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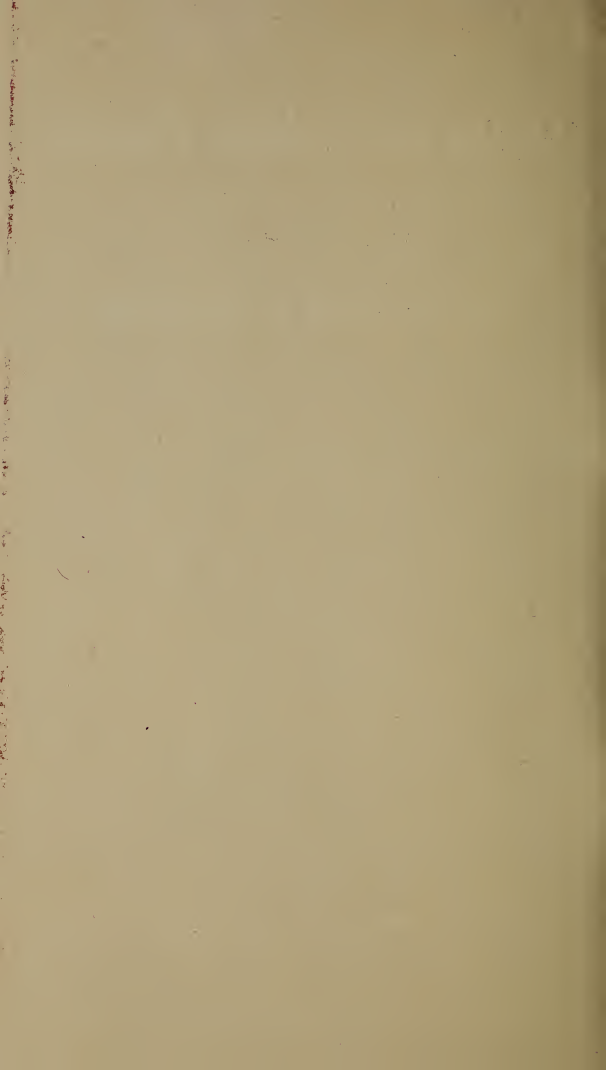
Litany for Catholic Parents

*to obtain God's blessing
and the graces of*

The Sacrament of Matrimony

by

Reverend James E. Sherman, S.F.D.



Litany for Catholic Parents

*to obtain God's blessing
and the graces of*

The Sacrament of Matrimony

together with

Certain Lessons Which Parents
Should Teach Their Children

BY

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By public recitation is meant not only as a part of a liturgical service, but even without the intervention of a priest, if it is done in a church or public oratory (Sacred Congregation of Rites, Nos. 3555, 3820, 3916).

FOREWORD

The Christianization of the home has been the constant object of the solicitude of the Holy Father and the Bishops of the Church. It is hoped that this little booklet will help parents to pray together and to implore Christ the Head of the Christian home to assist them with those graces of which they stand so much in need.

The added instruction, which deals with certain lessons parents should impart to their children, may be helpful to Cana clubs and other study groups which seek to learn more of the duties of Christian parents, and the way in which these duties may be fulfilled.

Priests who are directors of such clubs will find much matter which requires further expatiation and comment. Concrete examples must still be added in many instances.

It may be helpful to leave to the initiative of the parents themselves who attend, or who are members of such study groups, the opportunity to suggest concrete ways and means of imparting truths and lessons to children. In this way the parents themselves will be taught to think out solutions of many of their own problems.

Through Our Lord Jesus Christ,
JAMES E. SHERMAN.

Cincinnati, Ohio.

LITANY

**For Those Who Have Received the Holy
Sacrament of Matrimony in Order
to Obtain God's Blessing and
the Graces of the Same
Holy Sacrament**

(For Private Use Only)

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of Heaven: Have mercy on us.

God, the Son, Redeemer of the World: Have
mercy on us.

God, the Holy Ghost: Have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God: Have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, Mother of God and Model of
Christian Motherhood: Pray for us.

Saint Joseph, Head of the Holy Family, and Holy Model of Fatherhood: Pray for us.

Lord Jesus, Child of the Holy Family: We beseech Thee, hear us. (This response is now continued.)

Thou Who by Thy Holy Incarnation didst both dignify and sanctify our human nature:

Thou Who didst assist at the Wedding Feast of Cana:

Thou Who didst institute the Holy Sacrament of Matrimony:

Thou Who wast appointed the King and Center of all families and hearts:

That Thou bless us:

Thou Thou bless our home and all our family:

That Thou grant us the gift of strong Faith in Thee:

That Thou establish us in unfailling Hope in Thee:

That Thou inflame our hearts with true Love of Thee:

That Thou send Thy Holy Spirit to illumine our minds and strengthen our wills:

That Thou send Thy Holy Spirit to support us in all our undertakings:

That Thou cause us to be meek and humble of heart:

That Thou make our minds turn to things eternal:

That Thou lead us to receive often the Holy Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist:

That Thou take possession of our home, and make of it a house of prayer and devotion:

That Thou teach us to love and honor the Holy Sacrament of Matrimony which we have received:

That Thou teach us to rely upon and cherish the graces which daily we receive through this Holy Sacrament:

That Thou teach us to pray, and Thyself pray within us:

That Thou teach us to pray always, that we may present our daily work to Thee as an acceptable sacrifice:

That Thou teach us to pray for the blessing of many children as Thy most precious gifts:

That Thou teach us to prepare ourselves worthily for the duties of our state of life and of parenthood:

That Thou teach us to be truly devoted to Thee, that by example as well as by word we may teach our children and subjects:

That Thou help us to know and obey Thy Divine Will:

That Thou help us to remain always in the state of sanctifying grace:

That Thou help us to be detached from the spirit of the world:

That Thou help us to love and practice the holy spirit of poverty:

That Thou help us to be faithful to Thee in all our obligations in our holy union:

That Thou help us to avoid most carefully all that would defile our holy union:

That Thou help us to be faithful in all our duties to our Holy Mother, the Church:

That Thou help us to love and obey our Holy Father, the Pope, and all our bishops and pastors of souls:

That Thou help us to respect and honor each other in soul and body:

That Thou help us to be faithful to each other throughout our whole life:

That Thou help us to fulfill our duties to each other in this Holy Sacrament willingly and with love:

That Thou help us to be chaste in mind and body:

That Thou help us to be modest in all our words and actions:

That Thou help us to be temperate in the use of food and drink:

That Thou help us to be temperate and restrained in all that Thou hast made lawful to us in holy wedlock:

That Thou help us to be to each other true examples of Christian life:

That Thou help us to pray and sacrifice for each other:

That Thou help us to bear one another's burdens:

That Thou help us to be patient and kind to each other, and ready to forgive each other's faults:

That Thou help us to practice true charity to each other, and to love each other most sincerely:

That Thou help us to be benevolent to our children and all our subjects:

That Thou help us to be kind and loving to all our relatives and neighbors:

That Thou help us to render assistance to such as are in need:

That Thou help us to work earnestly for the salvation of the children entrusted to our care:

That Thou help us to direct our children in Thy holy Way:

That Thou help us to teach our children Thy holy Truth:

That Thou help us to watch over and guard our children as we ought, that they may preserve and grow in the gift of Thy holy Life:

That Thou help us to embrace for love of Thee the trials and tribulations of our state of life:

That Thou help us to accept crosses willingly and patiently:

That Thou help us to be joyful and happy of soul, though sorrows may afflict us:

That Thou help us to be prepared for death when Thou shalt summon us:

That Thou help us to regard death as the beginning of eternal life:

Graciously grant to us the health and strength of body for the tasks we must perform:

Graciously grant to us the grace to grow old together in health:

Graciously grant to our children, and to our children's children, the gift of Faith and eternal salvation:

Graciously grant to our children, and to our children's children, the gift of priestly and religious vocations:

Do Thou bless us with the gift of many descendants:

Do Thou bless us with the gift of many years of happy life upon the earth:

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world: *Spare us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world: *Graciously hear us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world: *Have mercy on us.*

Versicle: O Lord, hear our prayer.

Response: And let our cry come unto Thee.


LET US PRAY

Almighty God, Thou Who didst call us to this holy union, which is like unto the holy union of Thy Divine Son with His Holy Spouse, the Church, and Who, in the Holy Sacrament of Matrimony hast joined us to Him and to His Most Holy Church in a most wonderful way, grant us this day and all the days of our lives the graces and blessings of this same Holy Sacrament, that we may ever grow in holiness, and beget for Thee a faithful progeny. Through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Building the Family Ladder Which Leads to

GOD



		
Parents	Love, docility to instruction and grateful and prayerful assistance of their parents.	Children
	Christian education and support of their children.	
	Virtuous imitation and fulfillment of the precepts of their parents.	Children
Parents	Good example and Christian direction rendered to the children.	
	Reverence and obedience shown to their parents.	Children
Parents	Responsibility and authority rightly held sacred and administered as such.	

CERTAIN LESSONS WHICH PARENTS SHOULD TEACH THEIR CHILDREN

(A Guide for Parents' Study Clubs)

Based on the Pastoral Letter of the American Bishops, November, 1950

I. Awareness of God

Parents should instill a religious spirit in their children, which means that, first, they should inculcate in them a remembrance of the presence of God in everyplace, and of His action in all that occurs. Let them be taught also a remembrance of their own supernatural destiny.

The spirit of divine recollection may be implanted in the child's mind and heart by family prayer, both in the morning and evening, by grace said collectively before and after meals, by the family rosary, by reverence for a family shrine, by family visits to church outside of Mass time, by family attendance at

Mass, by family or group reception of the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist, followed by a family Communion breakfast after a worthy thanksgiving, by reverence for the crucifix, and other religious objects, by reverence in making the sign of the cross, and by a short prayer each time the clock marks the passing of another hour nearer eternity, through which the child may learn the value of time in preparing for the unending happiness of Heaven.

II. Union with God

The child must learn that he is a child of grace through baptism, and that the supernatural life of grace is greater than the life of the body. Let the child learn vividly the meaning of sanctifying grace, and the heavenly reward to which it leads; let him learn to fear mortal sin, and the punishment of hell to which it leads him, when his soul is robbed of sanctifying grace. Means of inculcating a sense of grace into the child's mind, will, and heart, must include a deepening of the child's faith in the Holy Trinity, with a personal friendship for each Divine Person.

III. Living for God

The child must be given a sense of spiritual direction, which is nothing more than training in the purpose of life. He must realize that God is not merely a name, or an abstraction, but a reality to be loved and sought, a reality that enters into His whole life, in this world as well as in the world to come. He must see God as the focus of all his activity, whether it be work of mind or body, play or prayer. Let him learn above all to unite with God his recreation, asking God's aid for the ability and success he seeks, and thanking God for His aid, even in a game that was not won.

Reverence, the Result of Union with God

The recognition of God as a concrete reality in his life requires the child to be reverent of God. First, he must be taught to revere God's Holy Name, in whatever manner he may be called upon to pronounce it, whether in prayer, in recitation, or in conversation. Let him revere the words of every prayer, especially the words he pronounces when he makes the sign of the cross. Let him be rev-

erent in church, which is God's House. Second, he must be reverent of the God-life within himself. Therefore, he must be taught to revere his own body and soul in which God dwells. He must, of a consequence, practice modesty in thought, in word, and in action; he must be pure and chaste. He must be reverent also of the souls of others whom he must not scandalize.

Imitation of Christ and the Saints

In his love for Christ he must be led to seek to imitate Him and the saints whose lives reflect His Divine Life. Love seeks to imitate. Christ's obedience, patience, thoughtfulness of others, and willingness to sacrifice himself should be objects of special instruction through word and example. Bible stories may well be read to impart these lessons. The lives of the saints should be read to show him how to reflect the life of Christ in himself, as the saints have done before him.

Power of Parental Example

The good example of parents is paramount. No instruction in virtue, or threat of punish-

ment, will be of any avail, if the example the parents give fails to illustrate the lessons imparted, or exemplify the virtue sought.

IV. Responsibility

Responsibility to God

As a consequence of the sense of spiritual direction which the child has acquired the child must acknowledge that he has a four-fold responsibility. His *first* duty is to God. He must acknowledge the divine dominion that God exercises over all things and the corresponding responsibility that he has to His Heavenly Maker.

He must be taught to show his recognition of God by his assistance at Mass on Sundays and weekdays, by daily prayer, and by the observance of God's Commandments. He must adore and praise God. He must also be taught very early to be grateful to God—to understand the purpose of gratitude to God, that it involves his acknowledgment of the precious gifts of nature and grace which God has conferred upon him. If the child is taught

to be grateful to his parents he will easily learn the meaning of gratitude to God. He must also be taught to tell God of his true sorrow for his faults. He must never be allowed to be self-sufficient, but must be taught to ask God for aid. Still, he must not be led to think that prayer of petition is enough for the fulfillment of his debt to God. Let the child learn the real meaning of the Mass, and how it does four things for him, being a supreme act of praise and adoration, of thanksgiving, of propitiation for sin or search for forgiveness, as well as petition of favors.

Responsibility in the Use of God's Gifts

Because the child is the recipient of God's gifts his *second* duty is to grow in a sense of responsibility in regard to these gifts. He must have a reverence for them because they came from God. The talents which he has received he must properly employ; the powers of sex which come to maturity as the child grows to manhood or womanhood must be respected as a distinct, new, and grave responsibility, and not a toy to be abused; he must strengthen his body through proper care

and recreation; the money which he receives he must use for proper purposes, especially divine worship and the works of religion; the clothing, books, toys, etc., that he owns have also come from God and must be acknowledged and used as if they were still God's, which indeed they really are. He must treat animals kindly, which because they have sensitive life would suffer pain at his hands were he to abuse them.

Responsibility to His Fellow Men

The *third* responsibility of the child is to his fellow man, both in his person, and in his possessions. The child, realizing that he is a child of God, must be taught that other children are also children of God. He must be taught to respect the person of other children, by not being cruel, or playing the bully, or leading them into sin. He must be reminded that God knows and loves the soul of every little child, and that God sees any injustice that is done to them. He must learn that others also share in the distribution of God's gifts, and that he must never be envious of the success of others, but rather rejoice in

another's good fortune and blessings. He should learn to be merciful and benevolent to others, especially when they are in need, even as God is to him. Let the child learn a sense of Christian brotherhood from the lesson he has already learned, namely, that God has given His gifts to all the children of the world, and not to himself alone. He must realize that God loves all children, even as He loves him.

Respect for Another's Property

The child must evaluate and cherish with responsible care not only God's gifts to himself, but also those bestowed upon others. The toys, the clothing, the books of other children must be respected even as his own. He must be taught that the possessions of others also belong to God as do his own. He must respect other children's rights in games, as he desires them to respect his own. He must be as happy to lose fairly, as to win fairly. He must be willing to give the victor his praise, as he would humbly accept it from others. He must learn to sacrifice for others, never failing to put himself out when charity urges. Justice and charity to others must be his constant goal,

even from a natural standpoint, lest he become unsociable, and unable to cope with the problems of society.

Responsibility to Society

In the *fourth* place the child must learn his responsibility to society. He must take an active part in social programs, whether they entail the promotion of parochial or religious causes, or a cause that is civic or national in character. He must be trained in leadership, yes, but this can only be through his willingness to co-operate with others. Unless he can follow a leader and work with others first, he will never be fitted for leadership in any field. In his social responsibility truthfulness is basic and must therefore be emphasized.

Daily Examination of Conscience

The child must be disciplined in the practice of daily examination of conscience, which should be more concerned with good than with evil. He must learn to lead a positive life of virtue, not a merely negative life of avoidance of sin. Each thought, each word, each deed,

must pass his scrutiny. He must not neglect to search out his sins of omission. Should he have been more kind, more charitable, more reverent, more prayerful, more studious, etc.? In what ways can he acquire virtue and make spiritual progress?

Weekly Confession and Holy Communion

The weekly confession must become an object of real delight to him. The practice of all the family going to confession weekly, though not always together, will be a powerful influence in the training of the child in the spiritual routine of regular "soul-cleansing" during his life. The happiness of a family that receives Holy Communion together on Sunday morning and unites in a breakfast-feast thereafter, will constantly remain with him during life as a happy memory of his childhood. It will help him to steer his course in the same direction. Sunday will not be Sunday without the Holy Table and the happy breakfast of love in his family, whether he be a child, or later a parent in a newly-founded family.

Friendship for His Guardian Angel

Among the most important lessons to be taught is friendship for his Guardian Angel, who helps him to fulfill his duties to God and self and fellow man. A strong love for his Guardian Angel should be implanted in his heart. Let him think of his Guardian Angel as more of a friend and helper than a mere watchman.

V. Sense of Mission: Acceptance of God's Will

The most sublime part of the education of the child consists in teaching him perfect submission to God's Will and Divine Providence. Although this subject is here treated last, it is by no means the last lesson to be taught, but one of the first. The child has a work to fulfill which is appointed for him by the Father in heaven. This mission he must seek to carry out. It does not always involve an extraordinary task. Too frequently this delusion will give the child a messianic complex, which leads it to become a dreamer. Let the child learn to recognize God's Will in

the direction that is given it by every lawful superior.

Obedience Fundamental in the Child's Training

Obedience to the commands of its parents and all lawful superiors should be a prime object to be attained in the training of a child. It should not be slavish, or material obedience only. Let the child learn to obey with its will as well as with its body. This can be gained only when the child realizes the purpose and value of obedience. It is not necessary that the child be told the reasons for each command; it should, however, be taught the reasons for obedience as such. Let the child learn that obedience to the commands of its parents, teachers and superiors is the fulfillment of its divine mission, that God speaks to it through the voice of authority.

Acceptance of Crosses

The child will find it difficult to accept crosses. It must learn, however, that these are also a part of God's largesse. In His

bounty He distributes crosses that we may be chastened. If the child learns to accept the daily trials and crosses without complaint, it will learn also to submit in the greater trials of life, when death or tragedy may demand it to say again, "Thy Will be done."

The Holy Spirit

No amount of guidance of the child will be complete without the child's being led to search earnestly also for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The parents should teach the child a prayer to the Holy Spirit which the child should say daily, and when it finds itself especially in need of light or counsel. The following prayer will be of great assistance to the child:

"Holy Spirit of God, take me as Thy disciple; guide me, illuminate me; sanctify me; bind my hands that they may do no evil; cover my eyes that they may see it no more; sanctify my heart so that evil may not dwell within me. Be Thou my God, be Thou my Guide! Whithersoever Thou leadest me I will go; whatsoever Thou forbiddest me I will re-

nounce; whatsoever Thou commandest me, in Thy strength I will do. Lead me, then, unto the fullness of the truth. Amen.”

Vocation in Life

When the matter of a vocation in life comes up for decision the child will not be ill at ease if it has learned to seek Divine Counsel. Greater than vocational guidance will be the Light of the Holy Spirit which the child will invoke, and which will fill his soul. He will have set his footsteps in the paths of righteousness and virtue.

Maurice Palmer

