

## FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost.

## HEAVEN.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (St. Matt. v. 3.)

All Saints' day is a solemn and glorious festival for all heaven as well as for all the world; for to-day God is praised, and the great salvation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ magnified and lauded by a common, universal act of holy congratulation and worship among all the saints—that is, among all souls that are united to God in the communion of saints, whether in the Church triumphant, in the Church militant, or in the Church suffering.

It seems to me that none but Catholics believe in heaven, the eternal home of the saints after death, because they alone appear to understand what a saint is, as the Church has proved herself to be the only power which has been able to train and canonize one.

Yes, all that we can know of heaven is, that it is the reward, the everlasting life, the new and divine state of being which the saints enter into and enjoy when they have left this world—that is, when they die in the Church militant and rise in glory in the Church triumphant. If any Christian then, or so-called Christian, fancies he can meditate about heaven, and hopes to get there without knowing what a saint is, and without striving to be as near one as he can, he is like the deceiving himself.

I fear that the kind of people who think of heaven as a good enough heaven for them, if we are to judge by the way they live, is, in fact, not much above what the state of hell really is. Many are the souls who ought to have been saints, and are damned because they were unfaithful to the vocation God gave them, and too sensual to make the necessary sacrifices that such a vocation demanded.

What kind of a heaven, for instance, do you think the many intelligent Protestants who meet with every day will likely get, who know they ought to become Catholics to save their souls, and are yet afraid to take the step; who stand still and count the cost, and cheat their consciences with the false doctrine that no real sacrifices were demanded of them, because God will be more glorified if they leave all and follow Him, and do nothing themselves? And yet these people, and a good many Catholics, too, are living just such lives, and in their deaths they will not be divided.

And now do you say: O Father! tell us then, what a saint is, that we may be sure we are not all wrong, but may have some hope of imitating such, and so join the company of the glorified ones in heaven when we die? I answer: A saint is one who does everything he feels that God wants him to do, and carefully gives up and avoids everything that he feels is not pleasing to God. Apply that to yourself. God does not want the same thing of everybody, nor require all to make the same sacrifices. So that, as a fact, there are all kinds of saints, as we know. But in what he does require he demands that one should aim at doing it perfectly. "Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect," said our Lord. Be perfectly honest, be perfectly pure, be perfectly sober, be perfectly charitable, be perfectly obedient to the laws of God and man, be perfectly humble, be perfectly free from loving money or other riches.

Don't let me ever hear you say that again that you are "a man of the world and must live in it" as an excuse for the wretched apology for a Christian life you lead. You know that is a lie. You are a man, and a Christian man of the kingdom of God and of His saints, and that is the kind of place you live in, and must square your life accordingly, or you will never see the kingdom of God and of His saints in glory, which is heaven, when you die. In St. Paul's gospel, our Lord pronounces: Think on them, and if you do not know them by heart, take out your Bible when you go home and read them at the beginning of the fifth chapter of St. Matthew's gospel. So live that you will merit to be one of those our Lord declares to be "blessed," and you will surely be a saint.

## TALKS ON RELIGION.

## SATISFACTION.

Penance not only included contrition and confession, but also satisfaction. Besides being our own accusers, we also have to execute judgment on ourselves by making satisfaction for sin. The catechism says that satisfaction is "the doing of the penance given us by the priest." It means the payment of what is due in reparation to God for sin. Penitents not having the desire to make satisfaction for sin could not receive absolution. Satisfaction has always been required by the justice of God. "I feared, knowing that Thou didst not suffer the offender," (Job. ix. 28.) We are told that the prodigal was willing to serve in his father's house as one of the servants, and the debtor said: "I will pay thee all."

According to the present dispensation of the Church, the penance given is generally some prayer or act imposed, rather as a sign of the willingness to accept the penance, than as the penance itself. Religion is linked to the idea of responsibility—responsibility to God for our deeds. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and is a rewarder to them that seek Him," (Heb. xi. 6.)

In the very beginning, man received a warning concerning the necessity of satisfaction. This is evident from the words God addressed to Cain when he was tempted to commit his crime. "Why art thou angry, and why hast thy countenance fallen? If thou dost well, shalt thou not receive? but if ill, shall not sin be with thee?" (Gen. iv. 7.)

"Present at the door!" Think of the consequence of our sins as waiting for us, following our footsteps, not to be dodged or put off unless they are in some way fully satisfied.

We know that God is a Judge—a just Judge—and will render to all according to their works, and we are told

by St. Paul, who wrote to the Galatians vi. 7: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked. For what things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap. For he that soweth in his flesh, of the flesh also shall reap corruption. But he that soweth in the spirit, of the spirit shall reap Life everlasting." And again: "The wages of sin is death."

We should frequently dwell on these solemn warnings, that we may not lose sight of our responsibilities. We are naturally inclined to put our sins out of our sight as soon as possible, and to deceive ourselves in thinking that as we have forgotten them, we shall no longer be held accountable for them. But they are present at the door! We can no more escape them than we can our shadow. Our Lord constantly compares sin to a debt which we owe to God. "One was brought to Him who owed Him 10,000 talents." (St. Luke vii. 41.) And then again: "A certain creditor had two debtors, one owed Him 500 pence, and the other 50." (St. Luke vii. 41.) In the Lord's prayer we are taught constantly to repeat, "Forgive us our debts—our trespasses—as we forgive those who trespass against us."

In the world, men and society pursue debts, and in various ways make them mindful of their obligations. Since this is expected, why should we not realize that the God of eternal justice will seek satisfaction from those indebted to Him? Even friends are required to pay their debts. When Moses and David sinned, though they both were high in God's favor, they had to pay the penalty of their transgressions and make satisfaction for their sins. God is not a respecter of persons. If we do render satisfaction here to God for sins committed, we must remember that there is a prison in the next world, out of which no man can go until he has paid the last farthing.—Catholic Universe.

## A PARENTAL DUTY.

We heard a mother say the other day: "Oh, John is the fine, good boy. He's never out of my sight long. He's always reading." And as the good mother's face glowed with pride in her boy, we could not help thinking that the mere fact that a boy is a great reader is no absolutely infallible sign that he is good. The question is not, does he read? But what does he read? If a boy eats heartily of chaff or sawdust or some other stuff with little or no nourishment in it, he is likely to grow strong and able? If he devours the matter with what appetite, bread that is poisoned or meat that is tainted, is he going to escape the effects of it? Of course not. In the same way, therefore, the boy who pours into his mind the vile, obscene story, or the basely suggestive joke, or the article making a mock of religion, or the daily paper's murder or divorce "sensational," is going to suffer in his soul from the things he reads.

Hence it behooves every parent with any thought of the boy's future to see to it that the household is kept supplied with good Catholic literature, and that the dime novels and the pink police sheets, and the yellow journals are entirely tabooed. There is nothing more sensitive to every impression than the mind of a child. Soon enough the children will be grown up and beyond the reach of the parents' authority and care. Parents then should try to make home a place of blessedness, a place where only what is good and wholesome will be received, a place where the mind as well as the body of the child will be fed with things that are good and clean and nourishing. The child who reads everything he can lay his hands on is as foolish as if he were to eat everything he got hold of without regard to whether it was wholesome or poisonous. Yet there are some children who are just exactly such omnivorous readers. It is the parents' duty to keep out of the reach of such eager young minds reading that would injure them, and it is a corresponding duty, whenever possible, to supply them with literature which will not hurt, but help them to become good Christian men and women.—S. H. Review.

## ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI AND THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC.

MINISTRY AND LIFE OF THE SERAPH AS A FACTOR IN THIS LAND'S DISCOVERY AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT.

In an article on "St. Francis, the Apostle of Unity," contributed to the July number of The Revue Catholique des Eglises, by Rev. Paul James Francis, of the Protestant Episcopal community known as the Society of the Atonement established at Graymoor (Garistown), N. Y., we find the following interesting passage:

"As an American citizen I venture to say that the discovery of the Western Hemisphere and its present status as a land to which the oppressed and poor of Europe flock at the rate of a million a year is a consequence of the ministry and life of St. Francis in much the same way that the possession of the promised land by the Israelites hundreds of years after his death was a consequence of the faith and obedience of Abraham. The stamp of predestination was as much upon Christopher Columbus as it was upon Joshua. The name given him at baptism foretold his mission; he was the son of St. Francis, a member of the Third Order. After years of baffled hops, when ridicule and rejection had given birth to despair, another Franciscan Tertiary, the Spanish Queen, supplied the purchase money for the ships, and so saved the cause. And the inspiration of Isabella was her confessor, yet another Franciscan, John Perez, guardian of the Friars Minor of La Rabida. Yes, and the very sailors that manned the ships were Tertiaries of St. Francis. They alone had faith enough to adventure their lives on what the world thought a madman's enterprise. Again we are to remember that the first Christian evangelists of the New World were Franciscan missionaries. Lastly, it was the democratic principles preached five hundred years before St. Francis in Assisi, and after-



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wards disseminated everywhere by his disciples, which found additional expression in the Declaration of American Independence. And is it not a little extraordinary that July Fourth, the anniversary of the Declaration, is also the Feast of the Dedication of All Franciscan Churches? In other words, the religious institute of St. Francis and its political outcome in the birth of the American Republic are celebrated on one and the same day.

And it is here that the political reformers of this generation need to learn an all-important lesson from the great reformer of seven hundred years ago. He did not make the mistake which so many secularists are making now, antagonizing two things which God wills to work in concert and concord—the Church of Jesus Christ and the Christian State. Francis was a Christian and a Catholic from the core of his heart to the tip of his fingers. And he was a social reformer, not in spite of his being a Catholic and a cleric, but because he was first the follower of the Divine Master and the loyal, obedient son of that Church which the Lord founded on the rock of Peter. And, moreover, it was the Church in the person of the Vicar of Christ that stood behind the social reforms of Francis and shielded his Third Order from the opposition of the barons who would certainly have crushed the militia of the Poorfolk had they not been so upheld.

## DRINK AND DEGENERACY.

Writing in the Etudes Franciscaines (Paris) on the subject of "Drink and Degeneracy," Doctor Swebel, a well-known French physician, makes no attempt to conceal his opinion that the anti-Christian revolt which has taken place in France within our days, may be traced to the sinister evils of drink, which, bringing as it never fails to do, a train of physical diseases in its wake, such as consumption and insanity, has the inevitable effect of weakening the mind not only toward all intellectual, but more so, even to every spiritual influence. "Alcoholism is," he says, "the demon of disorganization, the destroyer of the family. It is not only the duty of the priest and the educator to incessantly and aggressively wage war by act and word upon it, but it is the duty of writers to continually place before the public the concrete mathematical facts regarding its ravages."

The doctor goes on to point out that the scourge knows no particular country, nor any especial class. It is, however, worse in France than in any other country, and since Athens takes its toll most easily in minds that are most enfeebled, it appears a logical assumption, indeed the most reasonable, that France is now paying for the grossness of her inebriety as a race, by a lapse from the path of true reason, namely religion, it being an incontrovertible fact "that alcoholism and atheism are the closest of kin." To quote Doctor Swebel:

"In France the scourge of alcoholism is ever ominously on the increase. In the countries near us, it may be said to be stationary, such as in Holland, England and Italy, while it is slowly losing its hold on the people of Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and the United States. . . . Alcoholism first begins with the individual, then strikes the family, ultimately affecting society and the nation. Now, it has been wrongly said that alcoholism diminished the number of marriages. Statistics unfortunately prove, however, that it possesses not even this saving grace, for marriage, it is shown, increases in the same ratio as alcoholism. The lamentable result of this is that not only are the children born of such marriages, pre-disposed by heredity, to drink, but the wives, owing to domestic unhappiness, are likewise driven to drown their woes in alcohol. What can the result be, if not a lapse from religious duties, a carelessness as to the education and future of the children, in short, not only a disinclination toward all things spiritual and sacred, but, as the results upon the mind itself, a mental inability to understand the necessity of such matters. Alcohol is

## LIQUOR AND TOBACCO HABITS

A. McTAGGART, M.D., C.M. 75 Yonge Street, Toronto, Canada. References: "The People's Health," a standing and personal integrity permitted by Sir W. R. Meredith, Chief Justice, Hon. G. W. Ross, ex-Premier of Ontario, Rev. John F. D. D., Victoria College, Rev. Father Tealy, President of St. Michael's College, Toronto. Right Rev. A. Sweetman, Bishop of Toronto. Rev. Wm. McLaren, D.D., Principal Knox College, Toronto. Hon. Thomas Coffey, Senator, CATHOLIC RECORD, London. Dr. McTaggart's vegetable remedies for the liquor and tobacco habits are host to, safe, inexpensive home treatments. No hypodermic injections, no publicity, no loss of time from business, and a certainty of cure. One consultation or correspondence invited.

the destroyer of faith: It is the poison of the mind and soul. . . .

"Here are some of the results produced by it, during the past ten years, in the course of which Alcoholism has most especially displayed itself and the scourge of drink has, with an even step, become most virulent. Taking the average, we find that among women, miscarriages have risen from 6 per 100 to 12; that still-born children have increased in number by 50 per cent. It is shown also by statistics, that the families of drunkards are more prolific than those of non-abstainers, by 25 per cent; that their offspring are, however, either tuberculous, stunted, epileptic or insane. It is further demonstrated that child mortality arising from the intermarriage of alcoholic parents, exceeds that among normal individuals, by 54 per cent; that 24 in every 100 children are affected by epilepsy or nervous ailments. Here is a case in point cited by Doctor Legrain: An alcoholic couple had 16 children, 10 of whom died before the age of 5, 1 a chronic epileptic, and 5 others all subject to nervous or hysterical ailments. From the effects of alcohol alone, France loses yearly 150,000 children under 1 year old, and 500,000 children under 10 years old!

"The degeneracy among the children or descendants of drunkards is appalling to contemplate. As Gladstone said, 'alcohol is not satisfied to slay; it also degrades.' The above mentioned expert, Legrain, found among 145 descendants of alcoholic subjects, 4 idiots, 14 imbeciles, 12 weaklings—amounting to some 41 degenerates in 100. What, then is to be expected from a race so accursed and so enslaved? In prison statistics, it is found that of every hundred convicts the following proportion are either alcoholic subjects, or else the children of alcoholic parents: Murderers, 53 per cent; incendiaries, 57 per cent; thieves, 70 per cent.

"These statistics suffice to show that the life of any nation which encourages the drink traffic always remains in danger. Each country possesses an intellectual and moral capital which it is bound to keep at its highest level. Since hereditary alcoholism produces, necessarily, physical and moral degeneracy, the duty that is incumbent on every State clear and self-evident. No truer words were ever spoken than the old saying of Aemyl: 'The drunkard never produced anything worth lasting consideration.'—N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

The Holy Sacrament of the altar, wherein the Son of God made man dwell, is being better known, more lovingly appreciated, more effectively sought. Let the same revival of faith, the same increase in knowledge, the same manifestation of effects accompany the seeking of the Holy Spirit. The bringing of both within the heart of the faithful will secure the advent of the Kingdom of God on earth.—Cornelius P. Macs, Bishop of Covington, U. S. A.

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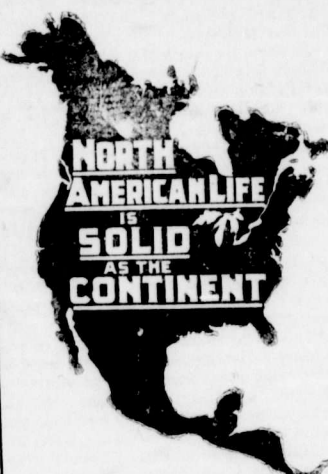
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