

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

EASTER SUNDAY

"He is risen, He is not here."—(Mark xvi, 6.)

Not only to the pious women who went out to embalm the body of Jesus, but also to us and to the whole world did the angel beside the empty tomb announce tidings of the utmost joy: "He is risen, He is not here." These words are in perfect harmony with those sung by the angels at our Lord's birth: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will." By His resurrection Jesus proved that it was really He, Who, for God's honor and peace amongst men, had offered on the Cross the great sacrifice of atonement—that He was indeed the Redeemer. His resurrection was the seal of our redemption, and therefore Easter is the great festival when we give thanks for all the graces and benefits that we owe to it. "With Him is plentiful redemption"—these words in the psalm are true to-day of our Lord. When He rose, He showed that death had no power over Him; His resurrection was a triumph over death. Death had come into the world through the devil's malice, because men by sin had put themselves in the power of the evil one; and Jesus, by conquering death, conquered also the devil, who had power over it, and thus by His death He really delivered us from the power of the devil and from the dominion of sin. As St. Paul says, He blotted out the handwriting of the decree against us, fastening it to the Cross (cf. Col. ii, 14). In His own Blood He washed away our sins, and He suffered both for our sins and for those of the whole world.

Through our Lord's infinite merits, men are now again admitted to be friends and children of God, and to heaven. Hence the angel's words: "He is risen" remind us that we ought not to let His resurrection be in vain, as far as we are concerned, but we must take part in His redemption, and lead good lives in future, after cleansing our souls from sin by penance. In this way only shall we show true gratitude to Jesus for His resurrection, and in this way only will it be really Easter, not only in the Church, but also in our hearts.

Jesus, having conquered death and the devil, through His infinite merits has power to help us in our long struggle against sin and evil.

In thought stand by the empty tomb whenever the tempter whispers to you: "It is too hard for weak mortals to avoid this or that sin." Your Saviour, Who once lay in the tomb, is with you, and earnestly desires it, and ready to give you strength. Nothing that He asks can be too hard for those whom He redeemed, since He died in order to obtain for them the powerful assistance of God.

A pagan may say it is too hard to do right, because his religion gives him no help; an unbeliever may say it is too hard, because his intellect, though he may value it very highly, is unable to withstand the fury of his passions; but a Christian cannot say it is too hard, when he is called upon to obey Christ's commandments with His Redeemer's help.

Ask all the saints, who relied so firmly upon their risen Saviour, what would have been too hard for them. The world is amazed at their virtues, which in a heathen age would have been deemed unattainable; they accomplished what appeared to be far beyond the power of mankind, and led an angelic life in their Saviour's strength.

We are told that our Lord's tomb was in a garden, and from the moment when it was opened, blossoms and fruits, virtues and good works, such as had never been seen before, have abounded on earth. Christ has redeemed us, too; let us, too, be willing to be guided by His grace; let us thankfully, by His assistance, practise virtue and good works, and not to surrender to cowardice, lukewarmness and indolence under the pretext that what He requires is too hard. He has risen and redeemed us; He has proved by His resurrection that His doctrine is true, for again and again He foretold to His disciples that He would rise again, but they did not understand Him, for His words were hard to comprehend. Therefore, He proved that the hardest doctrine which He ever taught was true, thus proving the truth of all the rest. Like a bright light this doctrine flashes forth over the whole world from the tomb of our risen Lord, and what was its effect? It swept away all the superstitions of idolatry, all the horrors by means of which men thought to honor their false gods; Christ's teaching was for all mankind; it was not restricted to a few favored individuals; even a very ignorant Catholic knows more about God and our salvation than hundreds of learned men would have known in pagan times. The life of whole nations is permeated by the doctrines of Christianity, their moral standard has been raised, their modes of thought changed, and their ideas and actions sanctified. So deep was the impression made upon the whole of civilized existence by the doctrines of our own risen Lord, that at the present time those who in their ingratitude refuse to believe in Him are nevertheless, without being aware of it, influenced by His Spirit. Whatever good they do, or teach, is due to Christianity, without which there would never have known many truths that they regard as matters of intellect.

Let us thank our risen Saviour for His teaching and for the precious

gift of redemption. Let us beware of trying to bring His doctrines into agreement with our passions, or to interpret them according to our perverse minds; what He taught, we will believe, now and for ever, and thus we shall reach heaven, our final goal.

Jesus is risen, He has redeemed us, and so we are destined for heaven. What encouragement does this truth contain! Without it life would, indeed, be cold and hopeless. Without redemption we should not know why we were sent into this world to undergo so many troubles during our short span of life, nor why we should be encompassed on all sides with sorrows. Life has no meaning for one who does not believe in the redemption, but in its light life appears full of significance and importance. In the light of the redemption we see that life is the narrow way, often painful and perplexing, leading up to heaven, if we are guided by the hand of our risen Saviour. We were created not for this brief life on earth, but for eternity, to which we may attain through Jesus Christ. Let us therefore thank Him to-day for all the graces of redemption, that He ratified by His Resurrection. Let us avoid sin, resolving firmly to do what is right and faithfully to follow out His teaching. Let us live, not for earth, but for heaven. This should be our thanksgiving to Him to-day on the feast of His Resurrection, our thanksgiving for His abundant redemption. Amen.

TEMPERANCE

THE MODERN PHYSICIAN AND ALCOHOL

John D. Quackenbos, A. M., M. D., Emeritus Professor Columbia University and Fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine, New Hampshire Medical Society, American Medical Association, and American Association for the Advancement of Science, writes as follows, in the Temperance Cause:

"I have been asked to define the position of the medical profession in regard to the use of alcohol as a beverage and as a therapeutic agent. It is distinctly unfavorable to-day. Physicians look upon alcohol as a protoplasmic poison, and are advising against its employment where it was once warmly recommended, as, for instance, in nervous depression, dyspepsia, insomnia and tuberculosis. We now know that alcoholic drinks interfere with digestion, predispose to cardiovascular and pulmonary troubles, and impair the elimination of toxins created in the body which are the cause of gastric acidity, sleeplessness and general neurasthenia, as well as of high blood pressure and premature arteriosclerosis. Thus the use of alcohol indirectly contributes to the development of a form of arterial degeneration designated as hardening, which is directly due to auto-intoxication accentuated by the ingestion of alcohol. The majority of people overeat and under exercise. Sixty per cent. of Americans work indoors at sedentary vocations, and these drink moderately as a habit, and oversomke as well, in response to the demand of a system depressed by a superabundance of food that cannot be disposed of, and of unnatural work that keeps up the demand. What these persons drink to reinforce nervous energy is itself a most dangerous compound made of crude sugar or potato spirits, or fusel oil, and various 'essences' manufactured in laboratories—a compound sixteen times as deadly in its effects on the brain and other organs as is ethyl alcohol in pure whiskey. And the beer and ale of this country all contain sulphurous acid and other adulterants, much of it preservatives, rendering it antagonistic to digestion which is a form of fermentation, and constituting it a kidney and liver irritant which has to be reckoned with by the doctor and is taken into serious consideration by life insurance companies. Diseases of the kidney have increased 20% with the sophistication and improper manufacture of beer."

THE GREAT FEAST OF EASTER

The word "Easter" comes from the name of the old Teutonic goddess of Spring, Ostera, whose feast was celebrated by the Druids and pagans of North Europe, during the month of April. Among the people of Southern Europe, beginning with their conversion to the Christian religion, the feast of Easter was also called the Pasch, from the Hebrew word referring to the Passage of the Israelites, through the Red Sea, when they were delivered from the land of Egypt.

The children of Israel eat their Paschal lamb in remembrance of their deliverance by Moses from the land of Egypt, a type of Christ by whom all men are delivered from the power of the devil. The people of Israel took the blood of the Paschal lamb and sprinkled it on the doorposts of their houses, by which they were saved from the hand of the destroying angel, a figure of the blood of Christ by which we are saved from everlasting death.

According to the greatest Doctors of the Church, the feast of Easter was instituted by the Apostles. The Fathers of the Apostolic Age call it the Feast of feasts and the Solemnity of solemnities. In the early days of the Church the celebration of Easter lasted for eight days, even among the

laity; to-day, most of these ceremonies are carried out only in religious communities.

According to the Latin Rite, Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday after the fourteenth moon following the vernal equinox, or following the 21st day of March. This accounts for the annual change in the date of Easter.

Easter is the feast of hope. "This solemnity," says St. Gregory the Great, "snatches us from earth to transfer us into the delights of heaven." On this day, which the Fathers of the Church so well named "the day of days," we celebrate not only the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, but we also hail with transports of unspeakable joy the dawn of our own resurrection. The great feast of Easter seems to say to men: "Thou shalt not die; the tomb shall be to the flesh corrupted by the breath of Time, as the earth is to the grain confided to her; there it shall germinate in the silence of centuries, to burst forth glorious and immortal."

To the Christian soul everything about the great feast of Easter speaks of the resurrection. Even Nature, which seems to sleep through the days of winter, clothes itself again with verdure; upon the branches, yesterday so bare, bloom today the loveliest blossoms, and all the world seems to chant the beautiful words of Christ: "And if the grass of the field, which is today, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, God doth so clothe: how much more you, O ye of little faith?"

On the feast of Easter, and during the Easter season, the ceremonies of the Church bespeak the joy of the faithful. Vestments of hope and ornaments of joyous colors have replaced all signs of mourning; rich embroideries adorn the altars; the bells ring out their most glad tones, and from the sanctuary the glorious "Alleluia" rises up to heaven. It is the time of the triumph of the Son of God. It is the figure of heaven itself. It is a picture of the glories of the hereafter. On Easter Sunday, Man, in the person of the Son of God, regained his inheritance lost through Adam.

During the week previous to Easter we see, in signs, symbols and ceremonies, Christ the Man, weak, suffering, dying, dead. During the Easter time we see, in figures and beautiful rites, the same Christ, the Lord, powerful, conquering and triumphant over hell, sin and death, rising gloriously from the tomb. "For by a man came death, and by a man the resurrection of the dead. And as in Adam all die, so also in Christ, all shall be made alive." Of all times of the Church year Easter is filled with the deepest mysteries. It is the culminating point of the whole year. All that which has gone before has been but like so many preparations for Easter. The pious waitings of Advent, the fastings of Lent, and the sorrows of Holy Week, are all like so many steps by which we arrive at the sublime mysteries of Easter. To show us the greatness of this time, God gives us two wonderful works in which to see His power: the raising of our Lord from the dead at Easter, and the coming down of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost.

The Mass of Easter Sunday is said in honor of Christ's resurrection, and is interpolated with many Alleluias. The color of the Easter vestments is white, to typify the glories of the Lord, clothed with light rising from the dead.

Strange as it may seem no hymn is sung during the first week of the Easter time, because, although hymns are signs of joy, still the season tells us of heaven, and only a heavenly ejaculation is chanted. Scripture tells us that St. John saw in heaven the angels and saints praising God, and repeating, again and again, the word "Alleluia," which means "Praise ye the Lord," and through which the Church reminds the people of the weakness of earthly hymns compared to those of the heavenly choirs.

In the course of the ages much symbolism has arisen to denote the resurrection of the body. In the tombs of early martyrs marble eggs were often discovered. For the Christian the egg is an image of the tomb; where the body remains, without movement, because, without life, until He Who has vouchsafed to compare His tenderness to that of a hen, gathering her chickens beneath her wings, comes to break the chains which hold it the captive of Death. It is to this eminently religious origin that the Easter egg may be traced. The modern fashion of appearing in Easter apparel on the day of the Lord's resurrection is but another custom that is founded upon Christian belief.

The resurrection of our Lord is the object of all Easter services and customs. Sin is the death of the soul, and for the people who rise in triumph from the grave of sin, Lent and Holy Week are given to prepare themselves for the reception of the Sacraments during the Easter season. All who have received their first Holy Communion must receive the Holy Eucharist each year, during the Easter time, which in this country lasts from the first Sunday of Lent until Trinity Sunday.

By ancient writers the Easter time is called in Latin Quinquagesima, and in Greek, Pentecost, both words meaning fifty, because the season lasts for fifty days. It is a continuation of the glories of the resurrection and signifies the everlasting joys and pleasures awaiting us in heaven, after the trials and sufferings in this valley of death through which we must pass, like our Lord. Each fiftieth year among the Jews was

their year of Jubilee, and all their debts were blotted out, and their slaves were set at liberty—a figure of our fifty days of Easter time, when all our sins are blotted out by good works and fasting during Lent, and the reception of the Sacraments during Easter time. From the first ages of the Church, during the first of these holy seasons, the people spent much of their time in the churches on their bended knees, in prayer; when the Easter season came they stood while praying in the church. From this comes the custom of the people standing at the prayers at High Mass during the Sundays of the resurrection of Christ from the dead. This practice has been retained even to our own day, and is also commemorated by the faithful standing during the recitation of the "Regina Coeli," said during Easter time, instead of the Angelus.

On Holy Saturday the Paschal candle is blessed with great solemnity. It stands at the right of the altar, and is lighted during the Gospel at all Masses from Holy Saturday till Ascension Thursday when it is put out at the end of the Gospel. It is lighted at the Gospel, for it tells of Christ enlightening the world by the light of His Word. The Paschal candle is a figure of Christ risen from the dead, and it is quenched on the day He ascended into Heaven, to typify that all revelation was then ended.

The Holy Spirit which dwells within the Church and teaches Her in all things, guided Her in celebrating Easter on Sunday, and not on a day of the week as the Jews celebrated their Pasch. On the first Sunday of creation, God, from everlasting night, brought forth the light which illuminates the world around us. "I was but a figure of the Wisdom of the Father. His only begotten Son coming forth from the sepulchre on that first Easter Sunday, when, with the transcendent splendors of the Divinity, he passed through the solid rock. Easter Sunday is the greatest feast of the Church; all the other Sundays of the year are but so many little Easters, coming each week to remind us of our risen Lord. Thus, to break the last link which held the early Christians to the law of the Jews, Easter was fixed on Sunday. The laws of Moses and of the Jewish Sabbath were gone forever, and the laws of Christ and the Christian Sunday took their place until the end of time.—Rev. W. D. O'Brien in Extension Magazine.

TRIBUTE TO CATHOLIC GIRLS

One of our daily papers paid a glowing and, let us hope, merited tribute, recently, to our Catholic girls. Commenting upon the approaching season of Lent, the paper had this to say: "The fashion of our forefathers went further into the matter of Lenten observance, and insisted upon some personal sacrifice from each maid and matron, as well as charitable deeds. Every girl denied herself something—perhaps candy or flowers or invitations to the theatre or dancing, etc. Our 1916 girls, however, have changed all this and they flout the idea of self-sacrifice and declare that they never deny themselves anything and intend to keep on having just as good a time as ever. This, however, does not apply to the girls of Catholic families, who, in all cases, cling to the custom of denying themselves pleasures in addition to the performance of good works."

Yes, thank God, the 1916 girls described above differ from the Catholic girl. They are the children of the world, while she is the child of God. They are living the life of nature, of fallen nature at that, while she is living the life of grace. They, of the world, worship pleasure, go forth to meet it, welcome it, bask in its warmth and find their heaven in its sunshine. She, of God, knows the emptiness and vanity of human pleasures when sought as an end in itself; and in spiritual joys that alone can satisfy the soul; in joys that spring from prayers, graces, sacraments, mortifications, aims, deeds, etc. she finds her delights. She has been taught well and has taken deeply to heart the words of the Master: "Unless a man deny himself, he cannot be My disciple." The cautious admonition: "He that counteneth small things shall fall by little and little," he that fails to curb nature in its craving after softness and ease; he that pampers it and gives in to even its every innocent yearning will find himself unable to withstand its demands in the hour of deep, death-dealing temptation. She appreciates the truth that saying of one of God's greatest saints: "If I had one foot in heaven and ceased to mortify myself I should be damned." The reason, therefore, why the Catholic girl "clings to the custom of denying herself" is simply because she sets a higher value on her soul than on her body; because she is more concerned with the goods of eternity than with the goods of time.—Western Watchman.

BEGIN TO BE AN APOSTLE

"Circulate Catholic papers and magazines," exhorts the Michigan Catholic. "Make an effort to undo the work of Satan, whose agents are honey-combing this continent with their lying literature. Subscribe for Catholic papers and encourage your neighbor to do likewise. Do not be a jelly-fish Catholic nor a too-lazy-to-read one! We have too many Catholic men and women who fail to find

time to read Catholic papers and we have a surplus of the class who sit in ignorance, when questions of current Catholic events are brought up. Do not haggle over the few pennies which will purchase Catholic publications. One article brings you full returns, and if you hand the copy to your non-Catholic neighbor you may be the means of bringing a soul to God. Spread the Faith! Be a militant child of Mother Church and one of your best weapons is the Catholic Press. The Catholic women, the mothers, wives and daughters should be leaders in this great mission! They should read and encourage those about them to purchase and read Catholic books and papers. Reader, if you have been lax in this great work, begin now."

"BECAUSE YOU ARE A CATHOLIC"

"Take [this public office or that] because you are a Catholic," was the late Mgr. Benson's advice to a gifted friend who expressed a preference for retirement. It is well known how fully he himself developed and used in the service of the Church all his remarkable talents. In this connection, Father Martindale, Mgr. Benson's biographer, observes: "I need therefore say, in answer to a singular question I saw somewhere asked, how it was that Hugh was given such scope for his various talents and tendencies in the Roman Catholic Church, no more than it was there and there only that his talents and tendencies would ever have come to all that they did." Entering the Church at the maturity of his powers and with a keen realization of what a wonderful grace it is to be a Catholic, Mgr. Benson seems to have chosen as the guiding principle of his own life the watchword he gave his spiritual children, because he was a Catholic he felt that he should perfect all his talents and devote the best that was in him to furthering every good cause.

Of course, Catholics equipped with Mgr. Benson's remarkable qualities of heart and head are not common. But Catholics resembling him in eagerness for self-improvement and self-expression, in zeal for fitting themselves to fill important posts creditably and to appear on public occasions advantageously; such Catholics should not be rare. If the professional, social, commercial and educational circles of every town and city in the land contained numerous Catholics of that description, if we had more men like the late Thomas M. Mulry, Andrew J. Shipman, and Dr. Thomas Dwight, no doubt, the Church's prestige in the United States would be wonderfully heightened. But of professional politicians who are more renowned for their Catholic antecedents than for their Catholic loyalty, of social climbers who sacrifice the faith of their children for temporal advantage, of invertebrate Catholics in all their genera and species, we already have far too many. What we need is a marked increase in the number of well-educated, clear-headed, pure-hearted men and women, who fear no one but God and who, because they are Catholics, can discharge with

credit any public office, or fill with distinction any post of honor, that the State or their fellow-citizens may choose to confer upon them.—American.

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How I Darkened My Gray Hair

Lady Gives Simple Home Recipe That She Used to Darken Her Gray Hair

For years I tried to restore my gray hair to its natural color with the prepared dyes and stains, but none of them gave satisfaction and they were all expensive. I finally ran onto a simple recipe which I mixed at home that gives wonderful results. I gave the recipe, which is as follows, to a number of my friends, and they are all delighted with it. To 7 ozs. of water add a small box of Orlex Compound, 1 oz. of bay rum and 1 oz. of glycerine. These ingredients can be bought at any drug store at a very little cost. Use every other day until the hair becomes the required shade, then every two weeks. It will not only darken the gray hair, but removes dandruff and scalp humors, and acts as a tonic to the hair. It is not sticky or greasy, does not rub off and does not color the scalp.

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