

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

REV. J. J. BURKE, PASTOR, ILL. THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

MIXED MARRIAGES

"Be not wise in your own conceits" (Rom. xii, 16) Many young people have a very high opinion of themselves. They imagine they know more than their elders. They are wise in their own conceits. Especially is this true when they are about to choose a companion for life. They will not listen to the advice of parents or pastor, but thoughtlessly look outside the Church for the one to whom they wish to entrust their life's happiness. Having called your attention on another occasion to the evil of divorce, I wish to speak briefly to you to-day on another evil which causes woe and misery second only to that caused outside the Church by divorce. I refer to the evil of mixed marriages. The Church, to show her disapproval of mixed marriages, will not permit them to be solemnized in the house of God, nor with any religious ceremonies.

But why does the Church object? Why cannot a Catholic marry a non-Catholic without a dispensation? Is not the Church unreasonable in placing obstacles in the way? No, she is not unreasonable. Her objection is in perfect agreement with reason. She objects, because mixed marriages are opposed to the very ends for which God instituted marriage. God instituted marriage to unite the man and wife in a mutual partnership and to assist each other in knowing, loving and serving Him, that they might be companions on the road to heaven and that they might teach their children the way to heaven. In mixed marriages both these ends are frustrated. I speak of mixed marriages as a rule. There are some exceptions.

The parties constituting a mixed marriage cannot be companions on the road to heaven, since they are trying to go there by separate roads. They cannot assist each other in the knowledge and service of God, since what one says God teaches, the other says is a mockery or idolatry. They can have no family prayer with its elevating influence. In fact, everything pertaining to religion, even the name of God, must be prohibited, "for peace sake." In the household, everything has its time and place except the one thing necessary; every topic, whether of gain or enjoyment, has its interest and is talked over with pleasure and profit, but if mention is made of religion, an animated discussion arises or a coldness ensues that has no elevating effect. Even when both are of the same religion, difference of natural disposition may and often does cause much unhappiness and misery. How much more so when of different religions. They disagree upon that which above all they should agree upon. If man and wife are one, they should be one in religion, one in everything. A united family makes a desirable home. Unity and concord are the life of the family. This is impossible when they differ in religion, when one is a Catholic. Before marriage all is sunshine; but no cloud appears to darken the sky; no fear is felt for the future. Promises are easily made and may be as easily broken. In nine cases out of ten they are broken. You know that when the Church grants a dispensation for a Catholic to marry a Protestant, both parties must promise, let that be practised the teachings of the Catholic religion; 2nd, that all the children shall be baptized by the Catholic priest and trained in the Catholic faith; 3rd, that the Catholic will endeavor to convert the non-Catholic. How long are these promises kept? How often are they kept for even one year? Seldom. Very, very seldom. Many think when they hear priests preaching on the evils of mixed marriages that much of what is said is exaggeration. But I can assure you that during the time I have been a priest I have seen such sacred promises broken, such woe, such misery, such heart aching and breakings resulting from mixed marriages that I am firmly convinced that half of their evils have not been told and that it would be infinitely better for any and every Catholic young woman never to marry than to marry a man who is not a Catholic. It is difficult for non-Catholics to understand this. But it will not be so difficult to understand when they remember that to the Catholic who has been well trained in his religion there is nothing dearer to his heart; that it is his aid in need, his consolation in affliction, his strength in temptations and persecutions and that he will work for it, he'll talk for it, he'll fight, and if need be, he'll die for it.

If his religion is so dear to him, if he will do so much for it, he will not expose himself to the danger of losing it. "He who loves mother or father more than Me," says Our Saviour, "is not worthy of Me." The good Catholic who really loves his religion as he ought, loves it better than any man or woman, than anything upon earth, and he will not run the risk of losing it for anybody or anything upon earth as the persons who enter a mixed marriage. He or she is not the only one exposed. The second end for which God instituted marriage is to bring up children to know and love God. Thousands of children are lost to the faith in the United States as the result of mixed marriages. Of the eighty millions of our population, only twelve or fourteen millions are prac-

tical Catholics; whereas at least thirty or forty millions ought to be Catholics. This loss is caused largely by mixed marriages. Perhaps you doubt this. Every priest can tell you that the results of mixed marriages are disastrous.

But you flatter yourselves that it will not be the same in your case. So did every one of the countless thousands who, notwithstanding the warnings of friendly voices, struck the rock that shipwrecked themselves and numbers of others. Young men and young women, if you are associating with non-Catholics withdraw before it is too late, before you are sorry. Fathers and mothers, for God's sake, for your own sake, for the sake of your own children, for the sake of your own immortal souls and the souls of hundreds of others do not, do not, I repeat, allow your children to mingle with non-Catholics. Stop the evil in its source, before it goes too far. Better—far better for your happiness in this world as well as in the next—never to marry than to marry a non-Catholic and have unhappiness here and hereafter.

TEMPERANCE

THE SOCIAL GLASS

The greatest obstacle in the path of the temperance reformers in Ireland, says the Dublin leader (and the statement is true of this country as well) is the idea that we can not get happy—that we can not get the acme of enjoyment out of life—unless we indulge rather freely in alcoholic beverages.

The constructive temperance policy of the Gaelic League, which stands for an Ireland light-hearted and happy, and does much to convince young people that the gaiety of the Irish Temperance will not be impaired by excluding alcoholic drinks from social functions. The members of purely temperance associations are beginning to recognize that to achieve our permanent good in making our people temperate it will not suffice to dogmatize on the benefits to health and prosperity that are gained by avoiding excessive drinking—an antidote in the shape of healthy amusements must be supplied if the wiles of Mr. Bung are to be counteracted. There are some, of course, like the Pioneers—the elect of the temperance movement—who will be sober under any circumstances; but there are a very large majority of young persons who can not be classed as teetotalers, who take a little drink occasionally and are yet sober and self respecting and fit to take their place under the banners of temperance.

Although we have a splendid army of pioneers who are pledged to total abstinence, still it is rather too much to expect that the bulk of our people will become teetotalers; and it is the duty therefore of the Temperance Associations to lessen as much as possible the temptation to over-indulgence to which the moderate drinkers are exposed.

The example of the Pioneers is very heartening to the less stolid individuals who have not renounced altogether the use of intoxicating drink, but this does not obviate the necessity for taking preventive measures—for adopting a fighting temperance policy—to combat the evil of excessive drinking. At this season of the year there is an evil which affects very much the young people of the community, viz., the use to excess of alcoholic drink at what is one of their chief entertainments—dancing. Speaking at a temperance lecture recently in Waterford, the Rev. T. F. Furlong, in referring to evils of excessive drinking at dances, said that at present there are inmates of inebriate homes in Limerick and elsewhere, members of wealthy and aristocratic English families, whose present unfortunate position had commenced with a glass of champagne after an exhausting and fatiguing waltz. Many a lady had become a victim of such circumstances and owed her position in an inebriate home to-day to the first glass of wine she was induced to drink by her partner in the dance. And what was true of the wealthy classes in this matter was also true of the humbler classes, for with regret it should be said that many a girl at a dance is not only tempted but often forced to begin a career of intemperance by a first glass of beer or porter offered her by her partner.

GOD WAS WITH HIM

"When he unfurled the standard of total abstinence, in the city of Cork," says the Catholic Bulletin, writing of Father Mathew, "he knew full well that he was undertaking a project which might be failed to end in disaster, for he was running counter to the long-cherished traditions and customs, not only of the people of Ireland, but of the world at large. It was no easy, at the least, a rash undertaking—this attempt, heretofore undreamed of, to reform the drinking customs of a people who had long cherished, although they had not practised, moderation as the highest ideal towards which they dared aspire. Father Mathew was not daunted by the seeming impossibility of the task he had undertaken. He had prayed for light and guidance and when he saw the new avenue of escape from the slavery of intemperance opening up before him, he did what every pioneer in a righteous cause must do if he would succeed—he began to practise what he felt bound to preach. He had wisdom enough to know that if the proposed remedy for intemperance were good

for orders it ought to be good for himself. He set the example by taking the pledge to abstain entirely from intoxicating beverages of all kinds and could thus say to those whom he hoped to influence, 'I have given you an example that I have done, so you do also.' "He began his crusade in the name of God," and the marvelous success that attended his efforts justifies the conclusion that God was with him. In no other way can we account for the transformation which he wrought in the mode of thought and habits of the Irish people."

DUBLIN PROTESTANTS AND THE POOR

Dublin Leader

There never was a time around which a gloomier prospect has settled for our poor people of Dublin than the present. It is no use enlarging on the miserable state of the poor of the city, for nearly every feature of it has been made familiar to us in the daily papers. But there is one aspect of the question which can only be seen in its true light by those who have come into intimate touch with the poor. A great number of the rich in Dublin are separated from the great majority of the poor by the broad gulf of religious antipathy. These rich look on these poor with undisguised contempt as given over to grovelling superstition and idolatry; such poor regard these rich with distrust, as they generally receive nothing from them in charity except at the price of what their consciences hold most dear. I believe that this peculiar religious antipathy between the classes has augmented the bitterness of the conflict that has been raging for months. It is true that Mr. Murphy, a Catholic, has been assailed with more bitterness than anyone else, but he is an exception. The great bulk of the members of the Employers' Federation, and the religious differences are sure to be a factor in every conflict of the kind, for the religion of the Protestant minority is largely a form of politics and the mainpring of a financial and social ascendancy. Society in Dublin is Protestant to the core; the great display of wealth, of equipages, motors, jewellery and dress, at public functions and in the theatres, mainly Protestant; the beautiful houses and gardens surrounding Dublin are mostly in Protestant hands; the luxurious country villas and the choice places in the residential town of Monkstown, Kingstown, Dalkey, and Foxrock are largely theirs. That this wealth is due to the unjust working of a Protestant ascendancy in past years, by which they got all the positions of emolument, and to the cunning selfishness of the Freemason body, by which they have been able to keep a superiority in commerce, Dublin is commonly known to the man in the street, and is not unknown even to the Catholic poor who are in this numerically Catholic city naturally the great majority of the dwellers of the slums.

Now in a normal Christian country this enormous inequality between rich and poor would be bridged over by the spirit of charity. The works of mercy would be performed by the well-to-do for their less fortunate fellow-beings. But Dublin Protestantism is commonly lacking in charity, the first essential of Christianity. The Dublin Protestant argues that he is exempt from the duty of works of mercy because the poor profess the Catholic religion, which to his mind is idolatry. The command of Christ to feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty is interpreted by him in a way that is very saving to his purse. The parable of the Good Samaritan who helped the poor Jew who had fallen among robbers makes no appeal to him. As a condition of the help given the Samaritan did not exact from the Jew a renunciation of the Jewish faith or make him join with him in prayers according to the Samaritan form of worship. But the Dublin Protestant has a different code of ethics to those taught by Christ, who commended the Samaritan for his charity. He does not believe in giving the poor Catholic food or clothing or shelter or medical assistance, unless the latter renounces his faith or disobeys its precepts by joining with him in his form of worship. And let the crisis of poverty be ever so acute and the misery ever so general, he closes his heart against all appeals. In the midst of ease and luxury and wanton display of wealth he keeps up a cynical disregard for the wants of the poor and afflicted. This inhuman callousness may be due to his religion, or rather want of it, or it may be due simply to heredity. The descendants of landed aristocracy, who evicted the poor peasants in thousands to die by the roadside at the time of the Great Famine, are not likely to improve much in one generation, and the clergy of a Church which, as long as they were able, exacted tithes from the poorest cottiers, to whom their ministry was a fraud, cannot be proper exponents of the Law of Charity as taught by Christ.

The Protestant employers gave little to the Catholic charities, to which their underpaid, if not sweated, employees must have recourse in affliction. I know of one firm in particular in which girls are paid 2s. 6d. a week; the names of members of this firm, which has grown rich on Catholic and even conventional custom, appear in Souper subscription lists,

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but never in those of Catholic or non-sectarian charities. Occasionally, to show their interest in the girls, ladies appeared in the workrooms, with nosegays of flowers as gifts, but the nosegays were accompanied with Protestant tracts, which the girls to their credit instantly threw on the floor.

Fortunately for the credit of human nature we can point to a small section of the Dublin Protestants who exert themselves in the cause of charity and philanthropy without any ulterior motive. Lord Iveagh, with his workman's hotel, his model tenements and houses, his model and his children's play centre, is a shining example which they might try to emulate, but do not. Lady Aberdeen, too, has set the example of unsectarian philanthropy, but has few followers among the crowd of wealthy Protestants who figure at the Viceregal Courts functions. There is a certain number of Protestants who promote and support non-sectarian charities and contribute to Catholic funds on the lists of subscribers to Souper institutions. And to give credit where credit is due, it has been noticed within the last few weeks that some Protestant ladies have gone about among the poor, giving orders for boots for them, and doing other works of charity without any interference with their religious convictions. But contrary to what is generally said, all these together are a small minority compared to the thousands of those who subscribe to the Souper institutions, and to no others, and the latter have continued to hold callously to their pernicious anti-Christian principles even during the worst period of the present crisis.

The Dublin Protestants gave practically nothing to what was known as the Lady Mayoress' Fund. As, however English Socialists contributed the bulk of that fund for the purpose of the help given the Samaritan did not exact from the Jew a renunciation of the Jewish faith or make him join with him in prayers according to the Samaritan form of worship. But the Dublin Protestant has a different code of ethics to those taught by Christ, who commended the Samaritan for his charity. He does not believe in giving the poor Catholic food or clothing or shelter or medical assistance, unless the latter renounces his faith or disobeys its precepts by joining with him in his form of worship. And let the crisis of poverty be ever so acute and the misery ever so general, he closes his heart against all appeals. In the midst of ease and luxury and wanton display of wealth he keeps up a cynical disregard for the wants of the poor and afflicted. This inhuman callousness may be due to his religion, or rather want of it, or it may be due simply to heredity. The descendants of landed aristocracy, who evicted the poor peasants in thousands to die by the roadside at the time of the Great Famine, are not likely to improve much in one generation, and the clergy of a Church which, as long as they were able, exacted tithes from the poorest cottiers, to whom their ministry was a fraud, cannot be proper exponents of the Law of Charity as taught by Christ.

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LIQUOR AND TOBACCO HABITS

A. McTAGGART, M.D., C.M., 155 King St. E., Toronto, Canada

Reference is to Dr. McTaggart's professional standing and personal integrity permitted by Sir W. R. Meredith, Chief Justice, Ontario. Rev. W. Ross, M.P., Premier of Ontario. Rev. N. Burwash, D.D., Pres. Victoria College. Rev. J. G. Shearer, B.A., D.D., Secretary Board Moral Reform, Toronto. Right Rev. J. F. Sweeney, D.D., Bishop of Toronto. Hon. Thomas Coffey, Senator, Catholic Record, London, Ontario. Dr. McTaggart's vegetable remedies for the liquor and tobacco habits are healthful, inexpensive, painless, and require no hypodermic injections, no publicity, no loss of time from business, and a certain cure. Consultation or correspondence invited.

children, thought she could make an impression by calling on well-to-do Protestants personally and bringing the matter home to them. She went through two long streets in a fashionable part of the city inhabited almost exclusively by Protestants. Calling from door to door, she sometimes was able to see the mistress of the house and sometimes had to send her message in through the servant. Her work was in vain, she did not receive a penny of assistance. They all showed astonishment and indignation that they were even expected to contribute. There was a curtness and bitterness about the refusals which showed by what spirit they were animated. One "did not go in for helping that," another "had nothing to give to anything of that sort," another "did not want to have our own charities to attend to," another, "No, I cannot afford it, the poor bring a lot on themselves." A loud "Boosh" announced in one house the futility of the message sent through the servant. In another the servant returned with word, that the master "always sent a cheque to the charities" (Souper, of course).

The usual appeals for the Souper charities, those of "Prayer and Food—No Prayer, no Food," are to be seen as usual in the papers. Amongst them was one for clothing Schools of the "Island and Coast Society" of the West of Ireland, all of whom are the children of comfortable farmers or coastguardsmen, and are very few in number besides.

An instance of the cynical and callous spirit dominating the Protestant mind was given lately at a meeting of the Guardians of the South Dublin Union. A Mr. Bennett, a Protestant Guardian, made the remark that he would be glad if Catholic people and clergy would support the Catholic families, which, is the same as saying that all the burden of charity should fall on them, as the Protestant poor are a negligible quantity. He also gave out that he had a Catholic family on his hands, and would be glad to shift the burden on the Catholics "as his money was going." Very little money such men spend except on themselves and their own pleasures. The ordinary Catholic shopkeepers who live in the city have to have their hands continually in their pockets in the cause of charity and in addition are handicapped by the heavy taxes which Protestant numbers in the county and have been deserting the city, escape the city rates, give nothing in charity, and even the amounts they give to the Souper charities are a very slight burthen to them. Most of the visiting work is done by their paid Biblewomen. They themselves make a brave show at the annual meetings, coming to them in their carriages and motors. A Bible preacher gave out some time ago that what he wanted to do in Ireland was to make Christians. If the form of Christianity he preached was that practised by his Dublin coreligionists, the less any country has of it the better. It means a negation of our common humanity.

A CATHOLIC FISHER FOR SOULS The pastor of St. Patrick's Church, Eau Claire, Wis., in which a class of 100 adult converts were confirmed by the bishop one day quite recently, is dubbed by The Catholic Citizen "the premier convert-maker of the West." During the past five years, says The Citizen, this priest, Father A. B. C. Dunne, has received into his Church 268 non-Catholics, "an average of a little more than one a week," and "the total number of converts received by him during his pastorate is 636." The Catholic weekly goes on to outline the methods which Father Dunne has used so successfully. Both Catholics and Protestants will find interesting the enumeration and explanation of the specific means and aids to conversion:

(1) By the co-operation of the laity in congregational prayers, novenas, communions, and general interest in the spiritual welfare of non-Catholic relatives and friends, through securing for them the grace of conversion. (2) Cordial and frequent personal invitations extended to non-Catholics to attend Catholic services, particularly the Lenten course of lectures, which are adapted to mixed audiences, and at the conclusion of which the non-Catholic shares with his Catholic brethren the graces that flow from the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. (3) Generous distribution of Catholic literature. Within the past ten years more than 1,800 copies of 'The Faith of Our Fathers' have been given to inquirers. Each Protestant minister, shortly after his arrival in the city, receives a copy with the compliments of Father Dunne. (4) Judicious use of the space generously proffered by the local press, to propound Catholic doctrine. (5) The easy and continuous opportunity of taking instructions. Father Dunne conducts 4 courses of instruction annually, each extending over ten weeks, of three hours per week. The opening of each course is announced from the pulpit three Sundays in advance, the faithful being exhorted to notify any non-Catholic acquaintances who may be disposed to attend. On each Sunday during the course the hours of instruction are announced, and candidates are permitted to enter the class at any time, being able to take up on

the next course the instructions they have missed. "These classes are open to Catholics, as well as to non-Catholics, and in prospective marriage cases he urges the attendance of the Catholic party, which conduces greatly to the encouragement of the non-Catholic as well as to their mutual benefit. "The following results of four years of prenuptial instruction will demonstrate its efficiency: "During that time the priest has had 102 non-Catholic applicants for marriage. Of these, 96 took the instructions, 86 of whom were received into the Church before marriage, 9 postponing their entrance until later on account of the bitter antagonism of relatives, and only 1 declaring that he was not sufficiently convinced of the truth of the Church."

THE ORNAMENTAL AND THE USEFUL "Pilgrimages are good and processions are good," says the Catholic Transcript. They are an open and formal profession of faith. They appeal to those within and without the Church. We can not undertake to measure their usefulness in the way of stimulating the sluggish and confirming the weak. To take part in them is to do a good work, but to go to Mass and so fulfill the first precept of the Church, is to do a better work. It is also a better work to go to confession and fulfill the Paschal Eucharistic obligation. It is better also to enter into the life of the parish and to try to share in the graces, ordinary and extraordinary, which are dispensed to those who strive to live up to their obligations, not for one day in three hundred and sixty-five, but for every hour of the three hundred and sixty-five days of the year."

Do you think that God, who made everything in the heavens, and who made all the earth, does not know where to place you and what is best for you? How beautiful is the soul which has learned to be serene amid all the superficial disturbances of this life. Such a soul is to be found in all walks of life. It may be the soul of the little girl working behind a counter as well as the soul of the Carmelite behind the walls of the convent. Wherever you find it, it is beautiful. God seems to have set His sign plainly upon it.

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MOTTO FOR 1914

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