

THE SUNBEAM.

A MONTHLY FOR OUR CATHOLIC YOUTH.

PUBLISHED BY

D. M. QUINN, Proprietor "The True Witness,"

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EDITED BY A PRIEST OF THE DIOCESE.

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Is the only paper of its kind in Canada, and deserves special consideration and encouragement. It has received the approbation of His Grace the Archbishop of Montreal. Its mission will be to counteract the pernicious influence of evil literature, bad books, dime novels, etc., with which our fair country is over-run.

For the present THE SUNBEAM will appear once a month. The publisher relies on the good will and efforts of the Reverend Clergy to bring it to the notice of their parishioners. Parents and Guardians of our Catholic Youth will further the cause of Catholic literature by subscribing for it and introducing it to their neighbors.

N.B.—Local items and letters from children will be cheerfully received.

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XMAS.

AS Christmas Day, 1892, will be a thing of the past before the next appearance of THE SUNBEAM, the Editor, profiting by the present occasion, wishes all his friends, the Sunbeams in particular, both big and small, A MERRY, MERRY CHRISTMAS. May the Divine Infant of Bethlehem give you all joy and happiness, peace and tranquillity, and all the other gifts and blessings that He has in store for all His little friends. Once more—A Merry Christmas to you all.

I AM THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

THE feast of the Immaculate Conception of our ever Blessed Mother occurs, as you all know, on the 8th of December. It is a Holyday of Obligation. The Immaculate Conception, dear children, was the cloudless dawn that heralded the most beautiful of days which Jesus, the true Sun of Justice, was to illumine. It was the source of the many privileges which the ever Blessed Trinity bestowed on Mary with so lavish a hand. What is the meaning of the Immaculate Conception? What do you understand by this consoling doctrine? "Our tainted nature's solitary boast!" Follow me attentively. Our first parents committed the sin of disobedience. We, their descendants, contracted their guilt, and on our arrival in this world, our souls were stamped with a mark of reprobation and malediction. This mark is usually styled original sin, or the sin of our first parents. From that stain every child of Adam must be purified in order to become an adopted child of God. You are well aware that original sin is the cause of all those ills to which human flesh is heir. Our passions, evil inclinations, deep ignorance which is partly conquered only after a long, tedious struggle, suffering and death, are a few of the dire effects of original sin. Mary, and she alone, was preserved from that taint or stain, and, consequently, from its consequences. It was a special grace on the part of God. It was given to her in view of the merits of the Passion and Death of her dear Son Jesus, who died for her as well as for us all. It is in this exemption from original sin that the true object of the feast which we celebrate on the 8th inst. consists. Yes, from the first moment of her existence, Mary's soul was adorned with the most unspeakable grace and

beauty, "Hail, full of grace." It was most acceptable in the sight of Almighty God. His angels were enraptured and admired this masterpiece of the object of their adoration and love. From the beginning, her mind was not obstructed with those clouds of ignorance and folly to which we are subject. She understood and admired the most sublime truths and mysteries of our holy Religion, which we too shall fully understand and admire if we enter one day the portals of our heavenly home. Nothing in the shape of temptations troubled her pure heart. It was like a silvery lake unruffled and at rest,—a mirror which no breath ever sullied. But you may ask: Did not Mary suffer; did she not pay the debt of nature? True, dear children; still she had no personal fault to atone for. She suffered and died solely to imitate her Divine Son Jesus, who, though God, suffered and died, and to be our model, that we too should suffer, undergo the trials and miseries of this life with patience and resignation to the adorable will of God. All hail, then, to our Queen! All hail, most incomparable of creatures!

Yes, dear Sunbeams, let us worthily celebrate this glorious privilege of Mary. She is that flower without thorns spoken of in the Gospel. Let us all then rejoice, but what would it avail to believe in the spotless purity of Mary if we were not careful to preserve our own hearts in the grace of God?

O spotless Maid! whose virtues shone
With brightest purity,
Each action of our lives refine,
And make us pure like thee.

MASS.

THE Third Commandment of the Church reads thus: "To keep the Sundays and Holydays of Obligation holy, by hearing Mass and resting from servile works. To day I shall say a few words about the first part of the precept, viz., about hearing Mass on Sundays and Holydays of Obligation. Are you bound to obey the Church? You are as much bound to obey the Church as you are to obey Almighty God Himself. The commandments or precepts of the Church are the commandments and precepts of God, though He gives them to us by His Church, which He has appointed to guide and direct us in all that regards His Divine Service. Hence our Blessed Lord plainly tells us that to obey the Pastors of the Church is just the same thing as to obey Himself, and, on the other hand, that He will look upon any disobedience to the laws of the Church as an act of disobedience and contempt offered to His own Divine Person. "He that heareth you," said He to the Apostles, who were the first Pastors of the Church, "heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me." (Luke x. 16.) And again He says—"If any man will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican" (Matt. xviii. 17); that is, look upon him in the light of an unbeliever and a public sinner, and, as such, avoid his company and friendship. Many seem to be ignorant, at least in practice, of the above precept. No doubt sickness, necessity, or some good, reasonable excuse justifies the absence of a Catholic from hearing Mass on the days commanded. But what is to be thought of those boys or girls who miss Mass probably because *it was raining* or *it was a little cold*—or they were *too tired*—perhaps they fell asleep with a novel in their hand—or on account of some other wretched excuse. Their faith is very weak. They are on the wrong path. They are contracting, in their young days, a habit that will cling to them, that they will find very difficult to shake off as they grow up to be men and women. Our Blessed Saviour was pleased, for love of them, to hang

during three long hours on the Cross in agony, and they refuse to spend thirty minutes or an hour at the foot of the altar and that but once in seven days. Dear children, promise the Infant Jesus never to miss Mass on these days through your own fault. In return you will be prosperous, and God will bless and protect you. Remember this, dear children, "that a dark cloud hangs over the Catholic family that neglects Mass on the Lord's day."

ST. MARTIN'S DAY.

ON the 11th ult. Rev. M. Callaghan was made the recipient of a set of Breviaries in four volumes richly bound. Nothing could have been inspired more happily or appreciated more highly. The generous donors were the pupils of St. Patrick's School. The day which the young ladies selected for their magnificent donation was the feast of his Patron Saint. It is evident they know how to excel in the noblest sentiments of the heart not less than in the various studies which they pursue with uncommon success. We trust the Rev. Gentleman will have many returns of his anniversary.

SANTA CLAUS! What sweet memories does not that dear old name awaken in the minds and hearts of those who have preceded you, dear Sunbeams, in the different walks of life. That magic word reminds us of the chimney corner, stockings, the biggest we could find in the house, feverish expectations, sly glances and furtive visits at midnight, and oh! wonderful to relate, toys of every description, dolls, jumping-jacks, skates, Noah's arks, candy, &c., &c., &c., too numerous to mention. You are all, no doubt, looking forward with impatience to that day of days for the child's heart. Dear old Santa Claus will put in an appearance about midnight. He is very busy at present rubbing down his reindeers. What a list the dear old man has to make out. Woe to him if he forgets our Sunbeams. There is no reason why he should forget them. On whom will he lavish his favors and gifts? Not on the disobedient boy or girl; not on the child whose first thoughts in the morning are for breakfast and disgust for school; not on the child who, at night, tumbles into bed without first begging God's blessing on his rest, and who forgets to bid good-night to papa and mamma. His especial favourites are the docile, pious and studious children. And what are our Sunbeams? Beware, Santa Claus. You will make a host of enemies if you do not come to time.

OUR readers are requested to study carefully the geographical puzzle which Uncle Ned gives them for dessert this month. It will make the little puzzlers dive deep into their geographies. If properly worked out it makes a most interesting story. It was sent in by a devoted friend of THE SUNBEAM, together with the sweet story which appears in this month's number. His *nom de plume* is Radius Solis, which is the Latin for a Sunbeam.

GERALD McSHANE doffed the lay dress for the clerical on the Feast of the Presentation and looked elegant in his cassock. It would seem he has not proved an unworthy candidate for this honor. The Church has a predilection for all such Gerald. Before entering the Montreal College he made a brilliant course of study in the Academy of the Christian Brothers.

ALL the patrons and friends of education will be glad to learn that Maggie Drumm and Charlotte Lane have just passed before the Government Board an examination which entitles them to diplomas. We offer our congratulations to these talented young ladies, and rejoice in seeing them swell the ranks of the Legion of Honor which is being formed, by the ex-pupils of St. Patrick's School.