

## FIVE MINUTE SERMON

By Rev. M. FOSSAERT

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER  
PENTECOST

## REVENGE, A THREEFOLD WRONG

Almighty God is a God of love and peace; He maketh His sun to rise upon the good and bad, and raineth upon the just and unjust; bestowing good gifts upon all His creatures. He wishes us to follow His example, and desires genuine charity and peace to prevail amongst us, so that no one may be angry with another, far less abuse him or take vengeance upon him. It is always wrong to seek revenge, and Christians cannot be too much on their guard against this evil.

1. *Revenge is, in the first place, wrong done to God Himself.*—By arrogating to ourselves a right that belongs to God alone, we are plainly wronging God and interfering with His privileges. He has said: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," and these words show clearly that no one will escape punishment who injures his fellow man, or deprives him of his honor, property and rights. But to punish the offender and make him feel the chastisement that he deserves belongs to God alone, not to the person offended and injured, who must not avenge himself, but leave the matter in God's hands, or else appeal to the lawful authority that can inflict punishment in God's name. God's will in this respect is made known clearly and decidedly, and no one can bring forward any arguments against it. Supposing a man attempts to avenge himself, and not only wishes evil to the person who has wronged him, but injures that person as much as he can, treating him with contempt and suspicion, and destroying his good reputation, so as to bring him to ruin. Is not this man directly opposing God's holy will? Is he not presumptuously interfering with God's judicial authority? And is this not a grievous wrong done to Almighty God?

2. *Revenge is, in the second place, a wrong done to our fellowmen.*—Those who avenge themselves presume to judge and punish their neighbours, without being in a position to decide whether the injury was inflicted willfully, for otherwise it does not deserve punishment. Our neighbor may have done or said something that we regard as an insult, but it is possible that he acted ignorantly or hastily without due consideration, or even that he believed himself to be doing his duty. In the former case, he deserves leniency and forgiveness, in the latter esteem and gratitude. Even if he was really badly disposed, and intended deliberately to give offence, is that a reason for avenging ourselves? No, it is never right to repay evil with evil; one unjust act cannot repair another; and how can you argue that you are justified in doing wrong because some one else also commits an offense?

3. *Revenge is a great wrong done to the person offended.*—You know that with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again. Now no one uses a worse measure than he who avenges himself on his neighbor, for he judges him without taking the trouble to judge him fairly; he assumes him to be in the wrong, and makes no allowances for him, punishing his smallest offences with the greatest imaginable severity. Is not this a bad measure? Yet it will be measured to him in the same way, he need not hope for mercy and consideration; he has judged his neighbor harshly, wished him all manner of evil and condemned him to pay a heavy penalty, and he will be treated in precisely the same way; he will be judged, sentenced and punished. It was not in vain that our Lord warned us, saying: "With what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again," and we have no reason to complain if such is the case, since we pray daily: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." God acts with perfect justice when He treats us as we treat others.

Let us then banish all revengeful feelings; God alone can avenge; we have to cherish a loving, peaceable, yielding and conciliatory spirit, for this is the spirit of God's children. Let us try to acquire it by means of prayer and self-discipline, and in it let us act and speak during life and in death. Amen.

## TRAITORS IN THE HOME

That the worldly spirit of the day is injecting itself even into Catholic families, is evidenced no more alarmingly than in the increasing instances where parental objection is raised against the priestly or religious career for son or daughter. It is not necessary to say that there are two diametrically opposed standards for measuring life, one in the world and the other in the priesthood and the convent. It should never be a question as to which gauge is the truer and better. Neither is there doubt as to which the Catholic, even of the world, must accept. And the father or the mother who uses the authority of parenthood to oppose the religious life of a child, once a vocation is clearly manifest, falls grievously short of the Catholic type. It is not, however, such open opposition that is most detrimental to the securing of the full spiritual life

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the priestly and religious ranks so necessary that the work of God may be done well. It is rather the constant disappearance of the religious life in the child's hearing, even from the earliest youth. The whole life of the home is modeled on the assumption that it is to produce nothing but men and women of the world. The possibility that the gift of a vocation may fall upon one or more members of the family, is never reckoned, and much less asked in prayer.

The parent of this attitude who injects into his home a spirit of hostility toward religious life, makes sure of a dire accounting he must give. To be instrumental in denying a child the life to which God has called him, may bring an early punishment. God permits no toying with His will. In a day when so many youths stray, when the wrecks of young careers are startling in their number, is it unimaginable that a parent will risk injecting into the home a spirit intended to be hostile to the priestly or conventual life, but which is so readily convertible into a spirit of hostility even to a virtuous life.

The parent who no longer deems it a rare privilege to have given a son to God's altar or a daughter to His service has lost the grip upon his faith. Nothing should be more characteristic of the Catholic home than an atmosphere that would nourish and protect the germ of a religious vocation that the goodness of God may have bestowed upon it.—New World.

NATIONS NEED POPE  
AS MEDIATOR

The Catholic press of the country has frequently emphasized the fact that the representatives of the powers taking part in the Peace Conference could do nothing better than to accord to the Holy See the same rights they have granted to the secular powers. As a matter of fact the diplomats could have made excellent use of the strong moral influence exerted by the Vicar of Christ, regardless of whether they desired to discuss or to ignore the question of the Papal States and the Temporal Power. The powers could indeed have invited the Holy See to participate in the labor of establishing a League of Nations without offending against international custom and diplomatic usage. This is evident from the history of International Congresses and Conferences,—a consideration which makes it all the more regrettable that the invitation has not been issued.

The manner in which the Holy See would, if conditions made participation possible, co-operate in the League of Nations, and the limitations of Papal influence in the conferences of the representatives of the various Nations, are laid down in a remarkable treatise on "International State Congresses and Conferences," a study in international law and diplomatic usage, which according to European newspapers, will be read with the greatest interest in diplomatic circles, and in fact wherever the new regulation of international law is being discussed. The author of the treatise is a young savant of Budapest, Dr. Richard Gruber, a graduate of the Oriental Commercial Academy in Budapest, and of the University at Zurich. The author has set himself the task of analyzing the practice of Congresses and Conferences, on the basis of authentic records and documents, and to thus reduce the practice to a set of laws, and to elucidate it. The treatise affords the theoretical as well as the practical man a means of quickly informing himself on the usage and rulings of diplomatic gatherings.

## IMPORTANT ROLE OF POPE

Concerning the participation of the Holy See in the League of Nations the author says: "In conferences for the establishment of peace the Pope should have an advisory voice, such advisory service to be unrestricted, except insofar as not to interfere with the fashioning of the official resolutions of the conference. There is not the slightest reason why such an advisory voice should be denied him. For his opinion, which in such cases would be expressed through a representative, could not but be of service to all the powers of the civilized world. Insofar as the voice of the Papacy will be sounded only in the interest

of harmonizing hostile factors, by paving the way to mutual understanding and reconciliation, the Holy See exercises a function traditionally its own, and which represents one of the principal purposes of the mission of the Papacy as the temporal representative of the Deity."

In a legal sense it is understood that, once the co-operation of the See in any Congress is consented to in practice among the nations, it would no longer be within the power of any individual nation to prevent papal participation in diplomatic deliberations, as has been the case heretofore. One can readily perceive that in many cases the Pope, by virtue of his position, could have used his influence to the end that the nations might base their relations on a foundation of the consciousness of the solidarity of the human race, which would serve to eliminate hatred, injustice and materialistic egotism. This would be done in the sense of the thought of Cardinal Rampolla, who wrote at the time of the call to the first Conference at the Hague: "It is essential that Christian Justice come to be recognized to the widest possible extent in the world. It is impossible for the world to enter upon an era of true peace without the mediation of Jesus Christ." (See *Compendium: Le Pape, les Etats et la Conférence de la Haye*.) In such work of mediation, however, the moral, entirely unpolitical influence of the Pope, separated from all ecclesiastical tendencies, would have to be brought to bear on the situation. If one considers the services of the Papacy during many centuries in the interest of the peace movement, and weighs the ever increasing influence of the Catholic Church, one cannot fail to wish that the Pope may henceforth co-operate to the greatest possible degree in the perfection of international organization.—(Wehberg l. c., p. 109.)

## NEUTRALITY OF THE HOLY SEE

In following Dr. Gruber's views and conclusions the reader will have to bear in mind that his book was written shortly before the end of the War. His argument is not affected, however, by the occasional use of the future tense. The author continues:

"Throughout the War the Vatican has honestly endeavored to maintain its position above all party lines. The question as to whether the diplomatic congress should extend an invitation to the Pope, or if they have an interest in his participation in the conference, is merely a part of the problem of the participation of noncombatant nations,—in fact of all neutrals.

"It should be added that if neutrals are to participate in the Peace Conference at the close of the present European War then the Pope should also be permitted to take part. The equitable application of the principle does not exclude any neutral, whether as a power or a sovereign state of a spiritual government with the attributes of sovereignty. Just as the equalization of contracts can be materially advanced through the co-operation of neutral powers, so the concessions possible between the various parties could be more readily consummated if His Holiness would speak in the name of Christian charity and international justice. And his voice would not be raised in vain. The spiritual power of the Pope can be exercised impartially for the benefit of all nations only if the Pope exercises his exalted office independently of all secular influences."

Thus far we have followed Dr. Gruber. The statement would not be complete without adding that the task of mediation also should be entrusted to the Pope, and to him primarily. Naturally nothing is expected in this connection except the discharge of his honorary duties. At the same time, however, the services of the Roman Church in the interest of social reforms and of the silent furtherance of the cause by the means at her disposal would finally be recognized and appreciated. The justification of papal participation in certain diplomatic undertakings must be investigated not only from the formally theoretical or the narrow practical viewpoint, but rather from the angle of Christian culture, now obtaining for some twenty centuries,—a culture which—and this should be frankly admitted—has formed the first foundation for all social progress and improvement.

The suggestions offered by Dr. Gruber have not been followed,—just as the Holy See was excluded from co-operating in the peace efforts so the Pope is apparently to be excluded from the work of erecting the structure of a League of Nations. Therefore the Central Bureau declared, in a statement prepared by it and later embodied in the resolutions of the Catholic Union of Missouri:

"We do not marvel at the difficulty experienced by statesmen and diplomats in bringing peace back to the world. The foundation of the structure which they strive to erect is purely human wisdom, and its cornerstone Humanism. The Vicegerent of Jesus Christ, the meek Shepherd and father of all the peoples of the earth, was not invited to devote his energies to the perfection of the undertaking. The Spirit of Evil, diligently at work everywhere at present, is seeking to isolate the Pope, to win the peoples of the world away from him. He shall not share in the fame of having erected a League of Nations. He, whom God has called to be the foundation-stone of His Church and the arbiter of His mercies as well as His judgments!"—C. B.

HOW A REVOLUTION  
WAS FRUSTRATED

When the Jesuits were expelled from Germany they found a hospitable home in Holland. That country was not afraid of the sons of Ignatius of Loyola. Nor does it seem that Holland has ever had to repent of its generosity towards exiled Catholics. On the contrary we learn from the March number of the "Stimmen der Zeit," as quoted in the Ohio Waisenfreund of June 4, that the revolution threatening to overthrow the existing order in Holland last November, was held in check, and frustrated principally by the Catholic citizens of that country more than two-thirds Protestant.

When the revolution in Germany had knocked to pieces the mighty empire it cast its waves also on the adjacent Holland. The Socialists of Holland grew confident. Like their German brethren they wanted to seize the government and foist their socialist regime on the land. On November 17th the revolutionists were to strike their blow. We and nobody else shall be in power," declared a socialist leader flushed with the presentiment of victory. Everything had been prepared, the masses had been electrified, success seemed assured.

The occasion was, indeed, very propitious for the scheme. The population was anxious and worried, the revolution seemed inevitable, officers suspected the loyalty of their troops, pusillanimity and confusion were in evidence among the people everywhere. And yet the project was foiled, and the socialist victory proved a failure. What was it that turned the scales? The organizations of Christian laborers. When the Socialists decided upon organizing the revolution, the executive committee of the Catholic union held a meeting, promised the government in the name of 100,000 organized laborers every help for the preservation of order, and devised the plans of defence. Next the people were mobilized. Everywhere local committees of Catholics were formed, and the very next day witnessed huge popular meetings which banished the paralyzing fear of the population. An anti-revolutionary pamphlet was distributed in 1,200,000 copies; a second one, in an equally large edition, followed the next day.

The two most important places, Rotterdam and Amsterdam were provided with reliable Catholic troops which marched into those cities amidst the applause of a loyal citizenship. When the Socialists at Amsterdam made attempts to lure the troops from loyalty all they got was bloody heads and a forced retreat with a loss of four dead and nine wounded. At the suggestion and with the help of Catholic labor organizations bands of citizen-militia had been formed everywhere. And these were equipped with officers and ammunition by the government. Thus in all the towns of the country, even those with a majority population of Protestants, the civil authorities were upheld by brave Catholic soldiers, and the revolution was kept in abeyance. This splendid success, in a country only one-third Catholic, was achieved by the thoroughly organized Catholic laboring class and by the almost entirely Catholic Cabinet. All this has been freely admitted by both the secular papers and the Protestant press of Holland.

Holland has been reaping a blessing—a blessing that will come to every other country that follows her example—for her fair and tolerant attitude towards the Catholic Church, which is, after all, the most successful nursery of civic loyalty.—S. in The Guardian.

PARENTS SHOULD NOT DO  
CHILDREN'S SCHOOL WORK

Miss Prudence Bradish, a pedagogical writer of some renown, warns parents against helping their children with their home tasks. She quotes a successful teacher of mathematics as saying to the mother of one of his pupils:

"If you help him with his work, so that he brings it in always correctly done, I never can tell how he is getting along, never can know how much he can do himself, or where are the weak spots to which I ought to devote special pains with him? He is given his homework largely to put him to the test of his attentiveness in school, to demonstrate the success or failure of the teacher's work. When the parent sits down with him every evening, explaining, and sometimes even actually doing the work and 'keep up his class,' but his marks will mean nothing, and his standing in his class will be on a false basis."

There are many ways of helping a child to get the best out of his schoolwork; but doing for him the lessons he brings home is not one of them. If he really cannot do them without help, it is a sign that he is being pushed ahead too fast, is graded too high, is inattentive in school, or that, for some reason which should be carefully investigated, the teacher is not teaching him. As Henry Clay Trumbull says in his book, "Teaching and Teachers,"—"Unless something has been learned, nothing has been taught."

If your child did not get in school during the day the principle illustrated in the example he brings home to do, says Miss Bradish, "it is because the teacher did not teach it to

him, however much she may have tried to do so. The help that most parents give to their children is not real help, at all, but enables them to evade the consequences of idling in

school, and trains them to be lazy-minded, to lean on the efforts of others, and to go through life expecting some one else to do their work."—Buffalo Echo.

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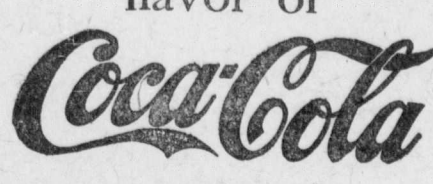
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