

SHORT INSTRUCTIONS FOR LOW MASSES.

N. Y. Freeman's Journal. (Delivered by the Rev. James Donohoe, pastor of the church of St. Thomas Aquinas, Brooklyn, N. Y.)

POINTS FOR THE PEOPLE ON BAPTISM.

DEAR PEOPLE: As this is the last instruction we intend to give in the present series on the Sacrament of Baptism, we must crowd into it, even at the risk of being lacking in method, a great many things of importance for the people to know that have been omitted in previous discourses on the same subject.

some precious white material? This could be taken away and religiously preserved by the parents. It could be transmitted from generation to generation. It would be a monument of the benefits received in baptism, and a mark of the alliance contracted with God.

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The next thing of importance is the choice of a godfather and a godmother.

To aid you in this selection, let me tell you the conditions required in order that any person may be in reality a godfather or a godmother. The sponsor must have the use of reason and be baptized. He must be appointed to this office either by the parents or by the priest. He must touch the child with the water in being poured, and he must have the intention of discharging the duties of a sponsor. What are the obligations of godfathers and godmothers? In case the parents should die or be unable to instruct the child, they are bound to teach the person baptized whatever is essential to its being a good Christian. The following persons are ineligible for this office: persons of bad repute for life or bad reputation, heretics, infidels, those who have been publicly excommunicated, persons of unsound mind, and those who are ignorant of the rudiments of faith; also members of secret societies condemned by the Church, and those who are known not to receive Communion at Easter time.

It sometimes happens that a child receives private baptism at the parent's home, on account of the danger of a storm, or in a strait obligation of afterwards bringing it to the church, when it can be done with safety, in order to have the other ceremonies supplied. To omit even one of the duties of a sponsor, some heretics would be a mortal sin. In case the parents should die or be unable to instruct the child, they are bound to teach the person baptized whatever is essential to its being a good Christian. The following persons are ineligible for this office: persons of bad repute for life or bad reputation, heretics, infidels, those who have been publicly excommunicated, persons of unsound mind, and those who are ignorant of the rudiments of faith; also members of secret societies condemned by the Church, and those who are known not to receive Communion at Easter time.

Who should accompany the child to the church? The father should always come, if he is able. If he is unable, the mother should come, if she is able. If neither parent is able, some other person should come, if he or she is able. The father who does not come is the lowest conceivable type of a degenerate fatherhood. Besides the sponsors, some heretics friends of the family would do well to be present. Although the presence of friends and relations is not necessary, it adds to the solemnity of the ceremony, and enhances the social advantages of the sacrament. Sad indeed is the fate of children where there is no baptism. Infants who are not baptized, and who are not accompanied by their parents, are redden with their blood. Their dying cries awake no compassion. People grow accustomed to hear their expiring moans. The witnesses at baptism, the presence of a number of friends, the church register, have the social advantage of being a check upon crime. The father who neglects to be present at the baptism of his child is better suited for China than Christian civilization. He is better qualified for citizenship at Pekin than in a Christian city. Be-should, let us surround the sacrament with all the pomp and ceremony we can. It is a great sacrament. The Christian father should know how to appreciate it. By it his child is consecrated in all its senses, it becomes a sacred being, an angel guards it, a saint protects it, it becomes a child of God, an heir of heaven, a companion of the angels.

Let the father and friends accompany him to the church. Ask the priest for a certificate of baptism. Preserve this document with care. There is a custom quite common among the best Catholic families of having a medal of silver or bronze made to commemorate the baptism of each child. Any style of medal is allowable. The father can exercise his ingenuity in drawing the plan. The words of the certificate might be placed on one side, and on the other the picture of the church, or the patron saint, or even parents' pictures. There is another custom of ancient origin which might be probably introduced in this country. Towards the end of the ceremony the priest puts a white cloth over the child's head and says: "Receive this white robe, and bear it unspotted to the tribunal that our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou mayest find there everlasting life." An ordinary piece of white linen is usually made out duty in our baptisries for this "white robe." It is a substitute for the white garments of the ancient catechumens, and denotes innocence, freedom, triumph. The white cloth is what is called. Now, why could not some friend of the family, or better still, the mother, anticipating the event, embroider a christen cloth of