SIX

FIVE MINUTE SERMON BY REV. M. BOSSAERT

PASSION SUNDAY THE WAY OF THE CROSS

This is Passion Sunday, and the name fixes our attention upon our Lord's sufferings, and suggests to us the duty of meditating upon the Pas sion and Death of Christ, especially during the last fortnight of Lent. during the last fortnight of Lent. No devotion is more suitable to this traceable to the failure of Protestant. Reason than the Way of the Cross, and I wish to address you today on tion. It is a far cry back to the subject of this most venerable practice.

Whence was it derived ? Who first trod the way of the Cross? Was vast crop of errors that is bearing it not our Lord Himself? After He fruit today. had been condemned by Pilabe, a cross was laid on His shoulders, and He was forced to carry it to Golgotha, he clearly defined position of the Catho-lic Church. The Church teaches that was forced to carry it to Golgotha, lic Church. The Church teaches that be forgiven. Is it too hard? Is it where he accomplished the work of the soul is immortal, that it lives not a mark of God's infinite mercy? our redemption. From Pilate's tri-bunal where the Way of the Cross Purgatory, that the dead do not began, to the place where our Lord rsturn but that we are in close com-was crucified, is a distance of nearly munich with them in the Communion a mile. It was a long way for our dear Saviour, who had already suf-fered so much, and was weak and their prayers the suffering souls in exhausted after the barbarous scourg- Purgatory. ing that He had undergone ; every step cost him a great effort and most acute pain, for His whole Body was consolation in the belief that we can acute pain, for His whole Body was covered with wounds. Many thou-help our departed souls to Heaven by sands of people followed the same our prayers. In place of vague state-road both before and after Jesus, but ments of a heaven with harps and surely none of them ever was so weak, so weary and in such agony of have the cartain teachings of the This, pain as our Divine Redeemer. therefore, gave rise to our practice of permanent possession of all good and making the Way of the Cross. As often as we do so, let us think of our ionship of the Blessed Virgin and the dear Saviour, and remember how He trod the path to Golgotha, bearing who have gone before them. His cross, on His way to die for us sinners, that by His death miserable He might deliver us from everlasting spurious consolations of Spiritism destruction. Let us remember that but those derived from Eternal He said : "If any man will come after Truth. Me, let him take up his cross and follow Me." We read in the Gospel comfort and security of Catholics. that our Lord was accompanied on They know, they do not guess. They His way by His holy Mother, by St. John. Mary Magdalene and other pious consolation, they have experienced it. women. Tradition tells us that after And this explains why Catholics have her Divine Son's ascension into no interest in Spiritism and the new heaven, our Lady often walked along revelation. They will not exchange the road to Golgotha, with deep emo-tion recalling all that He had endured mess of pottage.—The Pilot. on the way thither. It is certainly good for us to join her and other holy souls, and as faithful disciples to follow our Divine Redeemer along His path of suffering, whilst we devoutly make the way of the Cross.

2. The way of the Cross is a very widely spread devotion. In the early

centuries of Christianity pilgrims from all parts used to go to Jerusalem to visit the holy places, and especially to tread the path along which their Redeemer had passed, laden with His cross. In course of time, at certain points on this road, were erected; these were stations pictures of statues, at each of which a halt was made to allow the pilgrims to meditate upon the mystery that it Later on the Saracens represented. took possession of the Holy Land, and it became almost impossible to visit the holy places, so people began to erect pictures of the various Sta- priest. Others say that confession is tions elsewhere, so as to enable the gradually it became a universal custom, and now the Stations of the demanded confession because it is Five Popes have not only sanctioned say in general that the objections to Five Popes have not only sanctioned as in generative procession raised by honest people are founded in ignorance. They do expressly to all the faithful.

agony for our sake; let us beg Him to to arrogate to himself the power forgive us and grant us His grace, to forgive sine. and let us promise to do penance and really to amend our lives. If we practice the devotion in this spirit, is no inconsistency, nor does the we shall realize more and more the judge arrogate to himself the power horrible wickedness of sin, our hearts over life and death. The judge has will be filled with detestation of wills will gain strength to is the one who has been offended. resist it, and we shall advance more The judge acts in the name of readily on the right path that leads society. When he condemns a murreadily on the right path that leads society.

future life gives unsatisfactory com the executioner that the governor of fort. He says "the position of the the state offers a free pardon to the Protestant church in this country ought to be clear and articulate on this theme, but it is not, and clergy-men are too prone to fall into the old, in the future. Would not the ing they are opening the door to superstition.' In line with this admission is the statement of Mr. Ralph Adams Cram

Through His duly appointed messenger God tells the sinner that he ism to give any real religious consolawill forgive him on certain conditions called Reformation, yet the religious He does not demand that the pent breakdown that grew out of the tent make a public confession. Al breakdown that grew out of the tent make a public confession. All action of the reformers has sown a He asks is that he confess his sin to a priest under the sacred secrecy of

the confessional and if he be really sorry for it and will promise to do panance and lead a good life he will They tell us that the confessional

From Pilate's tri- after death in Heaven, in Hell or in is degrading and destructive of Christian manhood. On the contrary munion with them in the Communion there is no more noble act of a Christian and a gentleman than a heartfelt acknowledgment of the sins that he has committed. To use another homely illustration. A father has Here is something that the avertwo sons who have seriously dis-

Church of the Beatific Vision, the the absence of all evil, the compan-Saints, and the reunion with those In the presence of death the consolations of true religion are needed, not the

This is what constitutes the great fulfilling God's command. Though are not searching for trath, they have suffering or mortification. It may be His favorite dissiple, and by it. They are not reaching out for hard to acknowledge that we have done wrong, but it is the manly and the Christian thing to do. Even though it be hard, the joy and comfort that comes to us with the knowledge that we have been

> POPULAR OBJECTIONS TO CONFESSION

## REV. B. X. O'REILLY

No practice in the Church can be his own life or good name, to save more easily defended, just as no practice in the Church is more the life of another, or even to avert a public calamity is he excused from conductive to morality than confes-sion. No practice in the Church has this obligation. No power on earth can compal him to reveal the sins more bitterly assailed, more generally misunderstood than con-that have been confessed to him. A fession. When we can find out what priest, even though under oath on is the specific objection to the confes-sional we can readily answer. The would refuse to divulge the secrets difficulty lies in determining just of the confessional. To do so would not only violate a natural law and the what is the objection.

Many people say that Catholics get positive law of God, but it would infringe ecclesiastical law, as is evitheir sins too easily forgiven-all they have to do is to tell them to the dent from the strict prohibition and severe penalties that the Church has attached to the direct or indirect viotoo hard that God would not ask faithful to consider and venerate our this of His creatures. Some say lation of the secrecy of the confes-Lord's Passion and Death. The Fran-that confession sounds reasonable sional. The Fourth Council of Council of ciscans were the first to do this, but enough, but God does not demand it, Lateran ordained that if a priest should "reveal a sin made known to him in the tribunal of Penance he while others say God could not have Cross are found in every church. entirely too unreasonable. We may shall not only be deposed from his priestly office, but moreover be subjugated to close confinement in a monastery and the performance of expressly to all the faithful. Let us make the Way of the Cross one of our favorite devotions, and whilst contemplating our Saviour's bitter Passion and Death, let us repent of our sins which caused Him to enffer three let us the cheat Him to be the many the sheat Him to be the three three let us the cheat Him the cheat Hi to suffer thus; let us thank Him for is the one offended it is to God that we reception of the Sacrament of Penance His infinite love and mercy, that in- should confess. They believe that it are ample proof that the Catholic duced Him to shed His Blood in is little short of blasphemy for a man priesthood by God's grace has been loyal to its trust.

more than pay us for the hardship.

Protestant Church on death and dashes up to the scaffold and tells fallen into disuse; and that the emphasize a simple truth that hith-future life gives unsatisfactory com-fort. He says "the position of the the state offers a free pardon to the for the many, who desire to explicit statement. In the beginning unburden their souls by confessing no one questioned the fact that the only Holy Church in the eyes of the not to God only but to a fellowman, and who feel their need of comfort Apostles was the Catholic Church men are too prone to fall into the old, oheap, easy way of ministering to the enflicted, not realizing that in so do-easily escaped the fruit of his crime? The gospel, but which in many the gospel to be of the source of her Creed so clear that even malice A sinner has wilfally and grievously instances he may desire to hear offended Almighty God. He stands spoken by a man, who speaks in could not distort its meaning; and so the original article was expa on the very brink of hell. There is virtue of the authority of his holy nothing batween him and eternal office." into its fuller expression : in the Holy Catholic Church.' "

> ORIGIN OF THE WORD CATHOLIC"

THE CATHOLIC RECORD

Discussing the origin of the word Catholic" and the reason for its insertion in the Apostles Creed during the fifth century, the editor of the Catholic Magazine for South Africa, always sound and interesting in his mation were even conceived. Catho-lic Faith has remained the same from learned disquisitions, says :

"The word 'Catholic' was added to the time of the Apostles ; Protestant the [Apostles'] Creed in the fifth creeds are charged like garments century, but the word was not new in that vary with the fashions of the Christian usuage, and its addition day. only showed that the point needed emphasizing against the attacks of

heratics who were arising. The word 'Catholic' is found in the very earliest writers of the Church. Thus obeyed him. The one sullenly refuses to acknowledge his fault, in the year 110, only a few years after the death of the last of the while the other is so grieved that he Apostles, St. Ignatius writes 'Wheresoever the bishop shall appear will not retire to rest until he has told everything. Such a confession there let the people be, even as where is not degrading but signifies a Jasus may be, there is the Catholic manly character. It is singular that Church.' And Harnack makes one the very best and noblest men in the significant admission, which must world are those that are seen regular-ly at confession. You say it is asking cause some searching of heart to those Reformation Christians, who too much of flesh and blood. It it be refuse to see how strong the claims a commandment of God it makes no of the Catholic and Roman Church difference how much it asks of flesh and blood. The only question with are in the pages of antiquity. He tells us that already at the end of the second cantury the word 'Catholic' the Christian should be-did God ordain the confessional? That being 'Described the visible, orthodox established there is nothing, no matter how much it asks of flesh churches which, under definite organization, had grouped themselves round Apostolic foundations and especially round Rome, as distinfoundations and and blood, that should deter us from guished from the heretical commun it be hard we should not expect God to pardon us without the slightest ities.'

"If, therefore, the word 'Catholic' vas not added to the Apostles' Creed until the fifth century, it was not ecause the early Church did not hold all that the word now signified for us. Rather was it true that all this was taken for granted. restored to God's friendship will form of Arianism, heresy took its first formidable shape, and it was con It is sometimes objected that a demned by the first General Council priest may tell what he hears in the confessional. A priest is bound to infages of these heretics was to claim violable secrecy regarding the sins that are revealed to him in sacra-mental confession. Not even to save that there was a true and holy church which was not the Catholic Church. Then is became needful to

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Yet truth is one and alters not

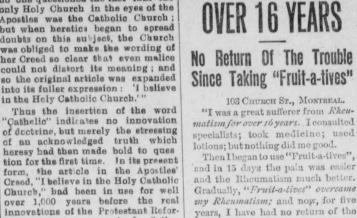
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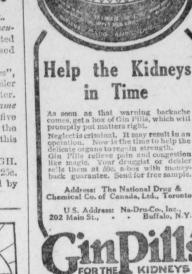
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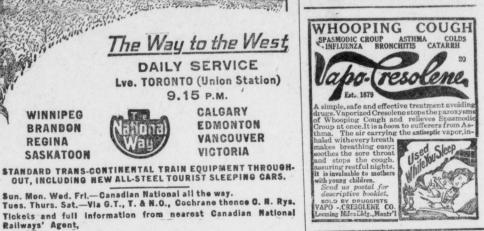
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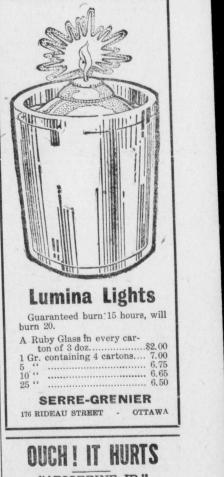




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MARCH 20, 1920

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SCIENCE AND RELIGION

to heaven. Amen.

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One of the leading non-Catholic condemn the criminal to death is psychologists of the country, Mr. G. not a power vested in him of his Stanley Hall, analyzing the doctrine own right, but is simply a power by Hall, analyzing the doctrine Oliver Lodge declares that Sir delegated by society. When a priest of Sir hears the confession of a sinner Oliver "does not attempt any kind of scientific demonstration or logical he acts as the representative of God. post-mortem survival, and He knows that in himself he has see who demand this, but no power to forgive sin. The power proof of post-mortem survival, and appeals only to his own intuition and that he exercises in the confessional to his wish and will to believe." He is a delegated power just as is states emphatically as a psychologist the power exercised in the civil and as a student of spiritistic phen-courts by a duly chosen judge. nomena, that "modern Spiritismis the last stronghold of superstition in the

testant does not find it so easy a task. Let us see. That a Catholic world and the common enemy of science and religion." This is typical of the effect that

may have his sins forgiven he must minded enough to be swayed by the eminent authority of the English scientist. But as we read thereit the so-called new revelation is mak- do five things-examine his conscito never more offend God, and to do scientist. But as we read through Professor Hall's analysis of Sir Oliver Lodge, we must be impressed with the fact that the psychologist not only attacks Spiritism, but talls the rather think that those who object truth about the cause of the spread of to the confessional because they Spiritism. He admits that the attrac find it too hard have a better case vogue of Spiritism.

There have been abuses of the When a judge in our civil courts confessional. The greatest of God's sentences a murderer to death there gifts, the most wonderful of his mercies have been abused through the perverseness of man. These abuses, which the Church has met with her admirable legislation, should not blind men to the great not been hurt by the murder. Society good that confession has brought not only to the individual but to society derer to death he does not arrogate at large. Even thinking Protestants to himself the power over life and have acknowledged the usefulness to death. As the properly delegated representative of society he speaks society of the tribunal of Penance. The following words of Leibniz, in his System of Theclogy are a striking and condemns in the name of society and realizes that the power to tribute to the confessional :

"This whole work of sacramental penance is indeed worthy of the Divine wisdom and if aught else in the Christian dispensation is meritorous of praise, surely this is a wondrous institution. For the necessity of confessing one's sins deters a man from mitting them, and hope is given to him who may have fallen after expiation. The pious and prudent confessor is in very deed a great instrument in the hands of God for man's regeneration. For the kindly advice of God's priest helps man to control his passions, to know lurking places of sin, to avoid the occasions of evil doing, to restore occasions of evil doing, to restore ill-gotten goods, to have hope after depression and doubt, to have peace after affliction, in a word, to remove or at least lessen all evil, and if there is no pleasure on earth like unto a faithful friend, what must be the esteem a man must have for him who is in very deed a friend in him, who is in very deed a friend in

the hour of his direst need ?" Dr. Martensen, a Lutheran, while Spiritism. He admits that the attraction of the wide who find it too that a may be at too the stand of the sector than those who find it too the sector than those who find it too the sector that the sector the sector that the sector that the sector that the sector the sector the sector that the sector the sector the sector that the sector the sector the sector the sector that the sector the sector the sector that the sector the se But Professor Hall goes still further his crime. All is in readiness for an institution, meeting as it does the execution when a messenger this want in a regular manner, has



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