

GENERAL INTENTION FOR NOVEMBER

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XV.

CHILDREN AND HOLY COMMUNION

The Holy Eucharist remains the eminent gift of Our Blessed Lord to the world, which He offered for all times as the nourishment of souls.

Desiring to extend similar benefits to the souls of children, the same Pontiff published, five years later, a decree which still continues to arouse the interest of the Catholic world.

The conditions laid down for the Communion of children in the decree Quam Singulari may be resumed as follows: "The age of discernment is attained by children when they begin to use the reasoning faculty, that is, about the seventh year, sometimes before, sometimes after."

The question naturally suggests itself: Are children therefore obliged to make their Easter duty, even before the seventh year, if they enjoy the use of reason? The age of the dawn of reason varies with every child.

This information suffices; the wish of the Church is clear; no reason for waiting until the seventh year is attained; in fact, to do so would be to put a false interpretation on Canon 859 and on the decree Quam Singulari.

The obligation becomes more evident from the fact that the ecclesiastical law which enforces it is only the expression of a higher law which no power here below can modify.

who had not completed their seventh year, but who had been admitted to Holy Communion because they enjoyed the use of reason, were really held to the Easter duty, the Cardinal replied that they were held.

All this legislation regarding the Communion of children is also perfectly conformable to reason. Our Lord affirmed that "except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you."

Even ignorance is no obstacle in children in regard to so solemn an act. The Church asserts that they possess all the knowledge necessary to receive Holy Communion with fruit, and for the purpose of helping any indecision that might arise, Canon 854 of the new Code distinguishes between a child in danger of death and a child in health.

On whom does the obligation rest of carrying out the stipulations of the decree Quam Singulari? "On the father of the child, or those who take his place, and on the confessor," affirms the decree. Canon 860 of the new Code is more explicit.

Naturally this doctrine is presented in a purely objective way. There may be considerations which modify the obligation, but it is well to know that an obligation exists, lest some people might be tempted to escape the fulfilling of it, through plea of ignorance, or false ideas, or usage, or family tradition.

In promoting Communion among children, members of the League of the Sacred Heart have a consoling apostolate carved out for them. One of the main objects of our organization is to spread the practice of Holy Communion among the faithful.

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of the profit and consolation derived from frequent Communion; excite in them a desire to go frequently; urge parents to send their children. The example of the little ones will not be lost on lukewarm parents, and grace will enter many homes that need it badly.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND ITS REMEDIES

The problem of unemployment at the present moment looms overshadowingly large; it has become a national concern and menace. The number of men out of work is very considerable. The approximate figures can easily be found in the various daily papers and need not be repeated here.

What unemployment means to the workingman can be visualized without any great effort by any one who realizes how much the laborer depends on his daily wage. In many cases, unemployment after a few days confronts the wage-earner and his family with the sad fact of an empty larder and the utter inability to replenish the exhausted supplies.

But the moral effects are of far greater importance. The man who is without work and sees his family subject to many privations does not look with a kindly eye upon a social order which makes such conditions possible and that does very little to remedy them.

This being so, society in sheer self-protection ought to devise means against the evils of unemployment. No doubt this consideration has prompted the calling of the unemployment conference in Washington. This conference, if it will do anything, at best will offer some palliatives for the present situation.

The rhythmically recurring periods of economic depression more than anything else are an indication that there is something basically wrong with our industrial system. The social world is not governed by iron laws as the physical world. It is of our own making.

Its disturbance and disorders are caused by moral factors which could be avoided. Against a meteoric disturbance, against a tidal wave which exacts a heavy toll of human life, or against a destructive earthquake there is no remedy, because they result from unchangeable cosmic laws over which man has no control.

There is one remedy that will strike at the root of the evil, and though there is no hope that it will be applied just yet, it is well to mention it. If industry were organized along the lines of service instead of profit and private gain, unemployment would be, if not entirely abolished, at least reduced to a minimum and alternating periods of inflation and depression would be avoided.

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