FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.

Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost.

PREPARATION FOR ADVENT.

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and appeareth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." (St. Matt. xxiv 27)

Our holy mother the Church, before Advent, fixes our attention upon the second Advent or coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in His majesty to judge the living and the dead. She does this to excite us to examine and judge ourselves, that by a true contrition we may be prepared to receive Him with joy when He comes as a little Infant at Christmas, when He comes at the hour of death, and when we meet Him at the great judgment day.

Our Lord in the gospel foretells at the same time the destruction of Jerusalem and the final destruction of the world.

Jerusalem may be taken as the figure of the soul, so that what befell Jerusalem represents to us in lively colors what shall befall souls which, dying unreconciled to God, shall fall under His judgments.

Now, our Lord says of Jerusalem that she shall suddenly be surrounded by her enemies, who shall dig a trench around her, and wall her in on every side, so that no one can escape from her. That her inhabitants shall die victims of pestilence, of famine, and the edge of the sword, until she shall be left an utter waste. That the anguish and distress of that time shall be greater than anything which had happened before since the world began. He told the exact time when all this would take place: "Amen, I say to you this generation shall not pass away until all these things be done."

All this literally came to pass within forty years after this prophecy was spoken, when the Romans beseiged the city, slaughtered over a million of people, and led the remnant army captive, to be scattered over the face of the earth.

All this horror and desolation is a mere figure and shadow of what shall take place at the end of the world. The sufferings of that time are nothing in comparison of what the wicked and disobedient shall endure at the awful day of judgment.

Jerusalem, that city of God, so beautiful and glorious, was utterly destroyed because of her sins and obstinate rejection of God's mercy offered her by the Son of God, the Messias, our Lord Jesus Christ.

The soul, the greatest and noblest work of the Creator, capable of unbounded happiness, if she chooses sin and disobedience, if she refuses to repent and accept God's forgiveness, shall fall a prey to His justice, and for ever fall from her high estate by her own folly.

The hour of death shall shortly be upon us. Then the soul will be in great straits. The devils of hell shall surround us, and our own sinful passions shall rise against us. If we have lived to gratify them and to sin, how difficult it will be to repent. We cannot, all of a sudden, love what we have hated, and hate what we have loved. All hope of escape will be cut off and we shall be an easy prey to our enemies.

The great judgment day for the whole world may be a long way off; but, after all, that is of little consequence to us, for each one of us must have his own particular judgment within a few years or months or weeks—when the time of his death comes.

Let us take our Lord's counsel then; leave Jerusalem before the enemy surrounds her; flee to the mountains; not stop to take anything with us, but flee at once, nor hesitate a moment—that is, flee from our sins, flee from all sinful practices and indulgences. Examine ourselves, deplore our sins, judge ourselves, condemn ourselves; flee to the mountains of God's mercy; entreat and beg for forgiveness; resolve over and over again not to sin again, but for the rest of our lives to be faithful and true.

God will hear our prayer; He will wipe out all our sins, receive us into the heavenly Jerusalem, where we shall rest safe and secure from all our enemies for all eternity. Amen.

OUR ANGELS GUARDIAN.

There is something beautiful in the thought that there are angels guarding us from the first moment of our existence to the last moment of our life. "He hath given His angels charge over thee," says Holy Writ, and their office is to guard us against the temptations that assail our soul. The scriptures speak of the three great archangels, Michael, Raphael and Gabriel. The first is the great angel shining with glory, who stands nearest the throne of God and who is captain of the angelic hosts, and as such with his battle cry of "Who is like God?" drove Lucifer and the rebellious angels out. The second is called "the medium of God," since, as shown in the case of the young Tobias, he ministers to the ills of the body and protects it from harm. The third is the angel of fortitude who brings comfort to the soul in distress and was the messenger of salvation to mankind in announcing a Saviour was to be born to the world. Then there are the nine choirs of angels: the virtues strive to sow virtue in our hearts; the powers uphold us midst life's struggles; the principalities watch our kingdoms; the denominations seek the extension of God's domions; the thrones seek to have God reign in our hearts; the seraphim and cherubim strive to make peace and good will reign in the soul.

There are angels guarding nations. There are those guarding cities and hamlets as well as guarding our individual souls, and whilst fulfilling their duties Holy Writ tells us they always see the face of the Father in heaven. They were created by God to adore and glorify Him and they are ever faithful to their duty; but they are given at the same time a task with regard to us, and that is to shield and protect us from evil and to bring us eventually to share with them the glory and happiness of heaven. They are our companions day and night and never cease their watchfulness as their care over us. They know God's love for us, and so their love for us is without bounds. They know the dignity to which mankind has been raised by the Son of God adopting our nature, and so they honor us and appreciate our greatness. They understand the destiny for which we have been created and they do their best to help us to attain it. They are ever at our side to help us on the way to eternal life. How precious their charge? Souls made to the image of God the Father and redeemed by God the Son, and to be helped to sanctification by the Holy Ghost; souls which God has thought of from all eternity; souls which He longs to have by His side in heaven. These are the charges of the angels guardian and they are most faithful to their trust. Every moment they are warding off the attacks of satan; every moment they are giving God's grace to shun evil and do good; they are always battling for us against the evil one.

It is for us to co-operate with our heavenly and valiant champions. They are invincible in themselves, but we must co operate if there battle for us is to end triumphantly. We have our powers and we must use them. If we struggle as best we can then heaven will be gained and we shall be crowned with the crown of eternal life. It is the giving of our wills to God at the hands of our angels guardian that is most needed for the attaining of our salvation. This readiness to comply with the will of God who has willed our salvation is the first and the one great requisite, this once done all else is easy. The divine will is made known to us through the voice of conscience, then our angel guardian strives to lead us as the voice of God directs and grace is given to us to comply and all is well if we correspond and go the way our angel leads us. How pure and noble one must become if he but keep mindful of the pure heavenly being that is his companion and guardian, and how one must long for heaven when he realizes how much God is doing to bring him there! It would be ungrateful and unworthy to be indifferent to service so great. How many times we have given our angels cause to grieve by our waywardness, and how often they must have been pained by our indifference and neglect! Their only thought is God and us, and we frequently forget all that has been done and is doing for us. No one but God and our angels know how many corporal dangers we have been kept from, and for all this there should be some token of our gratitude and a determination manifested to make every effort to save our immortal soul. Our holy religion shows us how to walk in the right path, and the graces that come to us by availing ourselves of its sacraments are all sufficient to help us attain the heavenly goal. We have but to start to succeed; our angels will help us and comfort us on the way.

How long we must go before we reach the end God alone knows, but we know that it is nearer than most of us think, and life's journey may come to an end any time.

Let us look up and pierce the clouds that stand between earth and heaven, as do our angels, and then, like them, we shall see, in spirit at least, the face of our heavenly Father, and we shall have renewed courage to fight against the obstacles to our salvation. We will unite with our angels ever battling against the enemies of our salvation; and their victory will be ours, heaven will be gained and we shall go to our Father's home, and there we shall see our angel face to face and can thank him for all he did for us. — Bishop Colton in Catholic Union and Times.

THE NOTE OF THE TRUE CHURCH

The note of the True Church, writes Doctor Gildea, is Catholicity or universality. The Church is Catholic as to time and as to place, because she subsists in all ages and teaches all nations. Go back to the first days of Christianity, and you will find the Church of Rome there. You will find that then, as now, union with Rome was the test of Catholicity.

St. Cyprian, writing to Pope Cornelius, speaks of the efforts he has made to effect that his colleagues "might steadfastly approve and hold to your communion, that is, to the unity and charity of the Catholic Church." (Ep. 45)

All the rights and prerogatives which the Bishop of Rome now claims were then conceded to him in the sixteenth century, Henry VIII., in his "Assertion of the seven sacraments," which won him from Leo X. the title of "Defender of the Faith," thus addresses Luther: "Deny, if you can, that the whole Christian world hails Rome as its spiritual mother. Even to the remotest ends of the earth, all that bears the Christian name, on the sea and in the wilderness, bows before Rome."

Will she continue till the end? Macauley, viewing the question from a merely human standpoint, is inclined to believe that she will. Edmund Burke was certain that if Catholicism went, Christianity could not long survive.

The Church of Rome is Catholic or universal in place, as well as in time, because she teaches all nations. If you should visit Rome, pay a visit to the Propaganda College, which Napoleon I. declared to be a model miniature of the Catholic Church, you will find amongst the students, representatives of every nation under heaven.

Cardinal Mezzofanti, the world famed linguist, of whom Lord Byron said that he ought to have been the "interpreter general" at the Tower of Babel, learned most of his languages there.

You will see black men there, men born in slavery in the wilds of Central Africa, defending these from the theology and philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas.

The Church has gone through her eras of persecutions, as was foretold of her. The early Christians were driven by persecution into the catacombs. We have memorials of those catacombs even to this day. What else are the lights on our altars, the secret whispering of the Apostles' Creed when the Divine Office is recited, the crypts under many of our churches?

In the sixteenth century, Schism shouted to her to "go back to the catacombs"; and while heresy was fighting for a duchy, her answer was to send her missionaries to America and the Indies, to win whole continents.

Always a distinctive name of the True Church has been this name of Catholic. St. Augustine, after saying that he is held in the Church by "a succession of Bishops descending from the See of Peter, to whom Christ, after His resurrection, committed His flock," says: "Lastly, the very name of Catholic holds me; of which this Church alone has, not without reason, so kept the possession, that, though all heretics desire to be called Catholics, yet if a stranger asks them where Catholics meet, none of the heretics dare point to his own house or Church. (Contra. Epist. Fund.)

Do the Protestant sects, which claim to be true Church according to the Gospel, possess any note of Catholicity? They are Catholic neither in time, nor in place. Luther declares when he fell away, that he was alone, as the preface of his works will show. Calvin admits, (Epist. 141) that the reformed churches broke away from "the communion of the whole world."

Again, there is no universality without unity, and who shall say into how many sects Protestantism is broken? It is at best an aggregate of national or sectional churches, just as Europe is an aggregate of nations. The Thirty Nine Articles may serve for England; but in other countries, they would run counter to prevailing doctrine.

CATHOLIC SCOTLAND EXILED.

Letters from Father Campbell, S. J., continue to delight the Catholics of Glasgow. Of the 80,000 Catholics in the diocese of Antigonish, 45,000 are Highland exiles or their descendants, 20,000 are French, and 15,000 Irish. There are sixty Gaelic-speaking priests, of whom the doyen is Bishop Cameron, who bears his four-score years wonderfully, and who has frequently visited the Braes of Lochaber, where his people dwelt. A wonderful old man he is, who has himself seen Popes Gregory XVI., Pius IX., Leo XIII., and Pius X. Besides the sixty priests, there are about fifty Gaelic-speaking nuns in the diocese who are chiefly engaged in the schools. Father Campbell concludes one of his letters to the Fathers at St. Joseph's with the request that his kindest regards be given "to every body in Glasgow." It is interesting, by the way, to find that papers of all kinds throughout Nova Scotia are full of Father Campbell's mission, and the Protestant as well as the Catholic press, teem with expressions of amazement at the remarkable effect of his visit. A few weeks ago it was indicated, in a special article in our own columns, that posterity would look back upon this as a great event in the history of Nova Scotia. The priests, press, and people there are already beginning to realise the greatness of the event.

Father Campbell's friends in Glasgow had been arranging to give him a hearty welcome on his home-coming from Nova Scotia, which was expected about the middle of November. Since the arrangements were first considered, however, it has been ascertained that the time of Father Campbell's return is so uncertain that it would not be safe to engage a hall for any date earlier than the New Year. The City Hall has been engaged for January 8th, but as that comes in the year of Father Campbell's Silver Jubilee, it is proposed to combine the jubilee celebrations and the homecoming, and to let one function suffice. Every effort is being made to interest all Father Campbell's friends, so that the welcome offered him by his "own people" in Glasgow may not be less enthusiatic than that given by the 45,000 Gaelic-speaking Catholics of Nova Scotia, amongst whom he has conducted no fewer than nineteen missions since he left Glasgow.—Antigonish Catholic.

AND THE CONVERSATION CEASED.

A very interesting and instructive little story was told by Father Rowan in the course of a sermon at the church of the English Martyrs, Alexandra Park, recently, on the subject of devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

Father Rowan related how he had met an old Nonconformist lady at a hotel recently, and that a conversation took place on Catholicity. The old lady told Father Rowan that there were many religious votaries whom she could not stand. "But," she added, "I can get on very well with Catholics—that is, if they are not Irish Catholics."

"What I object to in Catholics," continued the old lady, who left her antipathy to Irish people unexplained, "is that they do too much honor to the Virgin."

"Well," retorted Father Rowan, "can you tell me of one instance in the history of the Catholic Church showing that Catholics ever paid greater honor to the Blessed Virgin than did God Himself when He chose her to be His Mother?"

"Oh, that's a different thing," replied the old lady, closing her mouth with a peremptory snap and stopping the conversation on the spot.—Manchester (Eng.) Catholic Herald.

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FOOLISH GIRLS.

It is enough to make one's heart ache the way foolish girls will pass by splendid, hard-working men and choose insignificant little nobodies for their life's partners, and all because they won't take the trouble to look below the veneer of fine dress.

The man who has an aim in life can't spend all his time in running after girls and going to dances.

He has something better to do. He has to make a name and place for himself in the world.

The young men who are lounging around the street corners and saloons will never be anything better than they are now. The chances are they will be much worse.

Look around at the married women of your acquaintances. Some of them married honest, hard-working men. Others married loafers. Some of them are happy wives, others miserable wrecks.

Look forward a few years and imagine yourself in the place of either and then marry a good-for-nothing loafer if you dare.

Marry the worker and help him build up a successful career. Let him come home at night and find a cheerful home and a happy, smiling wife who is proud of his success and sympathizes in his reverses.

But don't deliberately walk into a life where failure is bound to come. Don't tie yourself to a man for whom as the time goes on you will be able to feel neither love nor respect.—Sacred Heart Review.

May Lay Aside The Cassock.

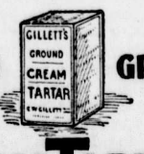
The Congregation of the Council has issued a circular note to all the Bishops in France, notifying them that, whenever priests are compelled to resort to manual labor or non clerical work in order to eke out a living, as is the case with many in France, they shall be dispensed from wearing the cassock in public streets or the tonsure, and even from the daily recitation of the breviary. The dispensation was received with general approval in France, because the clergy could no longer support themselves in their Church work, repeatedly had told the Congregation that it was impossible for them to find lay employment while they were wearing the cassock.

A Woful Sign.

It is a woful sign of the times that, under a radical government, the soldier police—the permanent army of occupation in Ireland—is to be strengthened in the year of our Lord 1907. It is doubtful whether people in this country rrcognize the full significance of that fact. It means that Ireland is in the same relation to England as Poland is to Russia, a country in a state of perpetual rebellion, which is only repressed by an overwhelming display of armed force. Such, after all these centuries, is the melancholy result of English rule in Ireland—coercion veiled under constitutional forms. — Reynold's Newspaper, London.

Set thyself, like a good and faithful servant of Christ, to bear manfully the cross of thy Lord, crucified for the love of thee.

GILLETT'S



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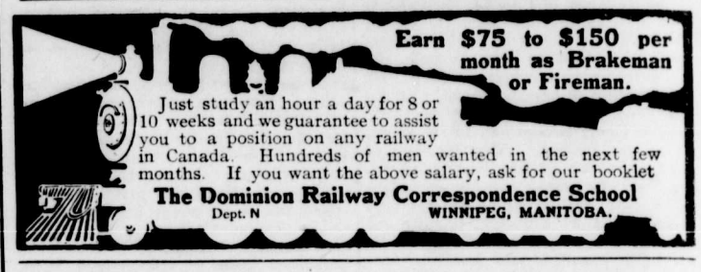

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