

St. Patrick's Cathedral Radio Hour

THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS
Thirtieth Talk—By the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Charles F. Shay

Subject: "The Gospel." Good Afternoon My Dear Friends: We are fast reaching to a close our instructions upon the first part of the Mass known as "The Mass of the Catechumens." There remain but two more features and we will have concluded the introductory ceremonies and actions and begin what is known as "The Mass of the Faithful." These two considerations are the Gospel and the Creed. In the light of all that has been stated to you, you should be somewhat conversant with the Preparatory Prayers, the Introit, the Kyrie, the Gloria, the Collect, the Epistle and Intermediary Prayers.

The second scriptural reading is called "The Gospel." It constitutes a climax in the first part of the Mass. The word Gospel itself as employed here signifies a part or fragment selected from one of the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke or John—and appropriate for liturgical purposes. In the New Testament the word Gospel has a most comprehensive meaning and brings to us the message of joyful tidings. The word has its origin in the Greek revelation of God in and through Christ. It is the Word of God made known through the Saviour to mankind.

Of course, I need not tell you that the message of salvation and peace, proclaimed from the mouths of angels to poor shepherds on the hillsides of Bethlehem. What a message that was! "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people; for this day is born unto you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in the City of David." This same Christ Child when He had attained the age of man's estate testified of Himself that He had been sent by His Father through the Holy Ghost to preach the Gospel to the poor, the simple, the lowly, the meek and lowly in spirit, who were in the state of spiritual bondage. Rightly, therefore, is the work of redemption styled the Gospel—the news of joyful tidings.

Just imagine yourself in the frame of mind and state in which the poor shepherds were when the Saviour was to be found. They were under physical and moral restraint; they had descended to the depths of misery and there was left little or no hope of deliverance from their spiritual bondage. But when in the arms of the Saviour, they found Him and saw His Son into the world to be born of a Virgin, even His very birth was a harbinger of better days and immeasurable grace.

Think of the wonderful humility of the Son of God in voluntarily accepting the lowly state of human nature, to live in that man might be redeemed and to take him from death—into the blessed—hope of salvation. Can you imagine a joy greater than this that the celestial kingdom of God is open to all? Can you imagine a man could be happy in the thought that he was the adopted spiritual son of God? Indeed, we are happy to whom salvation has appeared and to whom the great treasures promised in the ancient prophecies have been fulfilled. Rejoice, therefore, in the immeasurable blessing to earth and the

poor human race could at least take some consolation in the thought that they would not tread alone the path of life but would ever have a companionship of Christ through grace to make their journey lightsome. How precious then must be the Gospels to us since they are the record of God's wonderful deeds and mysteries as manifested in the Act of Redemption. The words contained in these Gospels are of eternal wisdom, a wisdom which the simple mind of man could never comprehend unaided. This wisdom has been made manifest and so comprehensible that it reaches not only the mighty and intelligent of earth but the humblest and most ignorant of mankind. These words of wisdom contain sufficient knowledge and so clear are they that men may arrive at the destiny which God has in store for them—namely, the salvation of the immortal soul.

The value of the Gospels consists in this that they give us plain yet beautiful pictures of the personal conversation, action, life and Passion of Our Divine Saviour described by eye witnesses and what is more important under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. As the result of His presence at the contemplation of every generation, no matter how remote from the actual days of the Redemption, can continue to hear the sweetness of His words and to look at His face followed by heavenly benediction—this is the "manner" here preserved within the loving heart of the special light of grace and exquisite purity of soul. God has willed His light to shine out in the darkness and to penetrate even the innermost recesses of the heart and to reflect in the slightest manner the glory of God suggested in the evangelic message.

These readings then from the Gospel at Mass-time are not merely instructive and edifying but they act at the same time as a means of rendering religious veneration and homage to God and His Holy Trinity in accordance with the scriptural admonition that in as much as they hear His teacher, they hear Him—if they reject His representative, they reject Him. Therefore, this explains the splendid wealth of customs which are observed in connection with the reading of the Gospel and the honor which are paid the Word of God at Divine Services whether it be read or chanted.

Now, my dear friends, what is the liturgical preparation for the announcement of the Gospel? Well, to announce the Gospel, the Holy Sacrifice must be celebrated and sung once. From the fourth century on the reading of the Holy Word belonged to the deacon or priest, both of whom prepare themselves that they may worthily lend their hearts and mouths to the announcement of the heavenly message. Suitable preparation would naturally be a perfect purification and sanctification of heart and mouth. This would mean a soul free from all sin, from base and earthly motives and ready to be sanctified by the blessings of the Holy Spirit. To express these sentiments two prayers are recited by the priest as he stands before the middle of the altar, raises his eyes aloft, lowers them again, profoundly inclines his body and kith hands joined without resting them on the altar he prays first for purification in these words:

"Cleanse my heart and my lips, O Almighty God, who didst cleanse the lips of the Prophet Isaiah with a burning coal; vouchsafe so to cleanse me by Thy gracious mercy, that I may be able to proclaim Thy holy Gospel. Amen."

And then immediately for the bestowal of the blessing: "Give me Thy blessing, O Lord! The Lord be in my heart and in my lips, that I may worthily and in a becoming manner announce His holy Gospel. Amen."

After the above preparatory prayers the priest walks solemnly from the middle to the right of the altar where the Missal is placed in a different position than that which was found at the time of the reading of the Epistle. The Missal is turned diagonally toward the corner of the altar so that when the priest reads the Gospel he is turned half toward the people and looks northward. It is in this position that he reads or sings the Gospel. Thereafter, three things to consider in connection with the reading of the Gospel, itself: the opening, the body and the conclusion of it.

(Continued on Page Five)

STRANGE BUT TRUE Catholic Facts But Little Known

By M. J. MURRAY

The Old English Custom of Squirrel hunting on Good Friday relates to the popular belief in the Middle Ages that Judas Iscariot was changed into a squirrel. In the Churches of Florence in Italy there is still maintained the custom of "thrashing Judas Iscariot" in church on Good Friday—beating the benches with willow rods whenever the name of Judas is mentioned in the service!

OVER 2000 STATUES SURROUND THE WONDERFUL EXTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL OF MILAN - ITALY

COFFEE, with a little milk brown, is known in Paris or Italy as "CAFFE CAPPUCCINO" because it resembles the color of the Capuchin habit.

St. Barbara achieved Martyrdom through her pagan father who himself beheaded her, according to tradition.

Do you know the meaning of the word BIBLE?

Why Carmel? By REV. LEQ. C. MOONEY, Chaplain, Carmelites Monastery

Many wonder why the Carmelites devote their lives solely to prayer instead of uniting prayer to exterior work for the neighbor and secondly, what is the reason for the grates, the turn, the complete hiddenness. As this element is what impresses first and often repels, it had better be answered first.

These things are the protection of a life of constant prayer. They make that life easier, not harder. They are helps, not penalties. The imagination is acted upon more by the eyes than by the other senses. The effort to keep the mind and heart with God whilst the imagination presented endless distractions, would result in little prayer and complete loss of health. Experts know the conditions best suited to their work and so does the Church after twenty centuries of experience, know in what atmosphere the life of prayer thrives best.

"Why a life devoted solely to prayer? To the unbeliever, there are several answers, one being that all persons ought to be perfectly free as to the choice of their life work. There are several prominent texts in Holy Scripture which give a reason for the life of Carmel. Perhaps the strongest is the answer of Our Lord to His disciples when they asked Him why He could cast out a certain devil while they had failed. He replied: "This kind is not cast out but by prayer and fasting." (Matt. xv. 20)

At the well in Sichar, He bids the apostles lift up their eyes and see that the harvest is ripe, and then He adds now, reap that harvest, work among those people but "pray ye the lords of the harvest that He send in laborers into His harvest." (Luke X 2)

When Martha complains that Mary does not help her, Jesus answers: "Mary hath chosen the better part which shall not be taken away from her." (Luke X 31).

Why is this loving contemplation the better part? Because God is the only worker. Creatures lift their hands but "unless the Lord build the house they labor in vain who build it."

Why does anyone become a Carmelite? Because he or she hears in the soul the voice of God calling to that life and finds peace and happiness in following that call. The mind is satisfied because of the delight found in contemplating living Truth, the will, because of the strength experienced in adhesion to the Will of God. The heart is delighted because it is able to spend itself fruitfully for those whom it loves. Whom does it love? God and all His creatures and therefore the Carmelite rejoices to offer prayer and sacrifice to gain every blessing for others. Apparently lost to the world and hidden with Christ in God, the Carmelite, in their solitude have but one thought, sanctification—the sanctification of themselves and of the world. Of themselves, because only the friends of the King can hope to gain favors.

And what happiness can equal that of being friends of the King of Heaven? Let those who seek happiness turn for five minutes to their

The Catholic Maronites By DONALD ATTWATER (C. V. Service)

The recent death of their patriarch, Mr. Hays, has drawn attention to the Catholic body of people called the Maronites whose home is not only that of the East but also that of the West. They are a considerable number of Maronites in our country and their patriarch has one diocesan bishop (all called archbishops) under him.

In a country like America, where there is so large a number of Maronites, it is not strange that their obligation of justice and charity to treat these Catholics of a different rite from ourselves as the brothers in Christ's faith that they really are Maronites may sometimes compromise the Catholic good name, but they are not to be charged with that by any means (people in Europe, especially in England, are not slow to notice how many of the worst American criminals and gangsters are Roman Catholics). The Maronites (and the Ruthenians, Ukrainians, and all other Eastern Catholics, who are separated from Rome, but on the other hand a number of eminent Catholic historians have carefully come to the conclusion that the Maronites, perhaps in ignorance and without deliberation, fell into heresy in the 7th century. He that says, it may, there was a Maronite patriarch at the Council of the Lateran in 1215, and there are today no more loyal sons of the Church than the Maronites of Syria.

Hemmed in by the mountains of the Lebanon, where they lived in almost complete independence even of the Turks, they have been an outpost of Rome in the Near East and for ages a shelter and refuge for persecuted Catholics of all rites from Palestine and Syria. In 1584 Pope Gregory XIII founded the seminary for Maronites that still flourishes at Rome, and which has produced a number of scholars of the first rank, among whom the brothers Assaunt were the most famous. During the 17th and 18th centuries the Maronite church underwent considerable internal troubles, which culminated in a big quarrel caused by the impostures of a nun who claimed to be spiritually united with our Lord Jesus Christ. These scandals were put to an end by a synod held in 1818. But twenty-two years later troubles of another sort broke out when, with the connivance of the Turks, thousands of Maronites were murdered by their pseudo-Mohammedan neighbors, the Deuss. Three Maronite laymen, the brothers Masabki, who lost their lives at this time, have been recently beatified. France eventually intervened to restore order; for centuries the Maronites have been the particular proteges of the French, who sometimes call them "les Franchises de l'Orient," "these Frenchmen of the east."

There are today not less than 550,000 Maronites in the world, of whom the great majority still live in the villages of the Lebanon, but there are over 100,000 in the United States and 50,000 in Canada. Their churches look just like Latin churches and their priests wear the same vestments, but their Liturgy (Mass) is quite different and is said in Syriac, the language of our Lord; they usually have incense even at low Mass. Since the 18th century the Maronites have given up the usual Eastern customs of confining babies

Creator, and ask for His friendship and earnestly detest their sins, and then will they know only the highest drop of the happiness of every moment in Carmel.

PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH SOCIETY HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONS

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This copy is edited by the Diocesan Office in connection with National Office. Inquiries concerning missions welcomed.

Visits with Village Elder Father Joseph Ryan, M.M., of Fairhaven, Mass., a Maronite missionary in Wuchow, China, tells in the May issue of The Field Afar of his visit with "A Village Elder."

Our Catholics of Kwangsi Province are certainly the poorest of the poor. In one of the last villages I visited, just before I sat down to eat the head of the village, a venerable man of eighty-two, said apologetically, "Father, we're only poor people here." We sat down to our meagre fare—rice and two dishes of vegetables, not meat, nor fish—not even peanuts—but I think I enjoyed that meal more than any I ever had. It wasn't satisfying as far as our appetites were concerned but man doesn't live on bread alone.

When we were leaving I tried to press a few coins into the hands of the old man but he refused to take a cent. "I couldn't take your money," Father, he said, "I know what sacrifices you've made to come to our country; I realize too how privileged we are to have you here, although you do certainly not seem to have given us more than we can ever repay. We've had an opportunity to go to confession and Communion, and do you think we could accept your money after all that God has done for us?"

Carmelite Sisters in Dire Need Dear Reverend Father: We are standing at your door, humbly begging whether you could do something for us. We are a very poor Carmelite convent in Austria; we have absolutely nothing, but the almost good people give us.

Teacher (teaching class alphabet): "Now, Mabel, what comes after Mabel (after a pause) "Whiz, miss!"

These later times we had occasion to make acquaintance with the generous American hearts and now we are appealing also to your kindness for some help.

If you can, please do have mercy on us, for Our dear Lord's sake and He will reward you a thousand times for the smallest alms you send us.

Assuring you of our sincere and deep gratitude and prayers, Mother Theresa of Jesus, Prioresse, Carmelite Convent, 17 Lauggasse, Linz, Austria.

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Blind and Penniless Following his conversion to the Catholic Church, Father G. J. Andrews, formerly a Jacobite priest, who is blind, has been left penniless by his relatives and friends. An appeal on his behalf has been made by the Bishop of Tiruvalla, Mar Theophilus (Catholic Bishop's House, Tiruvalla P. O., Travancore State, South India), who is himself a convert from Jacobitism.

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