

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Twenty first Sunday after Pentecost.

MIXED MARRIAGES.

I wish to give a short instruction on the sacrament of matrimony this morning.

If a marriage with a merely nominal Catholic be fraught with dangerous consequences, and be the cause of much disturbance and anxiety to one who wishes to be a Christian in deed as well as in name—and that it is so I think all will agree—what shall we say of a mixed marriage, as it is called—of a union of a Catholic with one who holds religious views opposed to the faith of the Church, or who, perhaps, has no true harmony or peace between the matter of religion, which lies nearest to the heart, and is more thoroughly interwoven in all the ideas, opinions, feelings, and practices of a practical Catholic than any other whatever?

Sympathy, union of interests and desires, of plans, hopes, and efforts, must exist in all true friendship; nay, more, without it association or companionship of any kind soon becomes a burden. There is no remedy for this except by dropping or putting in the background those aspirations and affections which are not shared by the other party. And what is true of all friendship is, of course, true above all of that which should be the highest, nearest, and dearest of all friendships—namely, that of marriage. The only way for a Catholic to be at all happy in a mixed marriage is to put religion in the background; to regard it, as unfortunately, too many do, as a matter of very little importance; as something to be professed, indeed, and occasionally practised, but which is to have no special influence on the general course and tenor of one's life.

How can a Catholic wife, for instance, who is earnest about her religion be really happy with a husband who cannot attach any importance to, or see any sense in, her practices of devotion; to whom Holy Mass, Benediction, the sacraments, the veneration of the saints and angels, and many other things which are her great joys and consolations in life, are mere idle mummeries and superstitions? Yes, this mixture temptingly on her observance of Lent, of Fridays, and fast days; who considers all the teachings and laws of the Church an imposition and a fraud, to be done away with as far as possible; who, in short, either looks forward to nothing at all beyond this life, or, if he hopes for heaven, has a different one from hers, and seeks for it in a different way? The only plan that can be followed to secure even a seeming peace and agreement is to bring down the Catholic religion to its lowest level, to make out that it is not very different from Protestantism after all; to be content with Mass on Sundays; to eat meat on Fridays whenever it is more convenient; to let the Pope and the Church generally get on as best they can, and to say no more about them than can be helped. Yes, this mixture even in the Catholic party of Catholic and Protestant is only too likely to be the result of a mixed marriage.

I know that it may be said, and with truth, that Protestants are not always prejudiced against our religion; that sometimes a Protestant husband is not only willing but anxious that his Catholic wife should attend thoroughly to her religious duties; and we find cases of Protestant wives even becoming Catholics, mainly, as it would seem, to induce by their example a more faithful practice of religion in their Catholic husbands. But these are results which we have no right to expect—no, not even if they are promised beforehand. And too often we find a state of things in a mixed marriage much worse than what I have described. We find, in spite of the most solemn promises made beforehand, a bitter and shameless persecution; Mass and the sacraments forbidden; children denied not only Catholic instruction, but even the grace of baptism; the priest not allowed in the house even in time of sickness, and nearly all hope gone of receiving the last rites of the Church at the hour of death. We do not wish to blame the Protestant party too much in these cases; he may be acting according to his conscience, but such a conscience, though perhaps good enough for him, is not one which a Catholic should run the risk of being governed by.

TALKS ON RELIGION.

THE SACRAMENTS—SIGNS AND CEREMONIES.

No one will claim that it was necessary for our Lord to make use of spit and clay to cure the blind man of Siloam. Why then did He make use of that ceremony? To draw special attention to the miracle and to teach that God may make use of material things as instruments of His power.

The miracle illustrates the sacramental system; that it is God's will to connect great interior or supernatural effects with the use of very simple things. It was not necessary for the Lord to send Naaman, the Syrian, to wash seven times in the river Jordan. He could, by a simple word, have cured him on the instant.

Man is a being both spiritual and corporal, a mixture of the visible and invisible. Hence it appears to have been God's will to use external symbols to instruct him and to impress through his senses and through his mind lessons upon him.

That God attached great importance to the ceremonies and rites He established in the Old Law is evident. He said: "Keep, therefore, the precepts and ceremonies and judgments which I command thee this day to do." (Deut. vii. 1.)

In the New Law our Lord has done the same thing by establishing His sacraments as external signs of grace. For the external part of the sacraments three things are required—matter, form, minister. In the sacrament of baptism, the pouring of the water is the matter. So in Confirmation, the imposition of hands and the motion is the matter. The matter of a

Sacrament is some external thing, or some rite or action, which is perceptible to the senses, and which represents, in a manner, the grace conveyed to the soul.

In addition to the matter, or with the matter there must be form. The form consists of words, of some words which give to the matter a definite significance or scope. The mere pouring of water would have no definite meaning or significance of itself. But when the words are joined to it, as: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," there is then the outward sign of the inward grace conferred on the soul.

That the outward actions may really exist as the matter and form of the sacraments, there must be some one to apply them. This person is the minister of the sacrament. In case of necessity any one may be the minister of baptism. Each sacrament has its proper minister. A bishop is required for Confirmation and for Holy Orders. In the other sacraments a priest is the ordinary minister.

The recipient of a sacrament should be well disposed: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after justice for they shall be filled." Those who approach the sacraments with these dispositions will receive abundantly of divine grace.

There are three sacraments which cannot be repeated after they have been validly conferred—Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders. They impress an indelible mark or character on the soul. Each of these marks is, in effect, a new dignity conferred on the soul, an elevation to a new rank. Hence the person baptized is as it were of a different caste than the one not baptized. St. Paul did that the marriage of a baptized with an unbaptized person is only a notorious marriage when no dispensation has been obtained.

The new dignity or rank conferred by the sacraments can never be lost in the sense that it is eradicated. It may, it is true, be turned into a misfortune by persistent sin or apostasy, and thus give us an illustration of a blessing turned into a curse.

Baptism gives us the rank and the rights of the children of God. We may become prodigals but we never actually cease to be children of God. This rank will ultimately be for our glory in heaven or for our ignominy in hell.

The sacraments are sometimes divided into sacraments of the living and sacraments of the dead. The dead can receive no sacrament; the term sacraments of the dead has reference to baptism and penance as these sacraments remove sins which cause the death of the soul inasmuch as these sins deprive the soul of supernatural life or of sanctifying grace.

The other sacraments are called sacraments of the living, because they are not intended to bestow the first grace but to increase sanctifying grace in the soul. Hence anyone who receives any of the sacraments of the living must at the time be free from mortal sin.

To receive the sacraments profitably, to receive abundantly their treasures, we must hunger and thirst for them; we must be in such dispositions that there will be in us nothing of "the hard and stony ground." Then we will be filled with the "good things," the graces and treasures of which the sacraments are the channels.

One indication of receiving the sacraments with proper dispositions is progress. If people who receive the sacraments have no idea of advancing in perfection, they cannot expect a great increase of grace.

Ceremonies are useful, necessary and imperative. The Council of Trent declares: "If any one says that the received and approved rites of the Catholic Church, used in the solemn administration of the sacraments, can, without sin, be dispensed or omitted by the ministers, or that they can be changed to others by the pastors of different churches, let him be anathema." These ceremonies are a safeguard for the essential rites on which the efficacy of the sacraments depends.

How beautifully the "white garment" and the "burning light" explain the effects produced by the sacrament of Baptism.—Catholic Universe.

A BISHOP IN ENGLAND'S HOP FIELDS.

The Bishop of Southwark, England, said Mass on a recent Sunday at Paddock Wood, the great hop centre in Kent. The London Daily Mail thus describes the event:

"The unusual spectacle of a Bishop in full canonicals in the Kentish hop fields was witnessed yesterday at Paddock Wood. Clad in violet cassock and biretta, the Bishop of Southwark wandered through the hopper's encampments, and many were the speculations as to his ecclesiastical status and personality. The Bishop's vestments deeply impressed the hoppers, and all the children were called up to look at him. The purpose of the Bishop's visit was to celebrate Mass, and hundreds of hoppers gathered round the Roman Catholic mission tent, where a primitive altar had been erected. A table covered with cloths formed the base, ginger beer bottles disguised with paper and filled with dahlias took the place of vases, a tin saucepan held the holy water and the consecration stone was mounted on some bricks. Behind the altar was a large red cross raised on the top of a hop pole. The congregation of hoppers formed a curious and motley collection, but they were most devout and evidently fully conscious of the honor which the Bishop had done them."

Oh, it pays to be true; it pays to be faithful; it pays to respect the hearts and hopes of our fellow creatures of every sort and condition. Only he with one fixed and high standard of honor can make and keep that friendship and good will of his fellows which no one can dispense with, and which is perilous in any given instance to abuse.—Katherine E. Conway.



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ONE OF MANY HUMBUGS.

Many of our readers may have noticed, in one at least of the daily papers, a peculiar advertisement, a picture of a man with a high and broad forehead, deep set eyes and white choker, underneath which in large type there is first "The Weary Sick," then comes this information:

"Jesus healed the sick, not because they were good, but because they were suffering." It told his followers to "heal the sick," and has greatly honored our efforts to obey the gracious command.

Next we find in bold capitals the words, "Wilt thou be made whole?" Finally appears the business ending: "For particulars address with stamp, Rev. G. A. Schram, 415 Cumberland Ave., Winnipeg, Man. Phone 2720."

As this displayed advertisement must cost a good penny and has been appearing for some time, the natural inference is that the Rev. G. A. Schram must have found it profitable. But, unfortunately for him the editor of Town Topics has caught him in a clever trap. He got a friend to connect a letter purporting to come from an uneducated woman in Crystal City, Manitoba.

The letter, which was published in Town Topics of last week, is a masterpiece of bad spelling, bad grammar and worse phrasing. It details the patient's symptoms and expresses complete trust in the healer's power, adding that she has saved up \$63 and doesn't want her husband to know that she is writing to Schram. The latter's reply, which is also published in full, requires ten dollars a month, paid in advance. Schram advises the sending of one ten dollar bill or two fives, and adds: "That will pay for a month, but I can't promise that you will be healed in a month and yet you may be healed in less than a month." He enjoins secrecy, quoting the words of our Lord, "See thou tell no man." When she has sent the money, he will let her know the time at which he will engage himself with her case, each day, and he may give her some other directions; but she must understand that distance is no obstacle, "I have healed persons more than fifteen hundred miles away."

After this clever exposure, the "sanctimonious shark," as Town Topics aptly styles him, will probably cease to make Winnipeg the centre of his scheme for obtaining money under false pretences.—Winnipeg Central Catholic.

Most people will naturally ask the question why do not the law officers of the Crown take action in a matter of this kind where a fraud is very evident. Are they waiting for some one to make a complaint? If the law requires this there is in it a big loop hole which should be filled up without delay. The publisher of the newspaper admitting such matter to his columns should also be prosecuted.—Editor CATHOLIC RECORD.

Boston's Name.

Boston owes its name to a Catholic saint. Early in the seventh century a Catholic monk named Botolph founded a church in what is now Lincolnshire, England. As the years went by, a town grew up around the church and was called Botolphstow. This was shortened for convenience into Botolphston, then to Boston, and finally to Boston. John Cotton came to America from that town, and named the New England capital after his native village.

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CATHOLICS AND CATHOLICS.

A hearty admiration for the great work of missions to non Catholics need not keep us from being thoroughly in agreement with the following comment of the Sacred Heart Review upon a recent address of Archbishop O'Connell:

"We have heard a great deal lately about converting New England. Apparently the conversion was to be effected by speeches and social functions. The courtiers of King Canute were never more fulsome or sickenings. But the Archbishop, as effectively as Canute taught them a needed lesson in this address. The duty of the hour, according to the Archbishop, is, not the conversion of New England but the instruction of Catholics. Our first obligation, he believes, is to keep what we have. He sees our men young and old being led astray by immoral political principles. He sees dishonesty condoned, or even praised, providing it helps our side." He judges rightly that our first concern should be to denounce this raceality; to tell the whole world that no man can do these things and be a Catholic. This is the gospel that will save Catholicism, and, at the same time its practice will conduce more to speeches or social functions to convert New England."

There is nothing that does more to keep non-Catholics out of the Church than the bad lives of Catholics. They see Catholics dishonest in business, or engaged in trade which no decent man should soil his hands with; they see them corrupt in politics; and they ask, Can the tree be good which produces such evil fruit? There is immorality in business deeper and more far reaching than the use of false weights and measures; and our people do not hear enough about it from the pulpit. We have often thought that if the Catholic preacher who concerned himself as much about the Seventh Commandment, our people would be as much superior to their neighbors in honesty as they are now admittedly superior in chastity. And besides business honesty, there is political honesty to be considered. When a St. Louis priest drove a corrupt political "boss" from his parish by his denunciations of him from the altar, all his brethren thought he had gone too far. In our opinion, the fault lay with the others who did not go far enough. Such a man should be afraid to enter a Catholic church till he mended his ways, for fear of hearing himself named from the pulpit.—Antigonish Casket.

FAITH OF OUR FATHERS.

Ireland's annual pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick this year was greater than ever before. Pilgrims from near and far directed their steps towards the holy mount which had been sanctified by the footprints of Saint Patrick. The numbers and piety of the thousands testified eloquently to the allegiance of the Irish to their religion and traditions.

Down along the ages, since the introduction of Christianity, the Irish people have been remarkable for their great adherence to the sacred cause of religion. Through the bitter years of famine and persecution they have followed the pure white flame of faith which was enkindled in their breasts by their national apostle well nigh 1,500 years ago. The Irish Rosary, in a cleverly written article, inspired by this pilgrimage, goes on to say something on this point which should warm the cockles of the heart of every true Catholic. "Cajolery, bribery, worldly preferments, and the other allurements to which the material held out to their views were of no avail. Priest hunting and penalizing proved equally futile. Empires might pass away; materialism, with its attendant satellites, might stalk abroad, and grub among the garbage of ungodly places; the pillars of society might rock and sway, but the grand edifice of Irish religious fervor remained as stable as the bed-rock of the Catholic Church. If our sneering economic experts, and our prejudiced national apologists took a more rational view of the spiritual side of the Irish character they would arrive at a clearer understanding of the problem which they have essayed to solve."—Boston Pilot.

Month of the Rosary.

October is always one of the best and most enjoyable of the twelve months in this country. Its days are generally magnificent ones, full of sunshine, light and happiness; and what prettier pictures could be desired than those of the woods present to the gaze now, with the scarlet and golden colors of the changing leaves? To the Catholic however, October has other charms than those with which nature invests its delightful days. It is the month set apart by Catholic devotion to Our Lady of the Rosary and the Guardian Angels.

Whoever serves God with a pure heart, and, setting aside all individual and human interests, seeks only His glory, has reason to hope for success in all he does, and especially under circumstances when, according to human judgment, there is no help; for the divine works are above human prudence, and depend upon a loftier principle.—St. Charles Borromeo.

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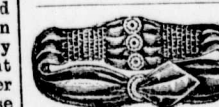
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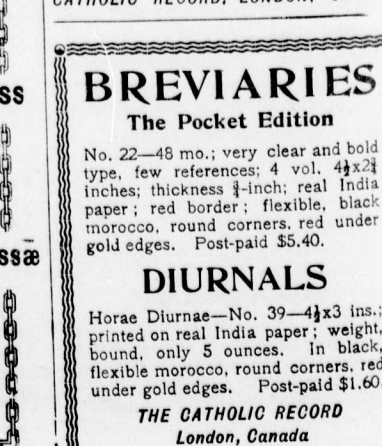
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