

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. WILLIAM DEMOUY, D. D.

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE CERTAINTY OF DEATH

"And when He came to the gate of the city, behold a dead man was carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow, and a great multitude of the city was with her. When she saw the Lord, she fell on her face, and wept, saying: 'Lord, have mercy on me.' And he said to her: 'Wep not.' (Luke vii. 11-13.)"

The prophets of old cried out that the world was desolate of spiritual wealth, because people did not think within their hearts. In modern times, if a prophet lived, perhaps he would not lament over the world's lack of thought, but over the kind of thought in which it indulges. Nowadays people think even more than they did in the times of which the inspired of God spoke, but they think of things alien to those of God. No one will deny that the world is more strenuous today than ever before in the history of mankind. With the advance of science, has come increased thought; with improved methods of communication, thought has also increased; with new enterprises, new thought has developed. We are more methodical today than our ancestors ever dreamed of being. All our traffic and travel is carried on in a systematic way. System rules more or less everywhere. The world realizes that without order, success is uncertain and progress impossible. Only a slight glance at the modern world will convince one of this method existing everywhere.

But this order in all things has not come about by chance. It has cost lives of energy and thought. Men have labored incessantly in its accomplishment; others have continued where their predecessors left off, until rules have been laid down that are inviolable. The work has not stopped, nor will it ever cease. With the knowledge that thus far has been gained and the successful methods that have been adopted, the life of the world's order and system will last till time is no more. It will be improved upon, added to, perhaps carried out differently; but the fundamental ideas always will remain the same. Men have created something in worldly order that for us and our successors is and will be inevitable. The consequence is that he who conforms to this established order will, as a rule, meet with success; he who fails to comply with it must expect disaster, or at least failure. Sometimes disaster will come even when all order has been complied with, but this is because no works of man are infallible. We enter a train with confidence that we shall reach our destination. As a rule we do reach it, but occasionally we are disappointed. Perhaps the train brings some to their ultimate destination—to eternity. We go aboard one of the mighty ocean liners, expecting that we shall reach the shores of the land beyond the seas; but sometimes we are disappointed, though generally safety is our lot. So in all things human and in the order of all man's works, there is a great degree of certainty but no infallible security. However, the more this order is observed, the more certain is a successful issue secured.

In the great order of God, there is a certainty in His mind and established laws that are infallible. What appears to us as defects are but exceptions to His order. He intended these variations when forming the world and establishing the order thereof. These defects or inflections may be permitted to punish man, or they simply may be to teach him that he has not here a lasting city. If everything in life succeeded to our complete satisfaction, and nature always acted to our liking, we would never have a desire for a better land. We would be of the world, and completely worldly. An all-wise God has not only given us commands, but He has prepared for us a way of keeping them. The surroundings in which we are placed since the fall of Adam and Eve, are blessings to us. We are not to remain here. Why then should we have everything for which the heart yearns? Not only are we not to continue on earth always, but while here we must prepare for another place, and this preparation is carried on better the less we have to do with the world, and, as a rule, the less our worldly success.

How few people think of this order of God, certain to us as to execution but uncertain as to time and manner! People go forward, meeting success when it comes, and facing failure when it is inevitable. This must be, we admit. Success will come sometimes, and at other times failure. But whether success or failure be our lot, we should gain. The plain truth is, however, we often merit by neither. Why? Because we have not thought within our hearts; because we have not, in our intention and by our efforts, submitted to the infallible law of God. In other words, we have not had that spirit of resignation demanded of us by God, and even taught us by experience. And this spirit of resignation will come only to those who think out the truth of God's established order.

What a disappointment death generally is to those who are dear to the one who is stricken! We have an example of it in today's Gospel, but we may believe the widow was not giving way to unavailing grief, as Christ deemed her

worthy of His pity and assistance. This helps us to form a true idea of death and some of its consequences. After the sin of our first parents, God decreed that man must die. This decree is infallible, but the time of its fulfillment in each individual is not certain. How much, then, should we realize the certainty of death and feel that at any moment it could come to us or to our dear ones! Naturally, it may cause the pangs of sorrow to enter the human heart, but in the depth of the soul of the faithful Christian there will be found conformity to God's will and patient resignation to His infallible decrees.

Would that the world would think more of this great truth, and that people would hold themselves always prepared for it! Let us not wait until the danger appears, to make our preparation; and let us remember that once death has come, if we are not prepared to meet it ourselves, nor to see our dear ones meet it, the consequences in either case will be lamentable. Today we live, tomorrow we may die; let us live today as if we were to die tomorrow.

PATRIOTISM AND RELIGION

By Rev. John A. Ryan, D. D.

Patriotism is sufficiently vital to evoke some thoughts fit for consideration by young men and women who desire to be at once good citizens, faithful servants of Almighty God, and genuine lovers of humanity. None of you is too young to have become acquainted with patriotism as it is understood in the time of War. You recall it as including devotion to country, self-sacrifice, moral indignation, and aspirations for liberty and justice. Since the War, you have witnessed a pronounced reaction toward selfishness, intolerance, and distrust of democracy. How is this reaction to be explained? Why have the peoples failed to carry their idealism along the ways of peace? Does the fault lie in the nature of War-time patriotism? Can we have a rational kind of patriotism?

According to this analysis, patriotism comprises five great loyalties; namely: loyalty to country as a place, as a set of national ideals and culture; as a social group; as a government or state; and as a person. Loyalty to national culture has ignored benefits that might have been derived from foreign culture. Loyalty to the social group has expelled many men to despise other social groups and other national groups. Loyalty to loyalties is, indeed, susceptible of exaggeration and perversion. Devotion to country as a place has constrained men to remain in their native land when they ought to have eminent leaders and the State has not infrequently been responsible for injustice and the destruction of liberty. Loyalty to country as a person has led men to forget that the State is made up of various groups of human beings, and to visualize both their compartments and the peoples of other countries in terms which are too simple and too abstract.

That patriotism I shall attempt to describe under two heads: sane nationalism and social justice. In the world of the spirit, there is a certainty in His mind and established laws that are infallible. What appears to us as defects are but exceptions to His order. He intended these variations when forming the world and establishing the order thereof. These defects or inflections may be permitted to punish man, or they simply may be to teach him that he has not here a lasting city. If everything in life succeeded to our complete satisfaction, and nature always acted to our liking, we would never have a desire for a better land. We would be of the world, and completely worldly. An all-wise God has not only given us commands, but He has prepared for us a way of keeping them. The surroundings in which we are placed since the fall of Adam and Eve, are blessings to us. We are not to remain here. Why then should we have everything for which the heart yearns? Not only are we not to continue on earth always, but while here we must prepare for another place, and this preparation is carried on better the less we have to do with the world, and, as a rule, the less our worldly success.

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great, unless it exemplifies social justice. The members of every class, every group, every section, must receive a reasonable measure of effective opportunity for right life and the pursuit of happiness. Adequate food, clothing and shelter, adequate security against the hazards of sickness, unemployment and old age, and adequate facilities, should be brought within the reach of all persons who dwell beneath the American flag. After all, this is the final end and justification of all States and all governments, the welfare of the human beings. To realize this end is the noblest and most enduring task of genuine patriotism.

The method of progressive taxation must be perfected and extended to reach adequately, but without discouraging enterprise, all forms of surplus profit. The rights of property must be scrupulously safeguarded, but it must never be forgotten that the institution of property exists for human welfare. Finally, the unfavorable contingencies of life, chiefly sickness, accidents, unemployment and old age, must so far as necessary, be provided for by a comprehensive system of social insurance. And this should be made available to the great rural population, as well as to the wage earners.

All that is necessary is to keep these loyalties free from excess and perversion, and to hold fast to the fundamental truth that no conception or practice of patriotism is justified except in so far as it tends to promote the welfare of human beings. This is genuine and rational patriotism. This is the patriotism that is needed in our time, and that will still be needed when the last survivor of your academic group shall have been called to that heavenly country where national boundaries and distinctions are effaced and sublimated in the City of God. To grasp, and to retain, and to practice this rational and human patriotism, is an immediate ideal which I put before you, as worthy of your noblest endeavors, and as presenting unlimited opportunity for service to country, to humanity and to God.

FRENCH SOCIAL WEEK

DELEGATES FROM TWENTY NATIONS AT CONFERENCE

By M. Massiani (Paris Correspondent, N. C. W. C.)

Lyons, France.—After having carried its sessions successively to many of the largest cities of France, from Strasbourg to Rennes and from Amiens to Marseille, the "Social Week" of France brought its seventeenth conference this year back to the city where it first came into being, and where the whole-hearted reception given to it by such bodies as the Chamber of Commerce, the Fair Committee of Lyons as well as the cooperation of Catholic clergy and laymen, would never have been dreamed of by the small group of earnest men who organized the first "Social Week" in 1904, that is to say twenty-one years ago. On the opening day of the Conference, the registration had exceeded one thousand, 150 more than on the same day last year. And the number of foreigners—twenty nations had sent delegates—far surpassed anything witnessed before, even faraway New Zealand being represented. The French delegates were drawn from every profession and walk of life: prelates, professors, journalists, physicians, sociologists, jurists, captains of industry, members of labor unions, in short the best that Catholic France could offer. The crowd filled to capacity the spacious halls of the Novitiate of the Lazarists which had been placed at the disposal of the Social Week.

"THE CRISIS OF AUTHORITY"

The increased attendance was due, no doubt, in large measure, to the general subject selected for study and discussion, namely: "The Crisis of Authority." The various manifestations of this crisis in the State, in the community, in the family, in professional life, in industry, in the schools, in the colonies, and in international life were fully discussed. The causes of the evil were investigated, the remedies proposed by non-Christians were weighed and an effort was made, by earnest and careful study, to select those which, in the light of Catholic teaching, should be recommended to Catholics.

A brief list of some of the more prominent speakers will show the value and the authority of the lectures: Mgr. Besson, Bishop of Lausanne; Mgr. Deploige, Senator from Belgium and Director of the Institute of Philosophy of Louvain; M. Maus, Director General of the Belgian Ministry of Justice; Father Rutten, member of the Belgian Senate, and the historian Georges Goyau, member of the French Academy, also prominent lawyers and professors from several law colleges spoke.

CARDINAL TACCI ATTENDES

Cardinal Tacci, who had come to France as Papal Legate to attend the festivities in honor of Saint Madeleine Postel, in Normandy, stopped in Lyons to attend the sessions. Cardinal Maurice, of Lyons, presided at practically every meeting and many Archbishops and Bishops were in attendance. Many interesting suggestions pertaining to the remedy of abuses in authority were made. It is worthy

of note that in his study of the abuse of authority in public life, M. Cretion, former member of the Lyons Bar Association, advocated the institution in France of a Supreme Court modeled after that of the United States.

Another interesting recommendation was that of Dr. Biot in an address on the duties of the medical profession in the campaign against immorality. Dr. Biot declared that only by the creation of a medical association possessing legal sanction could the medical body as such cooperate in the repression of numerous social evils.

"The Liberty of the Church and of Her Relations with the State" was the subject of the very important lecture delivered by Father Desbuquois, S. J., Director of the Action Populaire of France. "The Church," he said, "must remain supremely independent in the domain of conscience; the Church cannot be nationalized because it is universal, nor can it be in any manner subordinated to the State. But the teaching which the Church should bring to human souls is hindered today by false doctrines which claim to find a contradiction between human liberty and the rights of the Church. This contradiction is based on sophisms and it is to the interest of States and peoples to accept contact and cooperation with the Church."

AUTHORITY IN THE SCHOOL

The question of authority in the school, one of the most important subjects discussed, opened with a scholarly address by Mgr. Lavallee, Rector of the Catholic Institute of Lyons, who declared that the family today has little share in the authority on matters of education. "The Church," he said, "cannot remain foreign to the education of children for whose spiritual life she assumes responsibility at the time of their baptism. Authority in the matter of education belongs by right to the family and to the State, although the authority of the latter must and should be only that of supervision. The school should be organized on this basis, but such is not always the case today, and the family has but little share in matters of education."

There was a touching scene at the end of one of the most important sessions when Mgr. Roche, Bishop of Tulle, made a brief address. Bishop Roche is a Hindu, the first of his race to be raised to the hierarchy, and he asked permission to speak in order to thank the Catholic missionaries who had called him to the honor of the priesthood and whose charity had made it possible for an humble native boy to become the head of a diocese. This testimony to Christian charity which knows no distinction of race drew forth tremendous applause.

The Social Week of 1926 will meet at Le Havre. The subject will be "International Relations and International Law."

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