

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

THE REV. F. P. HICKEY, O. S. B.
FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

THE WORDS OF CHRIST
"But I say to you." (Matt. v. 22.)

In this chapter of St. Matthew these words, "But I say to you," are repeated by our divine Lord six times. They occur in His first sermon on the mount; and were a bold and manifest declaration that Christ our Lord came to change the traditions and customs of the Jews, and to insist on His own doctrine. The multitude that listened must have been amazed. Teachings and practices sanctioned for centuries were ruthlessly condemned and set aside, and a new code of conduct laid down by this new Teacher. "And it came to pass, when Jesus had fully ended these words, the people were in admiration at His doctrine. For He was teaching them as one having power" (Matt. vii. 28, 29).

And if they, who heard Him for the first time, were amazed and awed, how much more reverential and obedient should we be, who know Who this is Who repeated these words so often, "But I say to you." Christ our Lord, the Son of God! Yes, that is what He claimed and proved Himself to be. But that multitude knew it not. To them He was the new Teacher from Nazareth. It was after this He claimed to be the Son of God. You remember how, after He had opened the eyes of the man born blind, and who had been cast out of the synagogue for his adherence to Him, Jesus said to him: "Dost thou believe in the Son of God?" He answered and said: "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" And Jesus said to him: "Thou hast both seen Him, and who He is, and He that talketh with thee. And he said: I believe, Lord! and falling down adored Him." (John ix. 35, 38).

Yes, we also adore Him as God, and accept His words as eternal truth, for God can never change and never err. Then let us look into this chapter of St. Matthew, and find what are these words, which being the words of the Son of God must never be disobeyed, omitted, nor altered by man.

First: "You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not kill . . . but I say to you, that whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment . . . be reconciled to thy brother" (Matt. v. 21). Alas! how often is this doctrine disobeyed and disregarded by the world.

Secondly: "Of old it was said: Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say to you, that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart" (ibid. 28). Not actions alone, but thoughts and desires denounce as guilty before the eyes of God.

Thirdly: "But I say to you, that whosoever putteth away his wife and he that shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery" (ibid. 32). With these words of the Son of God before them, how dare the iniquitous laws of divorce be passed, to make sin easy and to be thought of no account?

Fourthly: not only perjury forbidden; but I say to you not to swear at all . . . but let your speech be yea, yea; no, no; and that which is over and above these is evil" (ibid. 34, 37).

Fifthly: the law of retaliation is condemned—"an eye for an eye," and instead, this neighborly spirit insisted on: "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not away" (ibid. 42).

And the last word: Instead of "love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy," the Son of God inculcates that doctrine of love and perfection: "But I say to you: love your enemies, do good to them that hate you; pray for them that persecute and calumniate you; that you may be the children of your Father Who is in heaven" (ibid. 43-46).

How sad it is to look around us and behold the world ignoring these emphatic words of Christ; at variance with them; yea, acting in defiance of some of them. Christian states passing laws about divorce, utterly abrogating the law of Christ, as if the divine Lawgiver were a God of yesterday and not of today. What answer at the judgment day will be found for having gained said the words of Christ? Have they forgotten that He said, "My words shall not pass away" (Luke xxi. 33; Mark xiii. 31)?

And do Catholics, even those who think that they are fairly good Catholics, take all these words to heart and keep them as religiously as they should? Are they as careful about being angry and unforgiving as He commands? Lustful thoughts, swearing—are they avoided with that holy fear that they should be? Have they learned and do they practise, "Give to him that asketh" and "Love your enemies and pray for them that calumniate you?" And if not, are they Christ's disciples? For He says, "If you continue in My word, you shall be My disciples indeed" (John viii. 31). And if anyone love Me, he will keep My word" (John xiv. 23).

We must beware of being led astray by the maxims of the world. We have in very truth and in all exactitude to accept the words of Christ and keep them. It is hard

for flesh and blood; it is supernatural work, beyond our powers; but grace and help from God will crown our endeavors to obey, if we ask for His assistance. Be solicitous to remember His words and to keep them, for if we fail and disobey He has said, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day" (John xii. 48).

NEXT EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS

TO BE HELD IN CHICAGO

On the authority of a special cable which he received from Rome, Archbishop Mundelein has announced that the twenty-eighth International Eucharistic Congress will be held in Chicago in June 1928. The coming of the International Eucharistic Congress to Chicago will mean the drawing to this city of at least 1,000,000 visitors, including Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, monsignori, priests and members of religious orders, from all the Christian parts of the world.

It means also the attendance of the entire Hierarchy of the United States with hundreds of Catholic laymen and women, to whom the holding of this first congress in the United States indicates new recognition by the Vatican of the Catholic people of America.

BIG PROBLEM FOR CITY
The pouring into this city of a million people of all nations for a few days' Congress, in the present problems in transportation and housing that will strain the resources of both, and for which preparations will have to be made a long time in advance.

The first information to reach Archbishop Mundelein of the probable acceptance of his invitation to bring the International Congress to this Archdiocesan seat, came in a report a short time ago that the standing committee of the International Congress meeting in Paris had voted in favor of Chicago, and had dispatched an emissary to Rome to secure the approval of Pope Pius XI. of their choice.

Without waiting for the final word of sanction, Archbishop Mundelein began making his plans for the Congress. These plans contemplate calling into service the entire resources of the Archdiocese in church capacity, music, the use of parochial schools and school halls, etc., for the care of visiting clergy, and the mobilization of the leaders in every Catholic parish and Catholic organization to take care of the details of arrangements and programs.

The Congress is essentially a religious affair, and the program will be wholly religious in its significance, including besides the larger gatherings, meetings and religious services in every one of the more than 250 Catholic churches of the city and suburbs.

Among the more distinguished of the visitors will be the Pope's own representative, and the officials of the Congress. Many of the most distinguished of the Cardinals and church leaders in Europe, Christianized Asia, South America, Australia, the Philippines and Hawaii, Mexico, Central America and Canada will attend.

PARADE TO BE AT AREA
One of the great features of the Congresses of the past has been the great procession of the Holy Eucharist with which the Congress closed. In the European cities this has been held in the streets.

It is planned to hold this ceremony on the grounds of the new Catholic University of St. Mary of the Lake at Area.

"I look forward to one of the greatest gatherings Chicago has ever witnessed, not excepting the World's Fair," said Archbishop Mundelein today. "It will present a great problem in transportation, but the transportation authorities have three years' notice to prepare for it. It will also create some problems in caring for the visitors, but all of the resources at our command will be utilized to that end. It will be a great event for Chicago, and for the entire United States."

Although the Congress will be a purely religious gathering and no civic ceremonies in connection with it are being considered, scores of prominent men who are not Catholics have already expressed to Archbishop Mundelein their appreciation of the honor done Chicago in selecting this city for the Congress and have offered their services in any activity in which they could be of assistance.

HISTORY OF THE CONGRESS
The first Eucharistic Congress was held at Lille, France, in 1881 on a call from Bishop Gaston de Segur. Each succeeding Congress gathered more adherents, and in a few years the attendants came from many of the other European countries. The first meetings of the Congress were in cities of France. Later the meetings were held in Belgium, Germany and Austria, and became international.

The Vatican stamp of full approval and support was given in 1905 when the Congress was held in Rome for the first time under the auspices of Pope Pius X., who took a part in its ceremonies.

legate of the Pope to England for more than 350 years. In 1910 the Congress was held for the first time in the New World, at Montreal, and was attended by Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops from Europe. The first talk of holding a Congress in Chicago was heard at the Montreal meeting.

One of the most interesting Congresses from an historical contrast and spectacular viewpoint was that held in Rome last year. In the Coliseum, which has been the scene of the persecutions of the early Christians, 10,000 children were given Communion, in the presence of 80,000 worshippers, by the Archbishop of Trieste. It was on this spot that Nero, Diocletian and other emperors had thrown Christian children to the wild beasts to be devoured.

ST. COLUMBA'S BIBLE

INTERESTING CHAPTER IN EARLY IRISH HISTORY RECALLED

There has been a revival of interest in ancient Irish manuscripts. Many eminent scholars are devoting attention to those works. Among the latest who have given the public the benefit of their researches is Rev. H. J. Lawlor, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in Trinity College, Dublin. Tracing the beginnings of Christian learning and art in Ireland, he dealt in a public lecture with the version of the Sacred Scriptures made by St. Jerome, the greatest scholar in the West. It dated from the year 400. St. Jerome translated the Bible from the originals in Greek and Hebrew into Latin.

The work took about 400 years to spread all over Western Europe as it had to be copied by hand. One such manuscript at least was in Ireland in the sixth century. St. Columba borrowed it from St. Finian of Drogheda and copied it. St. Finian demanded back not only the book but the copy St. Columba had made and the King of Tara decided the ownership with the sentence:

"To every cow belongs its calf, so to every book belongs its copy." But St. Columba did not accept this decision and went to Scotland in 563. The Cathach was left in the care of the O'Donnells. Centuries later it was placed in a beautiful Shrine, and in time it was forgotten what the Shrine contained. In the last century it came into the hands of Sir William Betham who opened it and found in the casket the Bible, which is now in the Royal Irish Academy. It was a pure Vulgate with not a bit of old Latin in it.

St. Finian was probably the first person to bring it to Ireland and St. Columba's first to make a copy of it here. The Book of Durrow, containing the Four Gospels, was beautifully illuminated about the year 700 from an original text, by St. Columba.

In connection with Dr. Lawlor's lecture it may be maintained that the Royal Irish Academy has devoted special attention to the promotion of the scientific study of the Irish language and literature and has gradually formed a library of Irish manuscripts which surpasses in number and importance all the other like collections put together.

In an address presented by the members of the Academy to Mr. T. M. Healy, governor-general of the Free State, the members said: "The organization of research in these varied fields is of serious consequence to the future of the country and we hope to continue our labors in the national service in the days to come. At an early period the Academy took the important step of forming a museum for the preservation of national antiquities, which has been steadily growing and the collection today is admittedly one of the most important in Europe."

Its great wealth in pre-historic antiquities of gold and bronze and in antiquities of the Christian period surpasses that of nearly all other national museums. Replying to the address the governor-general said that the achievements of the Academy in Science, Art and Letters were a glory to the country, and that the materials concerning every Irish county gathered and preserved by the Academy, deserved to be put in print as soon as possible.

RESTORED TO VERDUN

The relics of Saint Sainin, first Bishop of Verdun, which had been carried, for safety, to Bar-le-Duc during the bombardment of Verdun at the beginning of the great attack of 1916, have just been returned to the Cathedral in which they were formerly venerated. Mgr. Ginisty, present Bishop of Verdun, who carried the relics to Bar-le-Duc when the entire population had left Verdun, was also the one who brought them back to their former resting-place, in answer to the unanimous desire of the population. The Cathedral was badly damaged during the War and could not be used for many months. A part of the choir has now been repaired sufficiently to make it possible to hold services.

The relics were carried from Bar-le-Duc to Verdun by automobile, the Bishop being accompanied by his Vicar-General. Many Catholic notables followed the automobile carrying the shrine of the Saint. In the villages through which the road passes, the habitants assem-

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bled, headed by the priest and the mayor, to venerate the relics as they passed through and receive the blessings of the Bishop. "At Verdun, the greater portion of the population assembled in front

of the Cathedral, headed by the city authorities. More than a hundred priests from the villages of the Meuse accompanied the shrine as it was carried back into the restored basilica.

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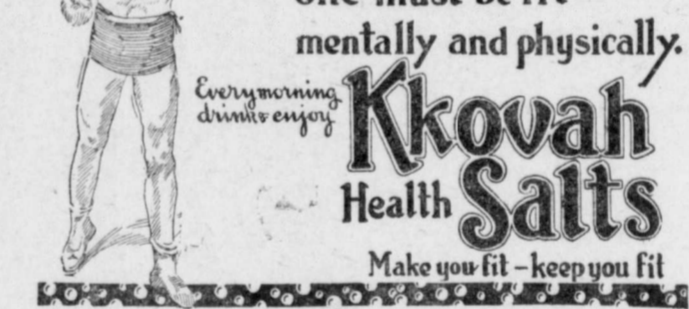


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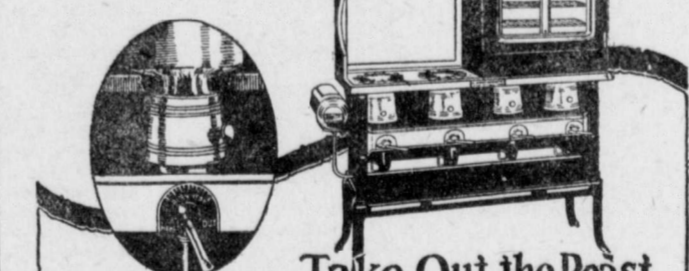
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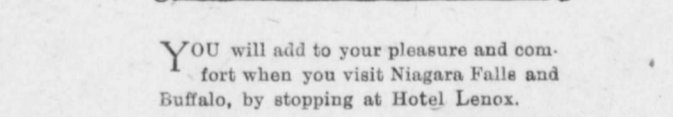
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