

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE POVERTY OF CHRIST

For all these things do the heathen seek. (St. Matt. vi. 32)

In this day's Gospel our Blessed Lord would teach us that the difference between men is the difference between the objects for which they live. And He lays down the fundamental law of His kingdom, that if the chief object of one's life is the enjoyment of the things everywhere about us—eating and drinking and money and lands—there is therein a mark of belonging to the kingdom of this world. To belong to our Lord's kingdom we must live for none of these things as the end of our existence. We may, indeed, have and use the things of this world, but for higher purposes than the world itself can offer; as far as any enjoyment in them is concerned, it is too trifling a matter to engage our serious pursuit. Yet, brethren, is not the whole Christian world absorbed in seeking after what should be the heathen's peculiar treasure? Is not the chief object of our life to get rich? Is not the possession of riches deemed the most enviable happiness? Is it not the best praise of an individual that he is prosperous, and of a nation that it is wealthy? What a serious lesson it is, therefore, that our Lord expressed His contempt for what is deemed the height of human wisdom among us—a contempt no less profound because so gently expressed! He is as much as says—if you and I are to make choice of a way, you may choose King Solomon's wardrobe with all its jewels, and I will take the new-blown lily; if you talk to me of foresight and skill in the business of life, you may admire the successful speculator, but the little sparrow is my model.

And our Lord's life was fully in accord with His doctrine. For it was of set purpose that He saw fit to lack those things that nearly all men covet most; that He was the child of a poor maiden, and the apprentice of a carpenter; that He was a wanderer barefoot and needy about Judea, yet all the time the only-begotten Son of the Lord of all majesty; that He was seemingly a tried and convicted criminal, and died naked and all but alone upon the gibbet, yet all the time the immortal King of ages.

The truth is that this unhappy over-valuing of the more lowly things is a fault deeply rooted in our fallen nature. That the eager pursuit of wealth is not compatible with God's service; that it is the peculiar province of the heathen we indeed know. And we know that the human soul is too noble a being to expend its dearest action to purchase any perishable thing whatever. Yet very many persons who deem themselves good enough Christians are quite proud of their success in the heathen's way of life. And many other Christians fall into downright despair because God has deprived them of the things that "the heathen seek."

Far be it from us indeed to underestimate the burden of poverty, or to say that it is an easy thing to suffer it. God knows that it is a terribly hard thing to be poor; to see one's family suffer actual hunger; to wander about the streets with no roof to cover one; to lie helpless and sick and too poor to get proper food or medicine. But on the other hand it is wrong to act under such circumstances as if all were lost, or as if God hated us; that is the very time to arouse one's faith in God's love and one's reliance on His promises; to seek His consolation in the holy sacraments; to raise one's eyes hourly to His countenance by fervent prayer that He may relieve the burden, or at any rate grant patience to bear it.

Oh! how few there are who gladly and heartily renounce the Kingdom of God and His justice in preference to the treasures of this world! How few there are who do so even grudgingly and doubtfully!

Yet the lot of the saints is to labor for a postponed reward in the Christian's life, and for a present reward in the heathen's. To pass by a seen and present joy for the sake of an unseen joy is the Christian's wisdom; to trust the voice of an unseen benefactor—in a word, to walk in the darkness of a supernatural faith—is the fundamental virtue of our religion.

ODIUM THEOLOGICUM

The daily newspapers of the United States are happily free from personal attacks on the life and character of the present incumbent of the Holy See. Serious objections may indeed be taken to the frequently misleading and inaccurate reports of happenings in Catholic lands, the more so that no effectual means has thus far been devised or established by which the evil may be checked. But abuse of the Holy Father or assaults on his high office are altogether uncommon. Strange to say such attacks are restricted to the religious weeklies, which will often comment on that self-interest or an unkindly spirit prompted, and on the other incur the guilt of the very offenses which they warn their readers against.

An appropriate illustration is furnished in the current Baptist Examiner, which prints a sermon on the Life of Christ, and yet leads off with an editorial under the heading "At His Own Risk," the his meaning the Holy Father. Sophism, mockery, calumny and abuse usurp the place of argument to plead the cause of a new policy of freedom for the handful of Protestants propagandists in Catholic Spain. It is most objectionable, and an apology is due to the reader for reproducing here the hideous picture drawn by an avowed enemy of the Catholic faith, and still he (the Pope) sits in the mouth of the cave, biting his nails at the progress of events, and snarling at those who would bestir themselves in the land where his authority still has potency. Were this description not a mere pen picture but a portrait drawn in colors the Examiner would make a worthy American substitute for the Rome L'Asino. Yet the personage thus jeered

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at is one in whom a Protestant layman, writing for the secular press of his impressions of a recent audience, discerned "a loveliness of character, strength of soul touched by a strange pathos that brought with it the conviction that the people of his beloved city of Venetia, among whom Giuseppe Sarto had once dwelt, had loved him for reasons that were good." The lies and exaggerations and misrepresentations of history are so present to the Baptist editor that "mountainous error is too highly heaped for truth to overbear," and he conjures up a phantom after his own sinister and distorted imaginings. How different from the simple tourist who was able to lay aside his bias, went down on his knees in the presence of Pius X, not because the etiquette of the hour required it but because he wanted to see the man who had made the world seem the sweeter, and the brighter for the existence of such a man as Pius X.

If the freedom of worship which Protestants demand in Spain is to include the right to outrage the feelings of millions of devout and loyal Catholics, and to heap abuse on one whom all Catholics revere as the Vicar of Christ as well as for his own estimable qualities of mind and heart, then aside from further reasoning we question whether such freedom would not be a step backward in the march of civilization and a serious menace to the religious peace of a Christian land—America.

WOMAN'S RIGHTS

ARCHBISHOP MESMER SPOKE ON THE SUBJECT AT WESTERN CHAUTAUQUA

Most Rev. S. G. Mesmer, D. D., Archbishop of Milwaukee, delivered the principal lecture of the season at Spring Bank, the home of the Western Catholic Chautauqua on Oconomowoc Lake at Okauchee, Wis., Monday, July 12th. The Archbishop took for his subject "Woman's Rights."

Among other things the Archbishop said that the modern "Woman Question" was an outcome of the French revolution. His Grace was of the opinion that not only the religious question, "Woman's Rights" a social but also a religious question, a fact overlooked by most writers.

"Rights of persons are determined absolutely by the purpose of the being in question," said the Archbishop, "and the point then arises, what is the purpose of the two sexes; what is the difference? We must come back to the Creator for the answer. Religion gives us the only true answer."

"The theory that demands equal rights must be denied absolutely," said the Archbishop. "It is a mistake to say equal rights instead of similar rights. Men have certain rights that women have not; and women have certain rights that men have not. No one can interfere with the rights given women by Almighty God."

"Why should women claim equal rights when it comes to a question of politics?" asked the Archbishop. "What does politics mean—politics mean the governing and ruling of nations, and not equal rights. It would interfere with woman's calling, which makes her queen of the household. It would destroy her female character, and destroy her influence on mankind."

The Archbishop went over this matter in great detail and stated that he was talking of general politics, admitting that there were certain questions where women might have a legitimate right. The Archbishop also stated that there were a great many occupations for which woman was not made and which would interfere with her high calling as a woman and her morality and would mitigate against her special vocation in the family as mother.

"A true solution of the woman's question may be found in religion," said the Archbishop. "Through this sacred scriptures run the law, that woman is subject to man, and, therefore, man takes the principal part. As he is the head of the family, man must take the leading part and on man rests the authority of the State. Woman is not, however, considered inferior to man even though the enemies of the Church say so, for the Catholic Church teaches that woman stands equally high before God. The only difference between man and woman is the difference in their purpose or work as assigned by God. Instead of saying equal rights one should say similar rights."

THE TYRANNY OF ROME

Why does any one, who has had no experience of life under the guidance and protection of the Catholic Church, call her power tyrannical? There are some people who consider the Ten Commandments tyrannical, and who would violate them if they were not. The one united, consequently a power; the others disunited, consequently weak. Seeking to offset this weakness, our Protestant friends are now striving for some sort of unity among themselves, formulating a consensus of denials in matters of vital importance.

Fortunately there are some who stanchly hold aloof from this movement, knowing that it can only be brought about by the more Christian element yielding to the lesser, and they are not willing to give up the remnant of Christian principles they still possess. All honor to them! In this we are with them. But we have it in our hearts to wish that they might be brought to a realizing sense of their own precarious position and of the full meaning of our Saviour's words: "He that gathereth not up his cross, and followeth me, cannot be my disciple."

Indeed, the Catholic alone understands the meaning of these two texts, and he finds no cranny in the Divine yoke imposed upon him by his own ecclesiastical laws.—S. H. Review

PIRATES ATTACK A PRIEST

The Cairo correspondent of the London Daily News telegraphed to that paper: A savage assault at Haifa, on the coast of Palestine, by Arab boatmen upon a London priest, is reported by the Egyptian Gazette. Father Mullan of Mill Hill and four American students, were being conveyed by shore boats to the steamer late at night when they were brutally attacked by the men who were rowing them because they refused to give three times as much as agreed upon for embarking. Father Mullan, who is a sturdy Irishman, hit out vigorously, and with the assistance of the students, eventually overcame the boatman, after a desperate struggle.

They then commenced to row themselves to the steamer, but the cries of the Arabs roused the natives who immediately began slashing the westerners with their heavy oars, and another serious struggle ensued.

This time the priest and the students were beaten down, their pockets were rifled, and their valuables were demanded as the price of their luggage being surrendered. Satisfied with their spoils the Arabs rowed the wounded tourists to the steamer, rapidly transferred them to the gangway, and disappeared in the darkness.

THE PLEDGE

I promise Thee, O dearest Lord, That I will never cloud the light Which shines from Thee within my soul. And makes my reason bright; Nor ever will I lose the power To serve Thee by my will, Which Thou hast set within my heart, Thy precepts to fulfill.

Oh, let me drink as Adam drank Before from Thee he fell; Oh, let me drink as Thou, dear Lord, When faint by Szech's well; That from my childhood, pure from sin Of drink and drunken strife, By Heaven's clear fountains I may rest Of everlasting life.

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The steamer was delayed for three hours while the wounds—which, though many, were not serious—were dressed. Father Mullan escaped with slight injuries, and one student had a nasty scalp wound.

AUTHORITY AS AGAINST CONFUSION

A friend was asked to give the reason why he became a Catholic and he sends the following in his own hand writing: "I wandered from the city of confusion and ascended to the mountain-top, and gazed upon the vast expanse of seamy below me. In the uttermost depths of my heart I cried out 'Where is the City of God?' I turned to the Holy Scriptures, and I saw that 'the invisible things from the creation of the world were clearly seen, being understood by those things that are made.' I looked above me at the star-spangled sky, and I said: 'All these have their centre around which they revolve, and I am in submission to their centre.' I looked at the magnificent government buildings, and I contemplated how that within the voice of authority was centered in one to whom all others turned for guidance and support. I fixed my eyes upon the dwellings of the poor and of the rich, and I thought to myself: In every family there is a central paternal authority that suppresses all the other authorities in humble submission. I looked at the animal world, and I noted how that in all the multitudinous species, the same unchangeable law prevailed, the submission of the inferior to the parent, and the authority and solicitude of the parent for the offspring, and I exclaimed, 'This is the wisdom of the Most High.'"

FOUGHT SHY OF "CONVERTS" FROM ROME

An Episcopalian clergyman of Boston, who shrouds his identity under the title of "Probyter Ignotus," writes a weekly letter to the "Living Church," which is notable principally for its nasty flings at Catholics, from Pope Pius down to the Cardinal of Boston (who ever she is). He seems to be obsessed with the idea that "Romans" are rushing pell-mell into the Anglican Church, and is wont to refer in somewhat vague terms to the large numbers of these persons, though he takes good care not to give us their names. From our own experience of Anglican clergymen, we have found them fighting rather shy of the average "convert" from Rome.

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