

First Friday Confessions.

Please be thoughtful enough to go to confession today or this evening -- you know where

Our Lord Visits The Coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

There is a pitiful story and a deadly moral in the Gospel of last Thursday's Lenten Mass: "At that time Jesus went forth, and retired into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And behold a woman of Canaan who came out of those coasts, crying out, said to Him: Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David: my daughter is grievously troubled by a devil. Who answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying: Send her away, for she crieth after us. And He answering, said: I was not sent but to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel.

"But she came and adored Him, saying: Lord, help me. Who answering, said: It is not good to take the bread of the children and cast it to the dogs. But she said: Yea, Lord; for the whelps also eat of the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters. Then Jesus answering, said to her: O woman, great is thy faith: be it done to thee as thou wilt. And her daughter was cured from that hour." -- Matthew xv, 21-28.

"The whelps also eat of the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters!" The bleeding heart of this poor pagan woman expressed here a truth that rings out over and over again from the pages of Scripture: The graces you reject go to others more worthy. She did not resent Our Lord rejection of her people as dogs; she humbled herself and won a great favor by her humility -- which is the test of faith.

When Israel went after strange gods, God sent the great prophet Elias to these same coasts of Tyre and Sidon, where he wrought the miracle for Serepta, the widow, and her son, so that their corn and oil failed not during three years of famine.

"And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet: and none of them was cleansed but Naaman the Syrian." -- Luke, iv, 27.

Jonas the prophet was told to leave the Israelites in their sins, and go preach to the pagan Ninevites. He did not want to go, and tried to run away from God; his adventures in the sea caused him to change his mind and do God's bidding, with the result that Nineveh did penance and was not destroyed.

It would be ideal for us to deny that we at Notre Dame have a special vocation and are singularly favored by God. "God bless Notre Dame!" said a Jesuit priest in a public address last summer. "God bless Notre Dame for the spiritual life of her students." No group of young men in the country, perhaps in the whole world, has the opportunity that is yours. What are you doing with it? May God forgive you, many of you, very many of you, are not better than the poor pagans about you who know not God. What does Lent mean to you? With what paltry acts of self denial are you quieting your conscience? You deny yourself a spoonful of sugar and drink a quart of liquor. You put a sickle in the collection box and then dance your dizzy head off.

The highways and by-ways are picking up the crumbs you drop from the table. You are invited to come to Mass and the Sacraments; you refuse, and your places at the Holy Table are taken by alumni and old students, and by utter strangers who come in to make their peace with God or to ask for instructions to become Catholics. You pay no attention to the Survey, and from all parts of the country come letters telling of the good it is doing elsewhere. These are fearful signs. They generally forecast disaster. If you are no better than pagans you are incomparably worse, for you know what is right. Our Lord's warning is ghastly: "You are of this world, I am not of this world. Therefore I said to you that you shall die in your sins." -- John, viii.