

May 21, 1926

Driftwood.

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Did you ever sit around a driftwood fire on the beach? A driftwood fire has a glow and a smell and a color all its own; sea salt and iodine and other treasures robbed from the sea add each a crackle or a flare to the flame; pine and oak and teak and sandal-wood are all reduced by misfortune to the least common denominator pitch and oil from the surface of the waves smudge the wood and make the fire hot and smoky and bright by turns; forlorn festoons of sea weed play antics along the logs. When the sky is clear and the air cold and the surf is swishing close by, a driftwood fire is as romantic as a pirate's tale.

Trinity Sunday (which is now only nine days away) brings in the driftwood. It comes from the seven seas; rich man, poor man, beggar man and thief are reduced by common necessity to a common lot; the flare of lust and the crackle of hate enliven the fire; all have touched the pitch of sin and been defiled by it; garlands of by-gone revelries are seared from the soul by penance. The world is cold to the sinner's penance, but in heaven "there is more joy over one sinner who does penance than over ninety-nine just who need not penance." Trinity Sunday is a day of great rejoicing in heaven.

"The Great Pardon."

In the Jubilee Indulgences the Church wishes to emphasize the necessity of penance and the bountiful mercy of God to those who do penance. We are accustomed to think a little of the temporal consequences of sin, even when we have a rather tender conscience on the matter of hell-fire. Too often the sinner is content with the word of absolution which remove the stain of mortal sin and the danger of eternal damnation, forgetting all the while that the punishment still due, for this life or for purgatory, may be as terrible, except for despair and the duration of the torment, as the punishment of hell itself.

While a plenary indulgence can of itself remit all temporal punishment due to forgiven sin, it is the belief of theologians that it rarely does so because the dispositions of those seeking indulgences lack perfection; some effect is usually gained, but not the full effect. Partial indulgences likewise, we are told, seldom have the full effect desired by the Church. The Jubilee Indulgence requires more than the usual indulgences, and it is felt that it usually produces a greater effect. Every Catholic should endeavor to make the Jubilee twice, to use his full privilege in this matter.

As stated yesterday, the requirements are five visits a day for four days, and reception of the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist. Prayers must be said each visit for the intentions of the Holy Father. The last work to be performed must be performed in the state of grace, although the visits preceding this last work need not be made in the state of grace. A special confession is necessary, and the Easter Duty Communion does not suffice for gaining the indulgence. The works performed must not be otherwise due -- such as a sacramental penance, Easter duty, Sunday Mass of obligation, and so forth.

The following suggestions are offered:

1. Start the visits Sunday and finish them Wednesday. The Blessed Sacrament will be reserved in the Church for this purpose next week.
2. Receive Holy Communion every day of the visits. While this is not required, Holy Communion takes away affection for venial sin, which hinders the effects of the indulgence.
3. Make your jubilee confession some time other than during Mass. Take time out for it. Confessions will be heard in the church on weekdays next week at 12:30 and 5:00 p.m. to give additional opportunities.