FIVE MINUTE SERMON

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY

HOME LIFE

"And he went down with them and came to Nazareth: and was subject to them." Gospel of the day (St. Luke ii. 51.)

The Gospel of to-day brings before us the home life of the Holy Family at Nazareth. The home of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph was a very poor but a very peaceful home. And from it we may learn how to regulate our homes, and make them the abodes of virtue and peace.

The only real comfort to be hand in this world is to be sought in that sanctuary of domestic life which we call home, and the happiness of every true home, be it a palace or a hovel, is essentially the same. The most sacred memories of the heart are entwined around the old home. All the joys of childhood, all the deep affections of mature years, all the quiet peace of old age, are associated with it. There is no life so bleak as that which has no home recollections to rest upon.

Now, the home life at Nazareth answered to all the conditions that constitute the true home. There was perfect love and harmony, there was perfect peace and trust, and, although the roof was lowly, and the labor incessant, and the means pinched, there was sweet contentment and repose. Poor as it was, the little vine-clad cottage at Nazareth was the only spot on earth in which Jesus and Mary could take comfort. Every other place and prospect had the shadow of a great sorrow hanging over it. No doubt Nazareth had its shadow too, but it was distant, and peace reigned there for years unbroken.

And if our Blessed Saviour Himself, who came into the world to suffer, found some comfort in His earthly home, surely we may look for it also. Love is the first condition of domestic happiness; there must be mutual love and trust between the inmates of every home worthy of the name. And this love must manifest itself in kindly, cheerful and unselfish devotion to the common interests and comforts. When love is lost, and ill-temper and ill-will take the place of cheerfulness and the will to serve, when there is bickering and barking and quarreling, there is no longer a Christian home, but only a den of snarling animals, without the common instinct of mutual harmony. And where there is drunkenness, and blows, and blasphemy, there is a den of demons who pollute the domestic sanctuary with the breath of hell itself, and make a hideous mockery of its happiness and peace.

It is amazing how some people will poison the sweetest waters of life by continually giving way to their mean, nasty tempers, and sacrifice the purest joys of existence rather than practise a little self-control. And nothing short of the direct influence of the evil one can account for the fact that so many infatuated creatures will utterly blight their homes and make their lives accursed for the pitiful consolations of the beer-jug and the demijohn.

Ill-temper and dissipation are the the great enemies of domestic happiness, but they are not the only ones. slovenly house-keeping, want of order and cleanliness rob the home of some of its best comforts. The poorest home may be made to assume an air of cheerfulness and comfort by keeping it neat and clean. And I have no hesitation in saying that a large part of the misery we meet with in the homes of the poor comes from dirt. You will often find in the same tenement-houses, and even on the same floors, apartments that present an immeasurably different appearance. Some will be bright, clean, and cosy; others squalid and filthy, the very picture of misery and despair. It may be some exaggeration to say that "Cleanliness is next to godliness," but certainly it is not far removed from it. For where you find order and neatness in a home you are sure to find some elevation of mind; but when you see homes that are kept like pig-pens you look for nothing except ignorance or vice. Women who keep their houses in a perpetual state of disorder and dirt are enough to drive their husbands to the saloons to become drunkards, and their children to the streets to become profligates. What comfort can a man take in his home when it is always in filth and confusion? What inducement can children find to remain in-doors when their home is squalid and cheerless?

When will the people come to understand that the poorest home may be made bright and cheerful, and the abode of love and peace? When will the men and women of this generation awaken to the fact that the real comfort and happiness of life must be sought at home and must be their own creation?

ONLY VENEER OF CHRISTIANITY

"Our present lax code of morals would make the ancient pagan draw himself up with scorn if he were to see them as they are to-day," said Prof. Ignatius W. Cox, S. J., of Boston college, in a lecture before the Holy Name Society in the church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Bechmont.

"We must understand our age," he said, "and realize that the world is no longer Christian—it is pagan. Outside the Catholic Church you will find only the thinest veneer of Christianity. Modern biblical criticism has sapped the very foundation of Protestantism and the new theology has completed the wreck. The old truths have crumbled away in the hands of Protestants, and they are left with no foundation for their religion. They have builded on the shifting sands, and the next great storm will sweep them completely away.

"When was there a time when there was so many incentives to vice, coming as they do from the cheap 5 cent theaters, the immoral stage and a dissolute method of conveying so-called daily news? What, too, is a planer demonstration of our paganism than the present condition of divorce?

"It is the professors of our great universities who are defending, disseminating and popularizing these new doctrines on marriage. Prof. Giddings of Columbia University said: 'It is not right to set up a technical legal relationship as morally superior to the spontaneous preference of man and woman.' This, translated, is a plea for free love.

"Prof. Charles Zueblin has said: 'There can be and there are holier alliances without the marriage bond than with it.' And recently, before the woman students of Vassar, he made a plea for free love that would bring the blush of shame to the faces of the most pagan in the community."

TEMPERANCE

CATHOLIC COLLEGE MEN AND TEMPERANCE

When the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of Pittsburgh held recently its regular monthly meeting at Duquesne University, the relation of the college to the temperance question was touched by the Very Rev. Father Hehir, C. S. Sp., when in an address of welcome to the delegates he said:

"Your work in uplifting mankind is grand and noble, but difficult, and although our faculty have not been able to take as prominent a part in this work as we wish, still we are in sympathy with you and have done some total abstinence work at our university. Our faculty try to impress on our students the importance of total abstinence to be successful business men and good Catholics. The president of the university delivers sermons on total abstinence to our students, and when they graduate they are asked to take the total abstinence pledge for a number of years. We also encourage them to join your societies and remain members of this grand union after they leave here. This work has created a healthy spirit among the students. They are allowed the liberty of the city, and yet the president of this university has not had one case of drunkenness to deal with in the last ten or twelve years. We train our young men to use and not abuse their lives and to do this they must keep away from drink."

Father Beane, President of the Union, in behalf of the Union, thanked Father Hehir for his kind welcome and his address, stating that the words of the President of the University showing the stand taken by it on total abstinence should and would make an impression on the future work of the Union.

LEGISLATIVE WORK AGAINST THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC

Opponents of the liquor traffic won their fight in the Massachusetts legislature, to separate the sale of liquor over the bar and the sale of liquor in the bottle, when the so-called "bar and bottle" law was put upon the statute books. Last year an attempt to repeal this law was successfully defeated. Now the anti-liquor interests believe the time has arrived to take the next steps in their general campaign to reduce the consumption of liquor; they want the hour at which the sale of liquor may begin in the morning changed from the present hour 6 o'clock to 8 o'clock.

The matter will be brought before the State Legislature when it convenes in January. The advocates of the later opening hour are of the opinion that thus more workingmen will start the day without a drink; doing thereby not merely a better day's work, but reducing materially the liability to accident. Statistical Bulletin No. 1, issued by the Industrial Accident Board of Massachusetts, states: "The 'peak' of accidents is at or about 10 o'clock in the morning, and 3 o'clock in the afternoon." In the opinion of physicians who have made special study of this matter, the effect of alcohol is most apparent between three or four hours after the liquor is taken into the system. This matter of industrial accidents assumes particular importance now, because the Workingman's Compensation Act went into effect on July 1.

The "Bar and Bottle" law went into effect a year and a half ago, and advocates of the legislation claim, among other results of the law, the following:

Over 250 fewer saloons in Massachusetts than there would have been except for the law; over 1,200 fewer wholesale licenses, a decrease of 70 per cent., a decrease of 87 saloons in the City of Boston alone; and a general and decided decrease of arrests for drunkenness.

ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT ON THE SALOON BUSINESS

Here are the exact words of the judges of the Supreme Court of the State of Illinois in their decision regarding the Harkin Saloon ordinance of Chicago which put 3,000 saloons out of business in that city:

"The business of selling intoxicating liquor is attended with danger to the community by the police power of the State. There is no inherent right to carry it on and it may be strictly prohibited.

"The manner and extent of its regulation, if permitted to be carried on at all, is to be determined by the State so as to limit as far as possible the evils arising from it.

"The power conferred upon the city is co-extensive with that of the State and includes authority to adopt any means to reduce the evils arising from the sale of intoxicating liquor, reasonably adopted to that end, which do not violate constitutional rights. The Legislature can not confer any power which it does not itself possess and can not authorize a discrimination between individuals not founded upon a reasonable difference for it could not itself make such discrimination."—Sacred Heart Review.

DYSPEPSIA MADE HIM MISERABLE

Suffered Agony Until "Fruit-a-tives" Cured Him

Hundreds of people gladly testify to the wonderful curative powers of the famous fruit medicine, "Fruit-a-tives". To those now suffering with Indigestion, Dyspepsia or other Stomach Troubles, this letter of Mr. Stirling, the well known real estate operator of Western Ontario, shows the way to a speedy and certain cure.

GLENCOE, ONT., AUG. 15th, 1911

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AN INCIDENT AND ITS LESSONS

We ran across a beautiful little incident the other day which illustrates how early the power of suggestion enters the life of a child.

The incident serves to show at the same time the importance of having religious pictures in the Catholic home.

The child was one year and a half old. In the room where he slept there was a large oil painting of the Madonna and Child. The painting was over against the child's crib, and his eyes naturally and frequently rested on it.

The mother noticed the interest her little boy took in the picture, and with delight she watched the child gaze at the Divine Infant.

One day, she saw the tiny hands of her own infant extend his nursing bottle to the Infant in the picture as though inviting Him to share his food.

The incident happened again and again; the mother evidenced her pleasure to the child and the tiny boy grasped the notion that he was doing something pleasing to his mother.

Since then, every thing is first offered to the Infant Jesus. The cake he munches, the toy that pleases, each has in its turn in that sweet oblation offered up in that Catholic home.

As the years go by, may we not hope that the Infant Jesus will grow more deeply into the life of the child? May we not expect that everything he values will be placed in the keeping of the Divine Infant, to Whom he lovingly offered up his childish treasures in the unconscious faith and generosity of infancy?

Or, perhaps, may we not go further and say that the consciousness of the supernatural has already dawned in the soul of that child, and that every hour of his life will deepen and intensify that consciousness!

But let us insist on two evident lessons for other mothers.

The education of the child begins in the crib—in infancy; and that education lies in the hands and the heart of the mother. As the veil lifts before the mind of the child, it becomes the duty of the mother to impress the lessons of religion and duty.

This is the most important obligation and privilege of the mother. All else fades away in the face of it.

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And, secondly, religious paintings and pictures should adorn the walls of the Catholic home. The first suggestion often comes from the familiar pictures in the home of the childhood; and the impressions thus created are the most lasting of a lifetime.

We recall ourselves two old steel engravings which made a deep impression on the eyes of our childhood and linger still in the memory. They were the deathbed scenes of the good Christian and the hardened sinner. We have never yet seen or heard anything to equal them in intensity—not because they were masterpieces of suggestion, but because they cut deep into our childish imagination.

It is possible now to obtain acceptable and even artistic pictures and engravings at a reasonable price. The advance in the art of printing has given us this advantage. There can be no longer any excuse for Catholics to have their homes undecorated with pictures, at once artistic and religious.

One of the sad features of the ordinary non-Catholic home is the absence of anything that might suggest God or the supreme duty we owe Him as His creatures depending in everything upon His bounty.

In these homes we find only profane subjects—earthly heroes, anything from George Washington up to a "Jacky" Johnson, for our ordinary American is as wide and indifferent in his choice as are the sensational journals which furnish his intellectual pabulum daily.

There is about as much of the supernatural suggested by the furnishings or circumstances of the home of the ordinary Americans as we find in the old pagan houses that they are digging up in Pompeii.

And we regret to add that there are Catholic homes just as bare of religious suggestion as those we have described. There are Catholic homes which do not possess a crucifix or a picture of the Blessed Virgin. The family bible is an "Encyclopedia of Facts"—the Lives of the Saints, an evening paper with a full sensational story of the "gunmen" and the latest murder.

We feel that we are not picturing the homes of The Monitor readers, for the Catholic that subscribes for a Catholic paper and reads it is sure to be an earnest and intelligent Catholic.

But we insist again on the great educational value, in suggestion and impression, of the pictures which hang around the walls of the home.

A Catholic home should have Catholic pictures, so that the eyes of the children especially should often fall upon them and drink in the spiritual lessons which they contain.—The Monitor.

PROGRESS OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER'S DURING 1912

Written for the New Year's issue of the Halifax Chronicle by the Rev. President, Dr. H. P MacPherson.

The year now closing has been a prosperous one for St. Francis Xavier's. The changes to be noted are not numerous, but all of them indicate activity and progress.

The University Staff has been strengthened by the advent of three new professors. Mr. P. J. Nicholson comes to us from Johns Hopkins University, Rev. D. J. MacDonald from the Catholic University of America, and Rev. M. N. Tompkins from the University of Toronto. They are all specialists in their respective subjects—Physics, English Literature, and Agricultural Science.

During the year the new University Chapel was opened, and has since been in daily use. It literally fills a long-felt want, and is proving a great convenience and a great comfort. It is a splendid memorial to the loyalty and generosity of an old alumnus.

In November we had the pleasure and advantage of having with us for a few days, Warren H. Manning, Esq., landscape designer of Boston, Mass. Mr. Manning is an acknowledged expert in the business of laying out to the best advantage the grounds of towns and educational institutions. He made a complete survey of our grounds, and selected the sites of future buildings, walks, athletic grounds, etc., and is now preparing the necessary plans for future extensions.

Further accommodation for professors and students is one of our pressing requirements. Among our present urgent needs also are a library building and an up-to-date gymnasium. Steps have already been taken to meet the requirements in other departments.

Our scientific outfit has recently been very much enlarged. To the generosity of our Alumni Association we owe the installation of a first-class gas plant for the supplying of gas to the Scientific Laboratories. To a generous friend we owe a complete equipment for the Mechanical Laboratories, including lathes, planer, handsaw, etc., etc.

During the past year considerable attention has been given to the management and development of the college farm at Mount Cameron, Antigonish. Since the college took over this property a few years ago, it has greatly increased in value. Under the continued application of scientific methods, it ought soon to become a valuable object lesson to the farmers of these eastern counties.

A few months ago the vacant chancellorship of our university was very acceptably filled. The new incumbent is the Right Rev. Dr. Morrison, recently appointed Bishop of the diocese of Antigonish. Under Mgr, Morrison's wise and sympathetic guidance, the friends of St. Francis Xavier's confidently feel that its continued progress is fully assured.

PRESIDENT SUSPENDER

NONE-SO-EASY

CHURCH CONDITIONS BAFFLING

The story of an Indiana village of 262 inhabitants, with 68 professed Christians and only 20 church members attempting to support 3 churches was related at the Federal Church Council in Chicago on December 4. Of the 68 Christians in the village, the 40 that were not members of the 3 local churches were distributed among 9 denominations. It was said that no young man under 21 was a member of any of the 3 churches. The case was selected as being typical of church conditions in many of the small towns in the country.

Philosophers tell us there is no effect without a sufficient cause, and nothing exists without an adequate explanation of its existence. No country in the world affords a better opportunity to study the results of the blessed Reformation than the United States, which has been appropriately called the battle ground of the sects. In Europe, notably in England and in Germany, a State Church and State patronage have enabled an overwhelming number of one denomination to throw into the shade the rivalries and discordances of many others. Stripped of official patronage and left to fight its battles alone in this country Protestantism is seen clearly in its results. The leaven of private judgment in religious matters which makes the individual the high court of decision in what is to be believed and what is not, has been at work for over a century among the masses of the population outside the Catholic Church, with the inevitable consequence that the multiplication of creeds and churches has become one of the great phenomena of the times. Recognizing as widespread, conditions such as this Indiana village presents, well meaning representatives of State Federations of Churches would stem the evil or at least devise some common ground on which all Christians might get togethea and work for the common good. The prospect is not encouraging. They cannot unite as Christians without first determining what each and all will accept as fundamental. As well try to supply the base for the fabric of a dream. So long as private judgment holds the citadel of the city of confusion peace will never be a portion of its inhabitants. Doubtless it will be easier to unite on a broad humanitarianism, which is merely an enlightened paganism and which is fast becoming the sole residue of a discredited and rejected Christianity.—America.

"Thanks be to God" is a prayer that should be ever on our lips and in our hearts. The thankful heart and not the fretful, peevish heart is dear to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

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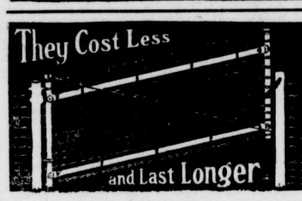

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The Time of Good Resolutions

It is meet that at the advent of a new year—the beginning of a new cycle—we should "take stock" of what has been accomplished, and resolve anew not to leave undone those things which promote our own betterment and the good of others.

Among the good resolutions of every thoughtful man will be the decision to take immediate steps to adequately provide for his loved ones by a reliable life insurance policy, such as is offered by

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