

# The Catholic Register.

"Truth is Catholic; proclaim it ever, and God will effect the rest."—BALMEZ.

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## PASTORAL LETTER

OF  
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By Favor of God and the Apostolic See, Archbishop of Kingston.

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF THE GOSPEL

IN THE WARRIOR OF SATAN AGAINST CHRIST

and His Holy Church in the present day the forces issuing from the "gates of Hell" are most determinedly directed against two main bulwarks of the fortress of religion built by the Divine Architect on the everlasting rock, viz: the Christian family and the Christian school. We will confine this instruction to the necessity of safe-guarding the Christian family.

Why did the Eternal Word come down from the heights of heaven and humble Himself to our lowly nature? For the space of three and thirty years. It was for the purpose, not only of atoning for our sins, but also of re-creating mankind, that is, giving to humanity a new birth and a new life. The entire race of Adam had become so corrupt, so degraded, that nothing short of a new creation could suffice to restore it to its high estate. The new creature, the nations every where had to be born over again, and nursed and reared under a new system of thought and conduct, through the agencies of a new civilization, in conformity with their new and supernatural life leading to their heavenly destiny. Society is based upon the family: it is but an aggregate of families organized by corporate laws into cities, provinces, kingdoms and republics. As the families are, so shall society be. The unspeakable turpitude of family life throughout the universal human world had overflowed upon society like a torrent of fire, each successive generation adding its quota of contamination to the flood of vice. At length, in the period known to scholars as the Golden Age of learning, the two arms and main pillars of state, the military prowess, man, the lord of creation made in the image and likeness of God, had everywhere become so depraved, that the vicious passions of his heart had extinguished in him the knowledge of the Creator and the Law, and all sense of the distinction between virtue and shameful crime. He worshipped his own flagrant appetites, calling them gods, and he erected temples of sacrifice in their honor and set up idols on the altars, and bowed down in adoration before them. The nature of human life in that period, as it is drawn by the heaven-guided pen of the Apostle St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, is the most awful chapter of history that has ever been presented to human eyes. It was a time when the cry of agonized expectation should be heard beyond the firmament: "Drop down dew, O ye heavens, from on high, and let the clouds rain forth the Just One; let the earth upon you, and bud forth the Saviour." In the fourth century the Messiah, who often promised, and so long delayed, came to redeem the lost world. He came from heaven and from earth; from the bosom of His Father through the womb of His Virgin Mother; God, in the infancy of His unchangeable God-head, and man in the lowly form of a slave, to which He had humbled Himself for our sake.

INFORMATION OF THE FAMILY.

Since the family had become the well-spring of moral and social abomination, there could be no effectual regeneration of mankind, till the family was purified and regenerated and transformed into a fountain of virtue and holiness, for the diffusion of the cleansing waters of heavenly grace and the sanctification of human life. How was this to be effected? Society is to last to the end of time. Accordingly the agency whereby the reformation of the family was to be accomplished, should be applicable to all ages and to all peoples, without regard to the distinctions of race or climate, of wealth or poverty, or the diversities of political and social institutions. It should, moreover, be a living, active principle of reformation, wisely dependent on the caprice or spasmodic activity of man's nature; it should be embodied in the very constitution of the family, exerting its vital energy by its own force so long as the family itself shall last. This principle our Blessed Saviour provided for mankind by the institution of the holy sacrament of matrimony, the indissoluble cornerstone of the new civilization.

THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY.

The Little Catechism teaches that "matrimony" is the sacrament which gives grace to the husband and wife to live happily together and bring up their children in the fear and love of God. The grace conferred by each of the seven sacraments is called sanctifying grace, because it transforms the soul and all its faculties with the true, real and enduring element of sanctification, whereby, as St. Peter assures us, we are made "partakers of the divine nature." Whosoever receives any sacrament worthily, receives this heavenly gift, and thus advances in most pleasing to God, every act of his daily life is meritorious and merits for him an increase of heavenly glory.

As the seven sacraments have been instituted by our Divine Lord for ever, different ends, the sanctifying grace conferred by each is an earnest of special actual graces or helps from God, suited to occasional or necessities that may arise, especially in times of trial and temptation, to enable the Christian to bear up against difficulty and, by fulfilling his duty, to attain the end for which the Sacrament was specifically ordained. In this reference it is termed sacramental grace; and, in respect of matrimony, it is a pledge from God to the Christian couple, that He will be with them continually by His particular Providence, and will exert His divine influence over their minds and hearts, their language and manners and temper and whose demeanor in relation to each other and to their children, enabling them, and making it easy for them, to live happily together, in accordance with the laws and conditions of their state, and to bring up their offspring in the knowledge of the Creator and His holy fear and love. And should the instincts of rebellious nature perchance strive for mastery, regardless of the rules of duty and the good order and peace of domestic life, opportune warning shall be given to conscience to seek strength for the calming of the troubled spirit by means of humble and fervent prayer, and the holy Mass, and the Sacrament of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist. Thus the sacramental grace of matrimony is operative throughout the whole course of married life. It restrains the passions; it fosters conjugal affection; it gives honor to God in the abiding consciousness of His presence in the home; it sweetens the fountain of daily life; it assuages pain and affliction, and makes a sanctuary of the pious Christian's house, whether it be the poor man's cabin or the gilded mansion of the rich. How beautiful is Tertullian's treatise on the Latin Apologists of our holy religion, who lived in the same century as St. John the Evangelist, describes the holiness and happiness of Christian marriage, as it was observed in those early ages, contrasted with the evils attendant on the marriage of a Catholic with an unbeliever, which he proclaims to be an unlawful and utterly incongruous union, he portrays the blessedness enjoyed by the pious Catholic couple thus: "The Church, which approves the blessing in the seal of it, and the angels carry it to the heavenly Father, who confirms it. Two bear together the same yoke; and are as one flesh and one mind: They pray together, work together, make their hearts united together, make their Church, and the fast of the Lord. They conceal nothing from each other, visit the sick, collect alms without restraint, assist at the offices of the Church without interruption, and encourage each other to praise God."

All this is the working of God's grace, that flows from the Sacrament of Matrimony. Take away the sacrament, and nothing remains but a mere secular, unhallowed contract, of which either party or both may soon become weary; and then the passions and caprices, the corrupting nature will claim its rights in the household; dissension and strife and cruel despotism, perhaps violence, will follow, and broken hearts will sigh for the dissolution of the conjugal tie. Sacramental marriage, on the contrary, if it be entered into with the right intention, makes "the yoke sweet and the burden light." Its grace is ever ready, ever operative; it abides in both united hearts until "death do them part, prompting and stimulating each to the observance of the grave and holy duties which they are summoned to perform." Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church. Therefore, as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for her, that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life; that He might present it to Himself as a glorious Church, holy and spotless. He also ought most love their wives as their own bodies."

INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE ON THE REARING OF CHILDREN.

"If the root be holy," says the Scripture, "so are the branches." This is said of our brothers in the faith with relation to us, their descendants. If the parents, the root of the family, be sanctified by the sacrament of marriage, the sap of holiness shall be communicated to the children, who are the branches. It is the general rule, although unapplicable in a few exceptional cases. These, however, serve to confirm the rule. It is not unlike our Saviour's aphorism: "Every good tree yieldeth good fruit, and the bad tree yieldeth bad fruit. A good tree cannot yield bad fruit." The first thought of the child is to adore his parents, and to adore the God who is without delay to the Temple and dedicate to the Lord for his regeneration at the font of Baptism, whereby it is made "a Christian, and a child of God, and heir of the kingdom of heaven." The stain that defiled the soul by the evil inheritance from the first parents, is now purged away by Baptismal application of the Blood of redemption; the child's divine wrath is transformed into the child of divine love. Satan is dispossessed; and Jesus Christ embraces that soul which he had purchased at the price of His life; He stamps His own image upon it, and presents it to His heavenly Father who forthwith adopts it as His own child, and as a treasure also now possesses! What a trust is reposed in her! What weighty obligations lie upon her! It is her duty, with the help of her husband, to rear that child of God for God, to cherish and quicken into earliest activity the graces and virtues which she has inherited from the Holy Spirit, and bring it up in faith, and hope, and charity, and the manifold discipline of piety prescribed by Holy Church for the preservation of the divine gifts amidst the temptations of the world, the flesh and the flesh throughout the whole course of its existence. How charming is this supernatural affection of the Catholic parent displayed in the character of Leonides, a Christian philosopher of highest repute for learning and sanctity, who lived in the second century. We read in his life that, before retiring to rest at night, he would come to the bedside of his baptized child, and, without awakening him from sleep, would quietly uncover his bosom, and would kiss the child, being the temple of the Holy Ghost. This illustrious son of the church gloried in the sanctity of his life by a glorious martyrdom in the year 202. His festival is celebrated on the 22nd of April. He is, to whom the foregoing narrative refers, was Origen, the most learned scholar, the universe of letters has ever known. He often visited his father in prison, and earnestly desired to suffer martyrdom with him; but was thwarted by his mother, who, seeing him incapable to bear tears and repeated prayers, was Origen, the most learned scholar, the universe of letters has ever known. He often visited his father in prison, and earnestly desired to suffer martyrdom with him; but was thwarted by his mother, who, seeing him incapable to bear tears and repeated prayers, was Origen, the most learned scholar, the universe of letters has ever known. He often visited his father in prison, and earnestly desired to suffer martyrdom with him; but was thwarted by his mother, who, seeing him incapable to bear tears and repeated prayers, was Origen, the most learned scholar, the universe of letters has ever known.

AN ESSENTIAL DUTY OF PARENTS.

Among the grave instructions given by St. Paul to his beloved disciple, the Bishop of Ephesus for delivery to his flock, is the following: "The woman shall fear the Lord, as the Church fears Christ, who is the head of the Church, who saves His body, which is the Church, which He has purchased with His blood, to cleanse it by the word of water, that He might present it to Himself as a glorious Church, holy and spotless. He also ought most love their wives as their own bodies." The first question Jesus Christ will put to her at the bar of Divine Justice, shall not turn upon money or dress or fashion or any of the things of mere secular life, but shall be: "How didst thou bring up thy children?" The Saviour, who the Supreme Judge, had redeemed them at the price of His Blood, and laid them in her bosom, to be reared and educated for Him in accordance with His law of faith and His discipline, would punish her by the loss of her children. It is the husband's duty as much as the woman's. But it is mentioned directly as the woman's office, because the home is emphatically her sphere, and the children, in their early years, are immediately in her charge, always near her dependent on her, every thing, their eyes and their little hands always turned towards her, and their hearts bounding with affectionate promptings of ready compliance with her wishes, her likings and dislikes. She has chief part in the moulding of their minds and hearts, and the formation of their character and manners. The husband is occupied with earning bread for the family; his days are most aptly spent abroad; and he seldom gives attention to the children's conduct, except when the mother's authority needs to be sustained. Therefore the woman shall be saved or lost by this criterion, "Did she, by assiduous care and orderly direction of the affairs of domestic life, and her untiring vigilance, train for child piety, word and example and timely instruction and correction, and motherly reproof and rebuke also in proper season, to abide with her "in faith and love and sanctification" (which means chastity) "and sobriety?" The Apostle does not make her responsible for their preservation in this good order of life after they shall have passed from under her control; the word he uses refers to their abiding in the practice of those Christian virtues which they abide in her home. For this she is responsible. Let us have one or two examples of the devotion of whole-souled Catholic parents to this duty. King Louis IX. of France, better known as St. Louis, was indeed a great King and a perfect hero and a wonderful saint. He gave his life for the defence of religion

against the Saracens, and died on the burning of Africa at the head of his vanguard, beneath the standard of the Cross. To the exquisite care with which he had been educated under the guidance and watchfulness of his holy mother, Queen Blanche, we are indebted, under God, for the bright example of his virtues. In all branches of secular education that enlighten and strengthen the mind and exalt a man above those around him, in the arts of peace and social refinement, as well as in those of government and war, he took care to see him trained and developed to the highest degree of excellence, as became the future head of the most highly cultured and most illustrious nation in the age. Mean while his moral training, and the shaping of his character in the form of a Christian King and Ruler, was the work that, beyond all others, lay close to her heart. She impressed on his soul the four and loved, the sovereign, cord and King of Kings; and in particular she taught him to love and practice those four prominent virtues so marked and emphasized by St. Paul as the special objects of every Catholic mother's care in the bringing up of her children, namely, faith, hope, charity, and sobriety. She used often to say to him, when he was a child, "I love my dear son with all the tenderness a mother is capable of, but I would infinitely rather see you fall down dead at my feet, than that you should ever become a mortal enemy to the world, the flesh and the devil, the strong impression which this lesson had made on his mind, was never effaced during his whole life, and that no day passed in which it did not recur to him, but only in text of his memory."

We would gladly expatiate upon these two indispensable characteristics of Christian marriage, but this would extend our Pastoral Instruction beyond reasonable limits. We wish, however, that you should recognize in them the same doctrine to the Roman and the Corinthian; that the latter in these words, "a woman is bound by the law of marriage" as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband die, she is at liberty; let her marry to whom she will; but only in the Lord. We would gladly expatiate upon these two indispensable characteristics of Christian marriage, but this would extend our Pastoral Instruction beyond reasonable limits. We wish, however, that you should recognize in them the same doctrine to the Roman and the Corinthian; that the latter in these words, "a woman is bound by the law of marriage" as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband die, she is at liberty; let her marry to whom she will; but only in the Lord. 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