

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. F. PEPPIERT
SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT
"He was transfigured before them." (Matt. xvii, 1.)

Our Lord was transfigured before His three most highly favored disciples, Peter, James and John, on a lonely mountain whither He had led them. He shows Himself in His glory to those who seek Him apart from the world, in prayer and meditation. He was transfigured before the three apostles who were especially to bear witness to Him; before Peter, the Head of the Church; James, who as bishop of Jerusalem was the first of the apostles to die a martyr's death, and John, destined to outlive all the rest, and to preach to the faithful even to the end of the first century, defending our Lord's divinity against the attacks of unbelievers and heretics.

He was transfigured before them, that His subsequent passion might not make them waver in their faith. He was transfigured before them that, when afterwards He should hang upon the Cross, they might see in Him not a weak, dying human being, but God incarnate, revealing His majesty most gloriously in the humiliation and shame of His suffering. He was transfigured because of His passion, and His passion was His transfiguration. The Church points to this truth by ordering the gospel account of the transfiguration to be read in Lent. Suffering and pain transfigure men also, for pain marks a man off from others, and to generous hearts a sufferer is more worthy of honor than a prosperous person. Pain borne with patience gives us the impression of being something great; it arouses our sympathy and draws us nearer to others. Sorrow endured in common has far greater power to unite men than joy. Pain can transform men, and we feel the truth of this fact deep in our hearts, and it is confirmed by a sort of affectation, very common at the present time, which aims at imitating pain, and makes people delight in fancied misfortunes and imaginary sufferings so that they delude themselves and others with the idea that they are lonely and forsaken, hoping thus to make themselves interesting to themselves and others, and to have at least the appearance of being transformed by pain. Of course this kind of imaginary suffering has no transforming effect whatever, but only obscures one's understanding, for a morbid desire of pain, a fancy that one is unhappy, is a proof of want of sense.

Real pain not only transforms us in the sight of others, but a soul that actually suffers is transformed by manifold kinds of experiences, deeply thought but very precious, and by a kind of steadfastness and courage derived from pain. This is true of merely ordinary suffering, but it is still more true of that endured by a Christian who strives to follow our Lord's example.

Before His transfiguration on Thabor the face of Christ shone as the sun and His garments became white as snow, and when afterwards He was transfigured by the infinite love with which He suffered on Calvary, His face was crowned with thorns in token of His transfiguration by suffering. To this crown of thorns the Church refers the following prophecy of Holy Scripture: "Go forth, ye daughters of Zion (ye faithful souls) and see Solomon in his diadem" (Cant. iii, 11). "Solomon" means peaceful, and we know who is the true Solomon, the real Bringer of Peace, whose head was crowned with the most glorious diadem, the crown of thorns, marking His transfiguration by pain. It is also the crown of His mercy, for when was divine mercy ever displayed more unmistakably than when our Saviour, being crowned with thorns, suffered for us, when He cried with a loud voice: "It is consummated. Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit?"

At that moment the angels in heaven exulted, crying: "Praise ye the Lord, for His mercy is great, and of His goodness there is no end." But on earth there was a solemn silence as when the spirit of God moved over the waters at the creation, for now the great work was accomplished which should cause a new race to rise from the waters of baptism, free from the dreary darkness of sin. Christ's crown of thorns was also the crown of His mercy and likewise of His triumph on earth. As a crown it reminds us that the King of righteousness, and in heaven it has been changed into a crown of glory. As Jesus on the Cross bent His head, crowned with thorns, many graves of just men were opened; and when He comes as Judge, wearing the crown of glory, all graves will be opened, and all the just will rise again. With joy will they behold the glory of their King, from whose hand they will themselves receive their crowns. With what gratitude will they then think of the crown of thorns that obtained such glory for them! In the same way, for the disciples as well as for their Master, all earthly pain will be transfigured in eternity.

Our own crown of thorns will often inspire us with sympathy for the sorrows of others. He who has suffered much himself knows how to comfort and help others, and thus his crown of thorns is also turned into a crown of mercy.

Our Lord's crown of thorns reminds us also of His divine justice, which will one day exact a terrible penalty from those who have been disloyal to their King and have rejected the crown of earthly suffering.

A man makes a right use of suffering if he lets it encourage him to practice Christian justice, and is led on by it to virtue and away from evil. It is better for us to suffer and to be united with God than to live in pleasure and amusement apart from Him. Every sorrow ought to remind us of the justice of God, who in His love leads us to heaven on a thorny path, in order that eternal suffering may not be our lot hereafter.

Let us, therefore, profit by the thorny crown of suffering, and never forget to live so as to please God, and then our crown will some day obtain for us the crown of glory, transfiguration on His holy mountain, and complete fulfillment of all that He in His infinite love has promised us through Moses and the Prophets and the holy Apostles. Our Lord's transfiguration was effected by suffering, and so is that of every true Christian whose heart gathers strength from suffering, and who is encouraged by it not to avenge from the path of duty, but to go forward bravely until he attains the crown of everlasting glory.

We have looked at Jesus transfigured on Thabor and crowned with thorns on Calvary, and we have learned that pain is intended to transform a Christian; but if it only casts a cloud of discontent and anger, of selfishness and sin over his soul, there can be no transfiguration either on earth or in heaven, but thorns of suffering in both this life and the next. May the crown of glory some day be changed for us all into that of everlasting glory and happiness. Amen.

TEMPERANCE

ITS HISTORY WRITTEN IN TEARS AND BLOOD

This is what the late Robert Burdette once wrote about beer and whiskey:

"My dear boy, men have fought, bled and died, but not for beer."

Arnold Winkelried did not throw himself upon the Austrian spears because he was ordered to close his saloon at 9 o'clock.

William Tell did not hide his arrow under his vest to kill the tyrant because the edict had gone forth that the free-born Swiss should not drink a keg of beer every Sunday.

Freedom did not shriek as Kosciuszko fell over a whiskey barrel. Warren did not die that beer might flow as the brooks murmur seven days a week.

Even the battle of Brandywine was not fought that whiskey might be free.

No clause in the Declaration of Independence declares that a Sunday concert garden, with five brass horns and one hundred kegs of beer, is the inalienable right of a free people and the corner stone of good government.

Tea—mild, harmless, innocent tea, the much esteemed drink of effeminate men and good old women—tea holds a higher place. It fills a brighter more glorious page, and is a greater figure in the history of this United States than beer.

Men liked tea, my boy, but they hurried it into the sea in the name of liberty, and they died rather than drink it until they made it free. It seems to be worth fighting for, and the best men in the world fought for it.

The history of the United States is incomplete with tea left out. As well might the historian omit Faneuil Hall and Bunker Hill as tea. But there is no story of heroism or patriotism with rum for its hero.

The battles of this world, my son, have been fought for grander things than free whiskey. The heroes who fall in the struggle for rum fall shot in the neck, and their martyrdom is clouded by the haunting phantoms of the Jimlams.

Whiskey makes men fight, it is true, but they usually fight other drunken men. The champion of beer does not stand in the Temple of

WOMAN'S BEST MEDICINE

Mrs. Kelly Advises all Women to Take "Fruit-a-Tives"

HAGERSTOWN, ONT., AUG. 26th, 1913.

"I can highly recommend 'Fruit-a-Tives' because they did me an awful lot of good and I cannot speak too highly about them. About four years ago, I commenced taking 'Fruit-a-Tives' for a general break-down and they did me a world of good. We bought a good many dollars' worth of their action is so pleasant, compared with other laxatives, that I found only pleasure, as well as health, in taking them. They seemed to me to be particularly suited to women, on account of their mild and gentle action, and I trust that some other women may start taking 'Fruit-a-Tives' after reading my letter, and if they do, I am satisfied the results will be the same as in my own case."

Mrs. W. N. KELLY

"Fruit-a-Tives" are sold by all dealers at 50c. a box, 6 for \$2.50, trial size, 25c. or sent postpaid on receipt of price by Fruit-a-Tives Limited, Ottawa.

Fame, he stands in the police court. Honor never has the delirium tremens. Glory does not wear a red nose, and fame blows a horn, but never takes one.

I do not know one good thing about the saloon. It is an evil thing that has not one redeeming thing in all its history to commend it to good men. It breaks the laws of God and man; it desecrates the Sabbath; it profanes the name of religion; it defiles public order; it tramples under foot the tenderest feelings of humanity; it is a moral pestilence that blights the very atmosphere of town and country; it is a stain upon honesty; a blur upon purity; a blot upon progress; a check upon the nobler impulses; it is an incentive to falsehood, deceit and crime.

Search through the history of this hateful thing and find one page over which some mother can bow her grateful head and thank God for all the saloon did for her boy. There is no such record. All its history is written in tears and blood, with smears of shame and stains of crime and dark blots of disgrace.

A BELGIAN ENGLISH QUEEN

In the reign of Henry VIII., Skelton, the poet, took sanctuary in Westminster Abbey. He is said to have employed his enforced seclusion by writing rhyming epitaphs on the kings and queens which hung, until the soldiers of the Commonwealth destroyed them, on tablets close to the tombs. Whether Skelton was really the author or not, it is certain that these quaint verses were written in the sixteenth century and all by the same hand. Each was concluded by an appropriate motto, such as "Learn to Die to Live Forever," "Learn to Live," which were applied to the two good queens, Eleanor and Philippa.

Opposite the tomb of Eleanor lies another faithful wife and loved queen, the Flemish Philippa, who, like the Saxon Matilda of whom we have spoken, was a "constant true lover of our nation," writes the daughter of the Dean of Westminster Abbey. Isabella of France, mother of Edward III., sent a Bishop and two ambassadors to select a wife for her son from the five daughters of the William, Earl of Hainault. The youngest, Philippa, was chosen, not for her good looks, since she was very plain, but for her fitness to be the wife and mother of English kings. The good ecclesiastics were not deceived in their choice, for during a

union of forty years she was her husband's faithful companion, and when unable to accompany him in his campaigns governed the kingdom well and wisely in his absence.

The marriage took place at York on February 25, 1298, and the royal pair were crowned in Westminster Abbey the first Sunday in Lent. In spite of the close alliance of her family to the crown of France, Philippa, we are told by the chroniclers, strenuously supported her husband's rival claims to that kingdom. She was with him on the famous occasion of the siege of Calais, when Edward would have ruthlessly slain the twelve chief burgesses of the city, who came out to him with ropes round their necks and the keys in their hands, had it not been for the angry king. She refused to rise till he promised to spare the lives of his prisoners, and Edward at last yielded to her importunity.

Of her fourteen children one only was able to present at his mother's deathbed. This was Thomas of Woodstock, afterwards smothered between two feather beds by his nephew at Richard II.'s orders, and was buried close to his mother's splendid monument. King Edward himself was with his wife to the last, and Froissart gives a touching account of her dying moments. Holding the King's right hand in hers, she told him her last wishes and entreated that: "When it should please God to call you hence you will not choose any other sepulchre than mine, and that you will lie beside me in the cloister at Westminster."

TERRIBLE THEIR FATE

"Terrible, indeed, was the fate of those who did not escape?" So said Father McMahon of New York in a lecture recently in Philadelphia on the horrors in Mexico. And he further stated that:

"The American commandant at Vera Cruz had sent a special train to convey one hundred nuns from the interior. Of this number only eight arrived; all the others had been murdered or had met a fate worse than death. The persecutions were like the persecutions inflicted upon the Christians in the time of Nero. Priests were half strangled, resuscitated and strangled again to prolong their agony."

All this on the American continent in the twentieth century, and with little or no comment or protest by the American daily press which, or a large section of which, is so loud in denunciation of alleged German atrocities in the war.

But not those "atrocities," even as alleged, nor the anti Catholic Penal laws in Ireland two hundred years ago, make as infamous a record as the Mexican chapter of barbarities. The Mexican "Generals" have made an infamy for themselves unique in the world's history. Father McMahon observes that: "In the United States the Germans are called 'Huns' for alleged cruelties during the Belgian campaign, while at our very doors the defenceless and persecuted Catholics, encouraged by the policy of the present Government."

This last—the policy of the United States Government—is, with the exception of the outrages themselves, almost the worst feature of the whole record. It is safe to say that no other Government in the world, having the power to stop them, would tolerate such inhumanities just across its borders.—N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

VESPER AND BENEDICTION

"Why is it that so few attend Vespers in the churches?" asks the Catholic Tribune. "It is a beautiful service and usually concludes with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. If an angel knocked at the door some Sunday evening of the home of parishioners and told them to hurry to some particular church, that Our Lord would be there and would bestow a blessing on everyone who came within the inclosure of the edifice, the building would be far too small to accommodate all who would come. Yet Our Lord is present all the time in every Catholic church wherever the Blessed Sacrament is kept, and at Benediction bestows His blessing. Is it want of faith or a lack of appreciation for the evening service that keeps so many away from it?"

Where love is, the presence of a father is surely the joy of his children. God is more to His creatures than a father. We are in a hard struggle for salvation and our pilgrimage is to our true home in Eternity. God is near to us in the Blessed Sacrament. He is with us to cheer us on our way and to make us certain of His blessing. "When I was in prison you visited me,"—to how many of us will those consoling words be spoken by the divine lips of Jesus, our eternal reward on the day of judgment? The soul who manifests his faith and love of the Blessed Sacrament by assisting at Benediction every Sunday of his earthly pilgrimage will be no stranger to the great Judge.

People with fine brains and generous souls never learn the life (as the world understands it) is only a game that will go to the shrewdest player and the coolest. They never see this. They put their whole heart into the hands of others, who only laugh and wring out their life blood. They take all things too vitally in earnest. Life is to them a wonderful, passionate, pathetic, terrible thing. They do not see that

coolness and craft, and the tact to seize accident, and the wariness to obtain advantage, to hew out the successful future. The world puts to death its Sebastians.

The Catholic Theatre Movement has entered upon its second season, and has issued its third list of plays that can be seen without offending decency.

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