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"Christianus mihi nomen est Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname)—St. Pacian, 4th Century.

VOLUME XXXII. LONDON, ONTARIO, SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 1910 1643

PASTORAL LETTER OF THE FATHERS OF THE FIRST PLENARY COUNCIL OF QUEBEC

SEPTEMBER 19TH TO NOVEMBER 1ST 1909

On the Christian Spirit in the Individual, in the Family and in Society

To the Clergy, Secular and Regular, to the Religious Communities, and to all the Faithful throughout Canada, Health and Benediction in the Lord.

Dearly Beloved Brethren, — The Church in Canada has held her first Plenary Council. Assembled in the ancient City of Champlain, where still vibrate the echoes of the never-to-be-forgotten celebration of its third centenary, grouped about the tomb where rest, in the Seminary's pious keeping, the venerated remains of the first Bishop of Quebec, your chief pastors have calmly studied together, one in mind and heart, how best to advance in this our country the influence of God's Church and the good of immortal souls. After having confided their deliberations to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, and called to their consultations men most noteworthy for erudition, wisdom and piety, they have enacted such decrees as they judged to be most conducive to the spiritual welfare of the faithful committed to their care.

These decrees, after having been submitted to the supreme authority of Rome, will be made public, to be thenceforward a guide for your faith and a rule for your conduct. But, in the meantime, it is our desire, dearly beloved brethren, at once to open our hearts to you, in gratitude for the fervent prayers you have sent up to Heaven to draw down God's blessings on our all-important labors. These prayers have been heard, as we have amply experienced in the sustaining effects of the divine protection. Jesus Christ, who has promised to be wherever two or three should be gathered together in His name, has manifestly blessed by His presence those solemn assemblies in which bishops and priests, animated by the spirit of that Divine Master, entertained no other ambition but to exalt His work and to extend His kingdom.

Your petitions will now, therefore, be succeeded by thanksgiving, in union with ours; with us you will glorify God, who has just given us so touching a proof of His bounty. And, that your gratefulness be not without fruit, you will strive to be more and more worthy of His favors, by accomplishing ever more faithfully His holy will.

In this Pastoral Letter, which complements the work of the Council, we unite our voices and our hearts to offer you a solemn attestation of our affection and solicitude, and to sow in your minds the seeds of good counsel. It is the entire Canadian Hierarchy that now addresses you. Receive therefore with respect, and meditate with care, these its teachings, which are dictated by a great love for your souls, and have for object your highest spiritual interests.

Taking our inspiration from the admirable programme which Pius X. has traced for himself at the outset of his pontificate, and convinced with him that there is no salvation for either individual or society, that does not rest on that foundation "which is laid; which is Christ Jesus" we join our voice to his in exhorting you to "re-establish all things in Christ," and to engrave the indelible impress of His spirit upon your private, your domestic, and your social life.

I

THE CHRISTIAN SPIRIT IN PRIVATE LIFE

The great duty of him who bears the name of Christian is to constantly endeavor to reproduce in his own life the essential features of the life of the Saviour. To the fulfilment of this we are exhorted by the Apostle, "that," as he says, "the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh." We beg of you, dearly beloved brethren, to earnestly reflect upon the meaning of these words and to accept with generosity their practical conclusions.

THE MODEL OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

The most important of these conclusions is that you must make special efforts to become intimately acquainted with the model offered for your imitation. St. Paul beseeches the Corinthians to be his followers, as he also is a follower of Christ. But he points out that, to win that title, he had devoted himself to constant study of the divine Model, saying, with truly apostolic pride, "When I came to you. . . . I judged not myself to know anything among you but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

Meditate well this lesson, dearly beloved brethren, in order to fully realize how necessary it is for Christians to study the Life of Our Lord, that they may be enabled to profit by His example. Alas, it is not for this knowledge of Jesus that men show themselves most eager. How comparatively few are those who make it a constant duty to open the Holy Gospels for the purpose of placing themselves in presence of the Divine Master, to study His actions, to drink in his words, and to commune with Him in intimate and holy familiarity. A craving for profane sciences is freely indulged; it is considered a source of legitimate pride to know all about the occurrences and the people that attract public attention. But of Jesus Christ what definite knowledge is generally possessed? What efforts are made to keep in the proper light His divine figure, His counsels and precepts, His blessings and His perfections?

And yet, more pronounced than ever becomes the necessity to him who would live by faith and be a real Christian, of seriously entering into the school of Christ and of learning from Him both the theory and the practice of wisdom. Hell, though unable to prevail against the Son of God, lets loose against Him all its fury, and madly strives to make Him unrecognizable in the sight of men. Following the long line of heresies by which the agents of evil have so often attempted throughout the ages to travesty His doctrine, behold these recent years have brought forth an error, which is an aggravated embodiment of all the rest, designed to attack the very person of the Divine Redeemer.

Under the plea of representing Christ to us in a new light, more in conformity with human science, the so-called Modernists portray for us but an unseemly caricature of the Saviour. In contemplating this repulsive mockery we may indeed sorrowfully repeat the words of Isaias inspired by the prophetic vision of the Messiah in the hour of His passion: "We have seen Him and there was no sightliness that we should be desirous of Him."

Far other is the Christ Whom the Church adores, and whom the Gospels and tradition represent to us, the God made man, Who came upon earth as the true light, and Who founded with His blood an institution, divine like Himself, by means of which He continues to teach all truth to mankind. Vicar of that Christ on earth, the Holy Father calls upon us to re-establish in Him our whole life, and, to that end, to fix well in our minds an impression of Him that corresponds with the reality. Read frequently the Holy Gospels in the approved text; read also some of the excellent histories of Our Lord's life that may be recommended to you by your pastors; listen attentively, and with a lively spirit of faith, to the sermons preached for your instruction on the teaching and example of the Son of God. His doctrine and His life will, as a result, be reflected in your belief and in your habits. You will draw your light directly from the divine flame, and you will have an incentive to adorn your souls more and more with those qualities which make so grand and beautiful the soul of Jesus Christ.

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

Christian life, dearly beloved brethren, has its outward manifestation in assistance at public services of religion, in the frequentation of the sacraments, and in the practise of acts which lend to human conduct a complexion of integrity and honesty. These exterior appearances, however, do not constitute life; indeed, they may go hand in hand with death. "Thou hast the name of being alive, and thou art dead," says the Apostle St. John to the Angel of the Church of Sardis.

To live the life of a Christian, then, means to have the spirit of Jesus Christ. "If any man," says St. Paul, "have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His." It is easy to deduce from this the nature of the Christian spirit. It is an aggregation of intellectual and moral qualities and habits that incline us to think, feel and act in a manner conformable to the thoughts, sentiments and actions of Jesus Christ Himself. We find this clearly epitomized in the exhortation of the Apostle: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

If you carefully study the life of the Saviour, if you search, beneath the letter of the Gospel, for the spirit of the Master—which should be that of the disciple—you will very soon discover that the sayings and actions by which this spirit makes itself known to us, in no wise agree with those inspired by the spirit of the world. Between the two there is unalterable opposition, and it is a fatal error to assume that they may be joined and mingled together in one's conduct. "No man can serve two masters," says our Divine Lord, and you are well aware how relentlessly He upbraided the spirit of the world.

Place yourselves, therefore, dearly beloved brethren, in the school of the Divine Master, to be there fully imbued with His spirit.

He will begin by teaching you humility: "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart." Humility is the fundamental virtue of the Christian life.

The first Adam debased humanity by seeking through pride to raise himself to the level of God; the new Adam lifts it up again by the lowering of God to the level of man. Now the place held by humility in the salvation of the individual soul, is of the same rank and importance as it occupied in the mystery of our redemption. "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." Pride, therefore, is the cause of all our shortcomings, both intellectual and moral, and it bows irrevocably beneath the pitiless yoke of the demon the souls that refuse to accept the sweet and easy yoke of Jesus. Humility on the contrary opens up the fountains of the graces which illuminate and strengthen. It is real wisdom, according to these words of the Holy Ghost: "Where humility is, there also is wisdom."

Obedience, the handmaid of humility, constitutes the second distinguishing mark of the Christian spirit. It is a virtue dear above all others to the Heart of Jesus, since He made it play such an important part in His own life. The Gospel summarizes the greater part of the mortal life of the Saviour in these few simple words: "He was subject to them," and the Apostle St. Paul finds no eulogy for Him more beautiful or more expressive than this: "obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross."

The demon, offspring and victim of the first revolt, spares no effort to drag mankind after him, both in the fault that proved his destruction and in the chastisement with which he is eternally stricken. The undying enemy of Christ, he knows no other ambition than to snatch from Him the souls reclaimed by the Cross; exiled from Heaven, he is bitterly determined to lead astray all those who set forward towards it in holy hope; and he finds no more effective instrument for his perverse designs than the spirit of disobedience. Alas, that he has succeeded in poisoning with that evil spirit so great a number of Christians.

It is an indisputable fact that the most widespread evil of our day is that of false independence and insubordination. The Holy Spirit teaches us that all lawfully constituted authority comes from God: "There is no power but from God," and shows that consequently resistance to authority means resistance to God: "Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." Now authority seems in our day intolerable to many. They demand liberty uncontrolled by authority, forgetting that such liberty is inordinate and destructive. Under pretext of evading rule which they find irksome, they lapse into license and throw themselves headlong into degrading slavery to greed and passion.

Nor is the authority of Jesus Christ and of His Church free from the effects of that spirit of insubordination; at times through ignorance, at times even designedly and with malice, attempts are made to restrict the rights of those who command in the name of God, and the discipline and laws of the Church are called into question with an independence which is all the more regrettable when it springs from a false education.

Let us remind you, dearly beloved brethren, that the mission of the Church springs from no human power, but from Christ alone, Who has stamped its character and set forth its scope in these words: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations. . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." It is that same Jesus Christ Our Saviour, Who still lives in His Church and continues to speak to you by the mouth of His ministers, to whom He has said: "He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me."

Christians who have lost their grasp on these elementary principles are indeed greatly to be pitied. We know quite well that they succumb to pernicious influences, the fulness of whose malice they do not realize. The storm of revolt that sweeps over modern society, shakes convictions hitherto reputed firm, and weakens in otherwise generous souls respect for the most sacred things and persons. Self-styled friends of the people strive to convince them that the yoke of the Church is too heavy on their shoulders, and that the influence which religious authority seeks to assume over them is intrusive and unwarrantable.

Prominent among the qualities with which the Church has been endowed by her Divine Founder is the fact that she is a nursery of discipline and obedience. It is as a result of this that she maintains such wonderful and fruitful union among her children, and scatters her path through the ages with works that perish not. Upon her fall the blessings promised by God to Abraham: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed My voice." If the various sects which have separated themselves from her, though not wanting in noble souls and generous impulses, exhaust their forces in endless divisions and useless quarrels, is it not owing to the fact that, being themselves the fruit of disobedience, they are of necessity incapable of teaching and reducing to practice this virtue essentially proper to true children of God?

Be glad, dear beloved brethren, that it is your privilege to be members of the Church of God, which holds in such high esteem obedience to Him and to all who exercise authority in His Name. Take a firm hold upon her teaching on this point, and put it faithfully into practice. Then only may you be truly said to live by the life of Christ. He will reign in you, since through you He will continue to fulfill His mission, which is to do the will of His Father.

The spirit of Christ is moreover one of self-denial and of sacrifice. It inspires courage to walk in the royal road of the Cross, and to respond with generosity to the appeal of the Master: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."

Many Christians, when they hear or read that declaration, are inclined to find it hard. It grates harshly amid the enervating chorus of worldly discourse, and outlines a prospect of life in which the customs of our day find little place. The love of comfort, the eager quest of pleasure, the dread of pain and an unremitting vigilance to ward it off, these are the deeply distinctive features of modern society. To be convinced of this it suffices to note the ever-increasing importance given to amusements of every kind; the alarming growth of luxury which swallows up the fruits of labor and enflames the most wicked passions; the disinclination to be reconciled with one's lot, and to bear with the afflictions, and trials permitted by God; and finally the ease with which pretexts are found for evading the penances enjoined by the Church. A sensualism ever more exacting and more refined pervades the customs of living, and subverts the Gospel spirit. What mankind seems to aspire to is a Christianity without penance, a forgiveness without atonement, and a heaven without Calvary.

This, dearly beloved brethren, will not be your mode of action. Show yourselves always to be true disciples of the Divine Victim of the Cross. Remember that the gospel is inseparable from the Cross, and that "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence," and consequently accept with cheerful hearts the law of penance, which for sinful man is a law of resurrection and of life.

3. THE SOURCES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

But to reduce to practice these virtues which are the choicest adornment of Christian souls, the will must be strengthened, by securing for its support the power of God Himself. This is the office of prayer. To pray is to associate God to one's life, to clothe oneself with His omnipotence, to put on His armor, according to the expressive words of the Apostle. In the supernatural order, our soul's life looks to grace alone for support, and grace is granted to him who asks for it. Prayer is, therefore, the paramount duty of the children of God. We beg of you, dearly beloved brethren, to accord to it the place it should occupy in your lives. It is good and useful for the Christian to lay aside from time to time his earthly occupations, lift his thoughts to God, and refresh his soul with heavenly discourse. It is in this holy intercourse that the soul is more fully emancipated from sin, tastes the sweet condescension of the Lord, revives its hopes and emphasizes its good resolutions. The man who has fervently prayed understands his duties better and fulfils them with greater courage. He permits himself neither to be cast down by trials nor enervated by pleasures. Temptations find him watchful and alert; he is a soldier fully armed, ready for battle and certain of victory.

Among the pious practices that promote the increase of faith and the re-establishment of Jesus Christ in souls, there is one more efficacious than all the rest, and which it is especially gratifying to us to recommend to you: we refer to Holy Communion.

In instituting the Sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist, Our Lord wished to provide mankind with a never-failing nourishment for their supernatural life. The form in which He clothed it is sufficient indication of His intention. "The Bread that I will give, is My Flesh, for the life of the world." "I am the living bread which came down from heaven," and, since bread is intended to be eaten, He adds: "If any man eat of this Bread he shall live forever." Nothing could be clearer or more convincing than these words. They should constitute the supreme and guiding rule of every Christian life. On the one side, we are under obligation to preserve, increase and bring to perfection the supernatural life which was imparted to our souls by baptism, and which should reach its state of perfect fruition in heaven; on the other, we have the assurance of Jesus Christ Our Lord that that life can be sustained only by the Eucharistic Food. We cannot but conclude, therefore, that the partaking of the Sacrament of the Eucharist is an imperative necessity to the true Christian. For him its use or neglect resolves itself into a question of spiritual life or death. "Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you."

It is not, then, surprising that the Church, to which is entrusted the mission of preserving the life of the soul, has always cherished an ardent zeal to attract the faithful to the Holy Table. Trained in the very school of the Apostles, the first Christians held it a necessity, as well as an honor, to be daily guests at that hallowed banquet. With their eyes of faith they saw that the soul as well as the body was in need of its daily bread, to sustain it against collapse on the way to heaven; and on each day the Divine Master nourished with His Flesh and Blood all those who so eagerly desired to take their life from His.

Alas, how far short we are of that primitive fervor! So great has become the indifference of Christians towards this divine repast that the Church has been placed in the painful necessity of obliging her children to receive Holy Communion at least once in each year. And in our days not a few are satisfied with merely obeying that commandment, and even have to be driven, as it were by force, to the august Table, where Jesus distributes the Bread of Life. The feast, however, is always ready. It is the wish of our meek and loving King that the banquet-hall be filled, and, as in the Gospel parable, He sends His servants everywhere to make the guests come in.

Four years ago the Catholic Church all over the world was aroused by a soul-stirring and passionate appeal in the Master's Name. Interpreting the sentiments of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, our much loved Pontiff Pius X. made a supreme effort to revive the holy traditions of the early ages. By a bold and truly apostolic stroke, he broke down all the obstacles that a pertinacious Jansenism and too narrow theological constructions had kept arrayed on the path to the Holy Table.

The Decree on daily Communion has resolved every doubt and put an end to every scruple. "Frequent and daily Communion, as a thing most ardently desired by Christ Our Lord and by the Catholic Church, should be open to all the faithful, of whatever rank and condition of life; so that no one who is in a state of grace, and who approaches the Holy Table with a right and devout intention, can lawfully be hindered therefrom." It is with this solemn, clear and precise declaration that begins the Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Council. It defines unequivocally the wishes of Christ and of His Church, and the unquestionable right to Communion, even daily, of all the faithful who are in a state of grace and whose hearts disclose an upright and pious intention. Thus practical rules are laid down which must henceforward serve as a guide to both priests and people.

But if this momentous document is an instrument of commanding authority, it is also, and pre-eminently, a message of inviting love. How can one fail to perceive, beneath the letter of the Decree, the throbbings of the tender, compassionate Heart of the Divine Prisoner of the tabernacle? He looks upon the distress of the multitude, bending beneath the burden and in need of the Bread that strengthens, and, as of old, He has pity on them. By the voice of His Vicar on earth He gives utterance anew to His compassionate entreaty: "Come to Me all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you."

The Catholics of the entire world have been attentive to this mercy-laden appeal, and of late we are beholders of a most consoling spectacle. The practice of frequent Communion is increasing rapidly, and an irresistible movement of faith and love is leading back the faithful to the Eucharistic Jesus. From the very beginning, dearly beloved brethren, you have taken your place in this pious movement. You have understood as enlightened Christians the wishes of our Holy Church, and as faithful children you have hastened to conform to them. On this we congratulate you with all our heart, and we exhort you to persevere in these good dispositions. Frequent Communion is the most efficacious remedy for the evils that ravage modern society; it will heal the fever of materialism which so imperils supernatural life, and it, more than all else, will re establish Christ in souls.

THE CHRISTIAN SPIRIT IN THE FAMILY

To be a Christian, therefore, dearly beloved brethren, is to penetrate one's soul with the teachings and example of the Divine Master; to seek in the Gospels the rule of life, and in prayer and the sacraments the grace of God. We now further assert that the Christian character is not confined to private life, but must distinguish public life as well.

It is an error altogether too common in practice nowadays and extremely ruinous to souls, to think that one can serve two masters, by accommodating his conscience to two opposite codes of morality.

This partition of the soul and dividing of the conscience is a dangerous self deception. As the soul is one, so also is the conscience. God, our soul and sovereign Master, exacts public as well as private service, and the Christian is responsible to that Master for all the acts of his life. This, dearly beloved brethren, is a truth which the Church is never weary of preaching to her children, and to which, therefore, we call your attention in a special manner. May the spirit of Our Lord then be reflected from your individual lives upon all your public acts, and may it shed its rays first of all upon your homes, and in your family life.

The family, even as the heart of the Christian, is a sanctuary, which should be consecrated and sanctified by religion. Fathers and mothers, you are the custodians of that sanctuary; and it should be your ambition not only to defend it against every profanation, but to firmly establish it in the rule of Christ's influence and the practice of Christian virtues. To that end follow with attention and respect the instructions which for your guidance we here deem proper to impress upon you.

RESPECT FOR THE MARRIAGE TIE

The stability of the Christian home depends entirely on the indissolubility of the marriage tie. Nothing but death can release from this bond, which God Himself declares to be inseverable; "What therefore God has joined together let no man put asunder." We cannot too strongly condemn such laws as sacrilegiously encroach upon this fundamental principle of Christian civilization. Divorce violates the teaching of Jesus Christ and brings in its train the most lamentable consequences. The Catholic Church has ever shown herself the unfailing guardian of the indissolubility of marriage, and she maintains that divorce leaves inviolate the marriage bond, no matter what the civil laws may presume to decree.

But the respect due the inviolable and sacred marriage union places Catholic husbands and wives under special obligations, upon which they cannot too deeply meditate. They must above all cultivate a boundless mutual charity, and bear with one another's shortcomings in true Christian patience. Domestic peace and happiness are purchased only by generous sacrifices. The sacrament of matrimony brings with it the grace to perform these sacrifices, and to avoid everything that would tend to interfere with harmony and weaken mutual affection.

We specially admonish heads of families to devote to their homes all the time that business affairs and legitimate social duties leave at their disposal. Nothing so much disorganizes the family circle as the habit prevalent nowadays with far too many husbands, of seeking apart from their wives and children distractions and amusements to which their tastes incline them. It would appear as though staying at home were a source of depression and annoyance to them. They are seldom found there, and numberless are their pretexts for absence, frequent and prolonged. There are to be found in all centres of any importance clubs which serve to an alarming extent as counter-attractions to the domestic hearth. It is there that, too often, men waste their leisure time, indulging in companionship, conversations and games, which leave to them unimpaired neither fortune nor health, honor nor faith. There they acquire tastes and form associations which rob them of all family spirit, and smother gradually in their hearts the pure and holy sentiments they should cherish towards these nearest and dearest to them.

And while these club rooms attract and hold their too faithful and too numerous frequenters, what is the state of things in the uncared for homes. Loneliness, and a sense of neglect weigh heavily on wives and children who feel themselves to be without protection or love; and moreover these ill-guarded homes are exposed to many and grave dangers, to overcome which requires no small degree of courage and Christian virtue on the part of wives and mothers.

On the other hand, wives should never overlook the fact that they are, as it were, the heart of the family life, the radiance which warms and brightens it. They are its visible guardian angels, and there exists no calling more useful, more noble or more rich in good results; none is more in harmony with the unselfish devotedness that God has implanted in the heart of woman.

The Church, needless to say, does not forbid woman to exercise her influence for good beyond her own dwelling, or to take her rightful part in that social work which is to-day more than ever necessary; but she unreservedly condemns all those unwholesome theories which are being propagated of late, and from which we should all make special efforts to safeguard our country. Under the highly fallacious pretext of emancipating woman from servitudes which are alleged to overburden her, these theories, if realized, would but tear her from the household of which she is the guardian, and remove her from the sphere of sacred duties for which nature and Providence have designed her. By a regrettable confusion of ideas, which in some is the fruit of ignorance, in others of malice, it is claimed that equality involves similarity of rights, whence woman is expected to engage in an absurd and unseemly rivalry with man in spheres of action where neither the conditions of the struggle nor the chances of success could be placed on an equal footing. The practical application of such theories would be fatal both to woman and to the family, and would rapidly bring about the degradation of the one and the destruction of the other.

Such is not the ideal the Church holds up for the aspirations of Christian womanhood, nor is such the type of wife and mother which the history and traditions of our country hand down to us. The Canadian family has been manifestly favored with the blessings of God. He has shielded it from most of the errors and pernicious customs that in other countries play havoc with homes and empoison the very fountain-heads from which flows the life of nations. With us domestic society has always remained solidly fixed on the foundations established for it by the Gospel, and it is our boast, as well as our reliance, that our women have admirably realized and resolutely performed their duties as wives and mothers.

For the direction and support of parents in the accomplishment of their mission, a most efficacious aid is found in the devotion to the Holy Family, a devotion whose origin in this country dates back to the beginnings of its religious history. Recognizing its value, Pope Leo XIII. some years ago, decreed the propagation of this devotion throughout the entire world, and the consecration to the Holy Family of every Catholic household. We exhort you then, dearly beloved brethren, to correspond with these wishes of the Church, by honoring Jesus, Mary and Joseph with your confidence and love, and by study and imitation of the beautiful domestic virtues practised by them, which make the holy house of Nazareth the perfect model for all others.

Enlightened by such examples, and fortified by such powerful protection you will make the real spirit of Jesus Christ paramount in your homes, you will preserve intact the wholesome traditions of Canadian Catholics, and you will correspond with the designs of God and the hopes of the Church by bringing up about your fireside a generation of veritable Christians.

THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

The training of children is of a truth the supreme duty, even as it is the great glory, of parents. Nature, as well as religion, places this responsibility upon them, and the welfare of society requires that they discharge it with intelligence and devotion. It is, therefore, of the highest importance that they be properly instructed with regard to this grave obligation.

HOME EDUCATION

Fathers and mothers, bear well in mind that the domestic hearth is the child's first school; this school may, strictly speaking, take the place of all others, but without detriment it can never be replaced by any. You are the directors of that school, and for the teaching that you there impart you are answerable only to God, the Church and your own conscience. There, at your knees, under your eyes, the child receives, through your words and example, the first rays that awaken his intelligence, the earliest impressions that are graven in his heart, and the first counsels that form and direct his will. The soul of your child, encased in flesh, and as it were held captive by the senses, looks to you alone for the *educative* act, that will draw it forth from its prison-house, and the elevating impulse that will direct it towards truth, towards duty, towards God. While yet tender and plastic it is entrusted to you, that by your hands it may be shaped and moulded according to the divine Model. Truly sublime is this ministry, which associates you with the work of the Creator, and makes you co-workers with God, so delicate a task, that it demands all the light and all the strength that faith and grace may supply.

Delay not, Christian parents, in devoting all your energy to this task of home instruction, and fulfil it in accordance with the teachings of our Holy Mother the Church. Remembering that your children have come from God and must return to Him, take pains to create and develop in them the sentiment of religion. From their tenderest age direct these precious souls towards Heaven, open their minds to the salutary influences of faith, and teach them the art of prayer. The praises of little children are pleasing to God, and His benediction descends upon fathers and mothers who piously kindle in these innocent hearts the acceptable incense of prayer. That incense will impart fragrance to your home, and healthfulness to its atmosphere. Happy is the household whose members gather daily together in pious recollection and unitedly offer up their prayer to God. The Lord shields it with His protection, in it He dwells as in a sanctuary and from it His grace triumphantly expels all evil.

Along with piety, the seed of Christian virtues should be implanted in the youthful soul, and its growth and development carefully watched. Among

CONTINUED ON PAGE FIVE

INSPIRATION

"Good-night" and then your candle's feeble flare
Went glimmering up the stair;
A door closed and the house was still.
Slow hour by hour the night grew old
And from the smouldering hearth the cold
Stole forth and laid its chill
On fingers weary of the pen,
On heart and brain that had been fain
To make a song of cheer.
For, oh, the summer warm and bright
You conjured in the winter night
Went upward with your candlelight,
Went with you up the stair.

—T. A. DALY.

CATHOLIC NOTES

Kilmainham jail, having no prisoners, has been turned over by the Wexford County Council to the Sisters of St. John, and it is now converted into St. Brigid's Home for female inebriates.

Father Vorst has built a little chapel for the Hungarians at Benchonzie, Sask., It is 40x20 and contains a room for the priest to live in. The poor priest has been obliged to build it himself with his own hands.

In the little, prosperous kingdom of Belgium there are upwards of 100,000 Franciscan tertiaries, of whom 30,000 are men and 70,000 women. They belong to all classes of society, from the highest to the humblest.

A number of Catholics from Holland arrived in New York last week on their way to Minnesota where they will establish a Catholic colony under the direction of Bishop McGoldrick. The colonists were accompanied by three priests of their own nationality.

The Right Rev. Denis O'Donaghue, formerly auxiliary bishop of Indianapolis, was solemnly installed as Bishop of Louisville with stately and brilliant ceremonies in the Cathedral of the Assumption, Louisville, on Tuesday morning at 9:30 o'clock.

The Duke of Norfolk has two sisters who are nuns—Lady Minna Howard belongs to the Carmelite Order and Lady Ethelreda is a Sister of Charity. Lady Edith Fielding, sister to Lord Denbigh, is another Sister of Charity, who spends her days in a convent in Keoukiang.

The Bulletin of Christian schools gives the number of pupils actually attending the Christian Brothers' schools in Cairo, Egypt, as 2,639. This is an increase of 220 pupils since November of last year. The Christian Brothers have in all 16 establishments in Egypt.

It is announced that the Pope will be asked to allow the Blessed Sacrament to be carried in the procession at the coming Montreal Eucharistic Congress, in a special carriage drawn by six horses, as used to be done by the Pontiff himself in the olden times.

Members of the black hand gang, recently released from prison, set fire to the church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, at Carbondale, Pa., in revenge for the activity of Father Cerruttis in prosecution of the black handers. The church was destroyed and the loss is $50,000.

Forty-five converts is the record of a mission for non-Catholics given in the Church of St. John the Evangelist, Philadelphia, by the Fathers of the New York Apostolate. Noon-day talks were a feature of the mission. They were preached chiefly to men and were on social and economic questions.

In France, while other religious congregations were expelled wholesale because of the hatred of the infidel government for all religion, the Little Sisters of the Poor have so far remained unmolested; because the government would not know what to do with the helpless aged without the Little Sisters.

Excavations at Hartlepool, England, have led to the discovery of thirty-seven skeletons, and traces of an old priory known to have been demolished in 1547. The skeletons, it is believed, are those of friars, one hundred and twenty-four thousand of whom are said to have perished in Britain nursing victims of the "black death."

In preparation for the Eucharistic Congress held two years ago in London, sixty thousand bouquets of flowers were sent by the Catholics of France to be strewn before the Host carried in procession. It is proposed that Canadian Catholics make a similar gift for the Eucharistic Congress in Montreal, next August.

Pittsburg has probably the most cosmopolitan Holy Name Society in the world. Included in its 1,500 members are natives of Russia, Sahara, China, Egypt, Australia and the islands of the Pacific; from India, Turkey, Spain and England. There are newly converted Jews, Syrians, Mongolians, negroes, Japanese and the brown-skinned Filipinos.

Denis Murphy of Ashcroft, British Columbia, brother of the Rev. Wm. J. Murphy, rector of Ottawa Catholic University, has been made judge of the Supreme Court in British Columbia. The new judge is an alumnus of Ottawa University. That institution has another alumnus in high station in Canada, the Hon. Charles Murphy, Canadian Secretary of State. Both are gifted jurists and publicists and a credit to their Church and Alma Mater.

"Mrs. King, widow of David Gordon King, prominent in New York and Newport society, has exposed the Catholic faith. She became a member of St. Mary's Catholic Church, Newport, leaving old Trinity Church, with which the King family have been closely identified many years. In the latter church there are many tablets erected to the memory of different members of the King family, and one of the finest windows was presented by Mrs. King as a memorial to her husband, during his lifetime a vestryman in the church.