

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Third Sunday after Pentecost.

THE OCCASIONS OF SIN.

"Be sober and watch; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, seeketh whom he may devour." (1 St. Peter v. 8)

A good business season is this, my brethren, for our adversary the devil. He may now modify his roar and limit his search, for the season itself, with its many temptations in the form of amusements, will accomplish no small share of his mean and villainous work.

Do not misunderstand me. Our religion is not stiff-necked, nor does it exact long faces. Recreation is necessary for some, it is good for all, and many of the amusements it affords are harmless and innocent in themselves; but while seeking what rest and enjoyment we can for our bodies, we must remember never to do so at the expense of our souls.

The apostle in today's epistle would seem to give us, in two words, a golden rule whereby to govern our conduct and safely guide us in all our recreations—"Be sober and watch." Excess in anything is never praiseworthy, and always defeats the very good it was intended to secure. Sobriety should be practised in all things—in our eating and in our drinking, in our work as well as in our play. It is the balance wheel governing the mental and physical powers of the whole man.

But mark well, brethren, that sobriety is not sufficient in itself, for the apostle warns us not only to be sober but to watch. Vain is the boast of the man armed with a pledge, or fortified with a firm resolve that makes for sobriety, who does not watch, and who fancies that he is strong enough with that shield alone to risk the strongest temptations.

Watchfulness has to be employed, particularly during this season, given up as it is to so much relaxation; and this watchfulness is to be observed not all, at the fashionable quarters of the rich, as well as at the resorts of the poor.

The toilers have little, indeed, to amuse them in this life, and God forbid that they should be deprived of the few enjoyments they are able to secure—but in the same breath I say: Better they should die from want of recreation than that they should secure it at the expense of their souls, at some of the vile places at which it is offered.

Understand this well, my brethren, that there are some resorts of amusement very dangerous and forbidden to Christian people. The Sunday excursion, which means the desecration of God's day in dancing and drinking and carousing, is undoubtedly both scandalous and dangerous. It robs God of the special worship due to Him; it only offers to man opportunities of debasing himself.

You, who work all the week and who have Sunday alone for rest, demand, and may well demand, relaxation and recreation; then take it and God bless you in it; but take it in sobriety and watchfulness, take it with your families about you, and take it only after you have fulfilled the positive law of worshiping God by hearing holy Mass.

Another forbidden amusement and one of the curses of our city is the Saturday night picnic. Beware of it! It is the haunt of our adversary the devil. Let our Catholic young girls shun such places if they value their virtue, for the serpent lies hidden in the very grass they tread. Many an innocent girl has made her first false step at these night picnics; and, in sorrow we have to confess it, many a girl has learned at these resorts to drink in public, without a blush, her first intoxicating glass.

Fathers and mothers, if you really love your daughters you should move heaven and earth to keep them from such occasions of sin and ruin. You should be willing to make any sacrifice, to put yourself to any expense, to supply them with suitable and wholesome recreation.

And what shall I say of the Catholic young man who visits such places? I can tell him plainly he is already the prey of his adversary the devil; he is encouraging and supporting resorts that tend to degrade woman and brutalize men. Young men, this is not a profitable trade you are engaged in, even if you look at it from a natural standpoint. The chances are against you at these resorts; you will be neither sober nor watchful, and the result will be ruinous to your best interests, both spiritual and temporal.

THE TRUE CATHOLIC SPIRIT.

If every Catholic, priest or layman, possessed the spirit of the priest Father Bertrand Conway, C.S.C., tells us of in the "Catholic Missionaries" work of the non-Catholic mission-aries would be made very easy, if indeed there were need for it. Says Father Conway:

"I remember a Panist missionary walking through the streets of a certain town with the resident pastor. As they passed by the women nodded, the men tipped their hats and the little children smiled. Now and again the pastor would stop for a moment, speak a few kind words, introduce the visiting priest and then pass on.

"Your people?" asked the missionary.

"Oh yes," replied the pastor.

"Again the same question, and the same answer. After a while the missionary asked: 'Why, is this whole town Catholic?'

"Not at all," said the priest with a smile: "The Catholics are in the minority. But they are all my people—Catholic and non-Catholic."

"That is the spirit of the true Catholic, priest or layman."

Look abroad upon earth's swarming millions—listen to the moan of pain that rises up to heaven from the heart of humanity, and acknowledge that now, also, as of old time, weariness and disappointment, and sorrow are the inheritance of our race. Still, as in the days of Solomon the ground tone of the psalm of life is found in the sad words: "vanity of vanities."

THE EMPRESS EUGENIE.

How long has it been since we have heard of the Empress Eugenie? asks a writer in the Boston Transcript. They call her the "Empress of Solitude." She still lives, an animated memory, in the Hotel Continental in Paris, not a stone's throw from her one time regal home.

When she drives about Paris now, it is in a brougham with a single horse, where so few years ago she drew to herself the eyes of a city in her \$20,000 coach and her eight spanking nags. Or in her Villa Cyrene, on the shore of the Mediterranean, under palm and eucalyptus swaying in the cool breeze, the exiled Empress walks, a dark figure leaning on an ebony stick, leading an ebony life, aimlessly watching the sea.

For a Spaniard her tastes were simple—too simple to please her imperial spouse. She banked her own money, speculated, built up a fortune with her own wits—and disgraced her open-handed Emperor.

When Eugenie was to meet Victoria, the Emperor himself superintended the selection of her gown. And what was his vexation when arriving at Windsor he found that the greater part of the consort's baggage had been left behind!

He insisted on her pleading fatigue and remaining hid till her dresses could be found—which she refused to do. Borrowing a pale blue frock of a lady in waiting she appeared before the Queen of England with a single tear in her hair. And the sensation has ceased to be. They will write of her one day as they write of Napoleon and Marie Antoinette.

But this evening of her life is so placid, her mournful and solitary figure in it, her quiet beauty, her dignified submission to her fate are so tender a picture that enemies of Eugenie she created thus, thirty years ago, has never yet been forgotten.

ON SAINTS AND IMAGES.

Some weeks ago, in commenting upon the statement in a Methodist journal that the late Methodist Bishop McCallister never passed a portrait of Abraham Lincoln without saluting it, we remarked that the very people who commend such a display of respect for the memory of a great American call Catholics idolaters when they salute a statue or picture of Christ, the Blessed Virgin or the saints. The Pittsburgh Christian Advocate, a Methodist weekly, is stirred to wrath by our remark, and even goes so far as to insinuate that we do not truly represent Catholic doctrine; that, in fact, we and other Catholics are not honest and try to explain away our "worship of saints, relics," etc. Here is just what the Pittsburgh Christian Advocate says:

"In this manner our Roman Catholic friends seek to ease up or explain away their worship of saints, relics, images, etc. Concerning this matter one or two things are clearly true: either they are grossly misrepresented and misunderstood, or this is not an honest statement. Which is the truth? Will our brother of the News affirm that the feeling and the attitude of Romanists when they salute a statue or picture of Christ, the Blessed Virgin or the saints, is the same as, and nothing more than the respect and reverence Protestants feel for Luther or Wesley, or Calvin, or other patriots, or for Washington or Lincoln? Will he dare not? It is not more respect and veneration they show, but it is adoration, and that is idolatry, because it is in violation of the second commandment. That is the real distinction which they seek to cover up. Come, now, friends, be honest and state the case as it is, and do not try to explain it away."

Coming from a Christian Advocate that is rather a Christian and ungentlemanly language. The Methodist editor might as well have called us a falsifier and be done with it. He says that we Catholics seek to "ease up" and "explain away" our worship of saints, relics, images, etc. Apparently he believes he knows Catholic doctrine better than Catholics themselves do, for he insists it is not veneration, but show the saints, but adoration, and that is idolatry. Perhaps there is no other Catholic teaching that has been explained more fully for non-Catholics than this very honor and veneration we pay to God's saints and to their images in our churches. But many non-Catholics will insist that their distorted views are the correct ones and that, in fact, we do not know what we believe. Our friend of the Pittsburgh Christian Advocate will probably be willing to admit that the Council of Trent is a pretty fair authority on Catholic teaching. Well, the Council of Trent (Sess. xxv) declares:

"That the images of Christ and the Virgin Mother of God, and of the other saints, are to be had and kept especially in churches, and that due honor and veneration are to be given them; not that any divinity or virtue is believed to be in them or worshipped, or that anything is to be asked of them, or that trust is to be reposed in them, as was done of old by the gentiles, who placed their hope in idols; but because the honor which is shown them is referred to the prototypes which these images represent; in such wise that by the images which we kiss, and before which we uncover the head, and prostrate ourselves, we adore Christ, and we venerate the saints whose similitude they bear."

Now that ought to be plain enough for even the Methodist editor in enlightened Pittsburgh who will have it that Catholics adore images. But he may persist that at any rate we worship saints, instead of God. The following beautiful passage from a letter written by the late Bishop Sanguin of Fall River, Mass., on his death-bed ought to make clear to any intelligent man the difference between the homage paid to the saints, who are the servants of God, and that given to God Himself: "I trust in the boundless mercy of Jesus; in the blood which He poured out for me on Calvary. May it

wash out all my sins! And thou, sweetest Mother Mary, whom I hope to see in thy immaculate beauty in heaven, come to the rescue of thy unworthy child. O holy Joseph, my best father and protector, assist me on my journey to Jesus. My holy patrons, William, Laurence, Aloysius and Francis, my guardian angel, all angels and saints of God, intercede for me a poor sinner."

We would suggest that the next time the Pittsburgh Christian Advocate's editor feels like writing anything about Catholic teachings it might be prudent for him to consult some book that states the doctrine exactly. Thus he will be spared making himself ridiculous.—Catholic News.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CATHOLICS.

"We must meet the world on its own platform. We must show our superior religion by results. We must show that we are the truly religious and the followers of Jesus Christ, by results that appear to men and that can be seen and felt. We must meet the world on this ground if we would be true to Christ. I tell you plainly, you are not recognizing your responsibility. You do not care whether non-Catholics are edified or scandalized by your conduct; and it is shameful to think that Catholics are so indifferent to the interests of God and His Church."

Every Catholic is burdened with the responsibility of bearing that sacred name with honor. And if every Catholic in this country to-day were really worthy of that name, there would be very few Protestants in the United States. But because Catholics do not care; because they are perfectly indifferent to the fate of non-Catholics; because they are always ready to say that these non-Catholics can die and go to hell as far as they are concerned, the Church is making very little or no progress here.

"Their priests are doing their duty; they are building churches and working and trying to collect money to pay for them; but there is not a country in the world to-day where Catholics are such strangers to its missionary work as Catholics are in the United States of America. Last week I saw in the morning paper the result of the missionary work of the women of one Protestant church in St. Louis for the year 1906. The women of that one Protestant church, and it is not the strongest Protestant church in the city, either, raised more money for their missions than all the Catholics of the Archdiocese of St. Louis put together. These women of one Protestant church, of one of the middle class Protestant churches of St. Louis, raised more money to spread Protestantism than all the Catholics of the Archdiocese of St. Louis to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Now think of that, we who are boasting of our achievements. We are priding ourselves on doing great things and being a great Catholic people; but is it not an empty boast?

"We have in the Catholic Church to-day in America the pick of all the national churches in the world. We have in the American Catholic Church to-day the choicest members of the Catholic churches of Ireland, Germany, France, Spain, Italy and England. But if we are the premier nation of the world to-day, why is it that the Catholic Church of America is not the premier church of the world? We are as numerous as the Catholics of Germany. But how poor and contemptible we are in comparison."

"Why do I say that American Catholics have no love for their religion? Because they do not want very much of it. The less of it they get, the better they like it. We are getting down now to the bare essentials. We ask: What is the least we must do to be saved? There is no peace in the world to-day where the people want shorter services and want fewer sermons, than in the United States."

"Now, is it not true that what we love we like to talk about? What we love we like to hear about? What we love we like to read about? Catholics in the United States do not want to talk about religion; they do not want to hear about religion; they do not want to read about religion. And it is because they have no interest either in their church or in their religion."

"And that is why those outside of the Church do not come in. St. Chrysostom, away back in the very morning of Christianity, declared that the preaching of the word of God was the true ministry of God. He declared that the priest or Bishop who could not preach should never have been ordained. He may have every other qualification, but if he cannot preach he should never be ordained. And it is a fact that the halcyon days of the Church have always been those when people loved to hear sermons. We brick and mortar clergy of America will soon disappear, and the sooner the better, to give place to a race of Christian preachers."

"Until a change takes place, and until the priests begin again to preach, and until the people hunger and thirst for sermons again, we cannot expect to do much in the way of converting America."

"The American people want a religion that will make them happy. That is one end of true religion. If they see that Catholics are happy in their religion they will join them. Now, are we happy in our religion? Is it not a heavy burden for most of us? Is not attendance at church and the reception of the sacraments an irksome duty? Does our religion make us grow in love? Do these heroic days of Christianity when whole nations entered the fold en masse? We do not hear of what the priests did or said; but the heathens say: 'How these Christians love one another.' God, send us back those blessed days when we shall be interested in our religion and be happy in its practice.—Rev. D. S. Phelan.

PURGATORY—PROTESTANT IMITATION AND CONVERSION.

Catholic Univ. rev.

This is the age of imitations. If we do not enjoin the Church Protestantism from gradually appropriating doctrines and practices that have been the sole possession of the Church Catholic, we will not find very much external difference between them.

The cross was for a long time a sure sign that the church it surmounted was Catholic. The cross as an ornament was, in times gone by, never worn except by a member of the Church that has existed in the world since Calvary. Confession and the confessional, scooped and decried for years as insulting to the "Only Mediator," found lodgement and votaries in one of the many branches of the Protestant Church. "Image worship" was charged against Catholics because they had statues and paintings in their temples, and now there are few Protestant churches in which they are not found in one form or another.

Vestments, candles and the Mass are advertised as attractions among the Ritualists. Praying for the dead was a high crime against Protestant theology, because it had been settled that a soul departing, if not fit for heaven, must be defiled, and no matter how slightly defiled, had to go to hell as the only other place in the next world.

That God is infinitely just, would render to every one according to his works, and that our Lord had said that there is a prison beyond the grave in which souls must stay until they had paid the last farthing, and that the Jews had sent silver to Jerusalem to have sacrifices offered for the soldiers that had fallen in battle, because it is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead—all those indications of a place of purgation in the next world were scooped and decried by the Protestant ministers and by their followers. It was claimed that the teachings and the scheme were for revenue only. It was branded as superstition and a blasphemous. Yet there is no doctrine more in accordance with Scripture, with tradition, with justice and with common sense.

Now comes Rev. Levi Gilbert, who for years was pastor of the First Methodist Church in Cleveland. He has written a book on "The Hereafter and Heaven"—a plea for prayers for the dead. The book has drawn out a caustic criticism from the Central Christian Advocate (Methodist, Kansas City), which hinted that Dr. Gilbert would like to see Methodism "have closer kinship to Rome, to paganism, to 'eternal hope.'" An examination of Dr. Gilbert's own words, however, shows that his idea is a very moderate one. His suggestion of prayers for the dead apparently goes no further than to recommend that we pray for their "progress in the heavenly life." "Is there any bar," he asks, put upon the promptings of our hearts to breathe out loving, trustful supplication for them as of old?" To quote from his book, Dr. Gilbert defends by asking:

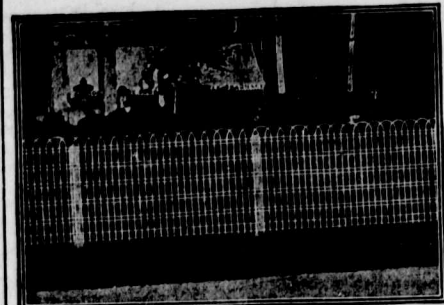
"Is it claimed that definite supplication for the dead is ruled out by the theology which teaches that it is utterly useless and unavailing since it could effect nothing—since the dead are in a fixed condition of joy and have all the consummation of blessings? We may well pause to question it. Is it not reasonable to believe that in heaven it self there are gradations of happiness, possible growth into larger and fuller bliss, ever-advancing progress toward the perfection which is in God? It is rational to suppose that our dead are to maintain a flat, stationary condition of dead level in that land of vast opportunity? Was not Tompkinson right in describing the life of the future as an eternal process moving on."

From state to state the spirit walks? And, if so, can we repress our profoundest wish that our departed ones may advance by sure steps through the circuits of their orbits, unto a higher height, a deeper deep? Yes, does there not lie, latent and unexpressed, a real prayer at the heart of all love? And, as we love the holy dead, must not our love breathe out a petition for their constant and increasing advancement in the happiness and holiness of heaven?"

Praying for the dead implies a belief in the Catholic doctrine of the "Communion of Saints." Imitation is flattery, but imitation is frequently stamped "counterfeit."

Should Have Catholic Pictures. The home of a Catholic should have something Catholic about it. It is no excuse to say that pagan adornments are artistic—a word, by the way, borrowed from the critics of the Catholic Church. To the pure all things are pure, is no argument to prove that we may have indecent representations. There are, however, Catholic homes which are pagan as to pictures and ornaments. There is no manifestation of faith. Pictures of Christ Our Lord, of His Blessed Mother and the saints are refused a place on their walls. They are not, we assume, ashamed of their religion, but they are ignorant of what constitutes art, and ignorant also of the fact that the most beautiful works in the world have come from men who knew how to pray and who, as true artists, made their genius the handmaid of the beautiful and pure.

Regarding Inscriptions. The inscription "At Rest" should never be seen on a Catholic coffin, says the Church. It means that the deceased has entered into glory, a declaration which it would be the height of presumption for us to make. The Catholic inscription is "May he rest in peace," that is, may he one day enter glory. We do not dare ask God to admit a soul to heaven at the moment of its departure from this world; we beseech Him to shorten its term in purgatory through regard for the prayers of his Church, and especially through regard for His divine Son perpetuating the sacrifice on Calvary, when Mass is said.



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A Cure.

Possibly the following story may help some victim of the drink habit to become a total abstainer. It will be well for those who wish to co-operate to have food handy in case of emergency:

A hard drinker was told by his doctor that he could be cured if every time he felt that he must have a drink he would immediately take something to eat instead. The man followed the advice and was cured, but the habit of asking for food had become so fixed with him that once he was nearly locked up as a lunatic. He was stopped at a hotel and hearing a great commotion in the room next to his, he peeped over the transom to see what the matter was. He saw and rushed madly down to the office and shouted to the clerk: "The man in 153 has shot himself! Ham and egg sandwich please!"—Catholic Universe.

A Prayer.

The chaplain of the house of representatives in Austin Tex., gave utterance to the following in his "Invocation" at the opening of a recent session: "There are thousands who are cursing the legislators for the laws they have passed. Why don't they come here and curse them to their faces? Is it because they are restrained by the thought that they may get their teeth knocked down their throats by the stalwart throats of these men here?"

As a part of a political speech these expressions would be strenuous enough but the man who uses them in a prayer has some very strange ideas of the meaning of the act, which is a communion with God.—Sacred Heart Review.

If one is to keep his aim in sight, he must not have too many aims.—E. E. Hale.

Wait for the Mud to Dry.

Father Graham was beloved by every one, and his influence in the little town was great, so good and so active was he.

A young man of the village had been badly injured and came to Father Graham, full of angry indignation, declaring that he was going to demand an apology.

"My dear boy," Father Graham said, "take a word of advice from an old man who loves peace. An insult is like mud; it will brush off much better when it is dry. Wait a little till he and you are both cool and the thing is easily mended. If you go now it will only be a quarrel!"

Amusing Anecdotes of O'Connell.

The Daily News has another story of O'Connell. Dan's great rival was Sergeant "Tom Gould," pronounced "Gold." Tom was a confirmed old bachelor, but when over eighty years of age proposed to and was accepted by a girl of eighteen. He announced his engagement to O'Connell in verse, concluding thus: So, you see, my dear Dan, that the eighty years old O'Connell is not so old after all. A girl of eighteen fell in love with old Gould. To which he replied: "That's a bit of a joke, my dear Dan, it is not true. But, believe me, dear Tom, it is gold without any (11).

It may be that some persons whom you often see stumbling, and committing many imperfections, are really more virtuous and more pleasing to God (either because of the great courage which they preserve in the midst of these imperfections, or because of the humility which they extract from them, or, again, by the love they gain for abjection) than those who may have a dozen virtues natural or acquired, and who will perhaps strive and labor less, and perhaps be less humble and courageous, than those who are so apt to fall.

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It is not so much that injure a man's position as the little things he does not think worth mentioning. One of the hindrances to success in a world where little is a plan may fold—is lack of ambition, a clerk or stenographer able to keep a position explosive temper or nature! How many lost by the impatience want of equanimity of How many hotel clerks have lost desirable treatment.

I know of a room whose suave manner ment of the guests is able in attracting attention, that the proprietors pay him a very large him to remain in his Many commercial success largely to the ing traveling men of and personality to r fact, some of these fact, should they be part of their trade? The merchants who visit become attached many cases, rather business with the their patronage to they choose to con The largest estate the Bon Marche—by the amiability of its founders, a grocery business of New York.

But it would be ability to look at attaining material to brighten and home, in the street the store, office, or it is found, is of in than its material li winner.—Ex-shang

A shame to be Everywhere pecially from age, who feel handicapped by th ing. I often g people, asking if they educate themselves course it is. The correspondence sitions like C evening schools, ies, and period determining to im abundant opportu While you lan early education a begin, you may be other young men who are making improvement, at half as good as you have.

The first thing resolve, a strong determined, to go to through life; ance; that, if you early advantage; make up for long you will no longer placed at a disa you can remedy You will change to an attitude toward pried to see ho materially imp have made a vigo Go about it with tion that you w learn a trade.

There is a normal being yearning for Beware of stit ture for self un Man was man expansion To have an broader every of ignorance a little wider, at an ambition It is not an education sho years of schoo people are the ing, always a every possible opportunity.—

East The only found where that is, you o But in your oned with it. If the other sometimes if to perceive fault with the warm or too too sunny or a good deal of times never ode you do and so don't subconscio that many comprehend honest. An wrong, too, ter of fact, self that you real discrim but you do running the setting all You may world wide along miles You may run a little think you the big tur are the eler business a kn-w just of the gre with you one of the