

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

By Rev. M. E. SARRANT

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

CHRISTIAN CHARITY TOWARDS ONE'S NEIGHBORS

In answer to the lawyer's question "Who is my neighbor?" our divine Saviour related the parable of the Good Samaritan to teach us that every one, friend or foe, Catholic or heretic, good or bad, fellow countryman or foreigner, is our neighbor, whenever we have an opportunity of helping him. From the example of the Samaritan we learn that true charity towards our neighbor ought to be, according to the spirit and teaching of Christ. Let us today consider some of its chief characteristics.

1. True Christian charity is in the first place unselfish. How free from all self-seeking was the charity displayed by the good Samaritan! He poured into the injured man's wounds the wine and oil that he had taken with him for use on the journey; he set him on his own beast, and paid the innkeeper for his food and lodging, and promising that, when he came back, whatever else had been spent on the wounded traveller should be repaid. Was he looking for any return kindness? No; he could expect nothing from the wounded Jew, who had been robbed of all his property, nor from the man's relations, who would have very probably have insulted him, being a Samaritan; in fact he had good reason to fear lest his own fellow countrymen should attack him for having befriended a Jew. Our Lord desires us to follow the good Samaritan's example; to each of us he says: "Go and do thou in like manner." Whenever therefore you have any opportunity of assisting your neighbor in his trouble, whether of mind or of body, do not stop to consider who he is, nor how you will benefit by it, nor whether he is rich or poor, respectable or of low estate, but do your utmost to help him, simply because he is your neighbor, your brother in Christ and a joint heir with you to eternal happiness.

2. In the second place, true Christian charity is active. St. John writes: "My little children, let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth." What advantage is it to our unfortunate fellow-creatures for us to condole with them in their sorrows or even to shed tears of sympathy, if we do nothing at all to help them? Be more sparing of your words, and learn from the good Samaritan how to act, when your neighbor is in trouble. The Samaritan did not talk much, but, as soon as he caught sight of the wounded man, he went up to him and did all that he could to relieve him; he poured out oil and wine into his wounds, bound them up, and setting the man upon his own beast, brought him into an inn and took care of him. If your heart is ever full of sympathy at a neighbor's misfortune, do not repress this most beautiful of all human sentiments, but give it free scope, offering help to the utmost of your power, cheerfully and readily, not in a grudging spirit, for "God loveth a cheerful giver," and "He that sheweth mercy to the poor shall be blessed." Remember our Saviour's words: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

3. Finally, true Christian charity must be universal. When God sends you an opportunity of proving in action your love of your neighbor, avail yourself of it, no matter who he may be; do good to enemies as well as friends, to strangers as well as acquaintances, and to the poor, as well as to the rich. Bear in mind our divine Lord's words: "If you love them (only) that love you, what reward shall you have? do not even the publicans this?" Let us therefore strive to have an unselfish, active and universal charity towards our neighbors, based upon our love of God. Unless we really love our neighbor, we cannot love Him, as St. John tells us plainly in the words: "If any man can say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God, whom he seeth not?" Jesus said to His disciples: "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another, as I have loved you." Let us impress these words deep in our hearts, and whenever an opportunity occurs, let us hasten, like the good Samaritan, to help our neighbor in every possible way, and may God design to bestow His blessings upon us! Amen.

THE TOLL OF WAR AND INFLUENZA

The War Department has issued the following figures touching upon the late war. The total list of dead among all belligerents reached the figure of 7,450,000, divided as follows: Russia, 1,700,000; Germany, 1,600,000; France, 1,355,000; Great Britain, 900,000; Austria, 800,000; Italy, 330,000; Turkey, 250,000; Serbia, 125,000; Belgium, 112,000; Roumania, 100,000; Bulgaria, 100,000; United States, 48,900; Greece, 7,000; Portugal, 2,000.

Total deaths in the United States army was 112,422, and the total number of wounded Americans, 236,000. Two of every three American soldiers who reached France took part in battle.

The Americans fought in 13 battles for 200 days. America's cost of War

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to April 30 of this year was \$21,850,000. The total armed forces, including army, navy and marine corps, was 4,800,000. The total number in the army was 4,000,000, and of these 2,086,000 went overseas. The number who fought in France was 1,890,000.

Yet for every American killed by German bullets ten were killed by the influenza epidemic that swept the world last fall and winter. One year of the epidemic killed more than four years of War in the belligerent countries of Europe.—America.

GENERAL INTENTION FOR SEPTEMBER

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XV.

RECRUITING CATHOLIC TEACHERS

Training youth is one of the noblest professions that can occupy the life of man here below. Taking raw, uncultivated minds and hearts and molding them in such a way that the possessors thereof shall become worthy citizens, is a work that has in all ages merited the highest praise. The ancient orator Cicero asserted that "no man could offer a greater gift to the Roman Republic than to teach and instruct its youth." All civilized lands since Cicero's time have simply echoed the sentiments of the old Roman pagan. Education is essential to the peace and progress of nations, and the recognition of this fundamental fact is summed up in the aphorism of a modern writer: "Education is a better safeguard to liberty than a standing army." Preparing children to become useful members of society is a profession fostered and honored by every government, the leaders thereof being well aware that the power and influence of a State can be gauged by the advancement it makes in the intellectual and social training of its citizens.

If teachers and teaching are necessary elements in the prosperity of a State, for far higher reasons are they necessary for the personal welfare of citizens who make up the State. Could any fact be more evident? Who will assert that the moral training of the individual is not of greater benefit to him than the promoting of his economic and social betterment? The latter merely leads to his earthly welfare, while the former points out the way to his eternal happiness.

Catholic teaching has in view not merely the temporal welfare of the State but also the spiritual welfare of the citizen, the latter being the more important of the two in view of the interests that are at stake. The Duke of Wellington once uttered a rather obvious truth in forcible words. "Educate men without religion," said he, "and you make them clever devils." And one might add, "Educate men in ignorance of the true religion and you make them pliable tools of Satan their master."

The unsound principles they imbibe in their youth from false teachers give a bias to their whole careers. Although professing no set form of religion themselves, they naturally turn against the Catholic Church; and while they cannot harm her—for her Founder's promise holds good till the end of time—still they can by word and pen lessen her influence among human souls. Without knowing why, and without looking for a reason why, they feel that she is the enemy that must be guarded against. All the bitter prejudices that so

many people keep up against the Catholic Church in their after-lives are the outcome of their early teaching. And the present is merely an echo of the past. History proves that the preaching of some false doctrine or other has been at the bottom of the persecutions the Catholic Church has had to sustain in her long career, just as the blatant teaching and the application of some false principle or other has been the cause of most of the social revolutions mentioned in history.

No such catastrophes are possible in lands where Catholic influence is allowed to prevail; that is, where Catholic teachers are free to live and mold the minds and hearts of those who are to be the leaders of future generations. We hear much, these days, about the mutual responsibilities of Capital and Labor. The Church teaches that if these two elements have just complaints to make against each other, they have other ways of airing their grievances and remedying their ills than by strikes, sympathetic or otherwise, which dislocate the entire social and economic life of a community, and cause inconvenience and loss to thousands of innocent victims. The economic upheavals which have been threatening this country in recent months are not the outcome of Catholic teaching, nor have the rumblings of social revolution which have been heard from coast to coast had their origin in Catholic schools. Our teachers inculcate respect for legitimate authority. In our schools one hears nothing but the true doctrine regarding frankness and honesty in dealing with one's fellow-men; the Church insists on her children's shouldering their duties as units of the society in which they live. She insists on charity, equity and justice among all men, even though the heavens fall. When one hears the rantings of Socialists and other would-be reformers, one is sure that he is not listening to Catholic doctrine; nor are so-called "soap-box orators" usually the product of Catholic schools. If there are Catholics among our Socialists and Bolsheviks, those people have chosen their company in opposition to the teachings and wishes of the Church in which they were baptized. Paradoxical as it might seem to our government leaders, it would pay them to subsidize Catholic schools and Catholic teachers, more generously than is their wont. Public order and tranquility would gain in the long run.

Catholic schools are centers of religion and sound patriotism and Catholic teachers are propagators of both. Is it any wonder, then, that the Church looks upon the formation of teachers as a matter of the greatest importance? The motherly care with which she surrounds her teaching communities shows what are her sentiments in their regard. Where these communities exist and are free to exercise their apostolate, she has no occasion to worry about the future of her little children, for she knows that they are being brought up in a healthy atmosphere and are being preserved from many blighting influences. But where Catholic schools and teachers do not exist, she fears for the consequences. The spectacle of thousands of her children deprived of their own schools and taught by people who have no sympathy with her doctrines, is a sad one to contemplate. "When one thinks of the agony one has gone through in consequence of false teaching," says an English author, "it makes human nature angry with the teachers who have added to the bitterness of life." It does, in fact, add to the bitterness of the short lives of the thousands of us when we come to realize that our intellects, created to assimilate truth, were in early years deprived of their natural food and were filled with the poison of false teaching instead. How many there are who will tell you that the revelation came to them like a shock. Precious years have passed and it is now too late to mend matters. It is one of the tragedies of life when perspectives are lost that can never be recovered.

And yet non-Catholic teachers may not intentionally inculcate doctrines against our religion. Unofficially they may be even sympathetic. Secular knowledge may even run more freely through non-Catholic channels, but the Catholic point of view is necessarily absent, the loss of which during the plastic years of childhood is reflected in the attitudes of those who have had to grow up in the obnoxious environment. Even though the Church may not have to deplore the loss of her child ren by formal apostasy, which unhappily sometimes occurs, she has at least to lament over their lukewarmness and indifference to religion and the consequent loss of her influence on society in general. Ruskin tells us that education is the leading of human souls to what is best and the making of what is best in them. How can this be accomplished for our children unless they sit under teachers who share their mentality, who think as their Church thinks, and who teach them what the Church wishes they should know?

The lack of Catholic teachers is, we learn, a serious problem in many countries and the call for them is imperative. Are there not many Catholic men and women who feel the attraction to instruct the young? Do they ever stop to reflect that the needs of the age and the welfare of the Church call for some sacrifice on their part? Or is selfishness so deeply rooted in them that this noble profession no longer appeals to them? Let them listen to the words of St. Serapion, a great teacher: "They that are learned shall shine as

the brightness of the firmament; and they that instruct others to justice as stars for all eternity." (Dan. xii, 3). Leading others out of ignorance and preparing them for their lives here and hereafter is leading them unto justice. It is a noble missionary work; those who engage in it are laying up treasures which will not rust. They are doing a work pleasing to God, useful to the State and profitable to themselves. And our Blessed Lord Himself promised them eternal life when He asserted that "he that shall do and teach he shall be called great in the kingdom of Heaven." (Matt. xii, 19.)

E. J. DEVINE, S. J.

MATERIALISM

By Bishop Shanley, at Catholic Educational Convention

Materialism is an intellectual error—a social plague, an economic menace, and a political abyss. It has never been overcome except by true religion, and that is why on the one hand it singles out the Catholic Church with unerring logic, and on the other, why the Catholic Church insists on religion, positive revealed religion, the known and feasible will of God as the strong fortress from which she has always overcome the assaults of materialism.

Discredited for a brief hour and without favor on the morrow of the great war which it brought about, materialism has too many allies within and without the unregenerate individual not to forecast an era of revival in the more or less distant future. Already it is casting about how it may most fatally wound the Catholic Church, its only adversary, and hopes to find the solution in the domain of education, thus cutting at the bases of supply as it were, at the communications of God's Church with her little ones the world over.

Already the garments of religion are borrowed and a camouflage of Catholic words and phrases emptied of their traditional reality. Substitutes for genuine Christian faith are offered, all of them presiding from an external religious authority, a vague religious emotionalism that daily vanishes into new forms, a universal service of mankind that has never stood any true test, a unidirectional brotherhood which fades away before the first conflict of public interests or private schemes, a religion of nature now streaming with the blood of mankind east and west.

In the hopeless wordy pantheism of static India, or in the dead stoicism of Ancient Rome, men seek the moral energies of their new religion but in vain. Neither Hegel nor Dr. Eliot can set up again these ancient moral bankruptcies. The sources of our human ills are chiefly within us, in our darksome intellect and our enfeebled will. And it is only the religion of the Cross, the divine redemption, of divine healing and illumination, which can lift up fallen and helpless man as the Good Samaritan lifted up the wronged and beaten brother by the roadside and restored him gratuitously to health and a social place.

OLD CATHOLIC SPIRIT

Without assuming any pessimistic attitude one cannot help noting and deploring the gradual weakening of that fine old Catholic spirit which was so strikingly evident in the decades gone by. It is true, that the difficulties and prejudices which confronted the early settlers brought them into close union with the Church and begot, if we may call it so, a pugnacious interest in her affairs. There was no middle course then, they either drifted away, lost the faith, or else drew nearer and formed an attachment which difficulties only strengthened.

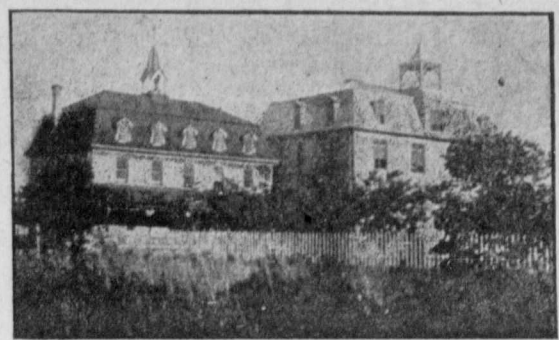
They saw the Church as the great consolator and refuge, and they conceived a loyalty not only to the Church herself and her eternal truths, but to everything that pertained to her. They were more than faithful children of the Church; they were her devout lovers.

So persistent has been the effort to break down the barriers between the natural and the supernatural, between humanitarianism and religion, that even Catholics become affected, and those tendencies towards indifference, those whisperings to leave religion in the churches, those forces that make good fellowships every-thing and minimize the need of creed and principles are insinuating themselves into the minds of many that the simple religious Catholic instincts of a few generations ago are no longer held in honor.

Take the home, for example. Formerly no good Catholic household lacked its religious pictures. There was the picture of the Sacred Heart before which the family recited the Rosary in the evening. Each morning the children opened their eyes upon the picture of the Holy Family. Prayer books were not hidden away. Holy Water was not forgotten. The piano came and the picture of the Madonna had to give place to a more or less wretched presentment of sheep, grazing in the field, or a daub of paint to represent a mountain scene. That fine old reverence begotten of filial love which animated the children seems lost and replaced

by a levity that styles the father as "the Governor." The equally fine old family spirit that united all the household in affection and loyalty to one another is very often replaced

by a boarding house method of living in which the children merely take their meals at home and their recreations and amusements in the streets.—The Visitor, Providence.



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