

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON
EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

BAD THOUGHTS
"Why do you think evil in your hearts?" (St. Matt. ix. 6.)

What harm can there be in mere thoughts? They are only light and momentary fancies, various and fleeting as summer clouds, coming and going as if by some will of their own, quite independent of our control. Will God regard even our thoughts? Will He judge us by what we have dreamed, rather than by what we have done?

Yes, my brethren, God does regard our thoughts. Our Lord Jesus Christ tells us that all sin has its birthplace in the heart, and as truly in the thought as in the act. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." He says it, and again: "The things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and those things defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies. These are the things that defile a man."

You see what a serious matter our thoughts must be in God's sight, when they are thus put in the same catalogue with such enormous sins as murder, adultery, theft, perjury, and blasphemy. St. John Chrysostom truly said: "Men's souls are not so greatly injured by the temptations which assail them from outside, as from those evil thoughts which poison them within."

Evil thoughts are very dangerous things indeed. We must be constantly on guard against them. And if there are any who think that they are safe so long as they keep their bodies from evil, and allow their hearts and minds to indulge in all sorts of irregular imaginations, they are guilty of grievous sin; they may not be staining their bodies, but they are corrupting their souls.

And these evil thoughts are as the sands of the sea-shore for multitude—envious thoughts, profane thoughts, angry thoughts, discontented thoughts, greedy thoughts, unclean thoughts, they are only little thoughts, perhaps; but together they make a great host. And they come buzzing around the head and heart like a swarm of flies. You remember the plagues of flies which afflicted the Egyptians in King Pharaoh's time. Well, I am afraid that the hearts of some of you are very much like the houses of those Egyptians—full of swarms of evil thoughts, thick as flies, making a breeding place in your souls, and rendering them foul, festering masses of corruption. When you kneel down to pray, they come to distract you. When you are with others, they influence your conversation. When you are alone, they are filling your mind with images and fancies. In church they disturb you. When you work, they interrupt you. When you walk they accompany you. And, like the plague in Egypt, "the land is corrupted by this kind of flies."

Now, my brethren, it is perfectly true that we cannot help such thoughts coming in to the mind; but we can help their staying there. We can prevent our hearts and minds from being hives and nests for them to dwell in. We can drive them away, give them nothing to feed on, clear them out as pests and nuisances. They may buzz around us and vex us, and worry us never so sorely, yet they can do no harm so long as they are not given admittance.

Though evil thoughts may come to us by hundreds and thousands, and beset us over and over again, if we always banish them, and pray against them, and refuse consent to them, so far from committing sin, we gain a victory every time, and store up merit in God's sight. Sin begins only when they are consciously admitted and willingly entertained.

You know what the custom-house is. All goods coming into this country are examined there, and if anything unlawful is discovered it is promptly seized and condemned. Would it not be a good plan for us to establish spiritual custom-houses at the door of our hearts, and subject all our thoughts to rigid inspection? If they are good, let them in gladly; if they are bad, seize, condemn, destroy them at once. Don't allow one to enter. There is no such thing as "duty" on bad thoughts; they are absolutely contraband; they must not be allowed to pass at any price.

THE TEACHER OF THE PASSION PLAYERS
We can not see how Protestants who behold in Oberammergau the famous Passion Play with its many scenes and tableaux from the Old and New Testaments, can ever for a moment imagine afterwards that Catholics are opposed to Bible study. Neither can we see what they suppose Protestantism could give to those villagers in the way of reverent Christian feeling, and earnest Christian living, that they do not already possess. Those peasants are simply saturated with the Bible, and their lives are lived in accordance with its teachings. This much all Protestant writers admit. But much more than this, they confess also that the villagers have the power to set forth the history of man's redemption in a way that is wonderfully striking and impressive. Yet those peasants are Catholics—simple, unspiced, unaffected Catholics, holding the same beliefs, saying the same prayers, as the Catholics of any other country throughout the world.

Of the effect produced on Protestant people by the Passion Play, we are reading a good deal now in various publications. They all seem agreed that there is nothing like the devotional, earnest manner in which the villagers assume their several parts in the great drama. The peasant players merge themselves so completely in their parts that the on-looker forgets he is not gazing on the real scenes of our Lord's Crucifixion and Death. A writer in the Christian Advocate (Protestant) in a long account of the Play, speaks thus of the principal player and the principal scene:—
Anton Lang plays his most difficult role with dignity and reverence and

The Work You do Tomorrow
Depends on
What You do
Tonight



After a wearing, grinding day, you need more than food and an easy chair to make you ready for to-morrow's work. Jangling nerves and whirling thoughts must be soothed and pacified. Restful sleep would do it—"if I could only sleep."

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tremendous reserve. He never offends the most sensitive. He does not simulate the agony of the Saviour, but he shows forth the lamb led to the slaughter, patient, silent, innocent, amid a wild storm of abuse. It is heart-breaking but not shocking. The scourging is being finished as the curtains are drawn back, so that only the last flourish of the cords is seen. The blind-folded, half-naked, fainting victim, enduring without a cry or a remonstrance, opens the fountains of tears. Most pitiful is the bowed form falling by the way beneath the heavy cross amid the infuriated mob; more pitiful still, Mary the mother waiting beside the way to know the cause of the commotion; most lovely the dear Master's recognition of her as He slowly moves on with Simon of Cyrene hearing the cross. When the curtains part for the crucifixion scene, the two thieves are already hanging from their crosses, but Jesus is stretched on His, still on the ground. We had heard the sound of the hammer. Slowly the cross is lifted with its precious weight. Horror and pity and adoring gratitude sweep in a great wave of profound silence over that vast assembly.

For about twenty minutes the Saviour not Anton Lang, seems to hang before us.

Amazing pity, grace unknown,
And love beyond degree.

The soldiers at the foot cast lots for the seamless dress. The crowd mock, the thief on the left reviles. At the foot of the cross the women weep, and Jesus tenderly gives His mother to John. It is all very, very real. The descent from the cross, after the inhuman mob has gone away and left the body to the friends of Jesus, is most appealing. How we love Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea for the tender, reverent touch, the affectionate care, the snowy linen provided for the Master!

O, who could look on unmoved, or fail to realize that this all happened in the long ago, that we might be forgiven, that we might be good!

And, we might add, who could look on, and lose sight of the very important fact that it is the faith implanted in their hearts by the Catholic Church, the religious instruction they receive from the Catholic Church, and the reverence and devotion they owe to their membership in the Catholic Church, that enable those wood-carvers of Oberammergau to present those tremendous scenes which

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in the hands of unbelieving actors, no matter how talented, would be a profanation and a failure?—S. H. Review.

A CONVERT'S APPEAL TO HIS
NON-CATHOLIC BRETHREN

The following statement, says the Rochester Catholic Citizen, directed chiefly to those in search of truth, is made by Mr. Walter R. Reece, of Carnegie avenue, Cleveland, a convert, who was received into the Catholic Church recently by Rev. Gilbert B. Jennings, LL. D., at St. Agnes' Church.

Mr. Reece has been engaged in the study of Catholic doctrine and practice for the past eight or nine years. After forty years of silence upon religious matters, after long meditation and upon the eve of entering the Catholic Church, the Mother Church, says Mr. Reece I am constrained to write my non-Catholic brethren and sisters, not as an apology to the Catholic Church for a narrow-self-satisfied position, and for so long having turned a deaf ear to her teachings, and for so long, having been skeptical and cynical regarding her motives and practices.

Ask yourselves why you despise or are cold towards the Catholic Church? Have you any real, true knowledge regarding her faith and doctrines, or is your knowledge composed of the common gossip illustrated by coarse, irrelevant jokes and stories at her expense? Have you accepted the popular fallacies that insult common sense, and drifted upon this tide of opinion without thought or investigation, thereby insulting mentality and love of justice?

Investigate and meditate, search for the truth and having done this faithfully, being honest with yourself, if you find one thing in the Catholic Church that is not warranted by Scripture or one thing that is repulsive to your manhood or womanhood, then put it down that you have not got the true instruction in that particular, and search again. It is truth you want. Go after it until you find it. Do this in justice to yourself and to your Lord and Saviour, remembering that no one's opinions can save your soul, neither will the influence of the world's opinion upon you be accepted in the judgment day as excusing you.

It has taken time to satisfy every non-Catholic as to the doctrines, the dogmas, the ritual, the practices of the Catholic Church. If you will faithfully and truthfully study with a singleness of purpose, you will see the majesty and beautiful purity of her faith, her simple and direct teachings. There are no ifs or ands or buts about it. No speculation as to what God meant when He said thus and so. No hypothesis or premise built upon human intelligence. Her faith begins and ends with God, and her path from beginning to end is that of the Scripture. When God said so and so? It is not for our poor defective intelligence to argue and insist in devious ways that the divine intelligence, the Author and Creator of all we are and have, meant something else that suits the pure thoughts born of our weakness, deluding ourselves into a comfortable and easy rather than a safe religion. The Catholic Church teaches and practices the word of God at each value.

There is no priestcraft, there is no image worship, there is no buying forgiveness of sins, there is no empty ceremonies. What is it that fills the Catholic Church from early dawn each day, regardless of weather and other conditions or personal consideration—the real life faith of her members, and their love, their adoration for Christ in this great

sacrifice that is daily celebrated on her altars at the Mass.

What Church so alive with vibrant faith and certainty, what Church that sees so clearly the path and the end? What Church so active for the salvation of the souls in her charge? What Church that so welcomes the sinner, and so fully carries out the precepts of Christ? What Church that gives the living embodiment of the sermon on the Mount? What Church that has so striven for the purity of the home, and so fought against divorce? What Church that has so much in mind the welfare of the nations of earth, in the training of her young? What Church that has in its many institutions shown such thought and care for the bodies of all sorts and conditions of beings, looking past the worldly conditions, and ailments, looking only at the soul Christ so loves, and working for the salvation? The Catholic Church has only one aim, one desire, and that is to save souls to the glory of our Father Who art in Heaven. We shall have to die. We all hope for eternal life with Him. Jesus Christ through His death on the Cross made this possible. That divine sacrifice, so replete with sorrow and suffering, can only be realized by meditation, as one follows the Way of the Cross. The Cross with its precious burden belongs to us all. It is the emblem of faith of all Christians, it is the only way to Heaven. Why should the prominence the Catholic Church gives the Cross and its precious burden be used against her? She realizes most fully that God is not mocked, and that salvation must be worked out in fear and trembling, and uses all divine and sanctified aids to this end. Of all the attributes of God acknowledged by Christians, the Catholic Church realizes how potent is His awful justice, which must be satisfied. She takes no chances. Watch and pray, is her slogan. Keep your soul and body clear of sin, for ye know not the day or hour when the Son of Man cometh.

Go into a Catholic Church in the spirit of reverence. Think of Jesus and His atonement. Look at each Station of the Cross and meditate, then stand at the feet of the crucifix and look upon it. Look and think and pray. The statue will fade from your sight and in your soul you will see the real Saviour, you will see His agony for you, you will feel His love. Do this often, and you will realize the atmosphere of the Catholic Church is surcharged with the Divine Presence.

Talk to her clergy, and you will be surprised when you find how humble they are, how earnest for your spiritual welfare, how human, how much like Christ in His manhood, instead of the high-handed, arbitrary, to-be-shunned celibate. The aim of the clergy of the Catholic Church is to do Christ's bidding, and lead us safe through all perils, dangers, temptations, and through the last dread moments of life, leaving us only at the valley and shadow of death, delivering us safely into the hands of Him who died that we might live with Him.

Roosevelt's Ideal of a Boy

My ideal of a boy is one who will grow up and be able to support himself and wife and children. To be fit to be an American citizen he has got to preserve his self-respect and conduct himself so as to wrong no one. Fathers need the most preaching. Frequently the mothers who have had hard lives take the unwise course in attempting to benefit their daughters and sons by bringing them up free from hard knocks. Next to hardness of heart, the next least desirable quality is softness of heart, and the mother and father should not try to bring up their child in that way. You don't get the right stuff out of those children for the next war, or you don't get decent citizens when there isn't any war. Bring them up to work so that they shall recognize an obstacle is not something to be shirked, but to be overcome.

Thought and Kindness

You know that to give alms is nothing unless you give thought also; and that therefore it is written, not "blessed is he who feedeth the poor," but "blessed is he that considereth the poor." A little thought and a little kindness are often worth more than a great deal of money.

HEAVY DRINKER CURED

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A man who has been released from the awful cravings of drink, and whose first thought is to help others, whose spirit of true brotherhood and philanthropy. Read this letter:

"The Samaria Remedy Co., Toronto, Ont.:—
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FATHER BLANCHET'S "CATHOLIC LADDER"

In the Catholic Sentinel the Rev. Edwin V. O'Hara, writing an account of the missionary labors of Father Blanchet, the Apostle of Oregon, mentions an ingenious device, called the "Catholic Ladder" where the good priest explained to the Indians the teachings of the Christian religion. The great difficulty was to give these Indians an idea of religion so simple and plain as to command their attention, and which they could carry back to their tribes. Father Blanchet thought out this plan. Securing a square stick, he represented the forty centuries before Christ by forty marks, the thirty-three years of our Lord by thirty-three points followed by a cross, and the eighteen centuries and thirty-nine years since by eighteen marks and thirty-nine points. This gave him a chance to show the beginning of the world, the creation, the fall of the angels, of Adam, the promise of a Saviour, the time of His birth and of His death upon the cross as well as the mission of the Apostles. The plan was a success. He explained the marks to the chiefs, and they departed and explained it to their tribes. The same scheme was soon after worked out on a chart, at first simply, but later in a very elaborate manner. A copy of the chart in its final form as copyrighted by Archbishop Blanchet in 1859 measures five feet in length and two and a half feet in width. It is a veritable pictorial compendium of Biblical and Church history. The use of the "Catholic Ladder" spread very rapidly and a copy of the chart was to be found in every Indian camp visited by a Catholic missionary. In the absence of the priest the Indian chiefs took great pride in expounding the "Ladder" to their people. Father De Smet praised it very highly, and the view taken of it by the Protestant missionaries may be seen from the fact that they tried to counteract its influence by a "Protestant Ladder." It is certain that this concrete and pictorial presentation of religion was much better suited to the capacities of the savages than the abstract doctrinal methods employed by the Protestant missionaries, and achieved more success. The indefatigable inventor of this missionary device was the first Vicar Apostolic of Oregon. An idea of the out-of-the-way place Oregon was in those days (1843-44) may be had by considering his route from that place to Montreal whither he had to go for consecration as Titular-Bishop of Philadelphia. He started for Canada, Dec. 5, 1844, boarded a steamer on the Columbia River, touched at Honolulu, doubled Cape Horn, landed at Dover, England; went by rail to Liverpool, took a vessel to Boston and thence proceeded by rail to Montreal, a journey of twenty-two thousand miles.—Sacred Heart Review.

A WOMAN DRUNKARD

It is horrible to see a man under the influence of liquor and to know that intoxication is frequent with him. It is still more shocking to meet a woman drunkard. She has fallen so low. She has fallen so far.

When it is a wife and mother who gets drunk habitually, the case is heart-rending. She has so many motives to lead a Christian life and set a good example. And she is false to her trust. When a woman is so degraded as to have almost lost hope of reform, her condition is desperate. She needs love. She must have sympathy, encouragement, and companionship to enable her to get back her self-respect and to strengthen her to exert her will to resist the craving for stimulants. She should have attention from a doctor, and if possible, a change of scene, of occupation, of diet, of circumstances. She should break friendship with companions who tempt her to drink. With the help of prayer and the sacraments, and of loving affectionate support, she may resist the devil of alcohol and once more become a decent, respectable, sober woman.—Catholic Columbian.

THE CATHOLIC PRESS

ITS IMPORTANCE AS AN AID TO SALVATION

By Rev. P. H. Casey, S. J.
Let it be laid down as a first principle that in every Catholic family there should be at least one Catholic weekly. Let it be laid down as a second principle that this Catholic weekly should be selected according to the tastes and the requirements of the family. Let it be laid down as a third principle that when the tastes and requirements of a family are different, there should be more than one Catholic weekly in that family. Do not talk about expense. The price of most of our Catholic papers is only five cents—the price, let me say plainly—of one glass of common drink. Cannot a man omit one glass during the week, and bring home a Catholic paper on Saturday evening to his Catholic family? Or can he not refrain from one glass of stronger drink for which he

ON TIME
One of the most important business transactions which sensible minded men should perform on time is that of making proper provision for those who are depending on them for the necessities of life.
The only way to do this is by means of life insurance. The only way to do it on time is to act now while in health. The most satisfactory way is to insure at once in the
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pays ten cents, and bring home another Catholic weekly? If a man has any real desire to support the Catholic press money will be no obstacle in his way. The poor man finds means of getting five cents to spend on the Sunday secular paper, perhaps for the sake of its colored comic supplement—a supplement which not long ago, at a banquet of six hundred representatives of the press in New York city, was declared by one of their principal speakers to be a "damnable sheet, when it was not puerile." The same speaker went on to say that he wondered if the men who published such a supplement ever let it fall into the hands of their own children. Still, for these colored pages and their concomitant paper the poor man, the father of a family, is willing to pay five cents on Sunday morning. Not if a Catholic has any real desire for Catholic news, or what is more important if he has any real desire for the advancement of Catholic interests, the cost of a Catholic paper will cause him no concern. Remember, then, that the work of the Catholic press is the work of Christ. It is a work carried on for the spread of the gospel, and for the salvation of the souls for which Christ died. Therefore, if we have any real love for Christ, it is a work we should help in every way in our power.

A DREAM EXPLAINED

Denis Caucher, an artisan of the French capital, related to his wife, one morning at breakfast, a dream he had had during the night,—a strange dream that rather disquieted him. He had seen four rats approaching him. The first was big and fat, the second and third were very lean, and the fourth was blind. Madame Caucher was as helpless as her husband in discerning the significance of the dream, though he remarked that it sounded something like the dream of Pharaoh in the Bible. In the meantime the Joseph who was to prove the interpreter for this latter-day Pharaoh—Jean Baptiste Caucher, aged eleven—had been listening attentively, and suddenly surprised his parents by exclaiming: "I know what the dream means! The big, fat rat is M. Dumont, the saloon-keeper down there on the corner, to whom you give so much money; the two lean rats mean mother and me; and the blind rat—that's you, father."

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