

FIVE MINUTE SERMON
FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

THE POVERTY OF CHRIST
("For after all these things do the heathen seek."
St. Matt. vi. 33.)

In this day's gospel Our Blessed Lord would teach us that the difference between the objects for which they live. And He lays down the fundamental law of His kingdom, that if the chief object of one's life is the enjoyment of the things everywhere about us—eating and drinking and money and lands—he has therein a mark of belonging to the kingdom of this world. To belong to Our Lord's kingdom we must live for none of these things. We may, indeed, have and use the things of this world, but for higher purposes than the world itself can offer; as far as any enjoyment in them is concerned, it is too trifling a matter to engage our serious pursuit.

Yet, brethren, is not the whole Christian world absorbed in seeking after what should be the heathen's peculiar treasure? Is not this the most anxious inquiry, How shall I get rich? Is not the possession of riches deemed the most enviable happiness? Is it not the best praise of an individual that he is prosperous and of a nation that it is wealthy? What a serious lesson it is, therefore that Our Lord expresses His contempt for what is deemed the height of human wisdom among us—a contempt no less profound because so easily expressed! If—He as much as says—if you and I are to make choice of beauty, you may choose King Solomon's wardrobe with all its jewels, and I will take the new blown lily; if you talk to me of foresight and skill in the business of life, you may admire the successful speculator, but the little sparrow is My model.

And Our Lord's life was fully in accord with His doctrine. For it was of set purpose that He saw fit to lack those things that nearly all men covet most; that He was the child of a poor maiden, and the apprentice of a country carpenter; that He was a wanderer barefoot and needy about Judea, yet at the time the only begotten Son of the Lord of all majesty; that He was seemingly a tried and convicted malefactor, and died naked and all but alone upon the gibbet, yet all the time the immortal King of ages.

The truth is that this unhappy overvaluing of the more lowly things of life is a fault deeply rooted in our fallen nature. That the eager pursuit of wealth is not compatible with God's service; that it is the peculiar province of the heathen who indeed know that we know that the human soul is too noble a being to expend its dearest action to purchase any perishable thing whatever. Yet very many persons who deem themselves good enough Christians are quite proud of their success in the heathen's way of life. And many other Christians fall into down right despair because God has deprived them of the things that "the heathen seek." Far be it from us indeed to underestimate the burden of poverty, or to say that it is an easy thing to suffer it. God knows that it is a terribly hard thing to be poor; to see one's family suffer actual hunger; to wander about the streets with no roof to cover one; to lie helplessly sick and be too poor to get proper food or medicine. But on the other hand it is wrong to act under such circumstances as if all were lost, or as if God hated us; that it is the very time to arouse one's faith in God's love and one's reliance on His promises; to seek His consolation in the holy sacraments; to raise one's eyes hourly to His countenance by fervent prayer that he may relieve the burden, or at any rate grant patience to bear it.

Oh! how few there are who gladly and heartily choose the Kingdom of God and His justice in preference to the treasures of this world! How few there are who do so even grudgingly and doubtfully!

Yet the doctrine stands: to labor for a postponed reward is the Christian's life, and for a present reward the heathen's. To pass by a seen and present joy for the Christian's wisdom. To trust the voice of an unseen benefactor—in a word, to walk in the darkness of a supernatural faith—is the fundamental virtue of our religion.

TEMPERANCE

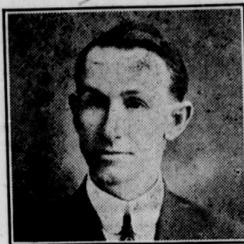
DEATH OF A DRUNKARD

As a priest, I have been attending death-beds for the last twenty years. I have seen death approach in his majesty, in every form that he could assume. I have seen him as he came to lay his icy hand upon the heart of the young man, and still it into the calmness of death. I have seen him approach like a gentle woman whose coming was expected, whose face was wreathed in smiles, who came only to take the soul, and by an easy transition, bring it into the presence of Jesus Christ and leave it there.

I have seen death approach, like a thief in the night, and steal behind the strong man, and simply lay his icy hand upon him, and bear him away, without another thought. But never, never have I seen the terrible grim conqueror assume all the horrors of hell, and bring with him in his train, before the very eyes of the sinner whose sands of life were passing away, all the terrors of that hell

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that awaited him—never have I seen him approach surrounded by devils, except when he came to the bedside of the drunkard, dying in his sin! Oh, if the greatest drunkard, the greatest of all slaves to that vice that ever lived upon this earth, were only to hear what I have heard, and what I would heartily recommend them to all sufferers from Asthma, which I believe is caused or aggravated by Indigestion!"

I remember of being called in to the bedside of a man who was dying from excess of drinking. I went into the room, indeed, not without fear. Four men were holding him down in the bed. It seemed to him, in his delirious mind, that in holding him down in the bed, they were sinking him, inch by inch, into hell! He looked around him with his awful terror-stricken eyes. He cried: "I burn! I burn! the blood is boiling in my veins! Devils! will you not let me rise from this bed of torment and of flames! Will nobody help me!"

He went on while his great chest was heaving, as he writhed like one possessed by a thousand devils, to get away from their grasp. He saw devils around him. Sinking on the pillow where he was lying, and endeavoring to shake them off, he said: "Save me! save me! here—there are seventy-seven devils! Oh where shall I fly from this hell around me!" This was he when I entered the room. His shrieks were terrible to hear. Truly the tone of the despair of hell was in his voice. I came over and laid my hand upon his fevered head. Keeping perfectly calm, I tried, if there were any mesmeric influence in me, to give peace to him.

For a moment he grew calm; he knew me. "Ah! Father Tom, what do you say? Yes, I am here, you tell me, 'the Blessed Sacrament?' 'Oh, begone, begone!' He is not my God! I will not have Him, or belong to Him. There are those around me who will take me away forever! Begone!"

With these words he heaved one mighty sigh—his heart broke with the excess of his terrible delirium—and he fell out of the hands of those who held him, a corpse—his last breath a blasphemy. Many a time and oft—for I knew him well and intimately—many a time and oft I had said to him: "My friend, you are every day preparing for the curse that will come upon you with your last hour, upon your death-bed. You are preparing, by a drunkard's life, to meet a drunkard's death." He did not listen to me. That drunkard's death he died; and I greatly fear that an eternity of sorrow will not be enough to repair the loss of his immortal soul.—Father Tom Burke, O. P.

WORDS OF A LEADER

We protest and cry against Socialism; but through Socialism we have lost not one hundredth the members that we have lost through the evils of strong drink. Divorce is condemned from our pulpits and press; but for every home that has been wrecked by divorce, more than a thousand have been wrecked by intemperance. Over the back fences, and neighborhood strife is engendered; but intemperance causes more quarrels, bitterness and hatred than this contention in religious of a cushion. We are contending against trifles, fighting the air like wind-mills, and wasting time and energy while there are real evils for us to battle against. . . . Temperance people should work for temperance, and go further. You should urge

your legislators to pass prohibition legislation, so that the blessings of temperance may be assured to your posterity forever.—Bishop Canevin, A FAILURE

At the meeting of the Anti alcohol Congress in Berlin, it was stated by Dr. Delbruck of Bremen, the president of the congress, that beer-drinking as a means of combating alcoholism has been clearly shown to be a failure. It leads often to the use of distilled liquors, but in itself it produces all the evils of whiskey. Of 149 patients who were treated in a North German private asylum for drunkards, 41 had been alcoholizing," said Dr. Delbruck, "by drinking spirits, 30 by wine drinking and 78—or more than half—by the excessive consumption of beer. The belief that delirium tremens was unknown among beer drinkers was a mistake. It was impossible to convey by statistics the extent of the misery caused by what he described as 'beer alcoholism.'"—Father Tom Burke, O. P.

HONOR LAST OF THE TYBURN MARTYRS

BEAUTIFUL EDIFICE AT DROGHEDA CONSECRATED BY CARDINAL LOGUE

Little more than two hundred years ago Oliver Plunket, St. Patrick's successor as Archbishop of Armagh, was hanged by the common hangman, at Tyburn, through hatred of the faith. The churches of his diocese have been wasted, and there followed on his death the long dark night of over a hundred years of the penal laws. Now, in the spot where he ministered, one of the noblest specimens of ecclesiastical architecture erected for many years in Ireland marks his memory and was solemnly consecrated on June 29, by his successor, who is a Prince of the Church. Thus has Irish faith triumphed and gathered again the "scattered stones of the sanctuary;" thus has God, in His own good will and time, brought about the rebuilding of "the walls of Jerusalem."

The consecration of the beautiful Oliver Plunket Memorial Church, St. Peter's, Drogheda, which has been erected mainly through the exertions of the Right Rev. Monsignor Segrave, by His Eminence Cardinal Logue, was followed by a procession through the streets of the historic town as an act of faith and of thanksgiving for the events commemorated by the noble structure. All the confraternities, sodalities, trade societies, school children and the Mayor Corporation participated. The procession, after proceeding through the principal thoroughfares, returned to the space in front of the church, where Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament was given from the portals.

SERMON BY ARCHBISHOP GLENNON

The sermon on the occasion was delivered by the Most Reverend John J. Glennon, D.D., Archbishop of St. Louis, who, referring to the feast day with its martyrs, SS. Peter and Paul, went on to discuss the persecution and martyrdom in Ireland as follows: "But of this vast army of martyrs who during these long years of persecution have illustrated the faith and heroism of Ireland no one has yet found a place in the accredited calendar of the Church. This is more than passing strange, for, as we have seen, it is not the lack of noble living and heroic dying, not a doubt concerning the sanctity of their lives, the worthiness of their motives or the completeness of their sacrifice. Why should it be? Some may say the Irish persecutions were in part political, and that politics must find no place in the process of canonization, which is quite true, especially if the politics of the oppressor were to prevail with a consistency in creasing away, and the politics of the victim were crushed out with his life. But such is not the real reason in the delayed causes of Irish martyrs. It rather appears to me as if the reason were that the 'causes' can in few instances be adequately presented—few documents remain—identities are lost. With Catholic Ireland the martyrdoms were so complete that they who would present a chronicle or preserve a memory were not left to tell the tale. All we have is that they died massacred by English soldiers, generally with no kindly process of law and with no kindly witness to tell the story of how they died. And such I suppose they shall remain until there be an 'All Saints' Day' for Ireland when, with permission and approval of Holy Church, we may group together in one great mass of flaming red and commemorate the sacrifice of the numberless and unnamed martyrs of Ireland."

THE LAST OF THE TYBURN MARTYRS
There is one such, however, of whom the record remains, who, because of the special sanctities that surrounded his life—the trials he underwent—the honors he achieved and the death he died, deserves a special mention, and, as we believe, will have a special place in Irish hagiology. This is Oliver Plunket, the last of the Tyburn martyrs. He was born in the County of Meath in the year 1629 and died July, 1681. Of gentle birth and gentler nature, his years were destined to be stormy and he himself would be the storm centre. Reared and trained in his earlier years by the devoted abbot of St. Mary's, in Dublin, he felt called to the priesthood, where he knew that every day would be a trial and every act entail, perhaps, a forfeiture of his life, yet to have the privilege



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to serve his countrymen or die for his faith he willingly went abroad to seek the knowledge his native land denied him. In Rome, whither he journeyed through trials such as St. Paul recounts among the perils of his apostolate, he found teachers and friends who, themselves not forgetful of the sorrows and martyrdoms of the Mother Church, knew how to sympathize with the downtrodden of all lands, and particularly with the constant sorrows of the persecuted Irish. Attaining a high degree there of piety and proficient in all knowledge, a student of great abilities, a professor of varied and distinguished knowledge, he returned to Ireland with the benediction of the Holy See and the mandate to take the mitre of St. Patrick and to minister in the primordial See at Armagh to the scattered remnants of a devoted people.

HIS LIFE AND DEATH

"The story of his struggles is long and interesting. How, between the different outbreaks he was found establishing schools, collecting and consoling the people and confirming the children. How from this his apostolic work he was driven into the vastness to live without companionship or food or protection. How through it all he sought to establish the law of God and all he could of the law of man, repressing crime even when the victims were themselves criminal, respecting power even when power meant oppression, instilling respect for a government even when that government did seek to encompass his life. How, through all these difficulties, continuous correspondence therewith, telling Mother Church of his sufferings and his love. How when unworthy countrymen of his own sought to separate the Irish Church from the Mother Church, appealing thereto with the insidious arguments of the Jansenist and Gallican, he told and preached to all their duty to remain with the one Catholic Church and to die rather than betray it. How these same men served his enemies by swearing falsely, deying out his transportation from Dublin, where he had some friends, but many enemies, to London, which had for him no friends to welcome him, no witnesses to testify for him. He, as the Blessed Master, must tread the wine press alone.

"The Chief Justice condemned him to death, and he was hanged, drawn and quartered July 11, 1681."

"THE DARK CRIME OF TREASON"

"There are some words and phrases spoken by jurists and statesmen, around which many mock heroes have been written, for which innocent lives have been destroyed, under which countless crimes have been committed. The 'majesty of law' is one of them, and 'the dark crime of treason' is another.

"Oliver Plunket was condemned because, as the Chief Justice president said, in delivering sentence, he was guilty of high treason against the government, in propagating the Catholic religion in Ireland, 'than which there is nothing more displeasing to God or more pernicious to mankind in the world.'"

"It is quite unnecessary for me to defend Oliver Plunket of the crime of treason; but what I want to say is that in all the world of to-day or of history, there never has been a nation as free from or which detested more the crime of treason as has the Irish nation."

"Furthermore, that there never has been a nation that more highly regarded the majesty of law, or sought or gave a more willing obedience thereto than the Irish nation. I say so to day, and before the altar, and I speak, as I believe, advisedly. I have studied Irish history—I have witnessed their service under many flags—I have seen their exiled sons placed where the test was whether law should reign or anarchy—I have followed them in the halls of legislation and to seats where justice reigned, and from these high places I have turned back to humbler walks where the 'common' people are found, and from the highest to the lowest, whether Lord Chief Justice of England or a presiding Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, at home or abroad, I have found in the heart of the laborer who served and the lord who ruled passionate love of justice—a high and holy regard for law and order and a scrupulous regard for the equal rights of their fellow-men.

UNDER LAWS THAT WERE UNJUST AND INHUMAN

"Your ancient history is largely the story of the Brehon Laws, which, represented at once the justice and prosperity of the nation. The English invasion, lawless in its inception, proceeded to set aside the Brehon Laws and refused the protection of the common law of England. It was their method and best excuse to abolish law first and then to punish the people for their lawlessness. Yet during all these dreary years, in spite of confiscation and devastation, though deprived of their lands and driven from their homes, the Irish people would willingly obey the law if it were established with even a semblance of justice. Instead, these laws, by their injustice and inhumanity, made their observance impossible and drove the nation, as was the enemies' purpose, into the last trenches, where, if strong enough to revolt, they were punished with death, and if not, they were left to die from starvation. And when the cloud lifted and better days appeared for Ireland, how earnestly and how patiently did she lift her bruised hands asking for justice—the right to live humanly, and how she waited, oppressed and depressed, while all the world moved on.

"And last and latest, see to day the millions of Ireland, and of Irish blood, calmly and patiently waiting the final supremacy of law in their own land, without reproach and without fear, believing that a just God guides the nation. The Irish people have reached at last that position where justice, fair play and equal rights appear to have become their long denied heritage, and they who loved and labored for a thousand years under a system that was infamous and under laws that were unjust and inhuman now see justice, humanity and nationality restored. So that at last we hope to see law and love go together, supreme, in our nation's upbuilding."—N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

REVERENCE IN CHURCH

One of the distinguished marks between Catholics and our separated brethren is the reverence which we show in church. Not only is the Catholic Church a place wherein to worship God, it is the abiding place of Jesus Christ in the sacrament of love. When, therefore, we enter a church, however humble and unpretentious it may be, we forget its poverty and remember only that within its tabernacle dwells the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, the God Who made all things out of nothing, the Redeemer Who offered up His awful sufferings and death to save our souls from eternal damnation. Yet sometimes in church we act as if forgot in whose presence we are. It is not an uncommon thing to witness people indulging in gossip, smiles, and other indications of levity. In all our churches these regrettable incidents may be witnessed. Ladies in leaving church after Holy Mass gossip and nod to friends while walking down the aisles, and recently in a local church an usher might have been observed chewing gum while taking up the collection. Actions like these display gross disrespect for the house of God, where only the greatest reverence should be manifested. In the church friends and acquaintances should be ignored. We should come with but one purpose, to adore and glorify God in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, and should be blotted from the mind. Another unseemly sight may be frequently observed at the termination of the Mass. A number of people are invariably on their feet, ready to rush out of church even before the priest has left the sanctuary. It would seem as if such people be grudging to God the one hour in the week in which they are bound to serve Him under pain of mortal sin. No Catholic should leave his seat till the priest has departed from the sanctuary. This unseemly haste is not a matter of urgency, for the hurried ones may be later found on the sidewalk, pipe in mouth and deep in baseball or other gossip. Let every Catholic show by his or her reverent demeanor in church that there is a strong realization of the presence of Jesus on the altar. Let them all wait till the celebrant has left the sanctuary before rushing out from the house of God.—St. Paul Bulletin.

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