

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

WHITE LIES.

Wherefore putting away lying, speak ye the truth every man with his neighbor. (Eph. 4: 25.)

There is perhaps no sin, my brethren, for which people seem to have so little real sorrow, or for which they so seldom make a practical purpose of amendment, as this miserable one of falsehood, of which the Apostle here speaks. You will hear it said: "I told lies, but there was no harm in them; they were to excuse myself, or to save trouble." They are matters to be confessed, oh! yes; the liar will perhaps even run back to say that he is a liar, if he (or quite likely she) has forgotten to mention it at the time. But as for correcting the habit, that is quite another matter. It would seem that the sacrament of penance is expected to take effect on these sins by mere confession without contrition or purpose to avoid them for the future.

But the liar will say: "I am sorry; I have contrition for these lies." Let me ask, however, what kind of sorrow have you? You are sorry that things were so that you had to tell a lie; but if things were so again, to-morrow, would you not tell the lie again? If you are sincere, I am afraid you will say: "Yes, I suppose I should." Where, then, is the purpose of amendment? Without purpose of amendment contrition is nothing but a sham.

Let us, then, my friends, look into our consciences about this matter, and get them straightened out properly. I do not want to be too harsh about it; for after all there are some expressions which people call lies, which are not really so, because the one to whom they are addressed is not expected to be deceived by them, but merely to be prevented from asking further questions. Some people, too, call it a lie when they do not tell the whole truth, but we are not always required—though we often are—to tell the whole truth; and when we are not, there is no lie, as long as what we say is actually true as far as it goes. But it would take too long to go into all the cases concerning what is or is not a lie; and as a general rule one can by a little common sense find them out for himself. Find them out, then; if you cannot surely do so by yourselves, get advice; and when you are certain that you are all right, do not call it a sin to act according to your conscience and reason, and do not make a matter of self-accusation out of it.

But when you cannot see any way to make out that what you say really is not a lie, then do not fall back on the idea that, if it does not injure anybody, there is no harm in it. You are false to yourself in this; for you know there is harm in it, otherwise you would not feel uneasy about it.

And what is the harm? The harm in a lie is simply that it is a lie, and therefore an offence against God, who is the truth. This is what St. Paul tells us in this very epistle of to-day. "Put on," he says, "the new man, who, according to God, is created in holiness and truth. Wherefore," he continues, "putting away lying, speak ye the truth every man with his neighbor."

Yes, my brethren, God is the truth, and He infinitely loves the truth, in Himself and in His creatures. He does not wish us to sacrifice it in the slightest degree, even to save the whole world from destruction. There is harm in a lie, then; harm, if I may say so, to God Himself and to His dearest interests. Do not think, then, to save His interests, or any one else's, by lying. Tell the truth and let Him look out for the consequences. Tell the truth for God's sake, because He loves it, and hates a lie; tell the truth, and love the truth, for its own sake. We are, as St. Paul says, "created according to God, in holiness of truth;" let us keep the pattern to which we have been made.

Stop, then, deliberate lying for a purpose, which is but too common. But also be careful in what you say; try not even to fall into falsehood thoughtlessly. Let it be your honest pride that your word is as good as your oath.

TALKS ON RELIGION.

SATISFACTION.

In the law given to the Jews, it is clear that some sacrifice was always required for the remission of sin. This was called an "offering for sin." This, in a manner, represents "Our Lord's Great Sacrifice." St. Paul, therefore, says: "And without the shedding of blood there is no remission." (Heb. xii: 22.)

By every sin, then, which men commit, they incur a debt to the Justice of God. The guilt of our sins can not be pardoned without true contrition and change of heart, and an acknowledgement of them in confession when we can. When the guilt of sin has been remitted, satisfaction is due to the injured Majesty of God, which must be paid in some manner.

Justice naturally requires the punishment of the offender. The Mercy of God, however, has provided many ways in which the sinner can make atonement. Sometimes this atonement may be made for us. Nothing that man can suffer, or do, would be a full and sufficient reparation for mortal sin. No sacrifice that he could offer would avail. Therefore, the Almighty has Himself offered a sacrifice for us, and His Justice accepts the reparation as if it were our own. The Almighty allows us to offer up satisfaction for our brethren, and to some extent accepts it as if from them. For instance, St. Paul "rejoiced in his sufferings to avail for those things that were wanting for the Church"—that is, for his brethren.

We have many instances in the Old Law emphasizing this teaching, that is, that Almighty God was pleased to receive the prayers and offerings of His faithful servants as satisfaction for sinners. When the Israelites had grievously offended God, fire was sent to destroy them. "Then Aaron put in cense into his censer and running in to the midst of the multitude which the fire was now destroying, he offered the incense, and standing between the dead and living, he prayed

for the people, and the plague ceased." (Num. xvi: 47.) And we read the Psalms: "And he said that he would destroy them; had not Moses, his chosen one, stood before him in the breach, and turned away His wrath, lest He should destroy them." (Psalms cv: 33.)

How many kinds of good works will God accept to supply the place of the punishment due to our sins? Our Lord dwells strongly on the efficacy of prayer. "And that servant, falling down besought him, saying: 'Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.' And the Lord of the servant being moved with pity, let him go, and forgave him the debt. . . . Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all the debt because thou besougest me." (St. Matt. xviii: 26, 31.) Hence we are told "by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving will your petition be made known to God."

Almighty God constantly refers to almsgiving as a most powerful means of paying our indebtedness. What stronger testimony could we find than that presented by the words of the Archangel Raphael, which are recorded in the history of Tobias: "Prayer is good, with fasting and almsgiving, more than to lay up treasures of gold; for alms delivereth from death, and the same is that which purgeth away sins, and maketh to find life everlasting. When thou didst pray with tears, and didst bury the dead, and didst leave thy dinner and hide the dead by day in thy house, and bury them by night, I offered thy prayer to the Lord." (Tob. xii: 8.)

The Prophet Daniel, in the same spirit, says: "Wherefore, O King, let my counsel be acceptable to thee, redeem thou thy sins with alms, and thy iniquities with works of mercy to the poor; perhaps He will forgive thee thy offences." (Daniel ix: 24.) Hence we are told in the New Testament we find Our Lord referring to almsgiving, and expressing His acceptance of the smallest thing done in His name to one of our brethren. "Whoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones, a cup of cold water in the name of the disciples, amen, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward." (St. Matt. x: 41.) Then St. Peter says: "Before all things, have; a constant mutual charity among yourselves; for charity covereth a multitude of sins." (1 St. Peter iv: 8.)—Catholic Universe.

THOSE WHO TOLL.

ALL IN VAIN UNLESS IT BE FOR GOD. By Rev. Theodore G. Foote.

Many are tolling on and taking no thing worth having, because God is not in their thoughts at all. There are those who toll for pleasure and bodily gratification—worldly-minded persons and many uneducated children. It is not that pleasures are wrong—far from it! They are even necessary, they are real blessings, but they are only blessings when they are received, as it were, from God's hand, with grateful, loving, understanding hearts. Other wise they may be an unmitigated curse, stealing the heart away from God, especially children's hearts, indisposing them to any serious thoughts, rendering them a prey to temptation. Why is it not possible for a Christian boy or girl to learn that all his or her pleasures are God's gift to His child and receive them with loving gratitude? God's blessing will follow the work as well as the play of such a child. But the people who live only to have a good time are taking nothing, no matter how hard they work, and often they wear themselves out in the search for pleasure. Finally, they get only ennui, discontent, selfishness, light-mindedness—very poor stock for the business of life.

Then there are those who toll for learning. No longer children, they must think of something serious. Surely, you will say, study must bring them something; this toll, so honorable, so respected, so prized, must be fruitful: one cannot fish in the great sea of knowledge without taking something. Yes, but what? A mind trained to facts and theories and speculations; or an intellect disciplined to draw fine distinctions, to split hairs, to criticize, to doubt. Many are deceived by this sort of thing, it is so impressive. They perceive themselves and talk profoundly, but a few questions skillfully put reveal its essential shallowness. It is true this toll often leads to earthly distinction and makes a great name, but the craftsman reckons it as nothing unless all this knowledge begins with God. The facts of science are but the thoughts of God, and how can they be helpfully studied apart from Him? Suppose, then, that a mind could acquire all possible keenness and comprehension, if it does not bow before the Creator with loving faith it would be nothing else than the mind of a devil rebelling against God.—Catholic Columbian.

AN EDIFYING SIGHT.

In St. Joseph's Church, near Wilmeton, Del., was witnessed a spectacle of notable and peculiarly edifying character. Accompanied by their eleven children, Mr. and Mrs. Denis Buckley, to mark the fiftieth anniversary of their marriage, approached the altar railing and there received Holy Communion in a body. In an age strewn with so many obstacles to long-continued nuptial felicity and fruitfulness, the event was indeed one to attract widespread attention.

Mr. and Mrs. Buckley were married in County Cork, Ireland, on July 12, 1856, by Rev. Dennis O'Sullivan. They came to America and took up their abode on the historic banks of the Brandywine, near St. Joseph's church. The family and their progeny number thirty-six in all, which includes eleven children and twenty-three grandchildren, who were present at the golden wedding anniversary.

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MARVELOUS GROWTH.

CHURCH IS RAPIDLY GAINING CONVERTS THE WORLD OVER.

Emperor William has decorated Cardinal Kopp, Bishop of Breslau, with the Order of the Black Eagle, the highest Prussian decoration. This is the first time the order has ever been conferred on a Catholic prelate. It is remarked that the relations between the German government and the Vatican have grown closer since the Church and State situation in France became acute. The headquarters of Cardinal Kopp are at Breslau, where he has steadily used his influence in bettering the relations between the Poles and the Prussian authorities.

Contrasting the state of things Catholic in the beginning of the nineteenth century with its condition now, the well known Jesuit, Father Forbes, of Paris, says in his recently published book, "The Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century":

"Turkey has but 25,000,000 inhabitants to its 40,000,000 in 1800. From Afghanistan to China liberty has made it possible for Catholic missionaries to spread the faith among 300,000,000, the Catholic natives now numbering 2,250,000, as against 500,000 in 1800. In Indo China alone the indigenous Catholic population has risen from 300,000 to nearly 1,000,000. Australia and New Zealand, which were without priests in 1800, are now the home of 1,000,000 Catholics, and the islands of Oceania can boast 100,000 members of the faith in their population of 5,000,000. Japan since 1879, has added 50,000 to her original number of 4,000 Catholics, and China proper boasts nearly 2,000,000 members of the Catholic Church. Africa, which was almost entirely Moslem in 1800, except where it had come under English influences, and where the Catholics were persecuted, has now a following of the Church numbering 2,000,000 with six vicars and a splendid hierarchy."

"Marvelous are the progressive results in both Americas. The Catholic churches of South America, with their 40,000,000 members, have awakened from their torpor, and give promise of a splendid increase. The Catholics in the United States numbered in 1800: 1 bishop, 40 priests and 40,000 Catholics. To-day there are 94 bishops, 11,817 priests and some 14,000,000 confessed members of the Catholic Church. Finally, in Europe there is Germany, with its 18,000,000 of Catholics strongly organized; Belgium, almost Catholic to an individual comes under English influences, and where the Catholics were persecuted, has now a following of the Church numbering 2,000,000 with six vicars and a splendid hierarchy."

Father Forbes further states that in seventy years more than 16,000 conversions to the Catholic faith have taken place among the Anglican clergymen and that the Anglican Church "is only waiting for the opportunity to pass over to Rome."

Cardinal Rampolla.

There is a substratum of truth in the reports circulated recently about the health of Cardinal Rampolla. Two or three times during the past year His Eminence has been obliged to suspend his studies for a week, and once at least he was confined to bed for a fortnight. But those who are intimate with him are sure that all that is necessary to restore him to complete health is change of air and scene for a couple of months. His Eminence has not spent a whole week out of Rome during the last twenty years.

OVER THE YEARS AWAY.

"O dear farm, O lost farm, O garden old, where the children strolled, In the likeness of you and me, How the dreams call'd, and the lanes call'd, Till our feet must needs obey, Over the beckoning roads, dear, Over the long gray roads, dear, Over the roads away."

"O sweetheart, O strongheart, O dearest of all to me, Our past is dead, our dreams are fled, We stroll by a water side, But the storm call and waves call, And we dare not say them away, Over the years we fare, love, Over the lands of care, love, Over the years away."

—FREDERICK LAWRENCE KNOWLES.

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VALUABLE TESTIMONY.

The editor-in-chief of the Charleston (S. C.) News and Courier is a Presbyterian, but that fact does not preclude his seeing, and, having seen, his proclaiming, the good points in other creeds, not excepting that of the Church. Witness this paragraph from his recent article on "The Corner Stone of Civilization":

"The position of some of the other churches on this question has been nothing short of shameful. Ministers in good standing in these churches have freely married those who have been separated by the courts, and who could not under the judicial decrees of separation lawfully marry again in the States in which their divorces were granted. The Roman Catholic position on the question of divorce is the only true position. In that Church marriage is a sacrament; and if the institution is to be preserved and the highest interests of society securely protected, it must be regarded as a sacrament. Every now and then some convention is proposed with the object of obtaining uniformity in the divorce laws of this country. These conventions are generally proposed by persons living in States in which the divorce business has been overdone. There has been talk from time to time of national legislation; but so far all efforts have failed to reach a plan which, while conceding great freedom of action in obtaining divorces, would at the same time preserve at least the pretence of some high moral purpose. The only State in the Union in which divorce is not granted is the State of South Carolina. The law in this State is the only law that can be adopted with safety to society and with proper regard to high religious teaching."

It may be a long time yet before the secular powers will adopt the attitude of the centuries and unchanging Church toward divorce; but adopt it they eventually must, if civilization is to be preserved from succumbing to the cancer whose ravages are constantly spreading throughout the social body.—Ave Maria.

A COMMON-SENSE VIEW OF THE CONFESSIONAL.

The Rev. Father Fidells (James Kent Stone) C. P., during a recent mission to non Catholics in Philadelphia said:—

"Protestants so often think confession was invented by the priests in order to have the people under their thumb. . . . the poor priest-ridden people." What bunglers these priests must have been to put this practise on Catholics and forget to leave the burden of confession on themselves! Even the Pope has to go down on his knees before some humble friar or monk like myself, and, if he makes a bad confession, and doesn't repent of it and make a good one, he is damned. Oh, if you only knew it, that burden of hearing confessions is the most terrible thing a priest has to do! Sitting day after day, week after week, year after year, listening to tales of sorrow and crime, and doing the marvelous work of loosing from sin!

"There is another objection, and I am almost ashamed to touch publicly upon it—the outcry against the iniquity of the confessional. Well, I was a Protestant once, my dear brethren, but I thank God I never said anything of that kind. There is something so low, so incredibly vulgar, not to say malicious, in respectable, well-educated, cultured ladies and gentlemen listening to the vile tales of so-called escaped nuns, and unfortunates priests and friars!

"I am speaking to you as an honest convert. When I was going to my first confession, previous to being received into the Church, I stopped off at the city of Newark to visit Bishop Bayley afterwards Archbishop of Baltimore, himself a convert and former Episcopalian minister. I told him I was going to confession. 'You are going to the real thing now,' he said; and I thought of that general confession I had so often read when a Protestant: 'We have done those things which we ought not to have done, and we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and there is no health in us,' etc. I thought of that sweet, familiar prayer: 'It is upon my mind now and it all comes back to me. How delightfully general that confession was! But now I had to go into my conscience and seek out the weeds of thirty years that had grown in the garden. When I got through I found it was the 'real thing,' and I felt so light and so happy that I might, with a good run, have jumped across the Schuylkill River."

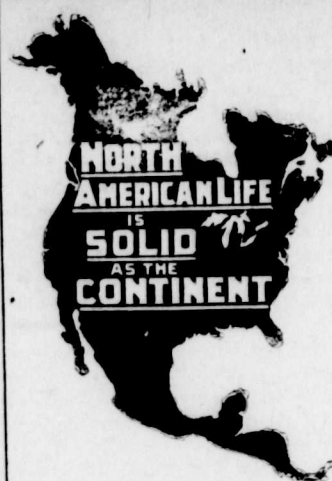
DECLARATION, REVELATION AND NEGATION.

There is nothing which so frequently shocks intelligent individuals as the religious inconsistency which prevails at the present time. It manifests itself among Catholics and non Catholics as well. But it is as we find it in the latter that we would now direct attention.

If occasion requires these people unhesitatingly assert themselves to be Christians. They believe in God. They believe in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. All believe in heaven; many reject the doctrine of damnation. A few read their Bible occasionally, and therefore hope for salvation. While a great many seem to think that heaven is to be theirs as a natural right, hence their Christianity consists more in declaration than in practice.

Their religious conduct in this particular is a strange revelation. For instance we find them worshipping God as their own pleasure prompts. The winter is too cold, the summer too hot for church attendance. With many Sunday is considered a day of long morning sleeps mixed with idleness and pleasure. Worship is a convenience, not a duty.

Life with them differs little from that of the beast of burden. It is made up of eat, sleep and labor. The bounty, the goodness, the mercy, the pro-



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fection of God finds no recognition in either. There are no blessings ascribed nor thanks returned for the gifts they have received. The beast of burden sinks to his rest for the night and rises to his labors of a new day more reverently.

What a strange Christianity such conduct reveals! Is it not an absolute negation of every practical evidence of Christian sentiments? What could be more inconsistent with Christian life and Christian profession! Are we not told that it is not they who cry Lord, Lord, who shall be saved, but those who do the will of the Lord? Where, then, is their hope for salvation? The will of the Lord is external as well as internal worship. These Christians render neither; and if a human judgment is permissible, it is against their enjoyment of eternal happiness with God.—Church Progress.

The wise and the good will never be heard to say, "I am too old to learn."

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