

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. WILLIAM DEMOUY, D. D.

PASSION SUNDAY

THE STRENGTH OF THE CHURCH
 "Jesus said to them: Amen, Amen, I say to you, before Abraham was made, I am. They took up stones therefore, to cast at Him, but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple." John VIII, 58, 59.

How much like the fate of Christ on many occasions has been, and is, the fate of the Church. She, like Him, must proceed on her course in the midst of enemies. Her path is one of thorns to the body and often to the soul. She must suffer contradiction, must be misinterpreted in her intentions, and must bear calumny, hatred, and revenge. There have been times when to one who loved her were opposed six who hated her: when one served her, six attempted her destruction.

Her children at times have been forbidden to breathe the free open air of God's earth, even their existence has been declared a menace to the State. With might and main have whole nations sought her destruction; but her Calvary never has come, nor will it come in future, for she is as permanent as the earth itself. She has been forced many times to travel a road that would have led to a Calvary, were it not for Christ's help promised to Peter, her first head, when He said that the gates of hell should not prevail against her.

Would we wish it to be otherwise? Certainly our desire should be that every human being should enter her fold, and one of our charges is to preach the Gospel to every creature. But, though we have this desire, and we are entering upon the work of evangelization more and more every day, still we realize from Christ's words that, like Him, we ever shall have our enemies and see our doctrines on many occasions ridiculed. But in this is a great part of our glory on earth—"to glory in Christ and Christ crucified." Not that we are glad man's sins forced our Saviour to so cruel a death, but because we can suffer a little, like unto Him—realizing that His sufferings and death pleased God, and that our tribulations and persecutions here will be a great means of bringing us to God, our Father.

No other church has suffered, nor will suffer, like the Catholic Church. The reason for this suffering is that she has the truth as given her by Christ, which her children will die to defend. Those outside the Church, if they have any of the truths of Christ, have them in part only, and not as coming from Him originally, but by adoption. To them is not given the command to resist unto death, and many times they will yield, we will not say to wickedness, but to customs and changes of the times, contrary to the stern, immutable law of God. The prevalence of divorce is a very good example of this spirit of accommodation to the times. Truly, many ministers protest against it; but, in fact, every church existing, except the Catholic Church, will allow divorced persons to remarry. The Catholic Church lost thousands upon thousands of her children, who afterward became her enemies and her persecutors, because she forbade divorce and remarriage, even as God forbids them. A church that can accommodate itself to the changes of the times—changes, of course, that are not in accordance with God's law—and can adapt its doctrines to the wishes of man, never has been and never will be persecuted, in the proper sense of the word. Some have suffered, but not because of God's real word and law, which they did not have, but because of doctrines recognized as false by the Church given the custodianship of the word of God. Of course, it must be lamented, as must any similar suffering brought on by man. But in this case persecution is not persecution because of adherence to Christ's teaching, as is always the case when Catholics are tormented.

The propaganda against the Church today is of the vilest kind, but there is one thing principally that keeps it going, and it is mammon. That the fight is unjust, unworthy, is easily seen from the tactics employed and from the ends intended. There is not a positive system opposed to us, nor one that is capable of erecting a worthy institution. There are simply a few hatebearing individuals and societies of egoistic, ignorant, never-forgiving men and women, who are spreading lies and endeavoring to incite others to persecute us. I speak of this country. Even if they could accomplish their perfidious work, one easily can see that such persons could do no good for the community afterward. Passion does not die with one victory; it seeks other fields to conquer. At any rate, how futile these attacks will be, the records of history pointing to failures of thousands of such attempts in the past, clearly indicate. The arch-enemies of the Church in days gone by have long ago appeared before the judgment seat; but the Church continues to wave the same banner of Christ, and to live a vigorous life.

We do not know what greater persecutions we yet may have to undergo. But let us prepare for them now, for in some shape or form, they are sure to come. Parents now have the responsibility of their children's future. They must be fitting them to be Christ-like sufferers, when the trying days come. How are they to do this?

By setting them good example, by seeing that they scrupulously obey the Church, and by giving them, from their earliest years, a good Catholic education. The Catholic who is armed with God's grace, and whose mind is illuminated with true, Christian knowledge, will form an impregnable barrier to the attacks of any persecutor, no matter how strong. He who grows up without these blessings will, when attacked, faint and die.

GENERAL INTENTION FOR APRIL

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS POPE PIUS XI.

WOMEN'S ACTIVITIES IN CATHOLIC WORKS

The loyalty and the devotedness of our Catholic womanhood to the Church and its works offer one of the most inspiring sights in the history of Christianity. Since the days of the Divine Master, "to whom holy women ministered," Catholic women have always been most active in His service. They stand today by His Church as they stood by Him during His mortal life. Their fidelity is ever the same, and time has not quenched the fires of their untiring zeal. During the long protracted night of persecution they kept the watch on Calvary, and they are still the first to herald the coming dawn of Easter.

The innate piety and devotedness of their sex, the spirituality of their more refined nature, and the unselfishness of their hearts give to Catholic women in the Church the same place they hold so beautifully in the Gospel. The General Intention of the League of the Sacred Heart for the month of April, *Women's activities in Catholic works*, emphasizes this truth and offers an opportunity to stress its importance in the everyday life of the Church.

We are not speaking here of that vast army of noble and holy women who, living in the cloisters, hospitals, orphanages, and schools, have dedicated their life to the great causes of prayer, penance, charity and education. One has only to read the beautiful book, "Our Nuns," recently published by Father Lord, S. J., to have an insight into the value of their contribution to the Church and to humanity. What indeed would be the world today were our devoted nuns suddenly withdrawn from the various fields of action. Unfortunately, we of the household of the faith take too much for granted the self-sacrificing devotedness of their lives. And is it not because, in the past Catholic women have unloaded too easily their responsibilities on the shoulders of our nuns, that today, realizing their obligations, they are reaching out on all sides to share with eagerness in the works of the Church at large?

Illimitable and innumerable are the opportunities given to Catholic womanhood to work for the Church. The field of Catholic action is as wide and as broad as charity, its divine inspiration and practical expression. For action that is not prompted and accompanied by Christian charity is not real, genuine Catholic action. Every sphere of Catholic activity, be it religious, missionary, educational, social, well-comes the intelligent cooperation and enlightened zeal of the Catholic woman in the service of her Master and of His Church.

The parish is the natural centre of Catholic life. Around it naturally gravitate the activities of a Catholic woman. The Altar Society finds in her a willing worker. Like the Virgin Mother, her noble ideal, she delights in preparing the swaddling clothes for the coming of our Eucharistic Lord in His sacrament of love. With what pleasure and with what taste will she not decorate the House of God!

The success, social and financial, of parish organizations chiefly depends on the whole-souled cooperation of our devoted women. Men may give their money, but the women give, with their money, their time and their energies. Their contribution is more personal. What would a pastor do without the active Marthas of his flock?

The mission field at home and afar has also for our Catholic women a strong attraction and a subtle charm. What splendid vistas open up before their eyes! What long avenues await their active zeal! "The Ladies' Auxiliary of Church Extension," the "Sisters of Service," "The Missions in China and Africa," are so many open doors inviting the Catholic women of the land to do something for the extension of God's kingdom on earth. What invaluable service they can render to our missionaries! While these soldiers of Christ's militant Church are on the firing line, they, by their prayers and their generosity, support and comfort them. Could there be anything more attractive for the Catholic heart of a woman than to mother the greatest of all causes on earth. And the examples of the tremendous activities of women for missionary endeavors in the various non-Catholic bodies should serve as a stimulant and incentive to those of the true and only Fold.

The services rendered by our Catholic women in the social realm are in a way more tangible and direct. The "home" is the mother-cell of society. The vindication of

the home by the protection of the sacredness of the matrimonial bond and by the observance of its natural and divine law is the supreme duty of the hour. When divorce, birth-control and licentiousness are rampant through the high and the low ranks of society, Catholic women by the example of their lives, by the modesty of their dress, and by their public advocacy of Christian principles, in season and out of season, will stand as an impregnable bastion against the renewed attacks of a pleasure-seeking and passion-sated world. No greater service can be rendered to the Church and society by Catholic women at the present hour. To a large extent public morality is what they make it.

Social service is another field in which the activities of Catholic women may be usefully spent. To them it will be but the practice of an enlightened and well-guided charity. For, social service is nothing else but the practical recognition of problems of society and the intelligent and systematic effort to solve them. The complexities of our modern life, particularly in our large populated centres, have created an ever re-occurring demand for services of all kinds. Baby Welfare, Recreational Centres, Settlement Work, Big Sister Movements, Girls' Clubs, Rosary Halls, Hostels, Convalescent Homes, Reception and Care of Immigrants, represent various forms of social activities wherein Catholic women can give something of that motherly instinct which God has placed in their hearts. Let them remember that if they do not take up this work, others will, and that to the detriment of the faith of their charges. We have to face conditions as they are. Principles remain unchanged, but policies of action vary with time and place, and therefore need re-adjustment. Social service, well-understood, is an urgent necessity of the day.

Catholic women, as such, have also their contribution to make to our national issues. The Catholic Women's League is a praiseworthy effort in that direction. To unite Catholic womanhood from the Atlantic to the Pacific and to bring its influence to bear upon the moulding of public opinion and the shaping of national policies which affect the home, the Church, and society at large, this is the praiseworthy object of the League in Canada as in other countries. The awakening of the consciousness of their weighty responsibilities to the Church and the Nation is one of the most encouraging features of this movement. Let us hope that the high purpose of this Catholic and Canadian organization shall never fail to prevail within its ranks in spite of the human frailties which are always liable to endanger its very existence or at least cripple its efficiency.

During its fleeting years, life is only worth the service we give to God and to His Church. Loud and incessant, therefore, is the call of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to enlist our service in every cause dear to Him. To answer this call every Catholic woman will follow the example of Martha and Mary, those dear and faithful friends of the Saviour. With Mary she will listen in silence and in prayer to the beatings and yearnings of His Heart; with Martha she will be ever solicitous for His needs and mindful of everything and everyone dear to Him.

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COURT BANS DANCING DURING HOLY YEAR

By Mrs. Enrico Pucel

Rome, Feb. 9.—The profound religious significance attributed to the Holy Year of Jubilee here is indicated by the decision that there will be no dancing at Italian Court functions during the year.

This decision became known when the first Court Reception was held recently. Following the reception there was a concert in the Royal Salon for about an hour, as is the custom. After the concert, had previous customs been observed, the Queen would have invited the guests to dance. Instead of doing this, however, Her Majesty remained chatting with the guests for half an hour longer and then dismissed them with the remark that during the Holy Year the Court will not dance.

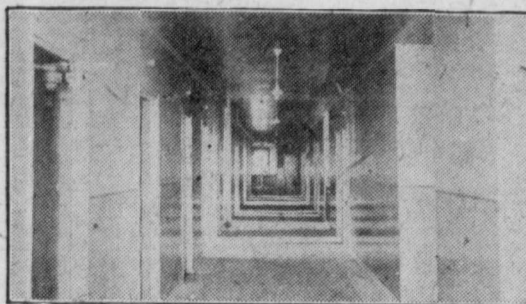
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ST. ANTHONY'S GRAYMOOR NOVENA

Next to the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, the saint most frequently invoked by Catholics in every part of the world is St. Anthony, the Wonder-Worker of Padua. Scarcely a Catholic Church can be found in America which does not contain a statue of St. Anthony, which itself is evidence of his popularity among the masses of the faithful.

Perhaps the most famous shrine of St. Anthony in the United States is that of the Friars of the Atonement in Church of St. Francis on the Atonement Mountain, Graymoor, near Peekskill, N. Y.

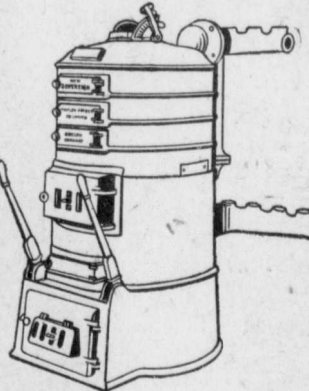
The church of St. Francis was erected by the Friars in 1911. On the very day the statue of St. Anthony was placed on the pedestal in the corner of the sanctuary, Rev. Paul James Francis, S. J., founder of the Society of the Atonement, received a letter from a benefactress of the community saying that her five year old son, Anthony, was very sick, and entreating the Friars to invoke St. Anthony for his recovery. The letter was placed at the foot of the statue. In a short time another letter was received, the anxious mother sending a thank-offering for the speedy recovery of Baby Anthony.

From that day forward, in ever increasing numbers, petitions were received by the Friars of the Atonement asking them to invoke the Wonder-Worker of Padua, until there developed what is called the Perpetual Novena of St. Anthony on the Mount of Atonement.

It is called perpetual, because a new Novena begins on every Tuesday, and as every such Novena is completed on the Wednesday of the following week, it necessarily results in these Novenas interlocking like the links of a chain; and so it has become to be known as the St. Anthony's Perpetual Novena.

Not only from every part of the United States, but even from countries across the sea, testimonials of his powerful intercession and success have appeared in this paper, which have been sent by grateful clients of the saint in thanksgiving for favors they have obtained through having recourse to him in the Graymoor Novena.

Those wishing to participate in the Graymoor Novena should address:
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