

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

REV. J. J. BURKE, PHOENIX, ILL.
FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

THE MALICE OF SIN
" Young man, I say to thee, arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak." (St. Luke vii, 14, 15)

The young man whom Our Lord restored to life is a figure of one spiritually dead. By one spiritually dead is meant a person in mortal sin. Mortal sin kills the soul by depriving it of its life, which is sanctifying grace.

It is well for us frequently to consider the nature of sin and contrast the condition of him who has yielded in time of temptation with that of one who resists and gains a victory over Satan and his own wicked passions.

Our catechism tells us that sin is any wilful thought, word, deed or omission contrary to the law of God. We can never understand its real malice; for it is an offense against an infinite being, and we know that the higher the dignity of the person offended, the greater the offense. Hence, when the person offended is infinite, the offense is infinite, and the finite can never comprehend the infinite.

Though we can never fully understand the malice and nature of sin, we can have a good idea of it by considering some of the punishments God has inflicted upon sinners.

Lucifer committed only one sin of thought, and he was banished to hell for all eternity with all the rebel angels. The only difference between St. Michael in the highest court of heaven, and Lucifer, in the lowest pit of hell, is one mortal sin. Just think of it: one mortal sin unforgiven would deprive us of the sight of God for all eternity. And how many have we not committed? Oh, let us tremble and seek forgiveness with a humble and contrite heart!

Our first parents, by a single mortal sin, were the cause of all the evils, all the wars, all the pestilence with which their posterity has been afflicted.

Even for a venial sin, for lack of faith, Moses was not allowed to enter the promised land, and Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt. Again we know that our sins were the cause of the passion and death of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

From these considerations we arrive at some idea of the nature and malice of sin; and, while thinking of its malice, let us examine the condition of him who has yielded to its allurements. Pleasure is the bait held out when we are tempted to sin. But the apostle says these "wages" this bait "is death."

He means that these pleasures, this deceitful happiness, this apparent good, ceases the moment it is enjoyed. Other pleasures may follow, but they, too, are doomed to a speedy death. What, then, have we gained by yielding to temptation? Where are our wages? They are gone forever. For they were the pleasures, the wages of sin and the "wages of sin is death."

Happy would we be, did death overtake our sinful pleasures only in this life. But such is not the case. Each sin is treason against our legitimate Master, who will be our Judge. A being, a Judge, of infinite justice can not but punish treason; thus the wages of sin both here and hereafter is death. But can we not repent? Certainly, we can, if we will. Still when we remember what is implied by the word repentance; when we consider that it means sincere sorrow for the past, a sincere feeling that could the past be recalled the sinner would rather die than yield to forbidden pleasures; when we recall to mind the fact, that the habitual sinner puts off this repentance to some future time; then, we fear his repentance will be too late. For God has not promised him the future. How does he know he will be alive to-morrow? Can not God say to him as He did to the rich man as recorded in the Gospel: "Thou fool, this night shall they require thy soul of thee, and whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" What have you now for your ill-gotten riches, your sinful pleasures? An eternity of woe with not a single oasis of joy to brighten the monotony of the desert of affliction.

Turn we now to consider the condition of one who victoriously resists temptation. He refuses sinful pleasures—pleasures forbidden by God and His Church. He stands aloof from the crowd and, comparing the transitory pleasures of time with the everlasting joys of eternity, says: "No! I will not yield. I will not purchase repentance at so dear a rate. I will not exchange real for apparent happiness, the joys of eternity for the pleasures of a moment. I will not do that which some time I shall wish not to have done." But is not such a one more miserable than the sinner in this life? No, assuredly not; both in this life and the next his generous Master will reward him for his fidelity. For if there is any real happiness in this world, it surely belongs to him whose pure conscience tells him he has overcome his passions and kept the laws of his God. If such a one is happy in life, he is far happier in death. His conflicts with his enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil, are then over, and how consoling is their remembrance. He has fought the good fight, he has conquered, and he has the assured hope of an eternal crown. He awaits death without a murmur. He is death without a murmur. He is perfectly resigned to the will of God.

He has done his duty, avoided sin with its fleeting joys, and is now ready to enter into the joys of his Lord.

Let us frequently recall to mind the nature and malice of sin. Let us not forget that it is an infinite offense, since it is against God an infinite being; that mortal sin kills the soul; and, although it may afford us a moment's happiness, it will cause us to be unhappy for all eternity. These thoughts together with the thought of the enviable condition of the dying Christian who has resisted his passions will serve to keep us from sin. With them ever before our minds we will be encouraged to resist the devil and our evil inclinations. By thus conquering our spiritual enemies we shall one day hear the sweet invitation of Jesus Christ to eternal felicity; saying "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things I will place thee over many things, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

TEMPERANCE

A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

Writing of the change that has come about in the public mind with regard to the use of liquor, the "Counselor," says in the Catholic Transcript:

If we could imagine some Rip Van Winkle to wake up out of a hundred years' sleep, and the changes which he would notice among the people would be wonderful. He would find that many of the old Mother Shipton prophecies had already come to pass during his long slumber.

But it would not be the telegraph, nor the telephone, nor the automobile, nor the aeroplane which would arouse his greatest astonishment.

The change which he would be apt first to notice, I fancy, would be the change from a bibulous to a temperate nation.

We can scarcely imagine the possibility to-day of such a thing as the whisky insurrection, which defied the laws in Pennsylvania less than a century and a quarter ago, in which men were ready to risk their lives and property, rather than have a tax placed upon their grog.

Cheap whisky seemed far more important to those early and ardent Americans, than the lives, liberties and sacred honor of the people.

No side-board in the early years of the nineteenth century was without even in the homes of ministers of the Gospel, that was not loaded down with ardent spirits of various kinds.

A man who was not given to the use of strong drink was looked upon as an uncanny and unmanly person.

George Washington was one of the few men capable of appreciating the right of a man to remain temperate, if he desired.

The story is told of a young officer who called upon him at Philadelphia soon after the close of the American Revolution. He was invited to dine with the general.

Just before the meal was ended, Washington politely requested him by name to drink a glass of wine with him.

"You will have the goodness to excuse me, General," was the young man's reply, "but I have made it a rule never to touch wine."

All eyes were turned in amazement and contempt upon the young officer. He was looked upon as unsocial and uncivil.

Washington noticed the feelings of his guests and graciously took the young man's part. "Gentlemen," he said, "my friend is right. I do not wish any of my guests to partake of anything against their inclination; and I certainly would not have them violate an established principle in their intercourse with me. I honor my friend for his frankness and for adhering to his rule, for which I have no doubt he has good reasons."

If it had not been for this kindly remark of General Washington's, the young soldier would have been insulted by the other guests.

How different are our present day customs!

What brought about this great change?

No doubt, there is a higher average of culture and refinement among the people than could be found in the earlier days.

But even among the cultured and refined in the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth century, the social cup was looked upon as the correct thing. Cowper was laughed at for his "cup that cheers but not inebriates."

Burns and Moore took the glass and the lass as their chief sources of lyrical inspiration.

The poet who would attempt to please an audience with a drinking song to-day would find but little applause.

I suspect that the temperance agitators and the societies organized to promote the virtue of temperance are to be credited as the leading cause of the change.

"IT WOULD BREAK HER HEART"

How many a young man, yes, and old one too, there is, who is deterred from committing evil by this thought "It would break her heart." It may be the memory of a mother whose tender love and constant prayers for her boy have brought him solace and comfort in many a dark hour; it may be the jealous, and ever watchful guardianship of a sister who would laugh at death rather than that a brother should suffer disgrace; it

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may be the meek patience of a wife always ready to shoulder the biggest share of the load; it may be the pleading eyes of the one dear girl in all the world, whom he has chosen to accompany him "down the vale;" but of one thing we may be certain more men have been converted from evil to the path of virtue, more hardened hearts have been softened, more dead souls have been brought back to life by the sweet compelling influence of good women "than this world dreams of."

How many men there are who would shrink from taking a glass of whisky if they realized that at that moment the one they loved most on earth was crying hot bitter tears of sorrow and disappointment. But women as a rule are prone to hide their sufferings. They fold their wings over the arrow that is in their hearts and no one knows that they are bleeding till the worn out corpse is laid to rest. Will you try to think of this some times, men? Don't persuade yourselves, "O she don't care." Perhaps you never found her weeping when you came home with a half emptied flask or bottle. Perhaps she never denied you the smile, the kind word, the tender caress you looked for. But her heart was bleeding all the while; and when the lustre began to fade from her eyes, when the bloom disappeared from her cheek, when you saw in a day a few "silver threads among the gold;" you began to wonder what brought about the change. And you never thought for a moment it was all your own fault. You were drinking. That made you forget her. It gradually drew you away from her. And the distance widened with every glass you took.

Do try and think of this the next time you are tempted; "It would break her heart."—Rev. Robert MacEwen.

HOW TO UNITE

Meanwhile there are thousands of Anglicans—clergy and laity—who are living lives of truly Catholic devotion, with all the aids to a devout life which the Church supplies, but who, in spite of their affinity with modern Roman Catholicism, would be the last to desert the Church of England in her hour of need.

Individual conversions to Rome can only hinder the general conversion, and one Anglican Catholic, who means so much to us, can make very little difference to the Roman Catholic millions throughout the world. The present disunion of Christendom is impossible as a permanent state; we must believe that Protestant Christianity is but a temporary measure designed by the God of all Christians, which has served and continues to serve to stimulate Catholicism.

One more point. Is it not probable that the whole of the Anglican Church will be more easily won for Catholicism by the life-long exertions of her own members than by the exertions of those who stand outside her and feel no sympathy for her in her struggle?

I appeal to those of your readers who are really interested in the moral and spiritual welfare of England, who see in the Anglican Church a real agency of religion, though to them a misguided one, to regard her as a sister Church who, having temporarily fallen into error, is striving, with the help of God's grace, to recover, and has during the last fifty years succeeded beyond all expectations in this revival to count for nothing in their eyes? Are we still to be regarded on a par with Lutherans and Presbyterians? Is it not probable that the great revival of which possibly your readers know only too little, is but the beginning of a movement which will not stop until it has achieved its object—Reunion.

It is a glorious vision—the future when your Bishops shall work hand in hand with ours, when the two great armies join forces for the conversion of England, when England is one more Catholic country, when "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other"—and the Kingdom of God is come.

ANGELICAN

in the course of a lengthy and able comment on this letter the editor of the Times and Opinion writes:

We are sure our correspondent, whose letter is so frank and friendly, will on consideration see why it is impossible for the Catholic Church to treat the Church of England as a sister Church and why in fulfilling her mission she cannot repress the desire to make individual converts from Anglicanism. As we have said, Catholics cannot but feel sympathy with those Anglicans who are anxious for more light, but as long as the Anglican body are outside the true fold, how could the Catholic Church look upon the Church of England as a sister Church? Unity, as our correspondent knows, is a mark of the true Church. How would unity exist if people who are in doctrinal error, though on the way to the Catholic Church, were recognized as members of a sister Church? Oneness of doctrine is essential to unity, and a Church in doctrinal error cannot be considered a sister Church, a branch Church or a part of the Catholic Church. Again, our correspondent will not deny that the Church was invested with authority. Is she to renounce this authority by recognizing as a sister Church a Church which does not accept her authority? The idea is outside the pale of possibility, and therefore Catholics feel

bound to urge individual Anglicans to make their calling and election secure by accepting the authority of the Church of which Peter's successor is the head.

Catholics not only sympathize with the efforts of Anglicans in combating Protestant prejudices and attempting to undo the evil effects of the Reformation, but earnestly hope that in time to come they will be crowned with success by the conversion of England to the old faith. We welcome the change and freely acknowledge that it is extensive.

VIEW OF MANY ANGLICANS

May I be allowed to express my view of the present situation? I would not dare to do so were I not sure that I am voicing the opinion of many of my co-religionists who, like myself, are longing for a reconciliation with Rome. I believe that the full Catholic Faith is that taught by the Roman Church, but after a careful study of the history of my own Church I cannot believe that she in any way forfeited her privileges at the Reformation to the extent represented by her opponents. She took great care to maintain the hierarchy intact, and preserved at least the two Sacraments of the Gospel, though, under the influence of foreign Protestants, she did for the time being give a definitely un-Catholic interpretation to them. Still these ordinances remained, and the unworthiness of their ministers did not detract from the grace which is conveyed "ex opere operato." Thus the forms remained. It only needed a sufficient body of opinion to reintroduce the Catholic interpretation of them. That opinion is now prevalent, and the Old Faith is returning to England.

SOCIALISM AND RACE SUICIDE

In the editorial column of this week's issue of the local Socialist, The Workers World organ, there appears an article which, carefully read will go far toward disclosing the real measure of "friendship" enshrined in propaganda of thorough-going Socialism. After a long exordium on the merits of a recently enacted Wisconsin Statute of a revolutionary and inhuman character the Socialist organ asks: "Has the human race a right to wholesale unlimited multiplication? If so why? If not why not? Has not the legislature the right to say to a miner who has seven children with only three days work a week 'there are too many miners already and not enough jobs?'"

Would not a close labor union, like the potters for example, which strictly limits the number of apprentices have the right to say to its members: "You must not increase your numbers faster than our trade grows."

The sinister meaning of these questions is evident on the face of them.

The implied answer to all of them is plain although not given in express terms. It is that Socialism bases its underlying principles on the old Malthusian theory applied to the natural laws of production. It means open defiance of the laws of God, and of the Creator's command to mankind "Increase and multiply." It is a deliberate cold blooded inculcation of that modern curse of humanity race suicide. It gauges the value of human life and human souls by the same measure that is applied by the stock raiser or that agriculturist to the raising of pigs or turkeys.

Carried into effect this dreadful propaganda would mean an effort to defeat the purpose of the Almighty in the creation of the world and be a more frightful blight to humanity than all the wars and pestilences of all history.

In view of this open declaration of the real meaning of Socialism how can any human being laying claim to the name of Catholic subscribe in any way to the theory of this modern bane of religion morality and the human race.—New World.

Life is not all night and conflict; morning breaks at last.

There is a big difference between a wish and dogged resolution.

Do you think that God, Who made everything in the heavens, and Who made all the earth, does not know where to place you and what is the best for you?

Dr. Gore's "Body of Christ," and Dr. Stone's "History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist," which have by their own intrinsic merits won their way into Roman Catholic circles, are no exaggeration of the views held and expressed by many devout Anglicans on the Blessed Eucharist. One more point: The Practice of Confession is spreading rapidly, and there are few districts indeed where there is not an Anglican priest willing and anxious to hear the confession of the penitent. This is not generally known because of all Catholic practices the one most hateful to the average Protestant is Confession, so that even Anglo-Catholics do not speak of it much except to one another. This steady trend is obvious to friends and foes alike, and the latter have formed societies for the express purpose of molesting Anglican Catholics.

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PRESIDENT SUSPENDER NONE SO EASY

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Catholics not only sympathize with the efforts of Anglicans in combating Protestant prejudices and attempting to undo the evil effects of the Reformation, but earnestly hope that in time to come they will be crowned with success by the conversion of England to the old faith. We welcome the change and freely acknowledge that it is extensive.

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May I be allowed to express my view of the present situation? I would not dare to do so were I not sure that I am voicing the opinion of many of my co-religionists who, like myself, are longing for a reconciliation with Rome. I believe that the full Catholic Faith is that taught by the Roman Church, but after a careful study of the history of my own Church I cannot believe that she in any way forfeited her privileges at the Reformation to the extent represented by her opponents. She took great care to maintain the hierarchy intact, and preserved at least the two Sacraments of the Gospel, though, under the influence of foreign Protestants, she did for the time being give a definitely un-Catholic interpretation to them. Still these ordinances remained, and the unworthiness of their ministers did not detract from the grace which is conveyed "ex opere operato." Thus the forms remained. It only needed a sufficient body of opinion to reintroduce the Catholic interpretation of them. That opinion is now prevalent, and the Old Faith is returning to England.

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