holy Communion.

Once that we felt that our leprosy had been cleansed, that the grievous torment of the sickness of our soul had been relieved and cured, could we help but be as grateful as the leper of the gospel was? We can picture him afterwards following Christ with His disciples, one of the faithful ones. And the faith that should animate us to do our utmost for God should be like that of the century, which our Lord marvelled at and commended. He had not found so great faith in Israel.

One of the great evils of sin is to prevent us remembering the mercy of God; whereas the miracles of our Lord and Saviour's kindness recorded in the gospels force us to recall and tenderly to meditate on the love of that Sacred Heart which is waiting to work on our souls the same marvellous cures. To remember the mercies of the Lord is a great grace, and awakens in our hearts a trustful confidence in His goodness. It is the first step of the penitent sinner returning to His outraged Redeemer. It makes us loathe the evil we have done against Him; it brings us to His feet, praying for pardon. We come like the leper, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." And the same blessed answer is ready for us, "I will, be thou made clean." And we come forth from the confessional, filled with that blessed confidence that He has spared us, because He loves us. And unworthy though we are, at His loving invitation we draw near to the altar, longing for the Bread of Life, and we hear that divine voice saying, "I will come and heal you," and strengthen you and guard you, and "he that eateth this Bread shall live for ever." May we

persevere loyal and faithful to the end, and that end will soon come. Then may our dying prayer be, "Lord Jesus, receive my soul!" and we may trustfully hope that the blessed answer will be, "I will." Thou sparest all, because they are Thine, O Lord, Who lovest souls.

TO WHICH CLASS DO YOU BELONG?

To call a man "a Catholic" is about as inclusive a thing as to call him "an American." There are many kinds of Americans, differing widely as regards color, character and belief. So, too, there are many kinds of Catholics. They may, however, be roughly divided into three classes:

There is, first of all, the nominal Catholic. Why he should cling to the name of Catholic is one of the unsolvable mysteries, as the Church has no more unsparring critic. His heart is recalcitrant, his mind rebellious and unwilling to accept and follow her teachings. Though he is called a Catholic, it is perfectly evident that his heart is absolutely unCatholic. His profession of faith means nothing, or in many cases, is a cloak assumed for personal and selfish reasons.

Then there is the worldly Catholic, who seems always bent on concealing his Catholicity, or minimizing it, lest it interfere with his standing in society or his business success. This species accepts just as much of the Church's teaching as it must, and that grudgingly. It gives as little of itself, its time and its love as is consonant with common decency.

There is, finally, the fervent, whole-hearted Catholic—and, thank God, their number is legion—who loves his Church as much as he loves his earthly mother. Everything that concerns her is of supreme interest to him. To insure her triumph, he is willing to make any sacrifice—even of his dearest worldly interests. He is ever ready to enter heart and soul into any plan which promises to promote her welfare. Like Christ, he loves the Church, and in the degree that he loves her, he is "another Christ."

This is the species out of which saints are carved, not only the canonized saints, but that vast unnumbered and unrecognized multitude whose glorification we shall all witness on Judgment Day.

These are the Catholics upon whom the Church places her dependence. And, strangely enough, just because of their whole-heartedness, they command the admiration of even worldly-minded men, for every one respects and looks up to the man who practices fearlessly what he professes.

Each one of us must determine for himself into which of these three classes he wishes to be assigned by God and by his thinking fellow men. Our faith and allegiance must be a reasonable service. With us rests the choice.

If we have determined to be real Catholics, Catholics worthy of the name, we must set earnestly to work to promote Catholic life within us in its full vigor by the regular reception of the sacraments and other practices of piety. We must create a Catholic consciousness in ourselves by prayer and a study of our holy Faith—a consciousness which will render us immune to the corroding influences of the world. This consciousness cannot be engendered by a promiscuous mingling with those who have no faith, or only a weak faith. It can be and must be hatched in the incubator of Catholic life and feeling.

This is a solemn thought, and one which should remind us constantly of the danger of falling into easy ways, worldly ways, unCatholic ways. There is just one road and that is the road which Christ pointed out when He said: "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life."—Rosary Magazine.

MR. WINDLE ON INTOLERANCE

C. A. Windle, the motto of whose paper Brann's Iconoclast is "Above All Things Liberty," is not himself a Catholic, but in answer to some queries as to his position, has from time to time fully stated it in Brann's Iconoclast, published in Chicago, of which he is the Editor. Perhaps the four following paragraphs state his position as clearly and concisely as may be done in so small a space.

I look upon the growth of religious and racial intolerance in America with horror. The bigot is as much a victim of his own intolerance as the man he assails, and in many cases more so. No human can harbor religious prejudice in his mind without harming himself. It is a cancer that destroys the milk of human kindness, that warps the brain and obscures the vision.

Intolerance is a deadly menace to the Republic, or what is more important, the sound principles upon which it rests. I take the position that a man can honestly defend the rights of Catholics without being one himself, and that there is no real reason for every non-Catholic to be an anti-Catholic.

See Velvetex Announcement on page 8.

THE KINGS AT THE MANGER

Centuries ago was it written by the Apostle of Love: "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." So from the beginning has the story of God's love for the world been told. "Surely," it was said in parable, "surely, they will reverence my son." But for His coming, no fire was kindled, no room made ready. Mary and Joseph know the bitterness of want as they walk from house to house, seeking a place of rest. Into the night they go, to find refuge on the chill hillside, in a place for beasts. The world then had no welcome for the Son of God, for Him alone who can ease the pain that pierces the heart of peoples and nations.

But in the light of the star, the kings from the East drew near to the child at Bethlehem. Rulers of earthly kingdoms, they bring gifts to the Child whose kingdom is not of this world. From that little Child in the arms of His Virgin Mother, they derive their jurisdiction. Their power He blesses and makes holy. They rule, not of themselves, but as all just rulers, in His name, with the authority given them by the King of Heaven and earth, the Prince of Peace.

Are the kings of the earth today drawing near the manger? Throughout the dark years of the War the voice of the Vicar of Peace, was raised in warning and entreaty. But the world would not listen. When the kings of the earth met in conference, the Vicar of Christ implored that their deliberations might be ruled by justice, love and forgiveness. Again, the world would not listen. Broken, dispirited, fearing the return of horrors which for four years made Europe a vast charnel house, today the world asks if the way to lasting peace may not be the path on which the Kings of old journeyed to the Child at Bethlehem. A philosophy which had no room for the lowly Son of God has brought only desolation, except in Bethlehem, and its lesson there is peace. May this New Year mark the beginning of the world's return to Christ.

Each of us, however small our influence, can bring that return nearer, not by intercession with the great, but by prayer and by example. The peace promised of old to men of good will, and given to the kings at Bethlehem would soon overflow the earth, if each of us were to establish in that small and unconsidered part of the world which is our own, peace with God, peace with our neighbors and peace in our own hearts.—America.

1923!

WORLD CIRCLING MISSIONARY

By Rev. Michael Mathis, C.S.C.

IV.

Nagaasaki, Oct. 12.—As we passed through the streets of Tokyo, we noticed that some of the larger stores were closed and that the people were in holiday attire. One of the party expressed surprise at this religious observance of the Sabbath in a pagan land. Father O'Neill, however, assured us that the holiday attire was not due to the observance of the Sabbath, but rather to the fact that this particular Sunday happened to be a national holiday, the Autumnal Feast of the Imperial Ancestors. This brought us face to face with Shintoism, the national religion of Japan, and we accordingly directed out steps to Meiji Jingu, the principal Shinto temple in Tokyo, erected in honor of the late emperor.

The temple is approached by a long avenue, over which no vehicle is permitted to pass. At the outer court there is a kind of water trough, set under a beautiful wood-carved canopy, from which a constant stream of worshippers took water from long ladles. The water is used to wash the hands and mouth. This is preparatory to the act of worshipping itself, which is made upon an elevated platform that looks out upon an open space where the spirits of the imperial ancestors are supposed to dwell. Bowing of the head and clapping of the hands constitute the external acts of worship, which in Japanese language is called "chin-chin." We had learned this much aboard boat, when a Japanese servant was sent to inquire the time of our Sunday Mass.

"When Catholic chin-chin," he asked us blandly. JAPANESE RELIGION Shintoism like the Emperor cult of ancient Rome teaches that the Japanese sovereign is a descendant of the gods and the object of religious worship. The political influence of Shintoism has of course been very great. It underlies the national self-consciousness, the national unity and the national loyalty to the imperial house whose history goes back two thousand years.

Few educated Japanese believe in the tenets of religion, but even yet Shintoism is favored by the government. It is deemed necessary for the support of law and order and authority in Japan. Hence the increasing emphasis laid upon the ceremonies at the great shrines and careful instruction given in the government schools. The stigma of disloyalty is put on every Japanese who turns from Shintoism to Christianity, but, with

the rapid growth of education, this form of religion, no longer believed by the enlightened Japanese, although still propagated by them for political reasons, cannot long survive.

EDUCATION AIDS

Catholic education is doing much to bring converts into the church. It was encouraging to learn from one of the nuns we met, a sister of the late Lord Mayor Terence MacDonagh of Cork, that the vast majority of pagan girl pupils are attracted to the Catholic faith, especially through the tales they hear of the sufferings of Jesus, and through devotion to the Blessed Virgin. Many of these would gladly receive baptism, if they could obtain the consent of their parents and guardians. Some indeed are converted at school, but many more after marriage.

The most important Catholic girls' institution in Tokyo is the convent conducted by the Sisters of St. Maur. To the regular school courses there is added a kindergarten, a school for nobles and a department of needlework. All the Catholic girl schools in Japan are indeed flourishing institutions. In some of them the attendance is more than one thousand pupils. Through the department of needlework, an opportunity of penetrating into the highest ranks of Japanese society is given the missionary sisters.

"PEACE TIARA" GIFT OF MILAN TO POPE

The "Peace Tiara" presented to Pope Pius by the Catholics of Milan, first through the hands of Cardinal Tosi, the successor of His Holiness as Archbishop of that city, on the occasion of the Consistory and later by the Milanese pilgrims who attended the public ceremony, is a wonderful work of art. It was designed by Senator Lucas Baltrinis and executed by the famous goldsmith, Alfredo Ravasco, both of whom are old friends of the Holy Father. The work was begun in June and was not completed until the end of October.

The tiara is 85 centimeters high and its largest diameter is 23 centimeters. The three crowns and the top, or dome, rest upon a filigree support of pure silver composed of thousands and thousands of tiny pieces forming the finest embroidery pattern. The dominant design in the decoration is the olive branch, symbol of peace.

The first crown consists of a band and a coronet. The band is designed in symmetrical lines, the centre being divided in a pattern in nine parts, of which eight represent bands of olive branches of beaten gold. Each bears 10 berries represented by 10 small cabochon emeralds. The ninth was left smooth for the following inscription: "Pio XI. Pontifici Maximo—Conciv.—Elden. Archiep. Olim. Suo Amantissimo—Mediolanenses—A. D. MCMXXIII—Pontif. A. S." Five diamonds, each weighing about 20 grains, divide each band and are alternated by four oriental rubies, weighing about 20 grains each.

The first crown is capped by nine clusters of olive leaves, in chiselled gold, and enamelled green, with a design in beaten gold. Between the clusters of leaves are big cabochon emeralds, and the green light they throw upon the pale enamel gives to the entire crown—a

delicate and characteristic coloring similar to natural olive leaves, which vary in color, according to the changing light.

The design of the second crown is also divided into nine parts in bands of olive leaves, and each has fifteen berries founded by small emeralds. Nine oriental rubies, weighing about 10 grains each, mark the division between the bands. The crowning part is similar to that of the first crown.

The crown on the upper part consists, instead of bands of leaves, of a row of large oriental pearls while the ornamentation of olive leaves with emeralds between the clusters, is the same. The dome is ended in rays starting from the central rose and in addition there are 13 winding flame designs formed by oriental rubies alternating with gold spears.

From the lower band depend two stoles. These are in fine embroidery which the patient hands of a young nun from Canossa have worked under the guidance of an elder sister. This embroidery is so delicate that it seems a water color upon material.

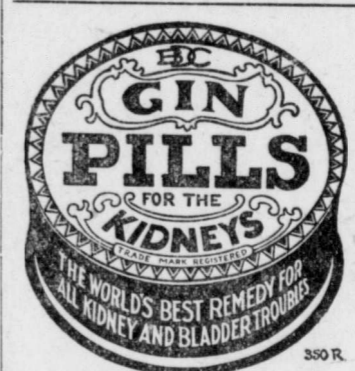
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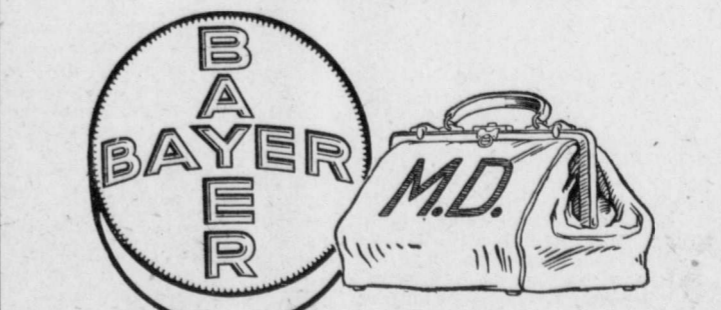
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GEO. GORDON BATTLE, ordering twenty copies of the book for his friends, writes, "I wish every American would read this delightful book and learn Ireland's wonderful story. It is a contribution of permanent value to historical lore." REV. MONS. CONNOLLY, New York, writes, "I only took up this book to glance at it, but could not lay it down again. It is fascinating. I am enclosing \$10 for copies." FRANK P. WALSH: "I am simply charmed with this book. It is the most readable, concise and beautiful work that I have yet been done—a most splendid contribution to the Cause." REV. DR. GEARY, Catholic University: "It is a work of which every man who belongs to the Irish race may well be proud." REV. MONS. KEANE, of Pittsburgh: "During the past fifty or sixty years, since I was a boy, herding the cows on the green hills of dear Ireland, I have read almost every work in English by both friend and foe, about the land of my birth, but after all these years, I must candidly confess I never met a work that pleased me as much as this one. Children, yet unborn, will bless Seumas MacManus for his beautiful work." MAJOR EUGENE F. KINKADE: "I am positively delighted with it. Its receipts made memorable for me Thanksgiving Day, 1921." REV. BISHOP HICKEY, Providence: "It has refreshed and enlightened me. It is a valuable contribution to the literature of Ireland." REV. BOSTON TRANSCRIPT: "Seumas MacManus keeps as closely as possible to admitted facts. He adds to his laurels with this book." GARLICK AMERICAN: "This book should be in the home of every Irish family, and every American who is interested in Irish history." PITTSBURGH LEADER: "Singularly unbiased and absorbing. Here is history written by a poet, and romance written by a historian." AMERICA: "A splendid work which should find its way into every Irish home—and every other home as well."

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