

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.

Second Sunday after Epiphany.

THE HOLY NAME.

When we say the Lord's Prayer, my dear brethren, we pray that God's Name may be hallowed on earth as it is in heaven. So great is God and so worthy of our reverence that everything that belongs to Him or that has been devoted to His service partakes of His reverence. A church dedicated to His service is a holy place; the sacred vessels used in the sacrifice of the Mass are holy things, are set apart, and none but those who are ordained can touch them. Anything that came in contact with our Blessed Lord had a certain participation in His sanctity. At one time it was the more touch of the hem of His garment that cured a woman of a lingering disease; at another it was His spittle that gave hearing to the deaf. As it is with these things, so it is with His holy Name—indeed, much more so.

For His Name to us is representative of all that He has done for us. It is significant of His divinity and of His office as Redeemer. It was given to Him by the Eternal Father. By the ministry of an angel it was declared that He should be called Jesus, "for He shall save His people from their sins." "For there is no other name under heaven given to men," says St. Peter in today's Epistle, "whereby we must be saved." In the same measure as His sacred humanity is elevated above all creatures, so is His sacred Name above all other names, "that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow." From the rising of the sun, says the Psalmist, "until the going down of the same, the name of the Lord is worthy of praise."

Worthy of praise, my brethren; and yet what is our every day experience? In all ranks of society, on the street, in the shop, in the home, in the presence of Christ's little ones, men swear, women swear, and little children are they can use their tongues properly learn to use curses and blasphemies. Parents who are God's representatives and who should love our Lord Jesus Christ and reverence His Name, instead of having a little patience, of acquiring some little control of their temper when anything goes wrong, give loose rein to their tongues and insult our Blessed Lord by their profane use of that Name which is the symbol of His love and mercy. How many there are who bow their head in reverence to that sacred Name in the house of God, and who go to their home or their occupation and use it only to add sin to their soul and give scandal to their neighbors! How often, alas! is that Holy Name dragged through the mire and filth of low vulgar, or of even obscene language.

What a detestable vice this is! How worthy of the demon in its rebellion to God's express command, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who taketh His name in vain." Let this feast of the Holy Name serve as an occasion for a renewal of our love and reverence for the Name of Jesus. Let us to-day make some special acts of reparation to Him for the insults He receives in the profanation of that Holy Name. If we are unfortunate enough to be the slave of this dreadful habit, whether through bad example or carelessness for the graces of the Holy Spirit, if you ask the Father anything in my Name, amen, I say, He will give it to you, be an incentive to him, be a stimulus to pray for the grace of freedom from that slavery. Habit is strong, but God's grace is stronger; His promise of help is never void. Blessed be the Name of Jesus!

RELIGION OF THE CROSS.

METHODIST MINISTER ON THE SECRET OF THE WONDERFUL HOLDING POWER OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

A Methodist minister of Wilkesbarre, Pa., the Rev. James Benninger, recently preached a rather remarkable sermon on the secret of the influence of the Catholic Church.

"We have fought and fussed and worked ourselves into a frenzy," he said, "while the Catholic Church, without any effort on her part, has gone on in even tenor of her way solving the problem to the satisfaction of her hierarchy."

"How does she do it? How does she get men out of bed on Sunday morning at an early hour, men who work late on Saturday night? How does she fill the streets on Sunday morning with worshippers when the Protestants' world is fast asleep? I know some of the explanations that are offered, but they do not explain. Many that we have read and heard only seem childish twaddle. One man will tell you that the Catholic Church contains nobody but ignorant people. But is that true to the facts of the case? Do we not know of brilliant lawyers and judges and professors and business men who are devout worshippers at her shrine? But if it were true that she only held ignorant people, would not the criticism pay her a high compliment? For every Protestant clergyman in Christendom knows that the hardest people to get along with are ignorant people. A church that can gather and hold the ignorant rabble has a vitality very much to be desired. But the criticism is not true."

"Another man will tell you that the Catholic Church sears people into her fold. How often have you heard that? But that explanation is no better than the first. You can readily see how one generation might be frightened into doing something, but who is willing to believe that twenty generations can be worked upon in the same way? The sear-cure method is bound to play out with the growing years. No such explanations as we usually hear, explain nothing. Her secret lies deeper."

"The reason the Catholic Church succeeds, in spite of our misgivings, is because she is true to the central fact of revelation. She makes the death of Jesus the center of her devotion, and around that point she organizes all of her activities. When you see a company of Catholic people Sunday morn-

ing on your way to Church you can be assured of this: they are not going for the sake of fine music; they are not going to hear an eloquent dissertation on 'Dr. Jekyll or Mr. Hyde.' They are going to that place of worship to attend Mass. What is the celebration of the Mass? It is what we call the celebration of the Lord's Supper. That fact is kept prominently before the mind of every Catholic. What is the first thing you see as you approach the Catholic church? A cross. What is the first thing you see as you enter that church? A cross. What is the first thing you see a Catholic do as he seats himself in that church? Make the sign of the cross. What is the last thing held before the eyes of a dying Catholic? A cross. He comes into the Church in childhood imbued with the death of Jesus; he goes out of this world thinking of the death of Jesus."

CHRIST AS A SOCIAL REFORMER.

ENGLISH JESUIT ON THE SAVIOUR AS POLITICAL AND SOCIAL REFORMER.

A course of timely sermons on "Christianity and the Social Movement" was preached during Advent in the church of the Holy Name, Manchester, England, the center of a great manufacturing district, where social problems are urgent, by Father Henry Day, a well-known English Jesuit.

"Democracy, or the upward movement of the popular classes who desire to have an equal share not only in political life, but also in social life, is no longer," said Father Day, "a mere imagination or dream. It is a serious fact in the social evolution of the world. It is a step in the development of the necessary law of progress, without which there could be neither life, nor movement, nor religion at all. It is an indestructible sentiment which since over a hundred years ago has been burnt into the heart of humanity, and which is growing to-day with its life. It is a tendency, therefore, which cannot be thwarted. But, like every human passion, it can, and should, be directed and guided. The flood of popular feeling is at its height to-day, and in the panic of society men and women are looking back to the old guide of the ages, asking, somewhat impatiently at times, what Christianity has got to say on this vital problem of democracy."

"Christ," continued the preacher, "was neither a revolutionary nor a partisan. His doctrines accordingly could lead to no support either to revolution or to factions. The objectives of Christianity, revolution, and class warfare were far from being one. They were opposite poles. This caution could not be too often repeated when so many Christian men and women, impatient of reform, are being drawn into Socialist toils. Christianity had nothing directly to do with governments or parties. It was neither a political nor an economic programme. The institutions of law and government were local and temporary. They changed with the times; they became obsolete; they passed away with the ages. But Christianity was eternal. It was the religion of the soul. It could never become obsolete. It could never ally itself with perishing principles. For could Christianity exclusively associate itself with any party or faction. What, then, was Christ? And for what did Christianity stand? Was Christ a social reformer? Undoubtedly He was. It was impossible to study the teaching and parables of our Saviour without coming to this conclusion. Primarily He was the great spiritual regenerator of mankind, but He was also its political and social reformer. Yet was He not a revolutionary. 'He came not to destroy, but to save.' He accepted the fabric of society as He found it. In His eyes it was a living organism which, however diseased, could be cured. Though moribund, it still lived with the essential life of humanity. To the political quiddities of His day who sought to engage Him in controversy His reply was direct and pregnant. 'Render, therefore, to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.' Regeneration from within; the germination and growth of principles; the evolution of Christ in man and society; this was the only true theory of Christian social reform. This was the ideal of the kingdom. This was the City of God. All other conceptions were false."

"Another question was what is the precise attitude of the Christian Church to the advent of the New Democracy? 'The position which it was taking was that which it had ever assumed in the past to all political and social movements. Consonant with that, it stood for any particular government or party, and that it had its mission to mankind as a whole, it welcomed the newcomer with a wise discrimination, and offered his gift of life to the latest aspiration of the people. The insane democracy of the revolution which destroys liberty, contradicts law and science, and is opposed to God and reason, the Christian Church necessarily rejected. But rational and regulated democracy which is in harmony with law and science, which issues from the nature of things, and which is therefore in the truest sense divine—democracy, in a word, which is the subject and offspring of the law of progress—it gladly accepted and welcomed. That the Church was engaged to fulfill this mission to-day, and with no little success, none could doubt."

Father Day concluded with the exhortation: "Learn how to render citizenship on your way to Church you can be assured of this: they are not going for the sake of fine music; they are not going to hear an eloquent dissertation on 'Dr. Jekyll or Mr. Hyde.' They are going to that place of worship to attend Mass. What is the celebration of the Mass? It is what we call the celebration of the Lord's Supper. That fact is kept prominently before the mind of every Catholic. What is the first thing you see as you approach the Catholic church? A cross. What is the first thing you see as you enter that church? A cross. What is the first thing you see a Catholic do as he seats himself in that church? Make the sign of the cross. What is the last thing held before the eyes of a dying Catholic? A cross. He comes into the Church in childhood imbued with the death of Jesus; he goes out of this world thinking of the death of Jesus."

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zen service. Endeavor above all that the ideal of Christ's Kingdom may be fulfilled in yourselves. By your lives of supernatural virtue proclaim the whole truth of the Kingdom of Christ, which, while it is also a kingdom of earth, is supremely the kingdom of heaven. In the great mosque at Damascus, which was a Christian church once, there may still be read, deeply cut in stone, high above the pavement where the Mohammedans bow, these words: "Thy Kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting Kingdom." Oh that the words of this text were cut deep in all your hearts, and writ high on the walls of the vast structure of human society to-day. For it is true indeed and it shall yet be known, that Christ our King is for ever and ever the Monarch of the world."

THE CHRISTIAN HOME.

The Christian home springs from the sacrament of matrimony and rests upon the unity and indissolubility of marriage. It is the outgrowth of Catholic teaching, practice, and influence. More than by any other agency the characters of men and women are moulded by their home life. When this is religious, pure and sweet, the virtues that sanctify and adorn life blossom like the flowers in the warm and gentle air of spring. But when the tender buds of childhood are blighted in this, their earliest sanctuary, all hope of fragrant bloom and ripe fruit is lost. The relations of the Church to the home are essential and intimate. Both the Church and the State may be said to exist for the sake of the home and they fall in one of their main purposes if they do not secure and foster happy homes. Whenever Catholics are permitted to lose sight of this truth, true religious zeal and practical piety soon sicken and decay. If the spirit of Christian faith and filial piety, of mutual love and self-sacrifice is not carried out in practice at home and in the bosom of the family, outward profession of religion is fruitless. Faith without good works is dead, and nowhere is their greater need of these good works than in the home. It is folly to think that even the best system of Catholic schools—absolutely necessary as these schools are—can prevent the decay of faith and the ruin of souls, unless the home life be in accord with the laws of God. The first and most indispensable school is the home. It is the basis of all others. It lays the foundation of character. It moulds the heart and gives to the mind and imagination their original turn—their primal and almost ineffable inclination to good or evil. "As the twig is bent, the tree is inclined," applies with more force to the home than to the school. If the home be secular, or pagan, or indifferent to religious duty, what hope can there be of saving the children to the Church and to God?

LAUGHABLE BLUNDERS.

Here in Boston our daily newspapers seem to be evolving a race of reporters who can write a description of a Catholic religious function without making ludicrous blunders, but it was not always so with us, nor is it so in many places yet. The blunders of the unsophisticated scribbler still furnish Catholics with food for mirth.

The New Zealand Tablet gathers together a number of reporters' blunders which it finds a amusing enough. It speaks of the reporter who faithfully described an evening Mass when he meant Vespers, but this is a blunder common enough in the United States. The Sydney Morning Herald spoke of Bishop Higgins as "administering High Mass," but it was in our own country that a daily paper told how a priest prevented a panic in his church by boldly throwing a "blazing sarcist" into the street. It was an American newspaper also which described the entrance of a Catholic clergy to the sanctuary in these words: "They wore long flowing stoles and birettas, with cassocks on their heads, which they removed as they advanced to the altar." A historic instance of the blundering that is a joy for ever was that of the reporter on an English daily paper who, in his description of the new Westminster Cathedral, averred that he saw a "seral thurifer" suspended from the ceiling—forgetting, poor fellow, that the thurifer is the person who carries the thurible or censer.

A Scottish Catholic paper tells about a description which appeared in a Glasgow secular paper of the consecration of a Bishop in St. Andrew's cathedral. The vesting of the consecrating Archbishop was summed up in the phrase: "His Grace was adorned with the amies" and that was said of the long and solemn function in these words: "The Archbishop engaged at Mass at the foot of the altar." The same paper tells of a reporter of a Highland paper who, describing a High Mass celebrated at the Fort Augustus Benedictine Monastery by the late Prior, the Very Rev. Jerome Vaughan, penned this inimitable sentence: "At this point of the proceedings the reverend gentleman turned round and observed in stentorian tones, 'Dominus vobiscum!'" "It was an Edinburgh paper," adds our Glasgow contemporary, "which gravely stated that 'the Bishop of Argyll and the Isles sang Haydn's Sixteenth Mass'; and it supplemented this remarkable item with the statement that 'the thurifer was

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swung gently to and fro in front of the altar."

The fact that these things are written gravely and with no intent to ridicule the functions they purport to describe only makes them all the more laughable. "There is no danger of the extinction of the joy-giving race of the Malaprops," remarks the New Zealand Tablet, "so long as there are non-Catholic reporters who have the courage—and the simplicity—to report the details of a Catholic ceremonial with which they are unacquainted, and of which they tell all they know—and very much that they don't."—Sacred Heart Review.

WHAT IS FAITH?

What is faith? We answer, in the words of the great Cardinal Newman who gives the following definition, or rather description, of the first of the theological virtues: "Faith is not a mere conviction in reason; it is a firm assent, it is a clear certainty, greater than any other certainty; and this is wrought in the mind by the grace of God, and by it alone. As then, men may be convinced, and not act according to their conviction, so may they be convinced, and not believe according to their conviction. They may confess that the argument is against them, that they have nothing to say for themselves, and that to believe is to be happy; and yet, after all, they avow they cannot believe, they do not know why, but they cannot; they acquiesce in unbelief, and they turn away from God and His Church. Their reason and arguments, for the truth of the faith, are arising in the root from a fault of the will."

"In a word, the arguments for religion do not compel any one to believe, just as arguments for good conduct do not compel any one to obey. Obedience is the consequence of willing to obey, and faith is the consequence of willing to believe; we may see what is right, whether in matters of faith or obedience, of ourselves, but we cannot will what is right without the grace of God. Here is the difference between other exercises of reason and arguments, for the truth of religion. It requires no act of faith to assent to the truth that two and two make four; we cannot help assenting to it; and hence there is no merit in believing that the Church is from God; for though there are abundant reasons to prove it to us, yet we can, without an absurdity, quarrel with the conclusion; we may complain that it is not clearer; we may doubt it, if we will; and grace alone can turn a bad will into a good one."

SOCIAL STUDIES IN CATHOLIC SEMINARIES.

Rev. Dr. John A. Ryan, of St. Paul seminary, in "The Ecclesiastical Review," gives the following as his idea of what the seminary ought to do towards equipping the priest of the future to deal intelligently with the social problems that are becoming more and more threatening from year to year: "He (the candidate for the priesthood) should receive in the seminary an amount of social instruction which will be fundamental and scientific; which will be sufficiently extensive to make him acquainted with the vital facts of current social conditions, tendencies and doctrines; which will be sufficiently stimulating to give him a lasting interest in these phenomena; and which will be sufficiently thorough to enable him to deal intelligently, justly, and charitably with the practical situations that he will be compelled to face afterward." In detail Dr. Ryan thinks the subjects should be treated intelligently and thoroughly; just wages, just interest for the employer and the capitalist; reducing wages to maintain dividends; the responsibility of stockholders, including educational and charitable institutions, for the improper practices of corporations.

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