

## FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. WILLIAM DEMOUY, D. D.

## PALM SUNDAY

## THE PASSION OF CHRIST

"At that time Jesus said to His disciples: You know that after two days shall be the Passover and the Son of man shall be delivered up to be crucified." (Matt. xxvi. 1-2)

Wisely does the Church put before us on this Sunday the history of the Passion of our Divine Lord. It is true that she wishes us to have it ever before our minds; but especially so, now toward the close of the season which is intended as preparation worthy to recall Christ's sufferings, and to celebrate gloriously His Resurrection. She recognizes in the passion of Christ nourishment of our spiritual lives. If it is not the passion itself, it is something that flows from it, or through the merits of Him who underwent it.

This sad closing of the life of Our Saviour, besides being our spiritual wealth, is also an example and encouragement for us. It easily is recognized as such, if we consider what our life upon earth is. It is not a paradise, it is not free from worries and sufferings, it is not a satisfaction to our nature in its present condition; it is a warfare from day to day. We have our little hills of Calvary to climb, and our little passions to undergo. We should not begrudge these. They were Christ's lot infinitely more than they ever can be ours. He faced His sufferings courageously; nay, in His inmost heart rejoiced at them, because by them He was doing His Father's will and sealing His love for man with His blood, showing thereby its intensity and sincerity. There is an end intended by God, when He allows sufferings to come over us. But it lies with us to carry out this end by willingly accepting these sufferings. We must, in other words, not suffer in vain. Many suffer and blaspheme God, or at least exercise no patience. To such as these, sufferings are no Calvary, no passion; they are rather an occasion of sin of the subject's own making. To suffer rightly and meritoriously we must imitate Our Saviour with His cross. A minute knowledge, a keen perception, a true love of Jesus' sufferings, is necessary for this. The Church affords us every opportunity of becoming true sympathizers with Jesus, and of fitting ourselves to suffer for Him and with Him.

Then, we must contemplate the terrible passion and agony of Christ in order to arrive at a true conception of the malice of sin. There is no place, whether in the Bible or outside of it, where we can learn sin's gravity as fully and as well as from the sufferings of Our Lord. They contain the true and real and complete account of sin; they alone could expiate for it; hence they alone put it before us as it is in itself. It does not seem so terrible now, since satisfaction for it, through the merits already gained by Christ, does not demand so much from us. But yet, it is a crime, an insult to God, disobedience to Him, and ingratitude to Christ, our greatest benefactors. It is even worse, in some sense, than it was before God sent His Divine Son into the world, because, besides being an open rebellion against God's law, it is an endeavor to put to naught the passion of Christ. Or it is an attempt to bring about another passion and death of a Christ, were it possible that God would permit it. Really to learn the malice of sin, there is one thought that in this regard must prove most efficacious; namely, that man will be condemned if he dies in grievous sin, even though Christ has died to placate His Heavenly Father. The work of the Redeemer, then, was not to change the nature of sin, but to acquire more help for man to avoid it, and make it more easy for him to do penance when, through weakness he has disobeyed God's law. No one who understands the passion of Christ can deny the existence of hell for him who dies in grievous sin. Had Christ not been God, it would have been necessary for Him to suffer the pains of hell, and even then He could not have done justice to God in attempting to expiate for the sins of the world. The passion of Christ was the most terrible and the most bitter of sufferings imaginable. Yet had Christ not been God, they would have been greater, could nature have stood them; and in the end they would not have been sufficient to satisfy the justice of an injured Maker. So, we must remember that it was not the passion of a man that conquered sin, but the passion of a man-God. How terrible, then, is sin! What base creatures we are to continue it upon this earth!

The passion of Christ must teach us also the goodness of God. God the Father willed such sufferings, and God the Son underwent them because He loved man. He could have plunged man, as He did the disobedient angels, into the abysses of eternal misery, but He would rather suffer Himself to save him. Man was more ignorant in his sin than were the angels; hence, the strictest justice of God allows him another opportunity. But man became more ignorant after the fall of Adam and Eve, and as a consequence, would have fallen more and more into sin had God not taught him again through Our Saviour's passion the true malice of sin, and furnished him with the means of overcoming the weakness of his

will. What a proof of God's goodness and love for us! The mightiest and the minutest of benefits have been granted us.

Catholics should realize well that it is an essential duty for them to think often on the passion of Christ. In no other way can they fully learn the grievousness of sin. Many a worldly today imagines that this earth is offering him and he is enjoying, all that nature can expect to have. When it is so, sin never is absent. Upon earth was Christ's Calvary for sins committed upon earth. There alone can be learned what in truth earth's pleasures are; and the serious, earnest Christian will desire to suffer his Calvary here where sin is committed, and not enjoy his paradise here and his Calvary—oh, terrible it is to say it!—where his paradise ought to be.

## RELICS OF ST. ALBERT FOUND

Brussels.—On his recent onomastic feast, King Albert was presented by Cardinal Mercier with a two-fold gift—wonderful St. Albert of Louvain, His Majesty's Patron Saint, and with a reliquary of artistic design and workmanship as well as of telling historic and spiritual meaning, conceived and executed by Brussels' foremost goldsmith jewelers.

In the history of St. Albert and of the saint's remains, Belgium's Primate found more than one prompting to remember his king.

Through the Houses of Orleans and of Saxony, King Albert is of the lineage of St. Albert, who was the son of Godfrey III., Duke of Lower Lotharingia, and brother of Henri I., Duke of Brabant. Although Bishop-elect of Liege, St. Albert has been surnamed "of Louvain," because he was born in the princely castle upon whose ruins now rises the Benedictine Abbey of Regina Coeli, which from its lofty heights overlooks the city of Louvain.

The War that brought so many sorrows to Belgium's King was the occasion for the discovery of the sacred remains of his patron and ancestral relative. These remains lay buried in the Cathedral of Rheims, being thought to rest the while in the chapel of the Carmelite Nuns, Brussels. In consequence of the vandalism perpetrated upon it during the years of the sad conflict, the restorative of the Rheims medieval architectural gem necessitated the opening of the tombs of several Bishops interred in the nave of the church. This was not done at haphazard; but with the documents concerning the burial places in hand and under critical examination, by anatomists and archeological experts.

## ST. ALBERT'S BODY FOUND

Before the digging began, the experts were prepared to find one sepulchre empty, because the body that had been laid to rest in it in the year 1192 was supposed to have been exhumed and translated to Brussels, at the request of the Archdukes Albert and Isabella four hundred and twenty years later. But, contrary to what the archives, the sepulchral inscriptions, etc., had taught them it was the burial place of the first prelate known to have been interred in the cathedral, of Archbishop Odoric, who died in the year 982, that the workmen found unattended. The vault that was believed to be vacant still held the remains of him buried there, according to irrefragable testimony, in the year 1192, the body, therefore, of St. Albert, Bishop and martyr.

While the sepulchre of the other prelates bore inscriptions, the two mentioned had none and St. Albert's had not even a sepulchral slab. Hence probably the mistake committed at the exhumation in 1012. In the stone coffin they then found a skeleton clad in pontifical robes, a gold-ornamented crozier, a gold finger-ring with a large sapphire, and various other objects that have been lost since.

As St. Albert died by the sword and as a traumatic wound was identified in the skull of the exhumed skeleton, the anatomists of the seventeenth century and since felt quite convinced that it was the body of St. Albert that was transferred to Brussels in 1612.

Had archeological science been as advanced in the seventeenth century as it is now, the experts of the day would have known by the shape of the crozier and of many other indices, that these objects were too archaic to date from the twelfth century.

With the remains recently brought to light, there was found a crozier as well, one clearly of a shape common in the twelfth century and since. Moreover, several traumatic wounds concord with the contemporary relation of the manner in which St. Albert met his fate at the hands of three men armed with swords and knives who went on furiously mutilating the body, even after their saintly victim had expired.

Commissioners appointed by Cardinals Luçon and Mercier scrutinizingly examined the remains, the tomb, etc.; and reached the unanimous conclusion that the recently-found body was St. Albert and that the holy remains venerated in Brussels are those of Archbishop Odoric.

Cardinal Luçon graciously offered the relics of the martyred Bishop of Liege to Cardinal Mercier, who keeps them in the chapel of the

episcopal palace at Malines until the completion of the votive basilica of the Sacred Heart now in course of construction upon the heights overlooking Belgium's capital. There the major portion of the relics is destined to be preserved for the veneration of this and future generations.

## ST. ODORIC'S RELICS

In the course of time the Brussels Carmelite Nuns, with the consent of the ecclesiastical authorities, absconded fragments of the sacred boon confided to them, to satisfy the pious desires of various congregations in whose churches St. Albert is particularly venerated. All these dispersed relics, now known to be St. Odoric's are to be returned, by order of the Holy See, to the Cathedral of Rheims. One notable fragment was given in 1878, to the Right Rev. V. J. Grandin, D. D., Bishop of St. Albert, Canada.

St. Albert of Louvain was not yet thirty years of age when the canons of the Cathedral chapter of Liege chose him for their Bishop. As the Bishop of the diocese was at the same time its temporal ruler, he needed the suzerain's lay investiture, which Henri VI., then emperor of Germany, refused to confer. Having proceeded to Rome to lay his case before the Holy Father, Albert saw the canons' choice confirmed by the Pope, who preconized him Bishop of Liege and raised him to the Cardinalate. On the way back to his own, the youthful Cardinal received the episcopal consecration at Rheims, September 20, 1193. He decided to remain in that city until such time as he could safely take possession of his episcopal See. His death shortly after, at the hands of the myrmidons of Henri VI., frustrated that hope.

## RELIQUARY GIVEN KING

Writing in the "Twentieth Century" about the reliquary donated to the king, the Abbe Schuygens says that it is "both of sacred and patriotic inspiration, of a personal and original conception, marrying with harmonious audacity the religious and the martial idea."

The custode containing the relic is boldly fastened to the edge of a sword pointed downwards. It evokes the remembrance both of the martyr of the Church's rights, who in his youth had worn the knight's haubert, and of the avenger of Belgium's rights, justly called the Knight King.

The custode is closed by a convex crystal lid wherein the capital initial letter "A" is adorned by a braid of which the twistings, through their entanglements express the hard roads of exile traveled by both Alberts. In the centre of the opposite side, on a guilloche background, appears, in niello engraving, the glorious image of the enthroned Pontiff. It is surrounded by a pretty wreath of edelweiss—the flower of the Bavarian Tyrol dear to Queen Elizabeth—dotted with roses, the emblematic flower of St. Elizabeth, her patron.

## ITS INSCRIPTIONS

A Latin legend in the exergue of the custode begins on the obverse with the words: "Juris, agone ingens, O Sancte Alberte," and continues on the reverse, "pugnatores patriae regem aureum regna coelorum et nuptum duc et sobolem victores." "St. Albert, so great, through thy vindication of justice lead triumphantly to heaven's golden throne the king, his spouse and offspring."

Upon the foot of the remonstrance-like reliquary the king's coat-of-arms is engraved in front, and the Cardinal's, in the rear; and on the rim runs the dedicatory epigraph: "Alberto R. B. inclyto, Serenissime Reginae Hanc S. Alb. Lovan, sacris e veteribus mih iustitiam D. J. Em. Card. An. Lillo Sac. D. D." "To His Majesty Albert, the illustrious King of the Belgians, the Most Serene Highness the Queen, His Eminence, D. J. Mercier, in this, the fiftieth year of his priesthood, bestowed this holy vertebra of St. Albert in me enclosed."

## MARRIAGE ADVICE

Chicago, Jan. 29.—A complete and succinct text-book for young married couples was contained in the advice given by George Cardinal Mundelein when he performed the marriage ceremony here Saturday of Miss Loretta Margaret Hines, of Evanston, daughter of the millionaire lumberman, to Howell Hoffman Howard, of Dayton, Ohio.

This was the wedding of which one Chicago society editor said: "Artistically and socially, it was the most magnificent wedding our city has ever witnessed." Members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra played the wedding march and Tito Schipa, tenor of the Chicago Opera Company, sang.

"You belong no longer to yourself but to each other," Cardinal Mundelein said as he stood before the kneeling couple. "As the word of consent is spoken, as the blessings of Holy Church are given, a new tie will bind you—one that death alone can break."

"And with this new change there come new burdens, added responsibilities. These may be heavy; they may bring pain and sorrow in their wake, but for all this you will be prepared."

"We feel that you will justify the scriptural words: 'To whom much has been given, of whom much will be required.'"

"That such may be the case, then, hold fast to two things in life."

"First—your great love for one another. Let that affection you bear to one another, that confidence you have in each other, never weaken, never grow less. It is the greatest source of strength the Creator has given us. His children, whereby the burdens of life may be lightened."

"When the load is too heavy for one, two may more easily sustain it together."

"Let no one, let nothing ever come between you and weaken that mutual conjugal love that now makes you truly, not two, but two in one flesh. Jealously guard it as one of life's great treasures, as the light that brightens life's pathway in times of sadness and in dark moments of suffering; as the warmth that comforts amidst the blasts of adversity and in the eventide of nearing dissolution."

"Be ever as kind, as considerate, as patient with each other even as you are now when your mutual affection seems to you the greatest thing life holds."

"And then, the greatest treasure of all, your best friend, your most sincere well wisher, the principal guest at your marriage! Like the youthful couple in the gospel, you have come here that Christ might be by your side when you pronounce your marriage vows. Like them, you have come to obtain His blessing first of all."

"In a short while, He will come again upon this altar, just as truly as He first appeared at Cana in Galilee; and then, when He rests here after the prayer He Himself taught us—the 'Our Father'—is said, and you kneel here, the words of the blessing may come from my lips, but with the eyes of faith you can see how His hand is raised in benediction over you, even as 1,900 years ago He blessed the young bride and her husband in Galilee."

"Cherish that blessing; even more, cherish His presence in your home. Never let Him depart from you or those you love; never, through any act or even careless omission, let Him feel that He is not the honored Guest."

"Then will the nuptial blessing be verified, in that you may see your children, and your children's children unto the third and fourth generation and afterwards, possess eternal life without end through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Although a vast sum, sometimes estimated at \$100,000, had been spent on the decorations and gowns for the wedding, although more than 2,000 guests crowded the great cathedral, the subdued spirit of reverence was ever present.

## METHODIST PASTOR ON CATHOLICS

Speaking on "Ways in which Roman Catholics Shame Protestants," the Rev. Arthur A. Bouton, pastor of the Methodist Church, Hempstead, N. Y., contrasted the active participation of Catholics in the worship of their church with the comparatively small percentage of Protestants, who, Dr. Bouton said, take part in active manifestations of their religion. Excerpts from his sermon follow:

"I have seen thousands of people pouring into the Catholic churches early in the morning, later coming out, and thousands more going in to worship, while in our Protestant churches we find scattered members here and there. That makes me wonder, why so many there and so few here? Why can't we get the spirit of loyalty?"

"The Catholics have a saying, so we hear, that after a child is six years old brought up in a Protestant Church, nobody can turn that child into any other belief. Can we say that? 'Why you could make a Mohammedan out of some six-year old children in our church. One time I questioned a Catholic child of six years and was surprised at what she had learned. Another time I asked an eight-year old Protestant girl who Jesus Christ was and she looked surprised and said she didn't know.'"

"That isn't the child's fault, but it is the fault of the parents. Some day some of these parents may see their children with lost faith, lost virtue, or lost honor and will wonder why it happened. Well, if nobody tells them the answer here, God will when they go to glory."

"It's a sin the way some Protestants lie down on the job. They let a few do all the church work and the women are doing most of it. Too many of our members are allowing others to support the church. It is time the Protestants woke up."

"The Catholics 'tip' their hats to their priests and before their churches, showing their reverence."

"Too many Protestant pastors preach what the people want to hear instead of what the people should hear. It is too easy for a disgruntled set to have a preacher replaced. The Catholic priest is 'Father' to his people. I wish that the Protestant ministers had more power. Protestants may well pattern after some of these things, and cease petty criticisms and bickerings."

During his sermon Dr. Bouton asked if any one present, including any member of the Ku Klux Klan, could disagree with him. He received no answer.

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