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SATURDAY MAY 5, 1906.

Calendar for Next Week.

- 6—Third Sunday after Easter - Patronage of St. Joseph.
7—Monday—St. Stanislaus, Bishop, Martyr.
8—Tuesday—The Apparition of St. Michael the Archangel.
9—Wednesday—St. Gregory Nazianzen, Bishop, Doctor.
10—Thursday—St. Antonius.
10—Thursday—St. Antoninus, Bishop.
11—Friday—Saints Cletus and Marcellinus, Popes, Martyrs (transferred from April 26).
12—Saturday—Saints Nereus, Achilleus and companions, Martyrs.

INAUGURAL SERMON

(Continued from page 1)

are equipped to safeguard the interest of religion against the machinations of its enemies? Where shall we find Catholic laymen so entranced with the vision of the possibilities for good which are at their command that they deem no sacrifice too great which will enable them to gird their loins with truth, to preserve their honor chaste and their integrity untarnished in order that they may be qualified when occasion arises, to emulate the deeds of the Crusaders of old and raise aloft the standard of the Cross and unfurl the banner of Catholic ideals at the head of their victorious columns?

If there is within the ranks of the Church militant to-day a body of men endowed with the possibilities of accomplishing for the modern world what the Crusaders did for the middle Ages that body is the organization known as

The Knights of Columbus.

Without disparaging any other society or minimizing in the least the good it has done, or is doing, it may be said with truth that the Knights of Columbus is one of the foremost societies of our era—the greatest, perhaps, not in point of numbers so much as in its efficiency for the task of fostering the noblest ideals of life and conduct and the highest type of ordinary, everyday perfection. It is based upon the fundamental principles of Catholicism; it has for watchwords, Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism; it recognizes no class distinctions, no national traits, no political affiliations. It is Catholic to the core; its standard is the Cross; its teachings the eternal truths which issued from lips divine. The goal towards which it ever tends is the formation of devoted citizens, as loyal to their country as they are true to their creed.

Though none but Catholics are admitted to membership, the mere profession of Catholicity does not form an open

sesame to its ranks. It aspires to the highest; it requires of its members an intelligent appreciation of the doctrines and practices of religion. Hence, not all who are faithful in their religious observances are accepted, but only those who, in addition, are endowed with intelligence to understand and ability to defend the teachings of our faith. All are not welcome, no matter how practical they may be, for all cannot be relied upon to comprehend and appreciate and discharge aright the obligations which membership imposes.

The Knights of Columbus, therefore, aim at creating and preserving among Catholics an aristocracy not of wealth nor social rank, but of intelligence and righteousness. The order strives to gather into one perfectly organized and well-equipped association the most influential and progressive of the Catholic laity in order that they may the better labor for their own personal development and for the attainment of the Church's weal. It seeks to unite in one solid phalanx the elite of the Church's hosts, not for the purpose of securing political preferment or earthly honor, but in order that the interests of religion may be enhanced by the all powerful influence of exemplary conduct and the persuasive force of truly Christian lives.

This organization came into existence in response to the exigencies of modern life, especially of modern American life. The age in which we live has witnessed a manifestation of the social instinct unparalleled in the history of the world. Men are consumed with a craving for the social and protective features which constitute the basis of every fraternal order, and unless the Church recognized in some way that legitimate demand, her children would be drawn into associations which might merit her strongest disapproval. The parochial and the national societies which have so long flourished within her fold have proved inadequate to the requirements of this new phase of modern life, and hence it was that upwards of a quarter of a century ago the first council of the Knights of Columbus was established by the late Father McGivney, of Connecticut. He builded better than he knew. Not even the prophetic vision of a seer could have enabled him to pierce the veil of the future and behold the mustard seed sown by his hand grow to the dimensions of a giant tree whose roots sink deep into the soil of this western continent and whose spreading branches afford refreshing shade, stimulating fragrance and delicious fruit to all Catholic people irrespective of caste or nationality.

During the past decade this society has enjoyed an era of remarkable prosperity. From the shores of New England it spread towards the west, journeying in the pathway of the pioneer missionaries who blazed their trails through the trackless forests, and followed the sun across the unfurrowed plains in order to bear the blessings of the gospel, to the inhabitants of the fertile prairie of America's great northwest. Farther and farther it pushed its outposts till at length it could behold the sun sink to rest beyond the Pacific slope; and now its members to the number of one hundred and fifty thousand are scattered over the neighboring Republic from the shores of Superior to the banks of the Rio Grande, and from Plymouth Rock to the Golden Gate. Aye, more than that: it has its adherents on the sun-kissed slopes of tropical Mexico and in the capital city of the distant isles of the Philippines. Eastern Canada, too, has welcomed it within her borders, and now it has been transplanted in the rich Catholic soil of the fairest City of the

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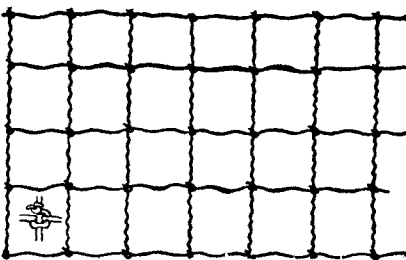
Canadian Northwest, whence, in days to come, it will spread throughout the length and breadth of this progressive Dominion.

Its Marvellous Strides

During recent years and its bright prospects for the future are the fruitage of the work done by those who know its worth and who desire that its advantages be placed within reach of all. This has not been accomplished without persistent effort, for determined opposition has been encountered even from those who should have commended such zeal. Its opponents have raised the cry that it is a secret society and, by implication, would have us believe that faithful Catholics are not permitted to join its ranks. This conclusion is based on the erroneous supposition that the Church condemns certain societies because they are secret. As a matter of fact, whenever she has raised her voice in protest against a society, she has done so because of the evils which lurk beneath its badge of secrecy, because of the false principles of religion and the perverted notions of morality inculcated by its teaching. Why should the Church condemn a society because it is secret if its object and the means it employs to attain it be worthy of commendation? Why should she place the ban of disapproval upon any organization solely because it does not proclaim its ritualistic work from the housetops. As well deny a firm or corporation the right to transact business, because, for sooth, the public are not made its confidants in all such dealings! No one denies that a person is justified in taking every lawful means to safeguard and promote his interests. Then, why refuse to admit that a society has an equal right to adopt legitimate precautions to insure the attainment of the end for which it was brought into existence? Those who denounce a society on the score of its secret character forget that the Church herself was the

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first secret society of the Christian Era. The exigencies of the early days of her existence made it incumbent upon her to exclude from a participation in her most solemn functions, all who were not absolutely known to her to be tried and true. In all cases, therefore, where she has deemed it advisable to formally condemn a society, she has done so because it attempted to usurp her legitimate sphere of action as the supreme teacher of religious truth, and strove to lessen her influence over the minds and hearts of her children.

The Knights of Columbus place the Catholic Church and her welfare above everything else in the world and accord fullest recognition to her divinely-bestowed charter to teach and sanctify humanity. To her they pledge

Unswerving Allegiance

even to the extent of disbanding should she, in her wisdom, deem such a course necessary. But as long as that spirit animates their hearts, they need fear no such contingency. Are they not her loyal defenders—the Crusaders of the twentieth century? 'Tis true they are not required to take up arms in defence of her holy places, nor to stand in battle array against enemies who dread the flash of the keen-edged sword or the thrust of the death-dealing bayonet. Their duty is thereby none the less imperative nor exacting, but more difficult of performance. For their "wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirit of wickedness in the high places." In order that they may discharge this obligation with honor to themselves and with advantage to religion they must be shielded with "the breastplate of justice," crowned with the "helmet of salvation" and armed with "the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God." Nothing short of the fullest equipment in the way of intelligence and righteousness, will suffice to make them the invincible champions of truth, the ablest advocates and truest defenders of the doctrines and practices of holy Mother Church.

She has need of such stalwart defenders. Her enemies are abroad to-day—ravaging wolves in the clothing of sheep—inculcating false doctrines under the guise of truth and with specious arguments leading the unwary astray. The citadel of religion is being stormed in an attempt to hurl the image of the Crucified from the niche it has occupied for nearly two thousand years. The dogmas of Christianity have lost their power over the minds and hearts of the multitudes wherever the parasitic advances of atheism and agnosticism are tolerated and encouraged. Socialism and anarchy with their attendant train of evils, have invaded the industrial and the political worlds, and would fain clog the wheels of human progress and demolish the institutions of the past. Respect for law and order and for legitimately constituted authority, is losing its hold upon the masses, because in the wake of disbelief in the doctrine of the divine right of kings to rule their subjects, there has been engendered a doubt regarding the truth of St. Paul's declaration that "there is no power but

from God; and therefore he that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God."

In such circumstances is it any wonder that oppression and might have raised their hydra heads to proclaim their sovereignty where formerly charity and justice held fullest sway? False notions of right and wrong have begotten new standards of morality which are sapping the very foundations of public and private virtue. "That sensibility of principle, that chastity of honor which felt a stain like a wound" is rapidly yielding to the inroads of expediency and selfishness. Public officials have grown corrupt under the protection of systems of administration which connive at wrong-doing on the part of individuals and corporations who are willing to purchase immunity from persecution by means of lavish bribery. On every hand we see the baneful effects of criminal laxity in the enforcement of law and in the vindication of the outraged majesty of the commonwealth. Life itself has lost its sacred character and reputations are ruined with impunity. The acquisition of power and the attainment of social rank constitute the dream of human ambition. The golden calf still suffices as in the days of the Exodus, for the needs of the degenerate soul.

But worst of all the very sanctuary of human affection has been polluted by this abomination of desolation, for new idols have been enthroned therein, and the noblest instincts of man's nature have been prostituted to basest ends. The Juggernaut of corruption has crushed its victims even beside the hearthstone of private life and within the sacred precincts of the family circle. The home, which gives stability to the community, has not escaped the stain of this universal contamination, and it is there precisely we note its most deplorable ravages. The family is the foundation on which the superstructure of society is erected and therefore should be guarded as the most hallowed of all institutions. But, alas! divorce and infidelity and riotous living have sapped its vigor and threatened its very existence by profaning its sacred character and violating its most cherished traditions. In many quarters the home is no longer regarded as the inviolable sanctuary, wherein are sheltered and nurtured the offspring of human affection, the fathers and mothers of generations yet unborn. The bonds of marriage are sundered and the obligations they impose repudiated without a thought of the result and at the whim of sudden fancy or the desire of lawless passion. Since these ties are no longer regarded as binding even unto death, the home training of the young in virtue and religion is neglected and the dire consequences of this neglect are accentuated by the system of education in vogue in the common public schools.

Education lost its true meaning and full significance when it was

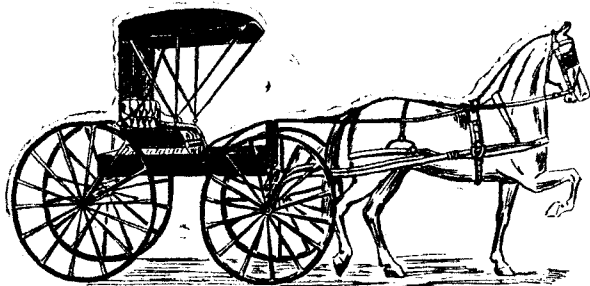
Divorced from Religion

It no longer walks hand in hand with its guide and monitor as it did in days of yore and as it does to-day in schools conducted under Catholic auspices. The common public school is the most

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