

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS FOR EARLY MASSES By the Paulist Fathers.

Preached in their Church of St. Paul the Apostle, 145 Broadway and Ninth Avenue, New York City.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST. "Cast thy cares upon Him, for He hath care of you."—From the Epistle of the Sunday.

The theological virtue of Hope, my brethren, is what St. Peter would have us practise when he uses the words, I have just read, a virtue, I think, too little practised among Christians. Indeed, there are many of us who do not so much as know, clearly at least, what it is to hope in God. What, then, is it? The best answer is one coupling the definition with Faith. Now, as Faith communicates to our reason a supernatural power of understanding God, the infused virtue of Hope endows our will with a supernatural power of confiding in God. Hope makes us conscious of a divine power within us, so that we feel able to actively pursue and securely attain to eternal life. Hope strengthens us with the divine might, raises our courage far above its natural level; we feel and act in the spiritual life with a decision and vigor far above nature's powers, despising the obstacles between us and God. We set about overcoming them, full of the highest confidence in ultimate victory. Hope is an elevating sentiment; it fills the soul with a joyous pride in his power, it nerves the timid to noble deeds for God's love; but its greatest practical good is that it braces us up with confidence in our final perseverance.

St. Paul gives us our reason for hope in his Epistle to the Romans: "If God be for us, who is against us? He that spared not even His own Son, but delivered Him up for us, how shall He not also with Him give us all things?" If, brethren, you believe these words; that is to say, if you have Faith, then you will enter upon a good life without hesitation, and assume its responsibilities without fear. If experience teaches you your weakness, supernatural Hope says, if God is with me I am stronger than sin and the devil. If past failures fill you with solicitude, Hope says, Cast all your solitude on God. He has the care of you. If the power of passion alarms you, Hope says there's no passion can stand against God. If in former times the fooleries of the world had deceived me, now I depise them: I possess Him who said, "I have conquered the world."

Even that deadly wavering of the mind itself, that feebleness of mental grasp which we call doubt, is cured by Hope; for what we have a solid and practical calculation to possess we feel near to us, and we perceive that it is a weakness of mind to doubt about it. The promise of eternal life, which we feel assuredly accepted by the virtue of hope, have a wonderful effect on our belief in the truths of faith. Once, when somebody brought up the doctrine of eternal punishment as very difficult to believe, an enlightened man, full of the virtue of Hope, answered: "What do I see how difficult and terrible the doctrine of hell may be. I'm not going there; that's certain. My interest in the question is, therefore, not personal." His confidence in the Divine goodness was such that the terror of Divine justice did not have a disturbing effect on him.

And, indeed, brethren, it is a small compliment to any one to consider him a tyrant, and especially is this so in God's case. God is our Creator and Lord, to be sure; but is there anything in that to cause us to serve Him with unmingled fear? And He has made us His children by holy Baptism; we are united to His only begotten Son by every tie of kinship we can be made capable of, and we shall creep along with downcast head and weeping eye, remembering our miserable sins, to the forgetfulness of the Divine love of our Heavenly Father!

Tell me, are you truly sorry for your sins, ready to confess them, determined, with God's help, to amend your life? Then take courage. Stand up like a man no way so much as you please God in like confidence in His affection, and calculating, as upon a certain thing that you will enjoy Him forever in Paradise. Let us ask God, in the words of St. Paul, to "enlighten the eyes of our heart, that we may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."

Statesman's Love for the Mother of God.

A service of plate and a purse of sovereignty would be of no use to a man like Windthorst, who, though by no means rich, is perfectly content to support himself on what little he has during the rest of his natural life. The "gift of honor," for which 300 and odd of our German contemporaries have opened a subscription, is to be appropriated towards the building of a second Catholic Church in Hanover, Windthorst's native place. As yet there is but one small Catholic place of worship in the city which has nearly 150,000 inhabitants, a large and growing proportion of whom are Catholic. Dr. Windthorst declares that the dearest wish he has is not to leave this earth without seeing this temple reared, which at his express desire is to be placed under the protection of the Blessed Virgin and be called Marienkirche.

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AN INFALLIBLE DECISION FROM AN OBSCURE NEW JERSEY VILLAGE.

To the Editor of the N. Y. Freeman's Journal. "Real palms are a real humberg!" So says the Editor of the Pastor in the April number of that "Monthly Journal for Priests." He attempts to prove his assertion by quoting Missal rubric for Palm Sunday. "After Terce and the usual Asperges, the priest, clad in violet cope, etc., proceeds to the blessing of branches of palm trees, or olive trees, or other trees," etc.

He starts out with the admission that palms are without branches, which is perfectly true of all species of palms. But, wishing to reconcile the Scriptural and rubrical expression Ramos, he says that the palm leaves, which are pinnated or feather shaped, may properly be designated as branches.

This is not true. No writer on palms at the present time ever uses the word branch; it is always leaves. The leaves are supported on petioles, or leaf-stalks. Their structure may be summed up in a few words; they are simple and furnished with a mid-rib, from which parallel veins branch off. This structure is common to all palms, but assumes in different species different forms, a fact acknowledged by all accomplished botanists. The mid rib in pinnate, pinnatisect or bipinnatisect leaves extends throughout the whole length of the leaves. This is the case in the majority of palms.

When the mid-rib is less developed, palmate, or fan-shaped leaves, are the result. Thirty years ago there were one hundred known species of palms having fan-shaped leaves.

The learned author whose article I am criticising says there are a few, and "only a few species, of this description." He calls it a "lusuus," although in the above quotation he admits it is a species! But this is only one of the contradictions in his article. If the majority of mankind are Mongolians, does it follow that one born in the city of Cors, London or Paris is not of the human species? I am sure a Mongolian would admit that our learned author was a homogeneous.

Let me inform him that all palms of high or low degree, with pinnate or palmate leaves, whether grown in Palestine or elsewhere, are an order by themselves, and represent the grand province of the Endogones.

The editor of the Pastor appears to have such a grudge against the noble order that he is bold enough not only to doubt that some of them are real palms, but even at the expense of making himself ridiculous he selects a few to show that it is nonsense to consider them at all. He has found somewhere that the rattan grows to the length of 250 or more feet, and that the leaves are only at the end; that it would be ridiculous to take a yard or two of the cane and call it real palm.

I am quite sure that any sensible person will agree with him. The leaves on the rattan grow at the end, or top, as in all palms. To take a yard or two of the cane and call it a palm reminds one of the fool who had a house for sale, and carried around a brick as a sample!

The whole article on palms in this Monthly Journal for Priests is so full of absurdities (that is, when one has to answer what appears original) that this letter is longer than it would otherwise be. Of course one cannot blame our Editor for singling out the rattan as an object of ridicule. It was probably the first palm he became acquainted with, and first impressions are lasting. But he might have remembered that palms are as exclusive as princes, forming close alliances among themselves, and acknowledging no immediate relationship with any of the numerous families of the great natural division among which they are classed. They seem to glory in isolation, proudly waving their graceful foliage among those with whom they are thrown together. Yet, as is often the case in everyday life, they have, like many noble families, low connections and poor relations. So let us leave the creeping rattan in its peaceful, sombre habitat. If we want a few yards of it we will order it for the school-room where our author first saw it, and where it will be useful and salutary, although certainly not ornamental. Nobody wants it for Palm Sunday. It would bring up too many recollections.

For genuine bits of rustic simplicity and pedagogic ignorance I commend my readers to the following extracts: "The so-called real palms of our enterprising traders are neither more nor less than the big leaf of the cabbage tree." "The cabbage tree of the South ought not to be called the real palm." "The priest can't take leaves to bleas." "And it is only the cabbage tree's fan-shaped leaves were pounded into a few of our churches recently."

How a man can write so recklessly and in such utter ignorance of his subject in a "Monthly Journal for Priests" surpasses all understanding. It is not possible that any priest will be misled by the article in question.

Well, it requires some patience to lead our pedagogue away from his diaphanous and aid him to digest it with a little palm oil. It must be done, however, not on account of the evidently intended harm the article in question may do anybody, objectively, but for the fun of the thing and to show what one "notional priest" is at least of it.

Now, how does our author come to apply the term "cabbage tree of the south" to what he calls the "Chamomero palm-etto"? Has he invented a new species? Shades of Linnaeus defend us! Perhaps the word chamomero would suggest cabbage? Not much. It is a compound word, and is derived from *chamo*, dwarf, and *rope*, a twig. The cabbage palm is the *artocarpus*, a native of the West Indies, and one of the most beautiful and stately of the palm tribe. The full sized tree is seven feet in circumference, and 150 feet high. In some of the tropical islands it is called the royal palmetto. It is called the cabbage palm from the fact that high up in its summit between its leaves it bears a vegetable which some have called a cabbage.

This fruit or vegetable is about two feet long, cylindrical, and about the thickness of a man's arm. To obtain this fruit, which is considered a great delicacy, the noble tree must be destroyed. The cabbage palm would not grow in

this country, unless in a young state in some of our large conservatories. Only one afflicted with strabismus would apply the term to the Sabal palmetto. Besides, the cabbage palm, like all the *artocarpus*, has pinnate leaves, and is as much like the fan shaped palmetto "as nice new milk is to Limburg cheese." I need not say that this elegant comparison is borrowed from the Pastor, but differently applied.

The palm which the editor of the Pastor objects to is the Sabal palmetto, the most northern species of all the palms and distinctly American, a real native of the United States and a very valuable tree.

The timber of the Sabal is used in ship building and in the construction of wharves, being practically indestructible in salt water and not liable to attack from worms. The leaves are used in the manufacture of palm-leaf hats, baskets and mats, etc.

The negroes eat the young unexpanded leaves and call their delicious dish cabbage. That is why our learned friend thinks it should not be called a palm in the story some of the words! He is evidently too much prejudiced against cabbage! But let him take heart. None of those tender, undeveloped, unexpanded leaves are ever brought into Church. The negroes eat them all up and consider them quite digestible. The leaves which we receive for Palm Sunday are too tough even for a negro's stomach, and are not cabbage at all. It is indeed, very funny that we must go into all these details for the information of our author, who should know that when he writes in a Monthly Journal for Priests he should talk by the book.

The Sabal palmetto is as true a palm as any that grow in Palestine or elsewhere.

Perhaps he objects to it because it serves many useful and economic purposes! He forgets that the Almighty and Wise Creator has particularly blessed the palm of whatever species. Whole tribes of mankind live on the fruits of this noble order of plants. Every part of the tree is put to some useful purpose by man for his own benefit. Why then should we not bless the leaves in preference to the fruit of the tree? I should like to acknowledge God's bountiful gifts to man! The Phoenix Dactylifera serves as many useful and domestic purposes as our own real palm, the Sabal palmetto. But it is the shape or form of the leaves that displeases our learned author.

Well, let us see. He was good enough to tell us that Thamar is the Hebrew name for a palm, and the Greek term for the same. But when does he get the word palm? He does not seem to know. Yet he talks learnedly about palms, and declares that real palms are a real humberg, and fan-shaped leaves are a lusus. Well, well, I have to take my good pedagogue by the hand and lead him back to the old Romans in their "palmy days," on the shores of the Mediterranean. The Romans were acquainted with the chamomero humilis, the dwarf fan palm, and on account of a certain resemblance of its leaves to the human hand called it *palmis*. Of course the Romans were not wise men or they would have dubbed the plant a cabbage! A modern Linnaeus, who edits a Monthly Journal for Priests, says it is not a palm at all. He says, "This same palm (*chamomero humilis*) palmate, or fan-shaped as it is, grows abundantly along the Mediterranean coast, and its leaves are blessed on Palm Sunday in hundreds of churches in Italy, and I can say in scores of churches in the city of Rome."

The Phoenix Dactylifera—which no one denies is the Bible palm simply because it grows abundantly with other palms in Palestine—has been introduced into Europe, and is cultivated for its leaves in the small town of Bordighiera, in the territory of Genoa.

It does not bear fruit so far north, hence we might be pardoned for saying it is Phoenix and not Dactylifera. The leaves are not blessed to the exclusion of the other palm probably outside of St. Peter's.

Now, as to the rubric. They are rules for the Universal Church. They do not direct the blessing of any particular species of palm. If they do, it is in the province of the editor of the Pastor, "a Monthly Journal for Priests," so quote the decision interpreting the rule. This he has failed to do, probably because there is no such decision. May I not say, therefore, that we follow the spirit and even the letter of the rubric, when we bless palms that grow in our own country, especially when we know (the editor of the Pastor to the contrary notwithstanding) that they are real palms?

May we not say that the rubric means where palms are not obtainable the branches of other trees may be substituted? The wine used by Our Lord at the Last Supper was certainly pressed from the fruit of a vine grown in Palestine. Does it follow that the juice of an American grape cannot be used in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass?

Must we go to Palestine for olives? Is oil produced from the American olive invalid for consecration on Holy Thursday?

The reasoning of the Pastor is a trifle peculiar. *Serventur Rubrica* say we, and to one who in a Monthly Journal for Priests does not speak by the book, *Ne extra scribam* say we again.

I must close with the flat denial of the truth of the following elegant extract: "While we can have branches of evergreens why should we go to the expense and against the rubric to secure bunches of rusty, dried, dirty, meaningless bunches of outlandish leaves each bunch for all the world like a bundle of yellow-faded licks, falling asunder, swarming with life, and variegated with the droppings of the multitudinous birds of the South."

This is evident that the Pastor or some of his friends has been sold. Some impetuous fellow has lately embarked in the palm business, thinking there was a fortune in it. He succeeded in getting a lot of dried, dirty leaves, which he sold at a trifle less than the good article, and a number of priests were deceived by him—simply this and nothing more. For the past ten years I have been using genuine palms procured from the New York Catholic Agency. I have invariably found them fresh, sweet, and perfectly clean.

For six of those years I was not personally acquainted with the gentleman who conducts the Agency—I left a standing

order to send me the same quantity of palms every year—I never had any anxiety about getting them in time, and never had any fault to find with the quality of palms he sent me. I believe this is the experience of all priests who ordered their palms through the Catholic Agency.

I hold that the editor of the Pastor has made a reckless and an unjust assertion, totally devoid of truth, and he should have informed himself. His article was calculated to injure a legitimate and necessary business, and the interests of one who deserves well of the Church in this country for his strenuous efforts to place within our reach "real palms for Palm Sunday."

Let any priest who takes the Pastor read the article in the April number carefully, and he will agree with me that it is full of contradictions. Let the editor himself read it over, and he will be ashamed of it. I leave it to my readers, to at least forty bishops, nearly all the archbishops and the rest of nearly a thousand churches, whom the editor of the Pastor calls "Notional," to decide whether he or I have carried off the palm.

"A NOTIONAL PRIEST."

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