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IN DEFENSE OF CHASTITY



by Felix M. Kirsch, O.M. Cap.
The Catholic Hour

IN DEFENSE OF CHASTITY

by

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Six addresses delivered in the Catholic Hour, produced by
the National Council of Catholic Men, and broadcast
through the courtesy of the National Broadcasting
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(On Sundays from May 1 to June 5, 1938)

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DEDICATION

To Mary Immaculate

The Mother of God and the Mother of Men

FOREWORD

The sex mania prevailing in our country today is corrupting the morals of the nation. The National Council of Catholic Men regard this situation as a challenge to the manhood of our land. At the same time they recognize that the national consciousness of the menace offers an opportunity for presenting to the American people the claims of God in behalf of chastity. In their endeavor to bring home to our countrymen this most important message, the National Council of Catholic Men were assisted by the courtesy of the National Broadcasting Company and its associated stations who placed at their service the nationwide Catholic Hour network for a series of discourses on the general theme, "In Defense of Chastity," delivered on the six Sundays from May 1st through June 5th, 1938. In this way this important message reached every week an audience of millions of people. The response from the radio audience was enthusiastic, and this is true of the reactions received both from Catholics and from non-Catholics. Hence the National Council of Catholic Men are hopeful that the work thus inaugurated will continue under God to bear fruit a hundredfold.

The six discourses presented herewith in printed form should help all who are willing to promote the cause of decency. The **Topics for Study and Discussion** appended to each discourse should stimulate individuals as well as groups to devise further plans for promoting the practice of decency. Teachers and leaders of discussion clubs will find these topics helpful in studying what is certainly a need of the hour and therefore the will of God.

The bibliography printed on pages 68-69 makes no claim to completeness, but is selective in that the compiler strove to present only those titles that would help the reader in choosing wisely from what is a veritable deluge of literature on sex. It should be noted in particular that the bibliography has been restricted to include titles by Catholics only. Non-Catholic literature on this delicate subject, though it be written with the best of intentions, can never measure up to our Catholic ideal of chastity. This non-Catholic literature ignores the essential aids of prayer, Confession, and Holy Communion, and, what is worse, will at times urge or at least tolerate what is a crime in the sight of God. We now have ample Catholic literature in the field, and consequently there is no need for Catholics reading any but Catholic books on the moral aspects of sex.

The National Council of Catholic Men fully realizing that "every best gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights" (James I: 17), kindly ask the reader to pray that their efforts in behalf of chastity—that wonderful Gift of God which is so much scorned in these latter days—may be blessed abundantly by Him without Whom they can do nothing.

WHAT IS CHASTITY?

Address Delivered on May 1, 1938

This is the first day of May, the month that we Catholics consecrate to Mary, the Mother of God and the Mother of men. Many non-Catholics will join us today in paying tribute to the Mother of Jesus. A non-Catholic poet describes her as being "our tainted nature's solitary boast". We rightly call Mary the Virgin most pure and the Mother most chaste. Chastity was always dear to her immaculate heart, and therefore it is appropriate that we should make this virtue the subject of the talks to be given in the Catholic Hour during the month consecrated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. We need the help of the Blessed Virgin to deal properly with this delicate subject. Whenever any speaker or writer undertakes to deal with chastity he is venturing upon holy ground where only angels dare to walk with freedom, while human beings must there be filled with deepest humility and tread there with greatest circumspection.

Still, we trust confidently that God, the Giver of chastity, as well as His Holy Mother, will bless everyone who undertakes in our day the defense of chastity. Today there is urgent need for defending this virtue. The need of the hour is always the Will of God, and of the need of defending chastity today there can be no doubt.

Sex mania is prevailing in our country today, and parents realize that something must be done quickly to protect our young people from this menace. Mothers and fathers are alarmed over the growing immorality of the young. They are asking anxiously: What can we do to save our children from the contamination of vice?

This anxiety on the part of parents represents both a challenge and an opportunity. In ancient Rome when the enemy was laying siege to one gate of the city, the Roman soldiers went out by another gate to make new conquests. While Satan is striving with might and main to corrupt the morals of our people, every Christian must regard his attack as a personal challenge. The sex menace of today represents not only a personal challenge to each one of us but also an opportunity for every follower of Christ to prove anew the undiminished power of God's grace. Today all Christian men and women must follow the example of the Fathers of the Early Church who in the face of a decadent civilization pleaded for the miracles of Christian chastity and virginity. And while pagan Rome was reveling in debauchery, Christian Rome gave us the Agneses and the Cecilians and the Sebastians. The present crisis in morality calls for the same action on our part. The arm of God is not shortened. Our Holy Father in Rome has issued the call to direct action. Our opportunities for action were never greater than they are at the present moment. The Church is the only institution which has survived the general collapse of the past few years and it is the only institution which has the key to recovery. Men admit freely that recovery in the moral order must precede every other kind of recovery, but they do not always see that the Church offers the only means to that moral recovery.

To achieve this moral recovery we must fight valiantly in defense of chastity. Chastity is so precious a thing for the individual, the nation, and the race that we must bend every effort to preserve it among young and old.

No human being can be good or truly happy without chastity. Rob any human being of chastity and you take from him his self-respect; for chastity is essentially reverence for one's self—a clean body and a pure soul.

We can never understand what chastity is unless we know what reverence is. Reverence is a deep respect mingled with love and awe, as for a holy person or place or thing. It is the feeling that the Catholic experiences when he kneels to receive Holy Communion. Reverence is a strong sentiment of respect and esteem, sometimes mingled with a trace of fear. This is the feeling that the American citizen has when he attends a session of the Supreme Court of the United States. Reverence is among the highest of human feelings. St. Paul tells us even of Christ that "in the days of his flesh—he was heard for his reverence" (Hebrews V:7). All culture is based on reverence.

Reverence is, in fact, as Canon Sheehan tells us, "the secret of all religion and happiness. Without reverence, there is no faith, nor hope, nor love. Reverence is the motive of each of the Commandments of Sinai—reverence of God, reverence of our neighbor, reverence of ourself. Humility is founded on it; piety is conserved by it; purity finds in it its shield and buckler. Reverence for God, and all that is associated with Him, His ministers, His temple, His services—that is religion. Reverence for our neighbor, his goods, his person, his chattels—that is honesty. Reverence for ourselves—clean bodies and pure souls—that is chastity."

Once we have a clear idea of what reverence is, it should not be difficult for us to have a clear concep-

tion of what chastity is: reverence for ourselves—clean bodies and pure souls—that is chastity.

Why should we feel reverence for ourselves? **We** are the children of God, temples of the Holy Ghost, members of the mystical body of Christ, and prospective citizens of Heaven. Just consider God's gifts to you and you will realize why you must feel reverence for yourself. God has given you: first, your body which is His temple; second, your soul, made to His image and likeness; third, His grace which makes you His child. Yes, you must feel reverence for yourselves for God has made each of you only a little less than the angels. He has crowned you with glory and honor.

Each and everyone of you must feel reverence for your body which is the house of God because God dwells in you. God is not far from everyone of you for in Him you live and move and are. Everyone of you may say of himself what St. Agnes said of herself: "I have with me an angel of the Lord as guardian of my body." God lives in you by His power in keeping you alive, but also by His grace in making you His Child.

A Christian should have no difficulty in recognizing his body as something sacred, the house of God. When he was baptized his body was made holy with the water of Baptism poured on his head. If he was given Catholic Baptism his body was also anointed by the priest with consecrated oil and chrism. Later, at Confirmation, the Bishop again anointed his body with holy chrism. When the Catholic receives Holy Communion, Jesus Himself comes to live in his heart, and his body in very truth becomes a chalice. The body of every Christian is indeed the house of God. St. Paul expressed this truth emphatically when he

wrote to his fellow-Christians: "The temple of God is holy, which you are" (I Corinthians III:17).

You are rightly horrified when you read of the King who murdered St. Thomas, the Archbishop of Canterbury, before the Altar of God. You feel that this King committed a double crime by shedding blood in the holy place. In the same way you recognize that it is a desecration to commit sin with so holy a thing as is the human body. When St. Paul heard that some Christians were using their body for impurity, he pleaded with them: "Know you not, that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Corinthians III:16).

In another part of the same letter to the Corinthians St. Paul reminds these Christians: "Know you not that your bodies are the members of Christ? . . . Glorify and bear God in your body" (I Corinthians VI:15, 20). St. Peter likewise exhorts all Christians to bear in mind their great dignity: "You are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation" (I St. Peter II:9).

Keeping in mind the indwelling of God a Christian will feel reverence for himself, and that both for his body and his soul. The very same considerations should inspire a Christian to have reverence for every human being he ever meets. As long as a man is loyal to what is divine in himself, he will recognize God in his fellowman. He will recognize that whatever makes him feel reverence for himself must inspire him to feel reverence for every other human being. It is only God who knows what is in a man's heart. As far as we human beings can judge, we should believe that every human being we meet is a child of God. Hence the reverence that we feel for ourselves we should feel for every other human

being. Here is the solid foundation for chastity. Reverence for ourselves should inspire us to keep our minds pure and our bodies clean. Reverence for every other human being that we meet should inspire us never to do anything that might sully his mind or body, and to do everything within our power to help him in keeping his mind pure and his body clean. To put it briefly, we might say that both a Christian lady and a Christian gentleman will find it helpful always to act on this principle: May my modesty be such as will attract everyone I meet to worship the Triune God who dwells in me.

Dear Friends, you need never fear that this view of chastity will deprive you of any decent or any legitimate pleasure. On the contrary, just because chastity will keep your self-respect it will make for your happiness. Happiness is pleasure without regret and without remorse. Using your body as a holy thing and as a sacred trust given you by your Maker, you will realize in your own lives the fulfillment of Christ's promise: "Blessed are the clean of heart: for they shall see God" (St. Matthew V:8). Christ here promises to the chaste happiness both here and hereafter. In Heaven the clean of heart shall see God face to face, and on earth they are seeing God not only in themselves, but in every fellow-being. That way happiness lies.

Christ never meant that His followers should kill their body or deprive the body of any pleasure in keeping with God's holy will. Msgr. Robert Hugh Benson interprets Christ's conception of chastity very properly when he writes: "We do not rise to our full spiritual stature by eradicating passions. The ideal man is not a passionless man. He is rather one whose passions are turned into the right channel.

The ideally pure man is not the sexless man; he is the man who loves violently what he ought, as he ought." Chesterton brings out the same truth in fewer words: "Chastity does not mean abstention from sexual wrong; it means something flaming, like Joan of Arc."

Chastity does not mean that friendship must be cold or frigid. Quite the contrary is true. For the very reason that chastity is based on reverence, it will make for perfect love and the finest kind of friendship. You can not really love a person if you do not feel a certain reverence for him. When friends no longer respect each other, they may indeed continue associates for a time, but they have broken the bond of union. If two friends sin together against chastity, they will first lose respect for each other, then their love will die, or, all too often, turn to hate. It is a mutual respect which makes friendship lasting. It is significant that even in our prisons the men committed for sex crimes are not accepted in the company of the so-called decent element of criminals.

For 1900 years there have been large numbers of loyal followers of Christ, and that both married and unmarried, who found happiness in chastity. To single out but one of the millions of the married, we have the testimony of Daniel O'Connell who said of his faithful and beloved wife: "She gave me thirty-four years of the purest happiness that man ever enjoyed." To mention again but one of the millions of the unmarried who found happiness in chastity we have St. Francis of Assisi. He was of an ardent nature and because he loved Christ with his whole soul, he found room in his heart for noble friendships with both men and women. St. Francis illus-

trates the truth that the nearer you are to the heart of God the nearer you are also to the heart of humanity. You show your love of God best through love for one another. It is a Catholic principle that the antithesis of spirituality is not humanity but brutality. Man is never more truly human than when he is most spiritual, and never spiritual when he is not human. Because St. Francis was clean of heart he saw God even on earth in his fellowmen. St. Francis was Brother Joy because he loved God and loved people for the sake of God. Do you wish to be happy? St. Francis shows you the direct route to happiness. To be truly happy you must be chaste. You cannot be happy unless you are chaste.

TOPICS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Why do we call Mary the Virgin most pure and the Mother most chaste?
2. Give a practical example to illustrate the principle, "The need of the hour is the will of God."
3. Every age in the history of the world has thought its own morals the worst. Is there any circumstance that makes the sexual immorality of our age worse than that of some previous ages (see Kirsch, *Sex Education and Training in Chastity*, pp. 14-22)? What can you do personally to remedy this situation?
4. Give two reasons to prove that the sexual immorality of our day presents both a challenge and an opportunity to all Christians.
5. Do you agree with the American writer who says: "Lack of reverence is our national sin"? Why? Do you know any magazine that makes for irreverence?
6. What can you and your friends do to decrease the circulation of that magazine?
7. What arguments can you add to those given in the talk why every human being must be chaste?
8. In the United States every sixth marriage ends in divorce. Do you think that the practice of birth control may be responsible in part for this high divorce rate? Why? Do you think that the practice of birth control would make for the loss of self-respect between husband and wife? Why?
9. Give two reasons to prove that sexual necessity is a myth (see Kirsch, *Sex Education and Training in Chastity*, pp. 207-221).
10. How would you prove to a boy or girl that we can not be happy unless we are chaste?
11. In the book list on pages 68-69 check those titles that are; 1) in your public library; 2) in your parish library; 3) in your pamphlet rack; in your home library.

THE CLEAN OF HEART

Address Delivered on May 8, 1938

Our country is today paying tribute to the mothers of the nation. Every worth-while man or woman is today repeating the sentiment if not the exact words of a great American: "All that I am or can be I owe under God to my angel mother." In paying tribute to our mothers we are doing a very Christ-like thing. Christ was always most loyal to His Mother, and even when He died for us upon the cross on Calvary Hill, in that last hour, in the unutterable agony of His death, He was mindful of His Mother as if to teach us that this holy love for our mother should be our last worldly thought, the last point of earth from which the soul should take its flight to heaven. And in His dying hour Christ gave to each and every one of us His own Mother to be our mother so that now we must truthfully call Mary not only the Mother of God but also the Mother of men.

I think that the subject of today's talk is in keeping with the reverence we feel both for our mother on earth and our Mother in Heaven. In discussing the subject "The Clean of Heart" we are doing our part to perpetuate one of the most precious lessons taught by a mother to her child—personal purity. Personal purity is impossible without a clean heart.

The whole problem of clean living is primarily a question of the mastery of the mind over the body. We all have had personal experience of the intimate connection between our mind and our body. If you are deeply embarrassed you will probably blush. As

long as your mind dwells upon the subject of your embarrassment, the blood continues to rush to your face. Your will power cannot control the blood supply. The only way to stop the blushing is to focus your mind on some other subject. Sorrow, a mental condition, may cause loss of appetite, a bodily condition. Fear may cause marked disturbances in the digestive tract.

Because of this intimate connection between mind and body we may lay down the rule: to have a pure body a person must first have a pure mind. This rule is in keeping with our definition of chastity: reverence for ourselves—clean bodies and pure souls—that is chastity. Christ stressed the essential need of the clean mind when He said: “Blessed are the clean of heart: for they shall see God” (St. Matthew V:8). Christ also brought out the close connection between impure thoughts and impure actions when He declared: “Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (St. Matthew V:28). The Old Testament is likewise emphatic in condemning impure thoughts for it insists: “Evil thoughts are an abomination to the Lord” (Proverbs V:16). In general we may say that we are what our thoughts are. You are as pure as the thoughts you think. To have a clean body, it is necessary first to have a clean mind.

To keep a clean mind we must control our thoughts. But it is not always easy to control thoughts of sex. In order to learn of various means that might be helpful in controlling these thoughts I submitted in writing the following question to 500 priests: *What means would you recommend to train people to control sexual thoughts?* Here are

the replies received from 368 priests listed in the order of frequency of mention:

Receive Communion frequently.

Be frank in confession.

Pray when you are tempted.

Think often of God living in you.

Get a clear idea of what is really sinful in this matter.

Work hard and play hard.

Control your eyes.

Watch your reading.

Seek wholesome distractions when tempted.

Avoid daydreaming.

Keep your memory pure.

Don't expect to have bad thoughts.

Don't play with dangerous thoughts.

Keep physically and mentally healthy.

Be calm when you are tempted.

Keep interested in worth-while things. *

Everyone familiar with the fruits of Holy Communion knows that frequent Communion makes for purity of mind. The Bread from Heaven will produce heavenly thoughts, and the Body and Soul of the God-Man received into our hearts lets us partake of Divinity. St. Augustine has Christ say to the soul: "Come and receive: have no fear: I shall not be changed into you, but you will be changed into Me." It is significant to find among the answers given by Notre Dame University students the following statements about the fruits of Holy Communion:

Holy Communion has given me the power to banish

* For further details the reader is referred to Kirsch, *Sex Education and Training in Chastity* (Benziger Brothers, New York), p. 231.

impure thoughts, for which I had a seemingly unconquerable desire before I began daily Communion.

The fact that I went to Communion this morning and am going again tomorrow always comes to my mind when I am tempted, and I lose all desire for sin.*

In his excellent booklet, *The Difficult Commandment*, Father Martindale shows how harmful it may often be to fight directly against bad thoughts. The more a person tells himself not to think of a thing, the more, obviously, he is keeping his mind upon it. The more he struggles against it, the more his imagination gets excited. If he says: "I will not think of onions; I will *not* think of those onions; onions are things I *must* not think about"—why, onions get so stuck in his mind that his very eyes begin to water. Hence it will be well not to think about one's "bad" thought at all, but to think of something else. When you notice a bad thought in your mind think or say quickly: "Jesus, help me; Mary, pray for me". Many people are helped in the case of a persistent bad thought if they make a small Sign of the Cross over their heart. It is always helpful to be able to *do* something, and therefore, it is a good thing if we have a hobby we can turn to. But what will an individual do at night when he can not get up and start carpentering, or take apart his radio set?

Here Father Martindale advises a man to turn to what he *likes* to think about—some wholesome interest of his. Let him recall incidents from his favorite novel, or some exciting play in a football game; or recall the finest compliment he ever got, or the best joke he ever heard. But if he hasn't any such interests, he must still think of something

* A selection of student testimonials, *Frequent Communion for College Men*, has been made and is distributed by Notre Dame University.

positive—however absurd—like composing a baseball team of the nine fattest men he knows. He will think easily of four; the three next will be difficult to find; the last two, almost impossible. But his “bad” thought will have gone miles away. Or if he has ever had a narrow escape while motoring—and who has not had such an experience?—let him recall the scene, and imagine what might have happened if he had not swerved his car sharply to the right. He is still shaking with the fright, but there will be no room for emotions of any other kind!

Of course, no method will ever be devised that will keep dangerous thoughts from coming to one’s attention. According to the judgment of an old missionary, we can not expect rotten thoughts to stay out of our mind until half an hour after our death. But with the help of God and the exercise of strong will power, we can avoid harboring these thoughts. As the saying is, “We cannot prevent the birds from flying about our heads, but we can keep them from coming down and making nests in our hair”. Just as physical nature abhors a vacuum, so mental laws demand that in waking moments the mind be occupied. The most effective way of keeping out mischief is to keep wholesome interests in the mind. One of the most wholesome results of athletic games is that they give boys and girls so much to think and talk about.

The general condition of the body has much to do with the quality of our thoughts. If we train our young people to take plenty of exercise, not to overeat, to keep away from liquor, to retire at an hour that will allow them eight hours of sleep, to sleep with the window open, to get up when they first awake and take a bath, preferably a cold one, they

will find it less difficult to keep their body strong and their mind clean.

The reason for the advice on guarding our eyes and controlling our reading is obvious. A young man used to think himself immune; he believed nothing would affect him, and hence he considered himself free to see or read anything. However, he now admits that he is paying the price for his indiscretions in that his fancy and memory often annoy him with what he learned in his early years. There is nothing that we see or read but makes some difference and leaves some sort of impression. All these impressions will be stored in the subconscious mind, and the consciousness, whenever the sex urge is experienced, will tend to recall whatever has been experienced or seen or heard on the subject.

While it is necessary for us to guard against impure thoughts, we must not be over-anxious in the matter. Some well-meaning people are scrupulous on this point and see a sin where there is no sin at all. It may help us therefore to examine briefly what is meant by a sinful impure thought. Theologians distinguish between *a thought about something bad* and *a sinful thought*.

If you see in your morning paper the report of a murder, it is, of course, no sin to think of that murder. But it would be dangerous for you to continue for any length of time in picturing that murder to yourself in so personal a way as to run the risk of becoming violently angry over the affair or even of desiring to go out and commit murder yourself. As long as you merely think in a cool impersonal way of the crime, you will *think about what is bad*. But this thought of yours becomes a *sinful* thought only when you picture the crime in your mind in so per-

sonal a way as to arouse either violent anger in yourself or the desire to commit murder yourself. The same is true in thinking about impure actions, with this difference however: it is far more dangerous to think of what is impure than to reflect on a crime like murder. In thinking about impure actions there will be a mortal sin of thought in the following case: first, if the person pictures himself as enjoying sexual pleasure; and, second, if he, at the same time, fully realizes the seriousness of the situation (hence he commits no mortal sin if during his thinking he is only half-awake); and, third, if he deliberately consents to continue thinking the impure thought. Or, in other words, the three conditions necessary to make an impure thought a mortal sin are the following: (1) the impure thought must be seriously wrong; (2) the person thinking this thought must know that his thinking is seriously wrong; (3) the person must fully consent to this serious wrong.

Father John M. Cooper in his *Religion Outlines for Colleges* (Vol. I, page 185), lays down the following as "a rough working rule" covering most cases of impure thought: "Mere thought or imagination about things unchaste, however vivid or persistent it may be, does not in itself constitute sin; such thought or imagination about unchaste acts becomes sinful when either desire or physical passion is aroused by the thought or imagination and is deliberately consented to."

Catholics will be helped in this matter if they are frank in Confession and tell their Confessor about any difficulties in this regard. In case a person is not certain whether he has yielded to the thought, that is, dwelt unnecessarily on it because

he was deriving pleasure from it, or in order to draw pleasure therefrom—he should not spend any time scrutinizing whether he lingered over the thought or not. Dwelling on the thought would simply revive it, and would excite the imagination anew. Let this person simply say in Confession that he has had bad thoughts, and accuse himself of any guilt there may have been in God's eyes. If he thinks he has deliberately taken pleasure in the thoughts, he should say so; if he is sure he did, he should say that. In case he habitually tries to get rid of thoughts, he may take the benefit of the doubt and feel free from the obligation of confessing the thoughts. But he should not spend time over the actual thoughts, either when preparing for Confession, or at any other time.

It may also be advisable for some persons not to expect to have bad thoughts. If a person is always going about in a panic that he is going to be tempted, he will be tempted. Boys may be in a deplorable condition of nerves over some quite ordinary thing, like bathing. They get into the habit of thinking they would be tempted, and end by supposing that there is a fate about it, and so give up. Father Martindale wisely warns the young man that he has let himself get into the dreadful state in which everything *does* suggest "bad" thoughts to him, simply because he has thought of those things over and over again, and has (one might say) carved a sort of channel in his brain for such thoughts to flow down. On the other hand, a man can by cheerful self-control become able to think very much what he pleases.

To some extent it is true that a man can train himself to be his own master in so far that he will

make up his mind not to be affected by what he sees or hears; and if he does not expect that it will affect him, it may happen that he is not affected. Such a result would imply full success, and most persons may be still far from that. Still, it is the direction in which a man must be going, and a great deal can be accomplished by a hopeful outlook! "The root of the whole matter is the mind. As your thoughts are, so (almost invariably) will be your behavior. At least, no man's behavior is likely to be bad unless his thoughts are bad *first*." A person's thoughts are his real personality.

It stands to reason that perfect control of thought cannot be gained overnight. A beginning must be made early in training the child to banish thoughts of greed, stinginess, hatred, spitefulness, and so forth, and the habit of thought control thus formed will assist greatly in transferring the ability to the field of sex.

Some people have found it helpful to habituate themselves to say the prayer of the Roman Missal: "O almighty and most merciful Lord, favorably consider our prayers, and deliver our hearts from temptation to evil thoughts that we may deserve to become worthy dwelling places of the Holy Ghost." Others have found it helpful to bless themselves and their beds before retiring for the night, and then to trust calmly in the Lord. Some people, however, need to be warned not to give way to the physical impulse to bless themselves in public or to make grimaces, as the reactions will be harmful. But violent temptations attacking a person when he is alone may be banished effectively by blessing one's self or by strolling off for a visit to a nearby church.

Persons who grow despondent over the persistence of temptations should remind themselves that God may be using this means to keep them humble, to make them depend upon Himself, and to train them to be charitable towards others, who may have even more serious temptations to combat. Every temptation overcome will be a source of new grace and greater merit, and will assist in developing character. Such considerations will prevent a person from developing a complex of worry over the situation.

As long as you are determined to belong to God, even the worst temptations of the Devil cannot harm you. Cast all your care on God for He has care of you. That anchor holds always. God will never desert you. God is always loyal and faithful to you, and will never suffer you to be tempted beyond your strength. His grace is always sufficient for you. Even though all the powers of Hell attack you at once, you must say to yourself: One with God is always a majority.

TOPICS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. How would you explain to a young person that to have a pure body he must first have a clean mind?
2. What advice would you give to a person who insists that it is impossible for him to remain pure? Tell him: (1) what he must avoid; (2) what he must do.
3. Expose the fallacy of this statement: "It is not what I think but what I do that is really important."
4. Give the arguments that you would use to prove to a girl of eighteen that she is adopting a dangerous policy when she says: "I am old enough to stand any kind of reading. Ignorance is not innocence and the more I know of sin the easier it will be for me to avoid moral dangers."
5. Why is it dangerous to indulge in daydreaming?
6. Make your own list of the means that you would recommend as helpful in controlling sexual thoughts. Arrange the items in the order of greatest helpfulness.
7. Do you approve of this advice: "Fight your bad thoughts?"
Give two reasons for your answer.
8. Would you mark the following true or false: "A person frequently tempted by impure thoughts may gain much merit for heaven?" Why?
9. What should you tell the priest in Confession in case you are doubting whether you took wilful pleasure in a bad thought?
10. Check in the bibliography on pages 68-69 (1) the books that you have read; (2) the books that you plan to read soon.

PURITY OF SPEECH

Address Delivered on May 15, 1938

Somebody has said recently: "Give us a chaste nation and America will be saved." But we cannot have a chaste nation unless we develop among our millions of Americans a deep reverence for clean minds and pure bodies. Americans are known the world over for insisting that cleanliness is next to godliness. Unfortunately, not all Americans realize that to keep the body truly pure one must first have a clean mind. As a man thinks so he is. And if you wish to know what a man thinks, you need merely watch his talk. As a man *thinks habitually* so he *talks*. Christ expressed this truth more fully when he said: "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth that which is evil. For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (St. Luke VI:45).

But our speech is important for further reasons. Not only does a person's speech reveal what is in his mind but his speech also reacts upon his mind and character. What he says will stimulate anew his thought and action. And when we recall how deep is the influence of our speech upon our environment we recognize still more how important a duty it is for both men and women to keep clean their speech. However, I realize how difficult it is to keep clean the speech of young people, and therefore I addressed the following question in writing to 500 priests: *What means would you advise for habituating our young people to be chaste in their talk?* Three hundred and sixty priests answered the ques-

tion. I herewith give their replies listed in the order of frequency of mention:

Inform young people betimes about the mysteries of life and instruct them that the subject is not to be discussed with their companions.

Explain the difference between vulgar talk and unchaste talk.

Expose the vileness of unchaste speech.

Explain Christ's warning about the punishment of those who give scandal.

Warn against magazines and other literature that deal with filth.

Raise the tone of the school or the club.

Expose the foolishness of boasting about sinful knowledge or sinful experiences.

Use your influence against vulgarity and blasphemy on the stage and in the movies.

Create a group spirit against dirty talk.

Show the danger of corrupting others through impure talk. *

Much would be gained if parents would realize that their children have a strict right to learn the facts of life from the proper source. The curiosity of children in this matter is legitimate. And parents should therefore answer the questions of the little people frankly and truthfully from the beginning and by thus encouraging mutual confidence, the child will gradually acquire all the knowledge necessary. By answering the questions of the children truthfully the parents will have an invaluable opportunity of giving their children God's viewpoint on sex for

* For further details see Kirsch, *Sex Education and Training in Chastity*, p. 231.

the rest of their lives. First impressions are the deepest. What a protection for the child to realize that God lives in him and that therefore his body is a very holy thing; that his whole body is the marvelous handiwork of God; that God has assigned to every member of the body a specific function; that sex is a power given by God as a sacred trust. Sex knowledge that is imparted by mother or father in childhood is generally received without shame or avidity, being then of no special emotional significance. Hence parents will avoid any later mutual embarrassment by answering frankly all the questions about sex asked by their children.

If parents will give adequate and satisfactory information to their children at home, these young people need never talk about sex with their playmates and school companions. Parents will create the proper tone at home by insisting that certain subjects are family matters which should not be talked about outside the home circle. Such family affairs are money matters or intimate things in general, and information about the mysteries of life should be included in the category.

While we must make every effort in behalf of purity of speech, we must beware of exaggerations in this regard. Hence it is necessary to distinguish between what is impure and what is only coarse, vulgar, improper, or in bad taste. Some people have erroneous notions on this point, and therefore may regard as sinful what is merely vulgar. We cannot call anything unchaste, or a sin against purity, unless there is therein such wilful sexual pleasure as the person in question has no right to enjoy, or to describe for the enjoyment of others. As long as there is no question of forbidden sexual pleasure,

there can be no question of impurity in the theological sense. However, very obscene conversations if carried on among young people are sinful.

But references, for instance, to the eliminatory functions which nature strongly prompts should be performed privately, are vulgar, but not obscene. Vulgar references to these functions are inelegant, yet not obscene or unchaste in the theological sense of the word. Therefore even the crude mentioning of these functions in coarse jokes, stories, and anecdotes is not to be classified as unchaste speech.

It is not only the home that can create the proper tone for the conversation of our young people. Teachers can accomplish a great deal in creating the proper tone in a school. Let me tell you of the good impression gained by a new student when he was confronted with the tradition against vulgarity prevailing among the boys at one of our Catholic colleges. It was the boy's first meal in the college dining hall. A student made a vulgar remark and laughed, thinking he had cracked a joke. Every other boy at the table except the new student, to use the language of the campus, "jumped" the offender — vigorously and seriously. The offender tried to laugh that off and then the head of the table gave him orders: "One more crack like that out of you and we'll find you a place where you can eat out of a trough." That settled the incident. It certainly made a very good first impression on the new boy.

But, alas! so high a moral tone is not at all common today. The Church and the school may be inculcating sublime ideals, may demand self-control and chastity in word and deed, and outside the Church and the school, nay, perhaps even at home

the youth will witness the grossest immorality. He will even be ridiculed for his attempts to remain chaste. He will hear and read that what the Church and the school insist upon is a remnant of a bygone age when people were priest-ridden, superstitious, ignorant, or lacked the opportunity for "enjoying life". These contradictory standards will prove a dreadful temptation. This temptation is all too common today, and therefore, we must train the youth, if we wish him to remain chaste amid a hostile environment, to stand on his own two feet, to recognize no authority except that of his own conscience and the representatives of God. He must learn to brave the jeers of the crowd, to be *not only a man in the world but a man against the world*. He must realize that one with God is a majority. He must strive to be not common, but uncommon, for in an environment without high moral tone common life will make common characters. He may say "yes" to the crowd as long as his conscience permits, but must say "no" quite emphatically whenever his conscience says "no".

In this way the boy will develop a sense of personal honor. And the sense of honor is a strong asset in fighting the dangers of immorality. Some people are impure because they have lost their sense of honor; among adolescents, particularly, a sense of honor may prove one of the foundation stones of chastity. All who are engaged in the movement for a better world in the next generation can ill afford to neglect the aid to be derived from developing a fine sense of honor among our boys and girls.

Anyone engaged in a crusade for purity of speech must reckon with the strange tricks that human respect plays in this matter. From a false sense

of honor, people try to appear immoral in the eyes of their companions. In a group they lose the self-respect to which they cling most tenaciously when alone, but which escapes them as soon as they mingle with the crowd. While they are with the crowd they try to appear as bad as possible. Their dirty talk may be for them a smoke screen or a mere boast.

It is therefore necessary for teachers and other leaders of young people to build up in boys and girls a sturdy self-respect that will remain with them in the wildest crowd. Our young people must learn to act in a crowd as they think in solitude. The world is usually ready to take you at your own valuation; but you must first show the world that you value yourself. Let a Christian boy or girl remember what the world expects of Christians and let their speech always be up to that high standard. They will do well to follow these two rules: (1) not to let anyone leave their company thinking more cheaply of Christians; and (2) always to help, rather than to hurt, the weak. No man advertises his weakness, and in a mixed group one cannot know who is weak and who is strong. A man was appalled, even almost physically sick, when he was told that *he* was the one who had (without suspecting it) sent a hitherto innocent lad to a house of sin. One pastor found it helpful to circulate among his young men a cartoon showing two men telling each other spicy stories while a small boy was eavesdropping. The caption on the cartoon read: "When a feller needs a friend!"

The most impressive warning ever given to a person tempted to corrupt the young is that uttered by Christ: "He that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck,

and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea" (St. Matthew XVIII:6).

What is said of vile talk is even more true of vile songs. One writer admits that he recalls vividly the words of a "smutty" song which he heard when a boy, which he has never repeated in speech, but which he can never forget. He admits that there are many things which he once learned laboriously, and which he would gladly remember, but can not recall. What a lesson for those who are apt to be free and easy in the presence of the young!

There remains the further problem: when people in a group tell vile stories, ought a person to make an attempt to stop the bad talk? If the person happens to be in control of the group, he should seek an opportunity of changing the topic of conversation. However, there may be occasions when a man or woman is not in control, yet cannot leave the group, and cannot stop the telling of a bad story. However, the individual need never participate in the enjoyment of a smutty story, and he need never tell it elsewhere. Our young people should be trained to make it a rule never to tell a bad story.

Many a young man who has become addicted to the use of profane or obscene language merely to make an impression, might be brought to his senses if he recalled the base ingratitude of insulting God Who dwells within him and Who gives him the power of speech. How can he dare to say in the presence of God what he would never dare say in the presence of his mother. Judas betrayed Christ with a kiss, and a man who uses for obscene speech the tongue on which Christ's Sacred Body rests in Communion, is repeating the crime of the Traitor. He then and there gives evidence of a yellow streak.

Several pastors report good results from distributing among their men a small card entitled *No More Indecent Stories*. The card describes graphically the harm that may be wrought by one who is in the habit of telling vile stories:

Suppose only one person each month heard and enjoyed your smutty jokes. That would make twelve a year. And suppose each of these again interested only one person a month in such tales. Even at this low rate the bad seed which you sowed would multiply and bring forth 4,000 dirty jokes a year! Would to God that these 4,000 souls committed only the one fault of listening to these smutty jokes! But people, especially the young, think over these vile stories, repeat them in their minds, arouse themselves to immoral thoughts, desires and even actions. . . *

It is the bad taste developed by impure stories, whether told or heard or read, that so easily leads to sin. How urgent is the duty therefore for all lovers of chastity to join in the crusade for purity of speech and reading. Realizing the tremendous importance of purity of speech it will be well for each and everyone of us often to ask God's help in the control of our tongue. May I ask all of you therefore now to join with me in this short prayer: "O Lord Jesus Christ, put a guard upon my mouth; give discretion to my lips; let my conversation be modest always. Amen."

* Franciscan Herald Press. Chicago.

TOPICS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. How would you prove the truth of this statement: "Give us a chaste nation and America will be saved?"
2. Why is a person's speech an index to his character?
3. What are your favorite topics of discussion with your friends? Which of these topics prove you are a person of refinement?
4. Make a list of the occasions when you might tactfully correct improper speech in others.
5. Why do even good people sometimes try to appear worse than they really are? How would you prove to a man that by so doing he shows himself to be a coward?
6. Have you noticed from your friends' conversation that there is a close relationship between a person's reading and his conversation? What practical conclusion must you draw in consequence to govern your own reading? What can you and your friends do to decrease the circulation of immoral books and magazines?
7. Use the material in Father Martindale's *The Difficult Commandment*, pp. 27-42, to write a short paper for your discussion club or for your own benefit on "Lies Told to Excuse Immoral Talk."
8. Which will prove more disastrous: To expose a twelve-year-old boy to typhoid germs or to vile talk? Give reasons for your answer. *Of Dirty Stories*, by Father Daniel A. Lord, S.J., will supply you with the best reasons for your answer.
9. A man said to his sixteen-year-old daughter: "To let you read an immoral book or magazine is almost as bad as to let you sit up alone for hours at night listening to vile stories of a sex pervert." What reasons can you give to prove that this father was right?
10. If you want to raise the tone of conversation prevailing in a particular group you will find the ways and means of doing so in Kirsch, *Sex Education and Training in Chastity*, pp. 240-260.
11. In the book list on pages 68-69 check those titles that should be read: (1) by married people; (2) by unmarried people; (3) by boys; (4) by girls; (5) by both boys and girls.

AIDS TO CHASTITY

Address Delivered on May 22, 1938

The practice of chastity has never been an easy job. The Sixth Commandment has always been the Difficult Commandment, but it is doubly difficult in our day. The literature of the day, the popular magazine, the scandal sheet, the theater, the fashions, sports, dances, night clubs, road houses, and bathing beaches have conspired to flaunt sex publicly. It has struck "sex o'clock" in America and it is made almost impossible for people to keep their minds off the subject.

Yet, my dear friends, there is no reason why we should be discouraged in our fight for chastity. I take it that each and everyone of us is eager to remain chaste and to help in the fight to make America chaste. The dangers confronting us on all sides should not discourage us, but should challenge us to seize what is an opportunity to prove we are men and women of character. Every temptation should challenge us to remain chaste. Every temptation offers us an opportunity to prove our loyalty to Christ. We should have no fear in our fight for chastity. The arm of God is not shortened. One with God is always a majority. The promise of the Bible still holds true: "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able: but will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it" (I Corinthians X: 13). If we ever feel anxious in the fight we must cast all our care on God for He hath care of us. God's grace will always prove sufficient for us (II Corinthians XII, 19). Without God we can do noth-

ing; but with Him we can do everything: we can do all things in Him Who strengthens us. God is fighting for us, yet He demands that we do our own part manfully. God Who created us without our consent, will not save us without our co-operation (St. Augustine). In our fight for chastity we must carry on as we do in all our endeavors for good: pray as though everything depended on God, and work as though everything depended on ourselves.

To encourage us in our fight for chastity we must remember that despite the prevailing sexual immorality, millions are remaining chaste. Looking at this miracle of God's grace we must say to ourselves: Yes, with the help of God I too, *can* be pure.

In our fight to remain pure we must not forget that as long as we are steadfastly determined to remain pure, we will be pure with the help of God. Every one must say of himself:

I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul.

Every person can do what he is determined to do. Let everyone carefully consider whether he has ever found God fail him in trial, when his own heart had not failed him first; and whether he has not found strength greater and greater given him according to his need; whether he has not gained clear proof on trial that he *has* a divine power lodged within him, and a certain conviction withal that he has not made the extreme trial of this divine power or reached its limits. Grace ever outstrips prayer. Cardinal Newman reminds us that Abraham ceased interceding ere God ceased from granting. Joash smote upon the ground but thrice, when

he might have gained five victories or six. All have the gift of grace, many do not use it at all, none can ever exhaust God's goodness. One wraps the gift of God in a napkin, another gains five pounds, another ten. God's gift will bear thirty-fold, or sixty-fold, or a hundred-fold. We know not what we are or might be. As the seed has a tree within it, so men have within them angels.

What an incentive must these thoughts be for us to give to our boys and girls the proper appreciation of chastity; for, once they have the proper appreciation of that virtue, it will be theirs, since they can acquire what they are determined to acquire. A great soldier and statesman said of himself, "I make circumstances," when referring to his achievements in politics and in war. How much truer is that statement with regard to gaining the victory over the temptations of the flesh! Let priests, parents, and teachers awaken in our young people the spirit of the conqueror—their supernatural ability which otherwise may always remain dormant. There is a nobility that lies in their souls, sleeping, perhaps, but never dead.

Splendid evidence of this nobility inherent in the souls of our young people was given in the replies received from Catholic college men in reply to this question: *What means have you found best in overcoming temptations?* Seventy-three per cent of the more than 1,000 replies mentioned supernatural aids. While we know these supernatural factors to be more important, yet we should never underestimate the help to be derived from natural sources. The natural remedies listed by these young men may be classified into mental, moral, and physical factors. Those mentioned most frequently are: When

you are tempted, change your thoughts; think of the consequences; think of your mother; practice self-respect; avoid the occasions; use your will power; keep busy; do something.

Yes, natural means are a help in remaining chaste. We may well place before our young people the ideal of the college athlete of whom the college boys say with pride: "A man who never did anything to hurt his body or his soul". A great help to chastity is to keep oneself busy and deeply interested in work and play. The idle man or woman is on dangerous ground. There was much wisdom in the practice of the ancient Jews in letting every boy learn some manual trade. The hermit of old was wise when he commanded the youth who was assailed by bad thoughts to keep active all day long. The youth confessed after trying the experiment for three days: "My bad thoughts are all gone; during the day I have no time to think of them, and at night I am so tired that I cannot keep awake". A proper amount of work is healthful in every way both for the growing boy and for the growing girl, and parents should be on the alert to provide opportunities for such activity.

The life of the youth, however, need not be all strenuousness. The joy of comradeship, interest in men and affairs, sports and games, fun and laughter, poetry, music, and art will all find their place. These appeal to various instincts and natural tendencies of a boy and girl and afford different outlets for their energies, while at the same time they develop them along several lines. While their more strenuous activities are equipping them for the serious business of life, these lighter activities equip them to utilize and enjoy the leisure moments of

their later years. The Christian educators of the past who achieved the finest results never underestimated the importance of wholesome recreation for the young. St. John Bosco loved noisy and lively recreations. His instructions were simple: "Make all the noise you wish: jump, run, shout at will. Engage in gymnastics, declamations, dramatics. Keep busy."

Much would be gained if we could get our young people to appreciate what is real joy. As no flower can develop properly without the sun, so our young people cannot develop properly without joy. The life and spirit of the home, the school, and the Church must abound with joy. St. Paul rightly insists: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say, rejoice" (Philippians IV:4). St. Francis of Assisi was fond of saying to his Friars: "Let those who belong to the Devil hang their heads; we ought to be glad and rejoice in the Lord". He who was called Brother Joy realized that vice is born, not of joy, but of joylessness.

We shall obtain splendid results by adopting the preventive system of the saints. This preventive system puts boys and girls in the moral impossibility of sinning. It turns their energy into the proper channels and so keeps them away from sin. The presence of the priest or teacher elevates the recreational standard; his mere interest, if manifested, in a basketball team, in a group of the Catholic Boys' Brigade, or in a troop of the Boy Scouts or of the Girl Scouts, will often be enough to prevent profanity and immoral talk.

These natural helps will accomplish a great deal. Parents and teachers must make skillful use of substitution and sublimation in the control and direc-

tion of the sex instinct. Our boys and girls must be shown that they can do what they are determined to do, that the spirit *can* control the flesh, and that they need never despair of attaining the high destiny of man. Their sense of shame, innate in fallen humanity, must be transformed into the protective power of genuine Christian modesty. Control of the imagination, manual labor, and active sports are valuable helps. I agree with Agnes Repplier: "The children to be pitied, the children whose minds become infected with unwholesome curiosity, are those who lack cheerful recreation, religious teaching, and the fine corrective of work. A playground or a swimming pool will do more to keep them mentally and morally sound than scores of lectures on sex hygiene".

Yet our young people have a *right* to all the sex instructions they need to protect them from the dangers of today. Proper sex instruction given at the right time will help to keep them chaste. God's truth will make them free of needless fears and support them through many a battle of the years ahead. Parents therefore have the *strict duty* to impart this information just as soon as there is need on the part of the child. A good rule for parents is to give the information, first, in accordance with the symptoms of curiosity—the child's curiosity in such matters is legitimate and he has a right to have his questions answered frankly and sincerely; secondly, give the information in accordance with the child's physical development. Here watchful parents may have to anticipate questions on the part of the child. Another wise rule tells us to give all information needed so that the child will not be helpless when the changes, either physical or psychical,

of adolescence, come into his life; and secondly, so that the information will not come first from the wrong source. It is undoubtedly better to give the necessary instruction a year too soon than one hour too late. In our day and country such instruction is needed much earlier than most parents imagine.

No definite rule can be laid down to cover all cases. Every single case must be treated individually. The important thing is that all Christian parents be convinced of their duty in the matter, and then we may safely commit the choice of the proper time to their judgment. If only all parents would realize what a privilege is theirs when they are called upon to give to their child God's truth with regard to the mysteries and facts of life. Some parents have found it advisable to offer direct opportunities to their children for the asking of questions, for example, in connection with their examination of conscience with regard to the Commandments when preparing for their first Confession. Subsequent Confessions would then provide further opportunities. In this way parents may train their children to come to them for whatever information they wish to have.

What a protection for the child to have received from his mother or father his first lesson in chastity—that his body is a holy thing because it is the dwelling place of God. If mother and father thus give their confidence to their boy or girl from the very beginning, they will probably find that in the critical years of adolescence when the child discovers the other sex, and when he is passing through the fire and water of the fiercest temptation, he will again turn to his parents for the knowledge needed then to guide him aright.

While this knowledge is necessary and most helpful, yet it alone will not give the young person the strength to do what is proper. For the strength to do what is proper we must fall back upon religion as representing our best aid to chastity. Among the religious aids, Confession and Communion are for Catholics the most important. Cardinal Newman wrote: "It is the boast of the Catholic Church that it has the gift of making the young heart chaste; and why is this, but that the Church gives us Jesus Christ for our food, and Mary for our nursing Mother?" A special fruit of Holy Communion is the aid it gives in fighting off the temptations of impurity. Holy Communion is indeed "the corn of the elect, and wine springing forth virgins" (Zach. IX:17). Saint John Bosco made splendid men of some 200,000 boys, of whom 6,000 became zealous priests. He used to say: "I know only two educational instruments—Holy Communion and the rod, and I have given up the rod and use only Holy Communion". Our young Catholic people who receive into their hearts the Virgin Christ in Holy Communion day after day can be pure. Thousands of them are remaining pure.

The Religious Survey conducted at Notre Dame University a few years ago dealt specifically with what Holy Communion accomplishes, and the answers given by the students are a revelation of the miracles wrought by the Holy Eucharist. For instance, in answer to the question: *Has frequent Communion lessened your temptations*, 417 college men replied "yes", and only 40 answered "no". In answer to the question: *Has It made you more careful to avoid sin*, 488 college men replied "yes" and only 100 answered "no".

The remarks made by the college students themselves are even more impressive and more significant than figures. We find the following remarks in answer to the request: *Please state frankly your own experience with frequent Communion:*

Daily Communion has transferred me from a spineless jellyfish into a man.

It has invested me with a holy strength for use in persistent combat with evil and temptation. Glancing backward I see a record of advance against a vice that exactly follows my increase in devotion towards the Blessed Sacrament.

Daily Communion has entirely broken my habit of profanity.

Frequent Communion has made me realize that genuine happiness exists on this earth only when a man's heart is fed with the Body and Blood of Our Blessed Lord. Arguments against this idea are only means of self-deception.

It has given me the power to banish impure thoughts, for which I had a seemingly unconquerable desire before I began daily Communion. *

These statements of college men prove clearly that for Catholics there is no better aid to chastity than the practice of frequent Communion.

Confession is likewise, for Catholics, an essential aid to chastity; and one of the fine fruits of frequent Communion has been that it has developed a deeper appreciation of the blessings of the Sacrament of

* A selection of student testimonials, **Frequent Communion for College Men**, has been made and is distributed by Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Indiana.

Penance. The majority of frequent communicants have not the slightest human respect about the matter of Confession. They agree with every word that Cardinal Newman says about the help and inspiration received in the confessional:

If there is a heavenly idea in the Catholic Church, looking at it simply as an idea, surely, next after the Blessed Sacrament, Confession is such. And such is it ever found in fact—the very act of kneeling, the low and contrite voice, the sign of the cross hanging, so to say, over the head bowed low, and the words of peace and blessing. Oh, what a soothing charm is there, which the world can neither give nor take away! Oh, what a piercing, heart-subduing tranquility, provoking tears of joy, is poured, almost substantially and physically, upon the soul, the oil of gladness, as Scripture calls it, when the penitent at length rises, his God reconciled to him, his sins rolled away for ever! This is confession as it is in fact; as those bear witness to it who know it by experience.

A priest who has been zealous in reclaiming the unhappy victims of impurity says that he has never known Confession to fail in the case of those who gave it a fair trial.

While natural means will prove helpful in remaining chaste, the best aid will always be that of religion. Faith teaches us that chastity is a gift of God. And it is to God that we must turn for the means to preserve this gift. "Watch ye, and pray," says Our Lord, "that you enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mark XIV:38). St. Peter tells us: "Be sober and

watch: because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter V:8). The whole Christian tradition, by the voice of the Fathers, theologians, mystics, and ascetics, has propounded these evangelical and apostolical principles and has insisted upon them. Apart from these principles, no training in chastity is possible.

It is in the domain of sex that parents and educators must realize that One greater than they must bless the work if it is to be at all effective. Professor F. W. Foerster, though not a Catholic, frankly concedes that religion is essential: "Real chastity and the real avoidance and overcoming of great temptations is (except in rare instances) not possible at all without the educative and elevating influence of religion, at any rate in the case of strong natures". This eminent authority believes that religion is so fundamental and indispensable that without it the young, especially those of strong temperament, will strive in vain to live continently and to banish and overcome violent temptations. All this is an eloquent illustration of the text of St. Paul: "But the fruit of the Spirit is . . . continency . . ." (Gal. V:34), as well as of the Book of Wisdom: "I knew that I could not otherwise be continent, except God gave it, and this also was a point of wisdom, to know whose gift it was: I went to the Lord, and besought Him" (VIII:21).

May I therefore ask each of you friends of the radio audience to join now in St. Agnes' prayer for purity: "Let my body perish rather than my soul sin. Let me keep my thoughts pure and my love holy, so that both in body and soul I may remain like Christ, my Beautiful Model, always wonderful."

TOPICS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Why is the Sixth Commandment the Difficult Commandment?
2. What would you say to a man or woman who would contend that it is impossible to remain chaste? For a detailed treatment of this problem see Kirsch, *Sex Education and Training in Chastity*, pp. 207-221.
3. Is a person a coward if he keeps away from bad companions? Why?
4. In our striving to remain chaste, why should we always keep busy at work or at play?
5. What helps you more in your efforts to remain pure—the thought: “I must be pure”, or the thought: “I can be pure?” Why?
6. Make a list of all the means you have found helpful in overcoming temptations. Arrange these means in the order of their helpfulness.
7. Write a letter to a boy or girl warning him about the dangers of alcohol in connection with the virtue of chastity (see Kirsch, *Sex Education and Training in Chastity*, pp. 353-357).
8. Make a list of all the reasons you know why parents are obliged to give the necessary sex instruction to their children betimes (See Kirsch, *Sex Education and Training in Chastity*, pp. 149-160).
9. Are you a help to your friends in remaining pure? Have you any friends who might endanger your purity? What should you do about this? Would it help you to discuss this problem with your confessor or your parents?
10. Make a list of all the false principles you have ever heard in defense of immorality. Prove that each of these principles is false.
11. In the book list on pages 68-69 check those titles that would prove helpful: (1) to boys; (2) to girls; (3) to those about to marry; (4) to those who are married; (5) to parents in giving sex instruction to their children.

THE BUILDING OF CHARACTER

Address Delivered on May 29, 1938

Everybody knows that sex mania is one of our great evils today. And what makes matters even worse is that almost everybody offers a different remedy for the evil. Here is the solution recommended by the intellectualist: immorality is due to the lack of knowledge; enlighten both young and old, and the problem will be solved. The physical culturist traces the prevalence of immorality to weak nerves and soft bodies, and counsels strenuous exercise or the sun and air of the golf course. The psychologist of a certain school declares it futile to attempt the repression of what he believes cannot be repressed. And the psychoanalyst promises a cure if the patient will reveal what is in his subconscious mind. There remains the large group of those who contend that it is wrong to label as immoral what is practiced by so many, or what is at least the craving of so many, and hence they talk of a super-morality based on the statistics of how the majority live or want to live.

All these solutions are various phases of the naturalism so vigorously and so effectively condemned by Our Holy Father in his Encyclical *On the Christian Education of Youth*. None of the solutions can be adequate, as they treat at most only one phase of man's complex nature, and ignore altogether the weakness caused by original sin and requiring the assistance of supernatural aids to lead a life in keeping with our supernatural destiny.

Furthermore, none of these solutions attack the root of the evil. The sex mania of today is but an

evidence of a general weakening of character. It is stupid to treat the symptom if we do not attack this *cause* of the disease. To safeguard especially our young people against the allurements of a sex-mad world, we must give them the protection of a strong Christian character. This was done by the mother who said to her ten-year-old boy: "John, I know it is hard for you to stay away from cookies between meals. But Jesus wants you to do something hard for Him because He shed the last drop of His blood for you. And by doing *now* what is hard you will grow up to be a strong man." You will note that this wise mother used both the natural *and* the supernatural motive in training her boy to do what was hard. Little wonder that this mother lived to see the day when her boy, grown to the stalwart manhood of thirty, had the strength to say "no" when he was tempted to sin by another man's wife.

Too many of our countrymen are moral weaklings, and have their wishbone where their backbone ought to be, because during their formative years they were never compelled to do what was hard. The practice of chastity will never be an easy job. The Sixth Commandment will always remain the "Difficult Commandment," and to develop the moral strength needed to withstand the temptations of today we must draw upon all resources of nature and grace.

In order to attack the evil of sex mania at the root, we must oppose naturalism, as well as animalism, and be consistent in practicing the Gospel of Christ Crucified—and that not only at the Communion rail and in the confessional, but also in the heart of the home, in the market place, in the shop, in the office, in the press, and in the thousand other

ramifications of our American life. But such consistency is impossible without complete character education of both young and old.

To illustrate the results of such character education I should like to quote the testimony of a physician. He writes:

I asked an excellent young man who had much trouble with sex matters and who later overcame all such weaknesses, as to what he felt had helped him most in his battle. He answered: "Laying the natural foundation first, getting matters clearly explained and 'lined up,' then building upon that with prayer and the Sacraments of the Church". I might add that this young man always felt free to go to the priest and ask about anything he did not understand and was curious about.

You will note again that what saved this young man was the building up of his character on natural *and* supernatural motives. It is such building up of character that is the best training in chastity. To build up character properly we must have a clear conception of what character really is. It may assist us to remember that the term is derived from the Greek word which means an instrument to cut furrows or to engrave. Your character is the sum-total of all the qualities that have been engraved upon your soul and that have become part and parcel of you. To be a man or woman of character your life must be controlled by principle and not ruled by mere impulse. You cannot have real character unless you have a completely formed will. The more you strengthen your will the stronger you will be in resisting the allurements of sex. You can always do

what you are determined to do. If you say with all your strength of determination, "I will be chaste," you will find it possible with the help of God to remain chaste. We all have more power than will, and it is only by way of an excuse that any person fancies that chastity is impossible for himself. While it is important to remember that everyone must be chaste, it is even more important never to forget that with the help of God everyone *can* be chaste.

Another factor that is essential to character building is the formation of habits. Every man is a bundle of habits. You may find your human nature to be weak, yet you can correct almost any such weakness by the formation of a good habit. Hence you might say of any adult that he is what his habits make him. Your character is the result of acquired habits added to your natural temperament. Your temperament is what you are by nature. Your character is what you have made of yourself because of your habits.

Most of the habits that we retain through life are formed in our childhood, between the years three to fourteen, and therefore it is the duty of all parents to begin early with habituating their children to what will form the basis of their character. One of the most important habits to be formed in children is to train them to be moderate in their wants. There is here no thought of denying them joys and pleasures. No, childhood should be filled with joy. Joy is the child's birthright. Yet even the very young child should learn that no one can satisfy all his wishes, and that every young person must be habituated to moderate his wishes lest he grow miserable later in life over the fact that he cannot get everything his heart desires. It would be

conducive to this end to have parents and teachers remember the equation: H equals P-W. H stands for happiness; P, for what you possess; W, for what you want. The more you reduce your wants, the more you increase your happiness.

When we consider how alluring are the temptations of sex, we realize the urgent need of training the young in habits of self-control. There was good reason for Archbishop John L. Spalding to appeal to mothers: "O mothers, you whose love is the best any of us have known, harden your sons, and urge them on, not in the race for wealth, but in the steep and narrow path wherein, through self-conquest and self-knowledge, they rise towards God and all high things".

While it is the duty of parents to give their children all necessary sex instruction, it is even more important to instruct the young people in what may be called the strategy of the Holy War. You parents will do this if you train your children every now and then to deny themselves some favorite food, or to conquer laziness, or to ignore pain. By doing this, you good fathers and mothers will put iron into the blood of your children. Your boys and girls will thus be trained early to exercise themselves spiritually, that is, to practice asceticism, for asceticism means spiritual exercise. These young people will be laying foundations for the standards that stand eternally: The real test of character is not what we have, but what we are; and, our real self is best tested not by what we can get, but by what we can do without.

Whatever makes a child struggle with himself strengthens him. Here is a challenge to our schools to co-operate with the work of the home. It may be

necessary for many teachers to change some of their present practices in order to train their pupils to acquire habits of self-control and self-denial. The tendency has been for some time and is still to smooth the road and to remove all difficulties from the life of the pupil. Too many of our schoolrooms are largely playrooms. A French critic of American education remarks sharply: "Easy methods seem to be a dogma with Americanizers. Easy is the word one hears all the time in connection with the art of teaching."

Making all things easy for the pupil will only soften him. Such softening is helping the devil who is eager to take out the child's backbone and pour in jelly. But to practice chastity we need the backbone of a strong character based on the principles of Christ. Some of these principles are embodied in the plain declarations of Christ: "If any man will follow me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mark VIII:34); "Whosoever doth not carry his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Luke XIV:27). St. Paul practiced these principles of Christ for he chastised his body, and brought it into subjection (I Corinthians IX:27). Following the example of this brave soldier of Christ, our young people should make the following their principle for life: "*Not what I like but what is right.*"

If you will present properly to the boys and girls this struggle for self-conquest you will find their hearts glowing with enthusiasm to follow Christ their Leader. The struggle for self-conquest will appeal to their love of adventure as being sport of the highest order for they realize that aggressive fighting for the right promises the noblest achieve-

ment that the world affords. In the war for the control of our emotional nature, the offensive is the best defense of the higher nature. To take the offensive is the best defense—that is the simple principle underlying the work of self-discipline. He who passively waits for the temptations to come from his animal nature is sure to fall. Why not forestall these temptations to evil by temptations to right-doing? Our sensuous nature must, from the very beginning, be severely disciplined and trained to obedience. To encourage the voluntary practice of self-conquest is the most practical and thorough-going training in chastity.

We trust we have made it plain that the need of the hour is complete education, not mere sex instruction. Young people need education of the whole man, not education merely from the ears up. Knowledge alone is a corpse, and, as it takes a soul to move a body, so it takes the grace of God to make our instruction effective. To get a good man, *you must develop the will of the boy and give him character*; but you cannot do that without religion. Without religion you may develop certain natural virtues in the child, but you cannot develop the strong character needed to withstand the fierce temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

“Take religion out of the school,” said the shrewd Napoleon, “and you will soon have your highways infested with robbers and cutthroats.” We have made the dangerous experiment in our country: we have taken religion out of our public schools, and our newspapers bring us sensational evidence day after day of the crimes committed by robbers and murderers. In fact, America has the highest murder rate of any civilized nation today.

The Duke of Wellington was a great soldier and esteemed physical prowess, but he recognized the need of religion for complete manhood, and therefore insisted: "By teaching your children only the three R's, leaving out the big R of religion, you produce only a fourth R, rascaldom." Cardinal Newman was second to none in his admiration for knowledge, but knew that human learning is a poor defense in the hour of temptation: "Quarry the granite rock with razors, or moor a vessel with a thread of silk; then you may hope with such keen and delicate instruments as human knowledge and human reason to contend against those giants, the passion and the pride of man."

Yes, only a character strong as steel and based on faith and religious principle can win out in the grim battle of life. A smattering of geography, or an acquaintance with physiology, will not carry our children through life, but a capacity for doing what they do not want to do, if it be a thing which needs to be done. They will later on have to do many things they do not want to do, if their lives are going to be worth the living, and the sooner they learn to stand by their guns, the better for them, and for all those whose welfare will lie in their hands. The child must be trained to brave the jeers of the crowd, to be *not only a man in the world but a man against the world*. No man can attain his eternal destiny if he has not a character firmly grounded on supernatural faith. Such a character is the one thing necessary for this life and the life hereafter. "Nothing matters but character," declares Father Vaughan, "in social life you are a visiting card; in politics you are only a vote; when you travel you are a ticket; in a hotel you are a

number. But before God you are a character". While character is therefore important for the individual, it is no less important for the nation. Our men and women of character are, indeed, the conscience of our nation.

These men and women of character are likewise the hope of our nation. We expect them to do for America in the twentieth century what the early Christians did for the world of their day. The early Christians did their part to save the world from ruin because, amid the debauchery of pagan Rome, they dared to be different. For instance, when Agnes was tempted to sin by the son of the Prefect of Rome, she had the courage to say "No", and thus proved herself different from the average girl of her time. And because she was different, 300 millions of Christians revere her today as a Saint and as a glory of womanhood. For sixteen hundred years she has inspired girls the world over to remain pure, and the very dungeon where she was tempted to sin, a place of shame in ancient Rome, is now a shrine and a house of prayer, with the miracles wrought by her courage depicted on the walls. Had Agnes been common like other Roman girls, no one would today even know the name of the Roman maiden. But because she dared to be different, she is still an inspiration to all our girls and women to be different today, and by being different to save their own souls and at the same time show to our distracted world the only way out of the misery of sin.

When France was growing decadent in the eighteenth century, one French nobleman remarked to his companion: "Let us be different; let us be distinguished." That was true nobility: *noblesse oblige*. They were true noblemen for not doing what

everybody else was doing. Similarly, our boys and girls and our men and women must say to one another, and often must whisper to themselves alone: "Let us be different; let us be distinguished; we are the children of God; we must keep the tradition of God in a world that is wallowing in filth and that is threatened with the ruin that is always the wages of sin."

My dear Friends of the Radio Audience, ask God to give you the courage and strength to set the fashion of decency by daring always to be different from those who follow the ways of sin and filth.

TOPICS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. If a person has had the misfortune to contract a habit against purity, will frequent Confession alone break that bad habit? What else must that person do? (See Kirsch, *Sex Education and Training in Chastity*, pp. 377-380).
2. It will help you in forming a good habit to associate therewith a feeling of pleasure or satisfaction. Make a list of all the feelings of pleasure and satisfaction a person may associate with the habit of chastity.
3. Make a list of self-denials that you would think advisable for: (1) a boy; (2) a girl; (3) fathers; (4) mothers.
4. Who is stronger, the pure person or the impure person? Give two reasons for your answer.
5. Give a practical illustration of the equation: H equals P-W. H stands for happiness; P for what you possess; W for what you want.
6. What saint appeals to you most as the patron of purity? Why? Tell a friend the story of his or her life.
7. Draw a practical conclusion from each of the following Scripture texts with regard to the practice of chastity: "He that loveth danger shall perish in it" (Ecclesiasticus, III: 27); "This kind of devil is not cast out but by prayer and fasting" (Matthew XVII:20); "The imagination and thought of man's heart are prone to evil from his youth" (Genesis VIII:21).
8. Which takes more courage: to do what everybody else is doing, or to dare to be different? Give two examples to illustrate the truth of your answer.

9. Write out all the ways in which you can help to fight the battle: (1) against bad books; (2) against bad magazines; (3) against bad newspapers; (4) against bad movies.
10. Can we remain pure if we do not practice self-control? Why? Or if we do not practice self-denial? Why? Give two examples of self-control. Of self-denial.
11. If you are interested in making a thorough study of the importance of self-denial, you ought to read **Cardinal Plain Sermons** (Longmans, Green & Co., 55 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.).
12. The literature listed in the bibliography on pages 68-69 will assist you in preparing papers for club discussion. Here are a few titles suggested for such papers: "Natural and Supernatural Aids to Chastity" (See Kirsch, **Sex Education and Training in Chastity**, pp. 328-340). "Education for Marriage" (See the pamphlets by Cooper and Meyer, and Kirsch, **Sex Education and Training in Chastity**, pp. 430-457). "Character Training in Adolescence" (See Kirsch, **Sex Education and Training in Chastity**, pp. 283-328).

THE CHRISTIAN HOME

Address Delivered on June 5, 1938

We have thirty million homes in America today. Imagine what a power for chastity these thirty million homes would prove to be if each of these households were a truly Christian home. But alas! in bringing up the subject of the American home we come face to face with what is probably the weakest link in our defense of chastity. This is a critical situation because no chain is stronger than its weakest link. And what makes the situation almost disastrous is that while the Christian home is essential for the chastity of any nation, the Christian home has disappeared to an alarming extent from our land. There is too much truth in the description of the American home as a garage with a bedroom attached, or in the comparison between it and a railway lunch counter, where we dash in for a hurried bite of food and dash out again and away.

But this is not the worst phase of the subject. We have government statistics showing that the sins committed against chastity in the very heart of the home are threatening the extinction of our race. Because of these sins against chastity we shall soon be a dying nation. The American family is harboring the germs of physical and moral decay. Our present-day marriage is in many instances a cloak for immorality. One marriage out of every six ends in divorce, and because the re-marriage of divorcees has been legalized in all of our forty-eight States, we are now witnessing the national scandal of having successive polygamy practiced throughout our land.

There are other dark spots in the picture. Our

annual crime bill amounts to thirteen billion dollars. We have the highest murder rate of any civilized nation. It is estimated that seventy-five millions of our countrymen are not baptized and that about sixty millions never attend any church service. There is sufficient evidence to warrant the drastic statement made by a non-Catholic writer, Paul B. Bull in his *Economics of the Kingdom of God* (New York, 1928, p. 171): "Society is rapidly becoming like a multitude of worms crawling away from a decaying corpse, when God meant it to be a living body composed, as our bodies are, of countless millions of cells, each one of which has an independent life of its own, with an impulse to realize that life by spending it on the commonwealth."

The spectacle of the American nation dying chiefly because of its sins against chastity presents gruesome proof of the truth of St. Paul's text: "The wages of sin is death" (Romans VI:23). Sin brought death into the world, and today sin is bringing death not only to the individual soul, but to our nation, and the race.

If you present these frightful facts to the average American he will probably reply: "Yes, the American home has broken down, but we now expect the school to do what the home did before. The American school will save our nation." How I wish this were true for the sake of our beloved country! Being a teacher myself I like to agree with those who expect great things from the school. Yet facts compel me to say that the school is not the most important factor even in the education of the child. The school alone cannot possibly furnish the education that the child needs today to remain chaste amid the allurements of our sex-mad age.

In studying this problem, one must remember that the child is in the school for only a small fraction of his time. Out of the 180,000 hours between birth and the age of legal maturity, the child spends an average of only 7,000 hours in school. That is to say, the child spends on an average less than 4 percent of his time in school, and the other 96 percent he spends at home or in other environments. The home, moreover, has charge of the child for six or seven years before the school is ever given an opportunity to influence him. Nor may we forget that over 17 millions of our children under fourteen years of age are being educated in schools from which Religion is excluded. Consequently, it is obvious that the home has far and away the advantage of the school in shaping the lives of the young.

Parents, and especially mothers, should never forget that they are the senior members in the firm of Home, School & Company. One good mother is worth a hundred school teachers. Is it not true that with regard to the training in morality even the best of schools can furnish little more than the theory, while the home must furnish the practice of the theory? Unless the practice of the home is in agreement with the theory of the school, the home will even undo the work of the school. Children do not learn much morality from copy-book maxims. They learn more from example. They do not learn nearly so much from what their parents *tell* them as from the way they see their parents *live*. Parents may say to their children what they please but they thunder what they are. Yet all too often what the parents are shrieks so loudly that the bewildered children cannot hear what their parents say.

Even the pastor is struggling against over-

whelming odds if he has not the mothers cooperating with him. The Spanish proverb is right in saying: "An ounce of mother is worth a pound of clergy." St. Wenceslaus is, as far as I know, the only Saint on record with a bad mother, clearly reminding us that only a good mother may expect to bring up a worthy son or daughter. The ideal situation obtains where the father acts on the principle that he is taking God's place in the home, while the mother does her part as the guardian angel of the family. In such a home the father's word is rightly law for the whole household, since both by precept and example he is in full accord with God's holy will. And the mother by her persuasive charm and holy living makes the home reminiscent of the Family of Nazareth.

But to have such a home the husband and wife must be mindful that God Himself has joined them together in holy wedlock, and that because of the Sacrament of Matrimony received at the foot of the Altar of God, the Lord will bless them daily in every way. Mindful of God's special purpose of Matrimony the husband and wife of a truly Christian home would never dare to do anything that might prevent the realization of this aim of marriage, and they deem it a privilege to cooperate with God in the generation of children. In facing the responsibility of parenthood they are inspired by Christ's words: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not. For of such is the kingdom of God" (St. Mark X:14). In such a home the father and mother regard their children as a sacred trust committed to their care, and bring them up in the fear and love of the Lord.

In one such home which I know, the father

happens to be the leading attorney not only of the city but also of the State. Yet he never allows his professional and social obligations to interfere with his duties to his God or his children. He attends Mass not only on Sundays but every day of the week, yet has ample time for his family. One day I remarked to one of his sons, a red-blooded youngster of twelve: "Dick, God has given you a wonderful Dad."

"Yes," replied the boy, "Dad is swell."

I asked: "Why do you think your Dad is swell?"

"Dad always plays with us," came the quick reply.

And I know that this father not only plays with his growing boys, but also prays with them and works with them over their lessons. Little wonder that his boys are a credit to their parents.

A millworker loved both his God and children so dearly that though he had to toil all through the night in the mill, he took his boy and girl to Mass every morning of the year. In the home of a coal-miner, the children assembled nightly with their father around the family altar for their night prayers, and the boys and girls, now mature men and women, regard the memory of these family prayers as one of the few bright spots in a childhood rich in privation and suffering. Even now they recall the feeling they had as children that because all the family gathered together every night in Christ's name, God always continued to live in the midst of them.

A truly Christian father was thus described to me by his daughter, a young college woman: "My

father," she explained, "has to make many trans-continental flights on business. Yet we are never anxious about his safety. Every day we know he says the rosary for all of us, and we children on our part say the rosary for him daily."

There was a glow of pride in the eyes of the girl as she spoke of her father, and we may confidently trust that she will always prove herself a valiant Christian woman.

In another Christian home I know, the father who is a physician with a large practice has the family say the Rosary in common every day after dinner, and only after the Rosary has been said are the grown-up sons and daughters free to look after their social affairs.

Another man lost his wife when the youngest of his seven children was eight months old. Though the man had large business interests and many social obligations, he felt that his first duty was the Christian upbringing of his children. Every morning he and his children attended Mass and received Holy Communion. Realizing the deep influence of environment he had the crucifix and religious pictures occupy the place of honor throughout the home. Every evening he and his children gathered together in a small oratory for the family night prayers. This man's home showed convincingly what a father can accomplish even after death has taken the mother away.

While all these fathers were undoubtedly an inspiration to their children, we must admit that it is the mother after all that is best fitted for teaching even the hardest lessons of Christianity. Let me tell you how one mother taught the lesson not only of

self-denial, but even joy in suffering. * Mary, her eight-year-old daughter, came home from school one day weeping bitterly. After much questioning, the mother got this story of grief from Mary:

“Lucy, my best friend, told a secret to Nancy, right in front of me, and would not tell me what she had said.”

The mother, steeped in the teaching of the Church from her cradle, explained to Mary:

“What Lucy did was not a nice thing for her to do. It is never nice to whisper in public, and it is cruel to hurt the feelings of others. But I want to tell you something today which I wish you to remember as long as you live. Life, my dear child, has many hurts. This may be your first hurt, but there will be more. In life there is great joy, but there is sorrow as well. The sorrow, however, can be softened, and often turned to joy if you will do what mother is going to tell you now. The next time someone hurts you, stop a second, and realize that the hurt really makes your heart ache; then look right up to God, and tell Him that you offer Him every bit of your pain and ask Him to let it make up for the times when you have hurt Him, or when someone else has hurt Him. You try this, Mary, and tell me what happens.”

About two weeks later, Mary literally burst into the house. Before her mother had an opportunity to question the cause of the radiant glow on her beaming face, Mary cried:

“I did it, mommy!”

* For much of the subsequent material the author is indebted to the excellent article, “The Home as an Institution of Religious Education” by Mrs. John E. McAniff, published in the Proceedings of the National Catechetical Congress held in New York in 1936, pp. 219-228.

“Did what, Mary?”

“Offered it up. Lucy whispered to Nancy again today. And it hurt awful, but I looked right up to God, right into His eyes, mommy, and said: ‘God, it hurts hard, but I give it all to You to make up for the time I hurt You. And, mommy, the hurt all went away and I was glad all the way through.’”

And Mary who now has a family of her own, despite many and many a hurt, has remained glad down through the years, and she will always be glad all the way through because her mother put into practice at home what the Sister had taught at school, and what the priest had taught at church. Mary learned early in life not to deny the cross, not to avoid it by seeking a substitute, as some sophists would have us do, but to consecrate all suffering by saying: “Thy will be done; I accept this for my sins.” By so doing she experienced the divine truth and comfort of Christ’s words: “Come to me all you that labour, and are burdened, and I will refresh you . . . For my yoke is sweet and my burden light” (Matthew XI:28, 30). At eight Mary was taught the only philosophy that, under all circumstances, can make for joyous living. Whenever she meets the ever-recurring question of the agnostic and atheist, “How can you believe in a God Who is infinitely good and omnipotent and yet allows pain to exist”, she can answer from her own experience. She can perhaps not fully explain why God believes pain essential to the development of character, but she can explain that sorrow is not necessarily a thing of evil. Like her mother, she is now living joyfully despite sorrow, as do all souls who have truly mastered Christ’s philosophy of suffering. Too many of us have but partially mastered His philos-

ophy, and so are not sufficiently happy in our religion. The home must practice what Christ taught—that following Him sweetens all of life. Then children will be won to Christ because He has taught us not only the truth in life, but also the joy in life.

It is a mother such as Mary had that will always stand by the Church when she insists that right is right and wrong is wrong. If such a mother finds a movie on the Grade “D” list she will know it is bad, and she will refuse Johnny permission to see the picture even though her son presents the plea of all children: “But, mother, every guy on the block is going to see it.”

Again, if such a mother has refused to let her daughter go to the dance with the boy who carries a flask on his hip, she will not yield even though the girl says the inevitable: “Mother, I hate to say this; you are good and kind, but really, you are hopelessly old-fashioned.” By such consistency in not yielding the mother will uphold the standards of God and of all decent people, and will be prepared to give the proper answer when later in life her daughter questions the so-called “old-fashioned” standards of the Church on divorce, birth control, and marriage in general.

Home training such as this is the need of the hour, and therefore the will of God. Given such home training, you will see miracles of grace in our young people. It was good home training and fine Catholic schooling that were responsible under God for the miracle of grace wrought in June, 1935, in Peoria, Illinois, when Mildred Hallmark, a girl of nineteen, suffered death rather than lose her virtue. The power of her example so impressed even the boy who killed her that he became a Catholic before

he was executed in the electric chair. The girl had gone to Holy Communion the very morning she died, and in her purse was found a copy of Father Lord's pamphlet, *The Pure of Heart*.

Dear Friends, you will agree with me that fathers and mothers such as I have described are the salt of the earth and the hope of the nation. Thank God, we still have many of them with us. Look around in your own community, and you will find them. Do be brave as they are. The family and the home are pillars of the temple of Christian civilization. The fathers and mothers who continue to maintain Christian homes in America today are giving us hope under God that America can be made chaste, and America must be made chaste if we are to avert the ruin of our nation and the misery of millions.

TOPICS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Give two illustrations of the fact that the school can furnish only the theory of morality while the home must furnish the practice thereof.
2. Make a list of the factors that you think responsible for the breakdown of the American home. Make a list of all that you and your friends can do to remedy this situation.
3. Write out a list of all that your parent-teacher association (or mothers' club or similar organization) can do to promote cooperation between the home, the school, and the Church. For suggestions, see Kirsch, *Sex Education and Training in Chastity*, pp. 149-163: and also the pamphlet, *Home, School & Co.*
4. Go through your home and make a list of all that might be helpful or harmful to the practice of chastity; examine the books, magazines, pictures. Which of these should be used for a bonfire?
5. What answer will you give to your son (or daughter) when he accuses you of being "old-fashioned" because you insist on God's law with regard to parties, drinking, or petting and necking? Check in the attached book list

those titles that would help you and your children to see God's viewpoint in all these matters. How many of these titles are available in your home library?

6. Which of the following prayers could and should be said in common in the home: morning prayers, night prayers, prayers before and after meals?
7. Can you explain clearly to a non-Catholic what is God's law with regard to the practice of birth control? Check in the attached bibliography those titles that would help you in giving this explanation.
8. How would you prove that the observance of God's law with regard to company keeping makes for the true happiness of young people, both before and during marriage?
9. Make a list of Christian homes that you know in your own community. Why do you consider each of these a truly Christian home? What practices of theirs should you introduce into your own home?
10. Make a list of Church Laws governing marriage. Prove that the observance of these laws will promote the temporal and spiritual welfare of the married couple as well as of their children.
11. Is your home one where your own family like to linger? If not, why not? What will you do to have them enjoy their home?
12. Make a list of all that you have done yourself to make your home a pleasant place for: (1) your mother; (2) your father; (3) the boys of the family; (4) the girls of the family; (5) your guests; (6) the friends of your children.
13. Suppose Christ and His Holy Mother would spend a week-end in your home. Of what practices in your home would they approve? Would they disapprove of any? Why?
14. In the attached book list check those titles that would be helpful to you in preparing papers on the following subjects: "Why are the Laws of God and the Precepts of the Church the best safeguards of the happiness of the Home?" "Why is the home more important than the school for training the children in chastity?" "What can parents do to keep their children chaste?"

CATHOLIC LITERATURE ON THE SEX PROBLEM

The best way to drive out darkness is to open wide the doors to let in God's sunlight. Similarly, to correct the pernicious doctrines that are being shouted from the housetops, we must make known God's views on this important subject. Fortunately we now have available a plentiful supply of Catholic literature to meet all needs.

On Christian Marriage (Casti Connubii), encyclical letter of His Holiness Pope Pius XI (1930). Published by National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. (10 cents).

Next on the list is **Sex Education and Training in Chastity** by the Rev. Felix M. Kirsch, O. M. Cap., Ph. D., Litt. D., published by Benziger Brothers, 26 Park Place, New York, N. Y. (\$2.00). This book of 540 pages has rightly been called a Catholic encyclopedia on chastity. With the help of this book parents, priests, teachers, and social workers would seem to be well equipped to meet every need in the field. The book answers in detail all such questions as to when the sex instructions must be given to the child, who must give the instruction, what must be said, and how it must be said. Individual chapters deal with the control of bad thoughts, bad talk, the solitary sin, and the association between the sexes. Other important sections deal with the education for marriage and Catholic character education. The author is at home in psychology and biology, but rightly insists that while the natural helps must be employed, it is the supernatural aids of prayer, Confession, and Communion that are most effective. While this book thus meets every need of the mature reader, there are other publications for particular needs.

For instance, **Watchful Elders** by the Rev. Kilian J. Hennrich, O. M. Cap., M. A., published by the Bruce Publishing Co., North Milwaukee Street, Milwaukee, Wis. (40 cents), instructs parents how to give the necessary sex information to children. The pamphlet contains further material that may be used in early and late adolescence, and deals also with particularly difficult cases.

Safeguards of Chastity by the Rev. Fulgence Meyer, O. F. M., published by St. Francis Book Shop, 1615 Republic Street, Cincinnati, Ohio (25 cents), offers reverent instruction on chastity for adolescent boys. The author suggests that fathers read and explain to their adolescent boys those portions of the book that pertain to their age and condition. **Helps to Purity** by the same author is a companion volume for adolescent girls.

The Heart of a Young Man or Talks on Personal Purity by the Rev. Lionel E. Pire, C.P.P.S., published by F. Pustet Company, 14 Barclay Street, New York, N. Y. (25 cents), will prove useful to both parents and teachers. A teaching Brother who has used the book for several years with high

school boys, reports that the young people have been greatly helped by the information given by Father Pire.

I'm Keeping Company Now! by the Rev. Fulgence Meyer, O. F. M., published by The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street, New York, N. Y. (5 cents), deals in a clear, helpful way with the temptations that assail young people during the period of courtship. The author presents telling evidence to prove that God's law still holds in our day, and shows at the same time how prayer, Confession, and Communion make possible the practice of the holy virtue even during the time of greatest danger.

The Difficult Commandment by the Rev. C. C. Martindale, S. J., published by P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 12 Barclay Street, New York, N. Y. (25 cents), deals with the subject of self-control in a way that will appeal especially to young men. The same author has edited a companion volume for young women, **Into Their Company** (25 cents).

Plain Talks on Marriage by the Rev. Fulgence Meyer, O. F. M., published by St. Francis Book Shop, 1615 Republic Street, Cincinnati, Ohio (25 cents), is a booklet for people who are married, or who are about to be married. The author, who has had many years' experience both in teaching theology and in preaching missions, offers practical help in the difficult problems that confront married people today.

Birth Control, by the Rev. John M. Cooper, D. D., published by the National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. (25 cents), is an excellent manual on a difficult subject for married men and women.

Sex Instruction, by the Rev. P. J. Bruckner, S. J., published by the Queen's Work Press, 3742 West Pine Blvd., St. Louis, Missouri (25 cents). A guide for parents, teachers, and others responsible for the training of young people. The booklet supplies the exact words in which the essential knowledge of sex may be given to children and young people.

The Sex Problem, published by the Paulist Press, 401 W. 59th Street, New York, N. Y. (5 cents), and **Training in Chastity**, published by Our Sunday Visitor Press, Huntington, Indiana (5 cents), by the Rev. Felix M. Kirsch, O. M. Cap., contain abstracts from his book on the subject of chastity and have been edited with a view to use in the pamphlet rack.

Aids to Purity by a Redemptorist Father, Our Sunday Visitor Press, Huntington, Indiana (10 cents).

Keeping Company, When Is It a Sin? by Mary McGill, Our Sunday Visitor Press, Huntington, Indiana (10 cents).

Home, School & Co., by the Rev. Felix M. Kirsch, O. M. Cap., published by Our Sunday Visitor Press, Huntington, Indiana (5 cents), is a pamphlet showing the need of teamwork between the Church, the Home, and the School to achieve proper results in the moral training of the children.

Of Dirty Stories, by Rev. Daniel A. Lord, S. J. Queen's Work Press, 3742 West Pine Blvd., St. Louis, Missouri (10 cents).

THE PURPOSE OF THE CATHOLIC HOUR

(Extract from the address of the late Patrick Cardinal Hayes at the inaugural program of the Catholic Hour in the studio of the National Broadcasting Company, New York City, March 2, 1930.)

Our congratulations and our gratitude are extended to the National Council of Catholic Men and its officials, and to all who, by their financial support, have made it possible to use this offer of the National Broadcasting Company. The heavy expense of managing and financing a weekly program, its musical numbers, its speakers, the subsequent answering of inquiries, must be met. . . .

This radio hour is for all the people of the United States. To our fellow-citizens, in this word of dedication, we wish to express a cordial greeting and, indeed, congratulations. For this radio hour is one of service to America, which certainly will listen in interestedly, and even sympathetically, I am sure, to the voice of the ancient Church with its historic background of all the centuries of the Christian era, and with its own notable contribution to the discovery, exploration, foundation and growth of our glorious country. . . .

Thus to voice before a vast public the Catholic Church is no light task. Our prayers will be with those who have that task in hand. We feel certain that it will have both the good will and the good wishes of the great majority of our countrymen. Surely, there is no true lover of our Country who does not eagerly hope for a less worldly, a less material, and a more spiritual standard among our people.

With good will, with kindness and with Christ-like sympathy for all, this work is inaugurated. So may it continue. So may it be fulfilled. This word of dedication voices, therefore, the hope that this radio hour may serve to make known, to explain with the charity of Christ, our faith, which we love even as we love Christ Himself. May it serve to make better understood that faith as it really is—a light revealing the pathway to heaven: a strength, and a power divine through Christ; pardoning our sins, elevating, consecrating our common every-day duties and joys, bringing not only justice but gladness and peace to our searching and questioning hearts.

96 CATHOLIC HOUR STATIONS

In 41 States, the District of Columbia, and Hawaii

Alabama	Mobile	WALA	1410 kc
Arizona	Phoenix	KTAR	620 kc
	Safford	KGLU	1450 kc
	Tucson	KVOA	1290 kc
	Yuma	KYUM	1240 kc
Arkansas	Little Rock	KARK	920 kc
California	Fresno	KMJ	580 kc
	Los Angeles	KECA	790 kc
	San Francisco	KPO	680 kc
Colorado	Denver	KOA	850 kc
Connecticut	Hartford	WTIC*	1080 kc
District of Columbia	Washington	WRC	980 kc
Florida	Jacksonville	WJAX	930 kc
	Lakeland	WLAK	1340 kc
	Miami	WIOD	610 kc
	Pensacola	WCOA	1370 kc
	Tampa	WFLA-WSUN	970-620 kc
Georgia	Atlanta	WSB	750 kc
	Savannah	WSAV	1340 kc
Idaho	Boise	KIDO	1380 kc
Illinois	Chicago	WMAQ	670 kc
Indiana	Fort Wayne	WGL	1450 kc
	Terre Haute	WBOW	1230 kc
Kansas	Wichita	KANS	1240 kc
Kentucky	Louisville	WAVE*	970 kc
Louisiana	New Orleans	WSMB*	1350 kc
	Shreveport	KTBS	1480 kc
Maine	Augusta	WRDO	1400 kc
Maryland	Baltimore	WBAL	1090 kc
Massachusetts	Boston	WBZ*	1030 kc
	Springfield	WBZA*	1030 kc
Michigan	Detroit	WWJ*	950 kc
Minnesota	Duluth-Superior	WEBC	1320 kc
	Mankato	KYSM	1230 kc
	Rochester	KROC	1340 kc
	St. Cloud	KFAM	1450 kc
	St. Paul	WHLB	1400 kc
	Hibbing	WMFC	1240 kc
Mississippi	Jackson	WJDX	1300 kc
Missouri	Kansas City	WDAF	610 kc
	Springfield	KGBX	1260 kc
	Saint Louis	KSD*	550 kc
Montana	Billings	KGHL	790 kc
	Bozeman	KRBM	1450 kc
	Butte	KGIR	1370 kc
	Helena	KPFA	1240 kc
Nebraska	Omaha	WOW	590 kc

96 CATHOLIC HOUR STATIONS

In 41 States, the District of Columbia, and Hawaii

New York	Buffalo	WBEN	930 kc
	New York	WEAF	660 kc
	Schenectady	WGY	810 kc
North Carolina	Charlotte	WSOC*	1240 kc
	Raleigh	WPTF	680 kc
	Winston-Salem	WSJS	600 kc
North Dakota	Bismarck	KFYR	550 kc
	Fargo	WDAY	970 kc
Ohio	Cincinnati	WSAI	1360 kc
	Cleveland	WTAM	1100 kc
	Columbus	WCOL	1230 kc
	Dayton	WING	1410 kc
	Lima	WLOK	1240 kc
	Toledo	WSPD	1370 kc
	Zanesville	WHIZ	1240 kc
Oklahoma	Tulsa	KVOO	1170 kc
Oregon	Medford	KMED	1440 kc
	Portland	KGW	620 kc
Pennsylvania	Allentown	WSAN	1470 kc
	Altoona	WFBG	1340 kc
	Johnstown	WJAC	1400 kc
	Lewistown	WMRF	1490 kc
	Philadelphia	KYW	1060 kc
	Pittsburgh	KDKA	1020 kc
	Reading	WRAW	1340 kc
	Wilkes-Barre	WBRE	1340 kc
	Rhode Island	Providence	WJAR
South Carolina	Charleston	WTMA	1250 kc
	Columbia	WIS	560 kc
	Florence	WOLS	1230 kc
	Greenville	WFBC	1330 kc
	Greenwood	WCRS	1450 kc
South Dakota	Sioux Falls	KSOO-KELO	1140-1230 kc
Tennessee	Kingsport	WKPT	1400 kc
	Nashville	WSM	650 kc
Texas	Amarillo	KGNC	1440 kc
	Beaumont	KFDM	560 kc
	Fort Worth	KGKO	570 kc
	Houston	KPRC	950 kc
	San Antonio	WOAI	1200 kc
	Weslaco	KRGV	1290 kc
Virginia	Norfolk	WTAR*	790 kc
	Richmond	WMBG	1380 kc
Washington	Seattle	KOMO	950 kc
	Spokane	KGA	1510 kc
West Virginia	Bluefield	WHIS	1440 kc
	Charleston	WGKV	1490 kc
Wisconsin	LaCrosse	WKBH	1410 kc
HAWAII	Honolulu	KGU	760 kc

* Delayed Broadcast

(Revised as of December 17, 1942)

