

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

REV. F. P. HICKEY, O. S. B. SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF CORPUS CHRISTI

THE LOVE OF OUR LORD IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

"I have loved you with an everlasting love." (Jer. xxxi. 3.)

Celebrating this great festival of Corpus Christi, our minds naturally turn to the love of Christ, in giving us Himself in the Holy Eucharist. By His prophet He says: "I have loved you with an everlasting love."

The love of Christ in giving us Himself! All other thoughts are dwarfed by this one—the love of Christ. Even that Divine love could no further go. To awaken gratitude and piety in our hearts, let us study and examine the love that prompted this gift, rather than the gift itself.

Love, if it could, would annihilate time and space, and thus always be with the one beloved. Even the pagans knew that "the property of friendship is to live with our friend." (Aristotle.) So true is this, that God Himself, when He would prove that He loved us, could do no other thing than this. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." (John i. 14.)

Take the qualities of love; test them here, and find them supreme. The first quality of love is strength. Even human love makes man generous, brave, persevering to overcome obstacles; pure love raises up human nature, and makes it heroic. Strong and faithful it may be, but it can in time be perverted. Suspicion, reproaches, ingratitude, betrayal—these can ruin love and turn it to hatred.

Not so the strong and faithful love of Jesus Christ. He had this intention and desire of leaving us Himself in the Blessed Sacrament, ever present in His Mind, and no ingratitude could change His loving purpose. His love was strong and faithful, though the Pharisees said He had a devil, and was ambitious to be King; though repeatedly the Jews sought to stone and kill Him; though the rulers resolved to put Him to death, because He did many miracles; though He was not believed in by His own brethren; though, when He declared Himself the living Bread from heaven, many left Him, and His disciples murmured against Him; though they were planning His death the very night that He instituted this Blessed Sacrament; though one, whom He had just communicated with His own hands, went forth and betrayed Him; though another Apostle, that very night, denied Him; though all this, His love was strong and faithful.

Secondly, love is unselfish and disinterested, for real love is "wishing and doing good to another, not for our own, but for his sake." (Aristotle.) This definition needs no application. Why is our Blessed Saviour here present? For us and for our salvation. Who can doubt the disinterestedness of Jesus Christ, who beholds Him, day after day, the prisoner of love in the tabernacle? In solitude and in silence, He is waiting to listen to the complaints of the sorrowful, the petitions of the needy, to welcome back the penitent and the prodigal, or to be borne to the death bed of the sinner, who may have disowned Him, perhaps for years.

And if on His festivals, if at Corpus Christi, He is honoured with ceremonial and sacred rites, adored by earnest crowds, what is that? What is the best that the whole world can do, to the great Almighty God? Are there not legions of angels in heaven who worship Him unceasingly? Yet, such is His love, He chooses to be worshipped by us, that He may reward us for it. His greatest delight is to give us Himself in this Sacrament, yet how unselfish, for why is He delighted? Because it is our salvation.

The most winning aspect of love, however, is its modesty and self-effacement. True love knows not repeated assurances; it cannot protest. The seat of love is the heart, and not the tongue.

Now, our Blessed Lord in the Gospel scarcely ever refers to His love in leaving us Himself. We find Him saying that love brought Him on earth, for He came "to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.) He says He loves us to the end, and editor of the official Catholic organ, El Universo. He is a foremost authority on matters of pedagogy. This appointment will go a long way in cementing Spanish-American relations, which all so eagerly desire; but it has been hailed with special enthusiasm by the Catholic press, for they know well that in the hands of such a man the philosophic and higher studies in the Republic which now at last turns for light and direction to the mother country, will receive a deep Catholic and orthodox

"Do this for a commemoration of Me." (Luke xxii. 19.) How humbly, briefly said, in memory of Me!

And yet we know of all things He longed for most was to gain our love, our hearts. But He knew that if His very Presence, believe and acknowledged as it is, failed to draw men to Him, that precepts and entreaties would alike be in vain. He left, therefore, His modest, gentle, untiring love to plead for itself, to draw all men to itself.

These thoughts, on the love of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, should awaken gratitude and piety in our hearts. That is what our Lord is asking for. It is not much. He once said: "If you love those who love you, what reward shall you have? Do not the publicans and heathens this?" (Matt. v. 46.) And yet, He is only asking you to love Him, and surely He hath loved us. Yet there is a reward for us, if we will—life eternal. Yea, and it will take us life eternal to pay Him back love for love; to thank Him and bless Him, for His strong and faithful love, for His unselfish love, for that silent, humble love, which we learned to realize all too late, in the Blessed Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

TEMPERANCE

U. S. UNIFORMS AND SALOONS

An old soldier at a campfire reunion said: "I was a private in one of the Western regiments that arrived first in Washington after the call for 75,000. We were given leave to see the town. My comrade and I were just about to go into the door of a saloon, when a hand was laid upon my arm, and looking up, there was President Lincoln from his great height above, a mere lad, regarding me with those kindly eyes and a pleasant smile. I almost dropped with surprise and bashfulness, but he held out his hand, and as I took it he shook hands in strong, Western fashion and said: 'I don't like to see our uniform going into these places.' That was all he said. He turned immediately and walked away, and we passed on. We would not have gone into that tavern for all the wealth of Washington city."—Sacred Heart Review.

WISE PETE—A PROHIBITIONIST HORSE

Glenoma, Wash.—Yakima Pete, the most famous of all the pack horses which ever carried a load in eastern Lewis county or over the mountains into eastern Washington, is dead, age unknown. He fell over a cliff a few days ago and was killed. Yakima Pete was owned by Will Hopkinson. For more than twenty years he packed for tourists and Government employees over every trail in eastern Lewis county. It is said that if in the load placed upon his back was a poisonous ingredient, no matter whether that poisonous ingredient is placed directly in the solution or engendered there by fermentative processes. Beer contains about three and one half per cent. alcohol. This amount of alcohol is always poisonous to human tissue, the rapidity of destruction being measured by the quantity taken. The brewer reduces the percentage of alcohol in beer to quiet the alarm of his customer, and then increases the volume of the drink without apparent detection. The drinker then pays his money for his share of imaginary sunshine on basis of the old familiar game: Head up, the brewer wins; up tail, the drinker loses.

BEWARE OF SNAKES

Beer is the diamond rattler of the liquor snake family. Some think it is innocent, while in fact it is more vicious than the rest. This is one reason why it bites so many. There comes no such thing as a harmless solution of a poisonous ingredient, no matter whether that poisonous ingredient is placed directly in the solution or engendered there by fermentative processes. Beer contains about three and one half per cent. alcohol. This amount of alcohol is always poisonous to human tissue, the rapidity of destruction being measured by the quantity taken. The brewer reduces the percentage of alcohol in beer to quiet the alarm of his customer, and then increases the volume of the drink without apparent detection. The drinker then pays his money for his share of imaginary sunshine on basis of the old familiar game: Head up, the brewer wins; up tail, the drinker loses.

The opinions of the medical profession on the liquor traffic ten years or more ago are practically worthless, because those opinions were based on popular beliefs since known to be false. Our opinions now are based on unanswerable scientific demonstrations.—Dr. R. E. Minahan, Green Bay, Wis.

A CATHOLIC DEAN IN A BOLIVIAN UNIVERSITY

The Ceylon Catholic Messenger mentions the appointment of one of the leading Catholic journalists and social workers of Madrid, Senor Don Rufino Blanco, for the important position of Dean of Philosophy and Letters at the Bolivian National University of La Paz. The Bolivian Government had petitioned the Spanish Minister to send them a man who should organize the entire course of philosophic studies in their great university. Senor Blanco was a professor at the Madrid Normal School and editor of the official Catholic organ, El Universo. He is a foremost authority on matters of pedagogy.

This appointment will go a long way in cementing Spanish-American relations, which all so eagerly desire; but it has been hailed with special enthusiasm by the Catholic press, for they know well that in the hands of such a man the philosophic and higher studies in the Republic which now at last turns for light and direction to the mother country, will receive a deep Catholic and orthodox

impress, which must strongly tend to the progress of religion and order in Bolivia.

It is needless to say that the Spanish Minister who has made the appointment was not swayed by any "clerical" prepossessions.—American.

THE ORIGINAL "FATHER O'FLYNN"

The original of the famous song was a Father Welsh, a parish priest in Kerry, who was on excellent terms with Mr. Graves, the Protestant Bishop of Limerick, the father of the poet (Alfred Perceval Graves). A recent description of the original appears in "Omnianna," by J. F. Fuller:

"Father Welsh celebrated early Mass on alternate Sundays at Sweeney and Tabilla; he spoke Irish fluently which was necessary in a parish where not a few peasants in those days spoke no English; and at Petty Sessions he frequently sat on the bench to exhort in the native tongue litigants who sometimes were not averse to giving a 'twist' to their evidence. Generally, too, he had mastered both sides of the case before it came to be tried. He was a large-bodied as well as a large-hearted man, and the physical exercise which his sporting pursuits involved was necessary."—Catholic News.

SOLDIER PRIESTS OF FRANCE

WIN ALL BY THEIR SACRIFICES

The outstanding feature of the War in Europe, although one not likely to become an eventuality here in this country, has been the heroic service in all lines of activity rendered by the priests of France. Thirty thousand of them have enlisted since the War began, and they are now filling every position to which they are physically fit. Their love of the country that bore them has been shown most especially by the manner in which they were able to overcome their finer feelings and shoulder arms in the trenches. If the infidel leaders of the country had an ulterior aim in forcing them to do military duty, the heroic response of the priests has surely resulted in their being hoist with their own petard. The people now regard their priests with even more respect and love than they had for them before the War.

The warrior prelate of the Middle Ages is a far-off figure associated with romance, but these soldier-priests of today are a reality which has astonished the world with a soldierly bravery as incontestable as their priestly piety. That one dedicated to the ministry of the Prince of Peace should show himself as brave as the bravest of soldiers has naturally struck the imagination as a new type of hero, the tale of whose deeds never fails. As the Journal de Geneve months ago remarked: "The nation's annals will consecrate and immortalize this type. What regiments the Church of France has given to the armies of the republic, and what men! A wounded man told me yesterday, 'For sheer courage there is nothing like these curés. One would say they had the devil in their bodies.'" Had the writer added God in the heart, the explanation would have been complete for their attitude in this long stand face to face with death.

That they are working and fighting for France, for the salvation of her people—that is the thought that inspires them to such deeds as are being officially recorded day by day. No hardship is too great, no danger too awful where France or the souls of their comrades are concerned. In the words of Cardinal Luçon, Archbishop of Rheims, their parish is now the regiment, the trench, and the hospital; if they fall there, their comrades fall there too.

MOUNTAINS OF GLORY

To illustrate this by examples becomes easier than ever for day after day the clergy of France are rolling up a mountain of glory which cannot be hid. What could be more wholehearted than the persistence with which the young Jesuit, Pere de Girondo, who left the college for the colors on the day of his ordination, insisted time after time on being sent back to the firing line? His reason was "the example that a priest could give." He fell gloriously at Ypres whilst assisting a wounded comrade.

A similar spirit was shown to Brother Ambroise Soude, a Dominican, who, in a letter written a few days before he was killed, said: "Our soul will perhaps be the only one in the world to know the gully where we fell. But what matter, if our soul of taking with it before God the pure ideal of France, obtains pardon for her sons?" Or, take again such words as these, written by the Abbe Gaston Millon, captain in the Ninetieth Infantry Regiment, in the midst of the racking struggle on Mort-Homme in Holy Week, 1916: "Wednesday: I thought on these words of Joffre: 'Our victory will be the fruit of individual sacrifices.' Sacrifice is the great law of which Jesus has given us the example. . . . Sacrifice even unto death. Maundy Thursday: . . . If, O my God, Thou wouldst have my blood, I offer it in union with the blood of my Saviour. Holy Saturday: Jesus dead in the tomb, and I too in my tomblike shelter, with death threatening at any moment. A shell has just fallen a few yards away; the lamp is extinguished and a soldier killed. God, receive my soul. Death is ever

nigh and ever possible. My soul is ready to welcome it, and it will be my deliverance. . . . If I come out of this War, how will I devote myself to the ministry of souls.

But here too I am still a priest; and so I ought to give an example of courage. . . . What a week! Maundy Thursday, the day of the priesthood; Good Friday, the day of sacrifice; Holy Saturday, the day of recollection in face of death. And then Easter Sunday, a glorious resurrection."

A short time after writing these last words Captain the Abbe Millon left his shelter on duty; a shell caught him, and Easter was for him the glorious resurrection of which he had written. Christ's sufferings and death were undergone for the salvation of men, and like their great High Priest, the priests of France are offering their lives for their country and their race.

SEMINARISTS AND NOVICES

There is also abundant evidence to show that the same spirit animated the seminarists and novices. Read for example, this document of the battlefield, blurred with his ebbing blood and found in his dead hand, which Marie Lucian Gaillard, a student of the Grand Seminaire de Chavagny-en-Pailleur, wrote while lying mortally wounded in solitary agony, on the field in the first September of the War: "My darlings all, when you get this letter your Dodou will be in Heaven, or else will have been taken from the field by some charitable Germans. Yesterday morning whilst you were at Mass—a kind attention on the part of Providence—I was struck in the thigh by a bullet. I fell, and remain where I fell, for, by an unworthy resemblance to my Saviour, I am truly nailed to my cross, being unable to move an inch. As long as I keep still my wound causes me scarcely any trouble, but I am suffering dreadfully from thirst. My spirits are good, and I have no anxiety. With my crucifix before me I pray and wait for the merciful will of God. You know that before leaving I made the sacrifice of my life, and since yesterday morning I have renewed that offering several times. I do not fear death: I have seen it, and see it now, too near for that. There is nothing terrible in it, for it brings happiness. And do you, I implore you, let your sorrow be silent, resigned, and almost joyous. My one trouble is leaving you but I know that I shall soon see you again."

While giving such a splendid example in their own persons, the priests with the armies are probably also the loudest and most generous in their praise of the deeds and deaths of their comrades. "Their death has been worth supreme sanctity for them," writes a chaplain: "a collection of their letters is a veritable dossier of canonization." And another writes: "I have witnessed splendid acts of preparation for death and deliberate sacrifices made in advance. I treasure in my heart secrets which will brighten my whole priestly life. If I shall fall, I shall bless God for having given me an example so comforting a vision."—The Tablet.

THE CROSS OF HONOR

HOW A GIRL BOOKKEEPER WON IT

The most signal honor France can bestow has been conferred upon little Marcelle Semmer for her heroism in the retreat to the Marne. She won the Cross of the Legion of Honor, and since that time her gallantry has been such that she has been acclaimed in the great hall of the Sorbonne at Paris. It is here that France gave honors to the great men of the world, poets, philosophers and scientists in time of peace, and, as we read the account of Mile. Semmer's deeds as set forth in the New York Times, it must be agreed that she was worthy of the honor.

The orator of the occasion, Mr. Klotz from the Department of the Somme, began his address by an eulogy of the obscure and unnumbered heroines of the War, the mothers who sent their sons to the front, the women in the occupied districts who never lost faith in the ultimate return of the French. Then he recounted the service which Marcelle Semmer, only twenty-one, had performed:

"The outbreak of the War found her an orphan girl in the little village of Eclusier, near Frise, or the Somme. There she was a bookkeeper and superintendent of a phosphatic factory founded by her father, an Alsatian who had fled from Alsace in 1871, not wishing to become a German subject. After the defeat of the Allies at Charleroi the French tried to make a stand along the Somme, but being outnumbered by the huge forces of the invaders, they fell back across a canal in the vicinity of Marcelle Semmer's home, with the enemy in hot pursuit. When the retreating Frenchmen had got across the canal the young girl had the presence of mind to raise the drawbridge over the canal. Then, fearing that the German advance-guard, now close behind, might swim across the canal and seize from her the key, without which the drawbridge could not be lowered again, she threw it into the canal. She was in the nick of time. Already German soldiers on the other bank were firing across at her and the fleeing Frenchmen.

By this audacious act Marcelle Semmer held up the advance of an entire German army corps until the following morning. Not until then were they able to collect some boats, make a pontoon bridge and negotiate

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the passage of the canal, thus giving away golden hours to the hard-pressed French troops.

In spite of all the risks, the young girl insisted on remaining in her village during the German occupation. In a subterranean passage used in the working of a phosphate mine near Eclusier the brave Marcelle managed to conceal no less than sixteen French soldiers who had strayed from their commands in the precipitate retreat from Charleroi and Mons. She not only kept these men hidden, but fed them, provided them with civilian garments, and, when a propitious moment arrived, aided them to escape into the French lines.

While she was helping a seventeenth she was caught by a detachment of Germans, who dragged her and the French soldier before the local commander. When asked whether she had indeed meant to help the soldier to escape she cried out:

"Yes! And he is not the first. I helped sixteen others, and I got them where you can not catch them. Do what you will with me now. I am an orphan and have but one mother—France! I am not afraid to die."

She was sentenced to be shot. They took her from the court room and placed her before the firing squad, but while the girl had been helping seventeen soldiers to escape the Battle of the Marne had been fought and won, and the French were now rapidly advancing. At the moment when her death seemed only a moment away the French artillery opened fire on the town and the German positions around Eclusier. The cannonade was so sudden that the firing squad was disbanded, and in the confusion Marcelle was able to escape to her subterranean gallery.

Shortly after the French reoccupied Eclusier. The Times goes on to say: Between the lines of the opposing armies lay the Somme, which in the vicinity of Eclusier and Frise spreads out into a sort of big pond with marshy banks. When the water rose it often flooded the lines so that soldiers frequently lost their way, and here it was that Marcelle again found a means of aiding France. Being thoroughly acquainted with the neighborhood, she used to pilot parties of soldiers. This brought her again close to death. While leading a squad of men who wanted to dig an advanced trench in the village of Frise she fell into the hands of a party of Germans.

They locked her up in the little village church of Frise, reduced last summer to a heap of ruins during the Battle of the Somme. On the morning, she felt sure, they would shoot her.

But once more luck and the French artillery were her salvation. The French across the Somme began a lively bombardment of Frise. One shell blew a large hole in the church wall. Through this hole, unperceived by her captors, Marcelle crawled. Creeping past the Germans scattered through Frise, she soon tumbled, safe and sound, into the nearest French trench.

By this time her fame had spread and rewards began to shower upon her. She got the Cross of the Legion of Honor, and sometime later the War Cross. In spite of all she had gone through she persisted in staying in the Somme country and continued to work for the cause of France. For fifteen months she remained, despite shot and shell, in her little Somme village, taking care of wounded soldiers. Also among her charges was a woman of ninety, too feeble to travel to a safer place. Marcelle looked out for her night and day with unflinching devotion.

Everywhere soldiers knew and admired her. One English general ordered his soldiers to salute when she passed and refrain from addressing her unless she spoke first.

At last, however, the strain of bombardment and work, aided by her grief at the death of her soldier-brother and brother-in-law, proved too much for her strength, and she was persuaded to go to Paris. Yet she had no intention of stopping her efforts. She petitioned the authorities to allow her to enter a nurses' school in order that she might continue to aid the wounded. She added that it was necessary for her to work, as everything she possessed had been lost in the War. Her request was granted. The Times concludes:

All this Mr. Klotz told his audience at the Sorbonne. Then suddenly he stretched out his hand in dramatic gesture and electrified his auditors with these words:

"This little heroine of Picardy, this admirable girl, this incarnation of the qualities of the woman of France, this girl of simple origin, flawless dignity, of serious mind and gentle ways, this girl of indomitable will-power, is here, ladies and gentlemen, here among you, in this room! And I feel that I am the spokesman for every one of you when I now extend to her the expression of our respect, our gratitude, our admiration!"

The auditors, every man, woman and child of them, leaped to their feet, mad with enthusiasm. They craned their necks to catch a glimpse of the heroine. Unable to escape them, the young girl stood up, blushing. Through the great hall of the Sorbonne, where the most famous people of the world had been honored by France, swept a storm of cheers. A reward more splendid than the Cross of the Legion of Honor, than the War Cross, than the salutes of soldiers at the front, had come to Marcelle Semmer.—New World.

STUDY HISTORY

Those narrow-minded individuals, says the Catholic News, who are forever making war on the Catholic Church and calling it a foreign institution are not, of course, familiar enough with history to know that the Catholic Church was in America officially before Protestantism was started by Luther in 1517. There were twelve priests with Christopher Columbus on his second voyage in 1501. The diocese of San Domingo was erected in 1512. In 1502 a priest emigrated with Cabot from England to administer to English settlers. French priests came with Cartier in 1534.

SERVING GOD CHEERFULLY

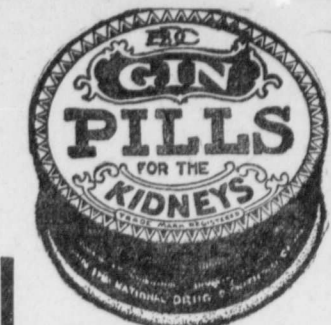
There are ten thousand reasons why the service of God should be delightful and satisfactory. As a rule, the man who is carrying on a profitable and successful business is, so long as everything goes well, tolerably happy. You don't see him going about with a long face, and although he may grumble a little, as most men do, you can see that he does not mean it. Now, if this is the case in the midst of the uncertainties which are inseparable from all human transactions, what ought to be the satisfaction and contentment of a man who has seriously taken in hand the one necessary business? For how does the case stand with such a man? The man who has seriously taken in hand the business of saving his own soul must succeed—for him there is no such thing as failure.

So long as he is willing he must be prosperous. And why? Because he has Almighty God as a Partner. And God is ready to give him what we hope it is not irrelevant to call unlimited credit. In this life He pours into his soul His heavenly grace, and this grace gives to all his actions a value which gives him a right to an eternal recompense. No action from morning to night, from week's end to week's end, but may be made profitable and fruitful, if done with a right intention, and, of course, if there is nothing sinful in it. This is the position in which any and every man may be placed and may remain if he so wills.

WHY ONE BOY BECAME A CATHOLIC

"Some thirty years ago," writes the late Father Matthew Russel, S. J., in his beautiful book, "Behold Your Mother," a poor lad who had entered the Limerick workhouse as a Protestant made formal application to have his creed register changed. He was brought before the Board of Governors, many of them influential Protestants, and questioned as to his motives for changing his religion. "Why do you want to be a Catholic?" he was asked.

"I have preserved through all these years a scrap of the Limerick Reporter in which the boy's answer was given in precisely these words and no more: 'Because Jesus was the son of the Virgin Mary.' The answer was rather curt and abrupt, but really it contained a full and sufficient reason for the faith that was in him." Because Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, and because the Catholic Church, alone, honors Mary as the Mother of Jesus, this little orphan boy was drawn towards it.—The Monitor.



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