

MARCH 7, 1932.

LEAGUE OF THE SACRED HEART.

General Intention for March.

Messenger of the Sacred Heart.

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY FAMILY.

During the month of February all our Associates, recognizing the full import of a revival of the Christian spirit among the nations of the earth, besought with more than ordinary earnestness the Dispenser of all graces to bring about this great reform, for His own glory and for the salvation of mankind.

But nations are not likely to hail Christ as their Ruler until His benign sway has been accepted without limitations by families and their individual members. Catholics must consequently use every endeavor to preserve or to renew the Christian spirit in those lesser societies which meet around the domestic hearth, and which in their aggregate go to make up peoples and nations.

By far the most efficacious means to compass this end is to propagate the devotion to that Blessed Family which was so highly, so divinely honored as to be able to count a God among its members.

We are now in the month of St. Joseph, who was head of the Holy Family upon earth. This is his greatest title to our veneration, and as Foster-father of our Lord we shall during this month sing his praises and invoke his powerful intercession.

Let us then, dear brethren, let us, furthermore, consider him as the exemplar of the Christian father ruling his household. To the father of the family he sets the example of self-denial, of disinterested devotedness, of implicit trust in Divine Providence.

In studying this his model, the head of the Christian home will learn to temper his authority with meekness, to be a peaceful and beneficent ruler, and not a tyrant in his little kingdom.

The Christian mother will strive to imitate Mary's more hidden, less transcendent, but not the less admirable virtues in her own inner life, for those virtues made of Nazareth the abode of peace, of unalterable sweetness and of piety the most gentle and attractive.

The education of Jesus will prove another subject of most consoling and instructive meditation for Christian parents. From it will they learn to direct the regards and the hearts of their children towards their little Brother of Nazareth, and to awaken in them, while yet tender in years, that ingenious piety which is always so touching and oftentimes so generous.

It was to encourage this devotion that on June 20, 1892, His Holiness Leo XIII. issued his brief on the Liturgical Association of the Holy Family.

"For me," he says in the account he has left us, "for fourteen years and more I longed most ardently and all but continually to see Mary become the mother of a great number of spiritual and adoptive children, to console her for the loss of Jesus. And this first thought I had relative to the subject was while meditating on the countless sufferings of the Compassionate Virgin at the death of her Son."

"Thereupon, I felt a desire to establish this practice in Montreal. Mr. Souart, to whom, as my confessor, I disclosed all that passed within my soul, approved of this devotion, and, as parish priest, allowed me to make it the subject of my sermon the following Sunday. This I did, and exhorted all men and women, who so felt inclined, to wear the cord after the manner according to the formula given, and to prepare for its reception by a close guard over their thoughts and actions so that none might be sinful through uncleanness. The devotion was warmly approved by all, and many received the holy badge after due preparation.

"This tentative effort led to another project, *Dies diæ erectæ verbum*. This was to institute an association under the title of the Holy Family, whose object should be the sanctification of Christian families, taking as model that of the Incarnate Word. The men were to imitate St. Joseph, the women Mary the divine Mother, and the children the Infant Jesus.

"My same spiritual director, to whom I communicated my purpose, confirmed me in it by his approval. But as we could not make it a success unless we obtained the approbation of His Lordship the Bishop, and Indulgences from Our Holy Father the Pope, I suggested to the same reverend gentleman, to Madame D'Ailleboust, to humbly beseech you, as Mother Superior of the Hospital and to Sister Margaret, Superior of the Congregation since we were all in concert—I suggested, as I said, that we should recommend this great and undertaking to St. Ignatius, offering for its successful issue a novena to the worthy founder of the Society of Jesus. I submit even the copy of the prayer which I composed in his honor, and of which I have still the original:

"Glorious St. Ignatius! who chose for motto, *The greater glory of God*, and who have left it as an inheritance to your children of the Society, we have no doubt but that you direct and so speak, watch over the pious work of your spiritual children, undertake for God's honor. Whence we most humbly beseech you to assume the guidance of and lead to success, an enterprise which we trust will contribute much to the greater glory of the Divine Majesty, since it concerns the reforming of Christian families in conformity with the most Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Bear in mind, illustrious patriarch, how useful to the Church such a society must prove: be mindful of the care, while in Rome, you yourself took of sinful men, of ill-wedded women, of helpless orphans and of maidens whose virtue was in danger. Continue in heaven above, through the instrumentality of your children upon earth, the works in which you were at one time engaged. Graciously inspire them in their choice of means for checking the disorders that lead families of perdition, and in all homes let those virtues flourish which are needed to transform them into so many schools of perfection, that they may ill the Church with holy members and heaven with saints.

"This charge, O Great Saint, must still be entrusted to you, since as Jesus deigned to choose you, you and your children, to impart His spirit to so many persons, to whole communities and even to kingdoms, assuredly Mary and Joseph, to be like their Son, will deign also to make use of you and your children to communicate their spirit to fathers and mothers of families.

"Thus, great promoter of God's glory, vouchsafe to be the founder of the Association of the Holy Family, as you were that of the Society to Jesus; and out of gratitude for the establishment of this new association, in which, under your patronage and through your intercession, we hope to succeed, we, the undersigned, promise, each of us, nine Communion, and will offer them in thanksgiving for the favors that God has granted to you and to your Holy Society. We promise, moreover, to see that all who are admitted into the Association recite immediately after their reception nine times the *Gloria Patri*, in the same intention. Done at Montreal, July 31, Feast of St. Ignatius, in the year 1663. (Signed) Souart, P.; Joseph Marie Chaumonot, Jesuit; Judith Bresselle, Superior of the Hospital; Marguerite Bourgeois, Instructor of the Congregation in Canada; Barbe de Boulogne, Veuve de Mr. D'Ailleboust."

"Eventually, the saint did not fail to secure success for the work we had recommended to him. After a few hindrances and some opposition, which works inspired by God generally meet with, I was summoned to Quebec where His Lordship the Bishop, having given his approbation to our work, wished first to have its practicability tested. So he authorized me to convene at intervals of a fortnight a number of ladies and devout women preparatory to their being received into the new society. Then, having found by experience that an association instituted with the title and in honor of the Holy Family, would be productive among the women and maidens of our Lady produced among men and youths, he gave it his approbation.

"He even had me write to Father Paul Ragueneau, then in Paris, to obtain from Rome the concession of Indulgences, even Plenary, for the members of the Association of the Holy Family. This the latter succeeded in doing, and in the year following we received the Bulls from the Sovereign Pontiff which Father Claude Boucher, our assistant for France, had solicited, but which he favored this devotion, and who had dedicated his flourishing seminary at Quebec to the Holy Family, having expressed the wish to see the new association attached to the cathedral, we were convinced that he and his most worthy clergy, zealous as they were for the devotion, would succeed better than we could in firmly establishing it. So we left the care of directing the association in Canada entirely in their hands, with the proviso that the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin should be favored of them by any decrease of fervor or of membership. This condition the reverend clergy observe most faithfully, since they hold meetings of the women and maidens only, who belong to the Association of the Holy Family, while the men, students and boys fulfill with greater exactness and fervor their duties as sodalists.

"Thus, the Association of the Holy Family being but the counterpart of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin as far as the pious exercises which are practiced in both are concerned, so all that was to be done was to model the former on the latter society, that they might afford mutual support instead of proving detrimental to each other. All Canada is witness of the great good effected concurrently by the sodalists on their side and by the women and maidens on theirs."

It will certainly be a great consolation for our associates to think that the country in which we live adopted the devotion to the Holy Family from the beginning. It is a glory for Canada to have at so early a date held in high honor a devotion destined in the designs of Providence to become, after the lapse of centuries, universal in the Church. Our glorious reigning Pontiff, Leo XIII., in the Brief we have already quoted, takes special pains to point out that Canada was among the first of the nations to recognize fully all the advantages of the Association of the Holy Family. We offer no other apology to our associates for having gone more minutely into the particulars of its first establishment on the shores of the St. Lawrence.

They in turn will pray all the more fervently that other nations may be favored, in adopting this devotion, with the same advantages they have enjoyed in the past. Nor will they limit their efforts to prayer alone, but every faithful soldier of the League will become a zealous apostle of the association of families consecrated to the Holy Family at Nazareth. It is the wish of our Holy Father, formally expressed, to have every family join the association in our homes by the means of reviving in it the pious practice of family prayers, and of strengthening the growth of so many other domestic virtues and customs, which have become all but obsolete in the material age in which we live.

PRAYER
O Jesus! through the most pure Heart of Mary, I offer Thee all the prayers, work and sufferings of this day, for all the intentions of Thy Divine Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in reparation of all sins, and for all requests presented through the Apostleship of Prayer, in particular that Catholics of every land strive to imitate the virtues of which the Holy Family of Nazareth has set them an example. Amen.

Religious Hate Dying.
The *Catholic News*, New York, says: In Norway we have a notable illustration of the vitality of the Catholic Church. In no other part of Europe Catholicism is suppressed half so successfully. Fifty years ago priests were still banished from the country under the pain of imprisonment, and the very name of the Church was held in contempt. According to Bishop Fallize, however, the reaction in favor of Catholicity is as strong as the prejudice was violent. At the dedication of a Catholic church and hospital at Christiansen recently thousands of Protestants, including the chief officials of the province, were present. At the close of the ceremony a prominent official made an address, in which he prayed for Christian unity and the decay of religious hatred. Bishop Fallize modestly attributes this remarkable change of popular sentiment to the influence of the nuns who travel in their religious garb, and are in constant demand as nurses in Protestant homes. So highly are they esteemed that they are allowed free passage in street-cars and on many of the steamship lines.

Not that Kind.
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A LIFE OF SACRIFICE.

The Arduous Labors of Priests Drag Them to an Early Grave.

When some American priests applied a few years ago to the insurance companies to insure their lives in favor of the churches which they had built, and were at the time heavily in debt, the companies, before issuing policies, deemed it prudent to make inquiries as to the number of years Catholic priests in the United States lived after their ordination. Their actuaries made a report, based on a period of forty years, and the figures were startling. From this report it was shown that the average life of a priest, after his ordination—say when twenty four years of age—was fifteen years. And, if it were asked: "What is the cause of this alarming mortality?" we will not have to go far for an answer, writes Very Rev. Dean Harris of St. Catharines, Ont., in his recently published book, "The Catholic Church in Niagara Peninsula." When the young man enters the priesthood, after passing fourteen or fifteen years in college and seminary, he is scarcely fitted for the rough, hard work of missionary life. All aglow with fervor and zeal, his piety prompts him to undertake more than very often what his strength warrants, or he is assigned as assistant to a large parish, where his labors are more than his young constitution can bear. After a year or two he is appointed to the charge of a scattered parish, where on Sundays he is compelled to rise early, hear confessions, say Mass and drive eight or ten miles to another church, where he again offers up the Holy Sacrifice, and while he is still fasting, addresses his people.

If his parish, as is very often the case, be territorially large, he is compelled in the most trying seasons of the year—Lent and Advent—to give Stations in the remotest parts of his mission. Returning some afternoon from one of these Stations, he finds, when he reaches home, that perhaps a "sick call" awaits him in another part of his parish. A call of this nature is imperative, and cannot be neglected under pain of mortal sin, whether it come at day or night, in a pelting rain or the severest frosts of winter. Nor can he excuse himself on the plea that the dying patient is stricken with smallpox or diphtheria. The Catholic Church holds that the salvation of a soul counts for more than the life of a priest, and she commands that, under all circumstances, where possible, the dying man must receive the sacraments.

The young priest, scarcely giving himself time to snatch a morsel of food, leaves to attend the sick man, and returning that night he takes to his bed and never may rise from it again. The already enfeebled constitution is not equal to the strain and in a few days all is over.

Let us take another case. The newly-ordained priest is appointed by his Bishop in a large city parish where three priests are trying to do the work of six. The pastor is engaged in building or what is perhaps more onerous, fighting a heavy debt on a church already built. The repeated calls upon his time as the responsible head of the parish, throw upon the shoulders of his assistant the visitation of the sick, and much of the labor which, under more favorable circumstances, would devolve upon the parish priest. For seven hours on Saturday the priests in large parishes are morally chained to the confessional, and none but a priest can conceive what this trying ordeal means. The following day brings severe work and more severe responsibilities. The young curate may be on the altar at 7 o'clock saying the Mass, in which he administers Holy Communion to one hundred and fifty or two hundred people. After Mass he drives to some Catholic institution and again offers up the Holy Sacrifice. In the afternoon he superintends the catechism classes, attends the meetings of the religious societies, and, in the evening, is expected to deliver an excellent sermon.

He retires to bed at 10 or 11 o'clock anticipating a fair night's sleep, when, about 1 o'clock the door-bell rings. When he opens the door a man tells him that one of his parishioners has been taken suddenly ill and wishes to see the priest immediately. The messenger is unable to give any clear account of the nature of the attack, the extent of the danger, or the opinion of the doctor—for no doctor has as yet been called in. The tired priest may hesitate for a moment, and be tempted to argue with himself that the case is not so urgent as to call for immediate attendance. Frequently before he had been summoned at night to attend the sick, and found that he might risk serious consequences to the sick person, or of conscientious remorse to himself. However, on a moment's reflection, he remembered that after a succession of some dozen or more of these cases, in which he might have put off the visit to more convenient time, there was one instance in which he found the patient in his agony, and had barely time to administer Extreme Unction. So he goes to the Church, takes the Blessed Sacrament from the tabernacle, and in the darkness of night, walks the silent streets till he arrives at the door of the sick man, only to find that the patient has no serious illness. Nothing is so trying to the patience of the city priests as this practice, which prevails among the poor, of summoning them at inconvenient hours without necessity, and of exaggerating the urgency of the case in order to secure their attendance. Still there can be no doubt that their anxiety for

the presence of the priest at the side of the sick has its foundation in a deep sense of the importance of his ministrations in sickness and at the hour of death. It is also a recognition of the potency and efficacy of those sacraments, on the proper reception of which the salvation of a sinner may depend.

"The Catholic poor," writes Dean Oakley, "look upon the priest as Protestant do upon the physician and as every reasonable and humane person would call in a physician where there is the slightest chance of illness being serious, even though in fact it be not so. I hope the time will never come when we shall pass a severe judgment upon our poor for summoning the priest in twenty cases, of which nineteen had been less urgent than their fears had led them to suppose."

This continual wear and tear soon tells upon any but a rugged constitution, and if he lives till the age of 50, the priest is practically an old man. It is gratifying, however, to learn that the vocations for the holy priesthood are increasing, and that, in the division of labor which will follow, the priest will have a better chance for a long life.

Protestants Returning to the Cross.
Less than fifty years ago the cross was exclusively a Catholic symbol. There was a storm of opposition from ultra Protestants when the sign of redemption began to be raised over "meeting houses," as they were called in those days. But the cross has won its way everywhere, and now there are none found to oppose it. Of late years the innovation has extended to cemeteries from which the cross was banished utterly. No crosses can be seen among the old tombstones of New England. The natural symbol of every Christian denomination is to be found nowadays even in rural cemeteries, and the form that occurs most frequently is the Celtic cross—the emblem of Christ and the emblem of eternity. This, by the way, is one of the very earliest of Christian gravestone forms reduced to its simplest elements. The day is probably not far distant when the stone cutter's clumsy and mechanical wares will cease to be demanded; and the Celtic cross, with some simple inscriptions, will find favor everywhere. Nothing could be more expressive in its meaning or more attractive to the eye. There is a Christian humility and dignity, and a simple pathos in a grave-stone like this, which is lacking in the clumsy monuments usually erected over the graves of rich men who have died without the last sacraments.

Mr. J. A. Schweinfurth, a well known architect of Boston, who deserves the credit of introducing appropriate and artistic designs in tombstones, holds that "gravestones should be at once unobtrusive yet artistic, plain yet beautiful." Good taste should not only in the restricted use of ornament, but in its tasteful application and skillful designing—Ave Maria.

The blue-bird is hailed as a harbinger of Spring. It is also a reminder that a blood purifier is needed to prepare the system for the debilitating weather to come. Listen and you will hear the birds singing: "Take Ayer's Sarsaparilla in March, April, May." The great demand for a pleasant, safe and reliable antidote for all affections of the throat and lungs is fully met with in Bickel's Consumptive Syrup. It is a purely Vegetable Compound, and acts promptly and magically in subduing all coughs, colds, bronchitis, inflammation of the lungs, etc. It is so palatable that a child will not refuse it, and is put at a price that will not exclude the poor from its benefits. *Cole and Kelley, Dispensing Chemists, 151 N. Y. St., Wilder, J. P. Lafareville, N. Y., J. W. Key and Kelley, Dispensing Chemists, 151 N. Y. St.* I am subject to severe attacks of Catarrh of the Kidney and Bladder, and find Parlee's Pills afford me great relief, while all other remedies have failed. They are the best medicine I have ever used, and they cleanse and purify the system, and give me strength and vitality. I have been afflicted for some time with Catarrh of the Kidney and Bladder, and find Parlee's Pills the best medicine for these diseases. These Pills do not cause pain or griping, and should be used when a cathartic is required. They are Genuinely Pure, and give me strength and vitality. The most remarkable cures on record have been accomplished by Parlee's Pills. It is unequalled for all Blood Diseases.



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