

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. WILLIAM DEMOUY, D. D.

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY

THE PRACTICE OF CHARITY

"Blessed are they who speak with the tongue of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." (1 Cor. xiii. 1)

The opportunities for performing acts of charity today, as in St. Paul's time, are unlimited; and therefore the occasions for practising the virtue of charity are numberless. This virtue—we take it here in its comprehensive sense—means love, and what follows from true and pure love. It means the giving of help where it is needed for body or soul; it means also abstention from any word or deed injurious to man in his person, right, or character. When we consider the multitude of ways in which the virtue of charity may be practised, we also should realize from existing conditions, that there are a vast number of opportunities for its practical application. It is lamentable to hear people sometimes protesting that they know not where to direct their charity. Not a day dawns but the crying need of some individual—nay of hundreds—is ringing in our ears. Few of us need go in search of the needy. They are at our doors; they are filling our ears with their supplications; they should be touching our hearts also by the occasion they give us, to say no more, of exercising the great virtue of charity, under the head of help to the needy.

Nor is it only by supplying real and personal needs that our charity can be daily practised. There are special opportunities of bringing it into action, to protect and defend the character of our neighbors. The human tongue wields a great influence in this world. It will be doubted whether the written word, so extensively spread in modern times, surpasses it in molding the opinions of people. What comes from the lips so often seems to produce impressions that are unceasingly reproduced. The natural result of this is that, if a favorable report is spread about a certain person, his reputation is certain to be enhanced; while, on the other hand, if the report is to his disfavor, he is likely to be ruined. When our character is attacked, the number of our defenders is small indeed, whereas our enemies seem to be indefinitely multiplied. Men are more ready to help with their physical strength than with the power of their tongue. As a rule, man is more willing to risk his life to save a fellow being from some physical danger than he is to use a few kind words to protect his character. He will in a flash recognize danger to the body and almost instinctively will exert his utmost strength to rescue the exposed one, while he will remain unconcerned, to say the least, when a person's good name is being destroyed before him.

The more misery and suffering is primarily caused by words than by deeds seems to be a truth that cannot be denied. It would be difficult to conceive anything that could ultimately produce more energy than that which words have been the means of putting into action. Of course, we can not and do not deny that words have done a vast amount of good and will continue to do so; but we are now speaking of their exaggeration and abuse. The one real antidote to the evil they produce is charity. In the case of many, the practice of this virtue has been the dawn of a new day, when it seemed the light would never return. It has been the means of many a beautiful flower, heavy and drooping from the atmosphere of calumny and gossip, brightening up and resuming its primal beauty. The sting of the serpent is soothed by its balm and the ghastly ghost of ruin expelled where all else fails. Upon it is built the beauty of the heavens and whatever good is found upon earth. Upon its wings alone can man fly to God and rest in the peace of heaven.

No day should be allowed to pass on which charity is not practised in some way and in some degree. It is the principal stepping-stone before us to perfection. In fact, it is the foundation for all else that helps us to arrive at the end for which we were created. Since it is so frequently disregarded, we are doing a twofold work in practising it—a work of duty and a work of reparation. By it we build, and by it we rebuild what others have torn down. It alone bridges the gulf separating God, in all His infinite perfection, from us in our lamentable lowliness. But once it has spanned this abyss, we stand united to God by the closest of ties. We are His friends, His children, the heirs to a share in His eternal kingdom. The path which ordinarily is difficult to follow is, by charity, made a straight road from which we never can deviate so long as we hold it as our guide. The beauty of the lives of the saints, on which we love to think and to admire, was begun and consummated in charity. Nay, the glory that has come to any soul both in life and after death, is but the crown of charity. It reaches from earth to heaven, and returns laden with the sweetness of God's love to pour it upon those whom it adorns.

It is to be regretted that our young people are not more fervent in the practice of this virtue. It is left, to a great extent, to the elders. The young are selfish today because

the world is selfish. Whatever the spirit of the times demands, these worshippers of the material gladly grant. For the sake of appearance, to bewitch, to charm, to impress, the youth of the present are spending their all, saving nothing for charity. Their parents no doubt are doing their share, but why should not the young be taught that charity is also required of them? Parents should remember that a child growing up with no inclination to the practice of this virtue is preparing itself for a future where selfishness is the reigning god. The beauty of charity should be seen emanating from every Christian, young and old, for each is the temple of the Holy Ghost and the tabernacle of the Lord, He who is Charity itself.

GENERAL INTENTION FOR MARCH

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS POPE PIUS XI.

THE CONSECRATION OF FAMILIES TO THE SACRED HEART

A short while ago our Director General was received in audience by the Sovereign Pontiff Pius XI. His Holiness was kind enough to tell him that from early childhood he had been familiar with the Apostleship of Prayer, that he followed with pleasure the marvelous headway the League was achieving in the world, and that he was especially interested in the effort it was making for the consecration of families to the Sacred Heart. In the choice of the General Intentions for the present year, a choice which the Holy Father reserves to himself, he requested that the present month of March be devoted to this intention.

No further invitation is needed to urge our zealous Directors and Promoters to take up a work so close to the heart of the common Father of the faithful. With his blessing, then, we should do well to ponder over that passage of the writings of Saint Margaret Mary in which she tells us that "the Sacred Heart promised that all who are devoted and consecrated to Him shall never perish, that He, as a source of all blessings, will abundantly bless all places where an image of His Heart is set up and honored, that He will bring together disunited families and will protect and assist all those in want and who will turn to Him in confidence, that He will extend the balm of His charity over all communities who honor Him and place their confidence in His protection."

Millions of the faithful children of the Church have in past decades pondered over these consoling promises made to the favored apostle of the Sacred Heart. Confident that our Lord would be faithful in keeping them, and that through them He would gently draw all souls to Himself, they began by consecrating their own families. The wisdom of this move is still in evidence; for the family, although made up of individuals, is the unit of human society, a body whose temporal and spiritual welfare depends on the sound constitution of its units. Leo XIII. reminded us that "it is in the intimacy of the family that the destiny of nations is prepared." The deeper Christian virtue takes root in the bosoms of families, the greater will be the common good and the more will mankind feel its salutary influence. Let virtue and piety be fostered around Catholic firesides, and human society will be given its true direction. Keep the family, therefore, under the shield of the Sacred Heart and every generation will add numberless souls to the population of heaven.

Based on these simple principles, the crusade for the consecration of families to the Sacred Heart has made rapid strides in the world, so rapid in fact that it has extended in some quarters beyond the family circle and has become an affair of national importance. It was precisely towards the consecration of nations, and eventually of the whole human race, that the first efforts of the Apostleship of Prayer extended. Sixty years ago the Social Reign of the Sacred Heart was proposed as the ideal for human society, and the doctrine was preached that Christ is the Universal King who wishes to reign over us not by force or by fear but by love.

In 1870 the League succeeded in obtaining from the Catholic episcopate a petition praying Pius IX., of venerated memory, to consecrate the world to the Sacred Heart. Over five hundred Bishops signed the document which received a generous welcome in Rome. In 1875 the task of getting in touch with the rest of the world was confided to our Director General, who sent a letter to all the Bishops, in which the plan of consecration was outlined and a method given which should bring things to a practical issue. In union with the Vicar of Christ, heads of families were invited to consecrate their homes, pastors their parishes, superiors their communities, Bishops their Dioceses. A few years later, in 1882, another appeal was sent out, this time aiming at families themselves and urging the formal and solemn consecration of individual homes. Again the response was widespread and general: hundreds of thousands of families in Europe and in America consecrated themselves to the Sacred Heart.

But the world is wide and the movement was only getting under way. In 1889 another appeal was launched, for the same purpose. Heads of families were informed that the ceremony of consecration could be held either in the intimacy of the home or in the church, and in order that the act should be efficacious and lasting in its effects, families were invited, first, to renew their act of consecration every first Friday of the month; secondly, to set up and venerate a picture in their homes which would also remind them of the obligations undertaken; and thirdly, to become more assiduous in the practices of the League. This appeal was heeded by millions, the proof of which may still be seen in the golden albums of names which are preserved at Montmartre and at Paray-le-Monial.

In still more recent years the consecration of families has been given a renewal of life, partly owing to the anguish and sorrow produced by the War, partly owing to the zeal of Benedict XV., who laid special stress on this act of piety, and partly to the eloquent apostles who have been preaching the sanctification of families through consecration to the Sacred Heart. The crusade is still on, and it is the desire of the present Holy Father that it be vigorously carried to a successful issue. The details of the ceremony have already been published in the Messenger. If these details have been forgotten explanatory literature may be procured by writing to this office. Here is an opportunity for our members to show their initiative and zeal. If they succeed in bringing their own families and others in their care under theegis of the Sacred Heart, a vast step will have been made towards inaugurating the social reign of Christ over individuals as well as over society.

E. J. DEVINE, S. J.

THE LEAVES OF YESTER-YEAR

America has been very kind to M. Coue, the druggist of Nancy, who startled the world with his method of curing through auto-suggestion. So he has returned to these shores after a year's absence to begin another tour of the country. It will be interesting to watch M. Coue's second attempt to spread his amiable idea of auto suggestion.

In attempting to repeat his former success M. Coue is tempting fate. Last year he was a novelty, and the American people received him with open arms, for they dearly love a new sensation. Now it is different. He is no longer a curiosity. His formula about "every day in every way" has been worn thread-bare by sincere clients, and the inevitable jokesmiths.

His little bag of tricks has been exhibited, imitated and exposed. Little free advertising which was responsible for so much of his popularity will be given him this time, for like the leaves of yester-year, he has been almost forgotten.

Unless he can devise some new and novel method of attracting attention, his present tour seems doomed to be disappointing. The public has had time to try his method, and they have found that it is not the panacea they fondly hoped. Like other forms of suggestion its successes were so outnumbered by its failures that it has not achieved a lasting popularity. Perhaps, this is because the public were led to expect too much from it.

There is this much to be said in favor of M. Coue, he makes no claim to supernatural or supernatural powers. "I do not work miracles," he said on his arrival in New York the other day, "I am neither a god nor a saint. I am only a man. I do not really heal. I only teach people to heal themselves."

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It is my method that counts." Those who are interested enough to desire more information in regard to M. Coue and his fellow-healers, will find it admirably set forth in Dr. Walsh's book on "cures," and they will find there too the reason why neither M. Coue or any other healer can lay claim to

miraculous powers, which really exist today at Lourdes and other shrines.—The Pilot.

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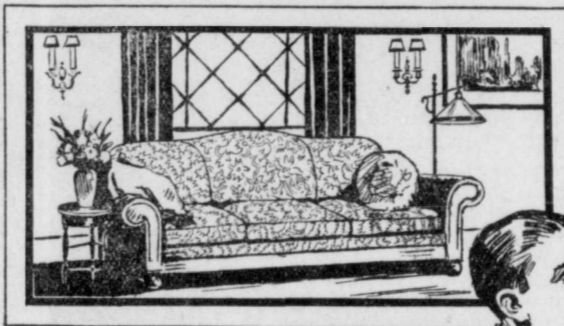
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"YOU know, Dick, you'd never admit there was anything worth-while in these spare-time homework plans. But I knew you were wrong and now I'm going to prove it. You're one of those matter-of-fact, practical business men—a little stubborn at times—who thinks a woman has no head for business. I was willing to give up my position when we were married, for I knew it would hurt your pride to see me going to work; but I didn't agree to merely spend my spare hours at home twirling my thumbs and looking pretty. And when I saw you worrying—fretting—figuring—trying to make your salary buy the things we need and want, I made up my mind I'd find a way to help you."

"One night last June when you were working late at the office, Mary Smith ran in for a little chat. You know how hard up Mary and John have been since they were married—and how pitifully dowdy Mary was beginning to look in that same dress and hat. Well, when she stepped into the room I could hardly believe my eyes. She had on a stunning tailored suit, an adorable fall hat, brown satin slippers and one of the prettiest furs I have ever seen. I guess she noticed my first look of surprise, for she laughed and said, 'I see you don't know me.' Then she told me her story."

"It seems that John's salary wasn't quite enough to meet their regular household expenses, much less buy clothes or furniture and the many things they needed. They were slowly getting into debt, the rent had been raised, and things were going from bad to worse. John was desperate and Mary was pretty well discouraged, too. She wanted to take a position for a while, but John wouldn't hear of it."

"One day, more out of curiosity than anything else, Mary answered an advertisement of The Auto Knitter Hosiery

(Canada) Company of Toronto—large distributors of pure wool socks and knitted hosiery. The advertisement announced a new plan whereby women at home could knit socks with the aid of an ingenious little machine called the Auto Knitter. And the company offered to buy back all the standard grade socks made on this machine, at a guaranteed weekly wage."

"Mary sent for the free book and was so convinced by the letters from thousands of other women, telling what this plan had meant to them, that she decided to give it a trial. She ordered the little machine and a supply of pure wool yarn and set to work. Every day she devoted a few spare hours to the pleasant, interesting work—without interfering with regular household duties in any way. Each week she shipped a package of fine, durable, well-shaped socks to Toronto, and back came the welcome pay cheque. Before she realized it she had \$200 in the bank; and with every package of socks shipped off to Toronto her balance grew and grew."

"That's how she was able to buy those beautiful clothes. And, besides, she now has an electric washing machine, a dandy vacuum cleaner and many other things they had never been able to afford."

"When Mary had gone, I did some quick thinking. What Mary had done, I could do, I reasoned. And I made up my mind to start without delay. I, too, sent for the free book. It told how, through the remarkable new plan, hundreds of women everywhere were turning into money the spare hours and half hours that might otherwise be wasted. I got the little machine and started out to help solve our problem of 'not quite enough money.' Each day, after my work was done, I turned out pair after pair of fine wool socks; and when it was time to get dinner I hid the machine

away in my dresser drawer and put the socks and wool high up on the closet shelf. I made up my mind not to tell you what I was doing, for I was afraid you'd laugh and ridicule my scheme. So I just kept on making socks, and with every package that went off to Toronto another entry appeared in my bank book."

"That's my little secret, Dick. And from now on it will be our secret. For I'm going to keep right on knitting my spare hours into extra dollars until you get the promised salary you deserve. But the best of it all is that we will no longer have to worry over nasty money problems. And we can now afford the things we need, for at last I've found a way to turn my spare time into extra dollars."

"If every woman only knew what I know about this wonderful Auto Knitter Homework Plan they wouldn't hesitate another day. For all you have to do is send off the coupon, get the free book, read the facts and judge for yourself. There is no obligation to buy anything or do anything—just a splendid big opportunity to turn wasted hours into extra money. The coupon will prove it." The Auto Knitter Hosiery (Canada) Co., Ltd., Dept. 43, 1870 Davenport Road, West Toronto, Ont.

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