These words, my dear brethren, are taken from the parable of the ten virgins who went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride. Five of theo,

Brethren, the meaning of this parable is so plain that it hardly needs even a word of explanation. Yet how unbeeded it is, alast by the majority of Christiansi. What does this oil mean that the foolish virgins neglected to provide for themselves and to have in their lamps? What but the grace of God, with which our souls should be provided, and without which they are in the state of mortal sin? If this precious oil of God's grace is in our souls we are ready at any moment to meet the Bridegroom; no matter how suddenly the cry is made that He is coming, we can go forth with confidence to meet Him and feel sure that the door of the marriage-feast of heaven will not be closed to us.

preparation, those years so carelessly

preparation, those years so carelessly thrown away.

Friends may stand around us who have not wasted the oil in their lamps as we have ours. Their souls may be full of the grace of God, preserved and increased continually by prayer and good works, by the love of God and frequent confession and Communion. They may have sough and Communion. They may have enough and to spare; but they cannot lend to us. "No," they must say to us, "go rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. Go rather," that is, "to the regular sources of that grace, the sacraments, which our Lord has placed in the Chrisch to our Lord has placed in His Church, to give life to the deed. Send for the priest, and with his help fill the lamp your soul, and prepare to meet our

But too often it is as in the parable of the virgins. While the foolish Chris-tian, who has put off his preparation for death, who has lived in the state of sin, death, who has lived in the state of sin, expecting to die in the state of grace, goes to fill his lamp, his Lord comes, finds him, and judges him as he is. The priest comes, but only to look on him lying dead. Or even if the oil of grace is brought to the sinner, he has not, perhaps, the price to pay for it; that is, he has not those dispositions of sincere

### THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

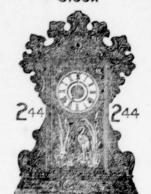
The Sign of The Cross

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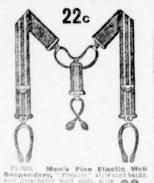


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