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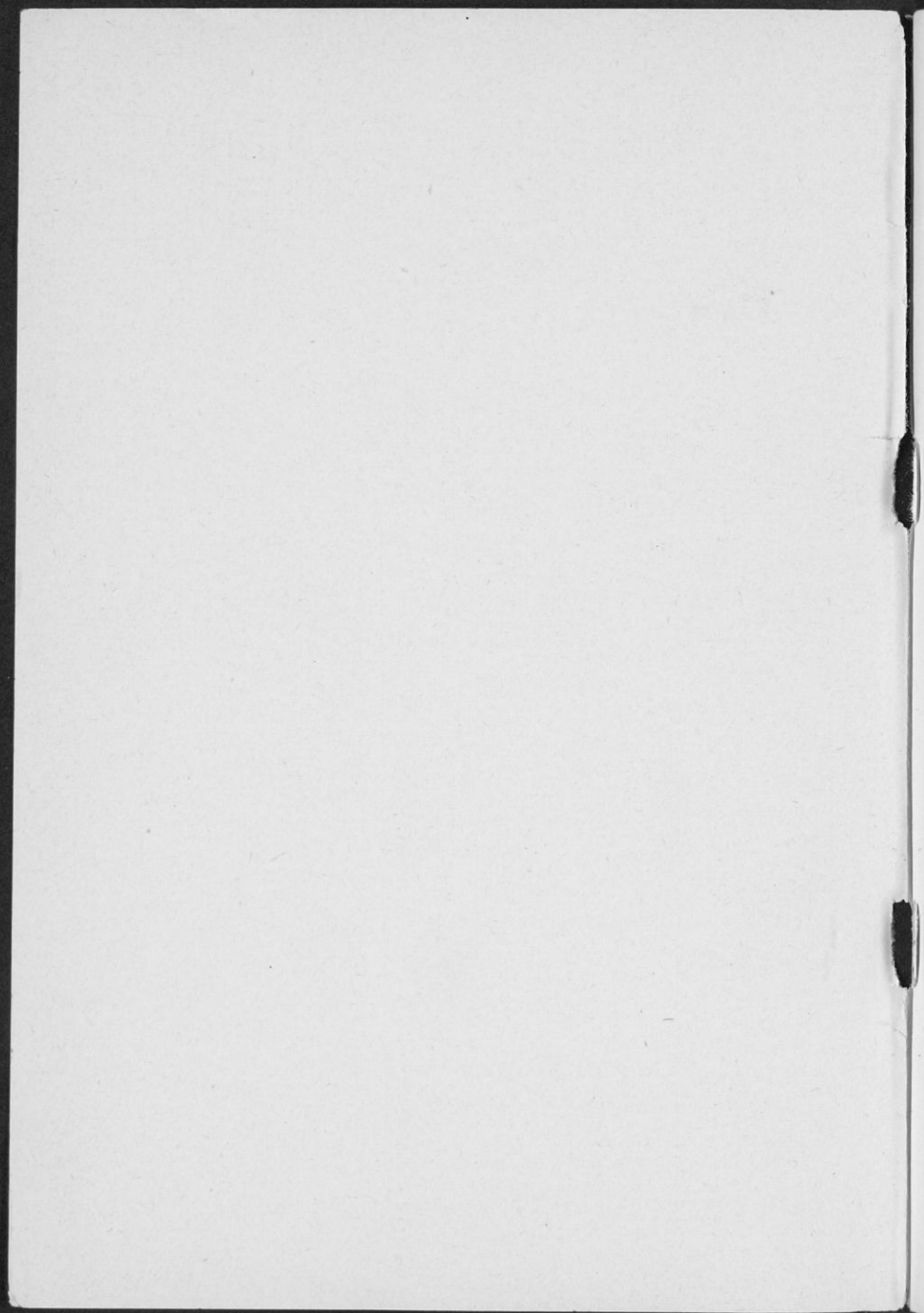
# RELIGION IN THE HOME

FOR *ELEMENTARY* SCHOOL CHILDREN

by  
KATHERINE DELMONICO BYLES



HINTS FOR  
PARENTS  
IN THE  
TRAINING  
OF CHILDREN



# RELIGION IN THE HOME

## Monthly Aids for the Parents of **Elementary** School Children

By

KATHERINE DELMONICO BYLES

THE PAULIST PRESS

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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The idea of a series of little lessons or aids for parents was suggested by the eminent Paulist Father, Rev. Joseph McSorley, and grew out of his deep interest in Catholic education. He gave generously of his wisdom and advice throughout the formation of the booklets.

Thanks are due also to my own four children and to several thousand pupils, who, all unknown to themselves, have furnished me the happy experience of a life as mother and teacher which has enabled me to pass on these notes to other mothers.

K. D. B.

*Nihil Obstat:*

ARTHUR J. SCANLAN, S.T.D., *Censor Librorum.*

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## FOREWORD

### PURPOSE

This series of monthly aids or lessons is designed primarily for the parent in the home, where all religious instruction should begin. More and more, parents are coming to realize their duty to obey the words of the Holy Father, expressed in his encyclical *On the Christian Education of Youth* (December 31, 1929), when he clearly states:

"The family, therefore, holds directly from the Creator the mission and hence the right to educate its children—a right inalienable because inseparably joined to a strict obligation, a right anterior to any right whatsoever either of civil society or of the State, and therefore a right inviolable by any power on earth."

Nations and rulers show a growing recognition of the fact that the character of the future man or woman is largely formed by the training received in childhood and youth. Since this training is the duty of the parent, it is hoped that many mothers and fathers may be glad to hear of some definite, practical, and well-tested ways of cultivating right moral and religious habits in the family.

The purpose of the lessons is to show parents how they may guide their children to put into practice the teachings of the Faith, to show them how they may live a Catholic life. In other words, the aim is to help parents realize that Christ said, "I am the Way and the Life," as well as "the Truth."

### PLAN

Two booklets have been written, one for the parents of children of pre-school age, and a second for the parents of elementary school children. Each booklet consists of twelve chapters, one for each month, this division having been undertaken in order to make use of the rich liturgical material of the ecclesiastical year.

### CONTENTS

The contents are in no sense elaborate or exhaustive. A general knowledge of the Catholic religion on the part of



the parent is taken for granted, and, in the case of the elementary school booklet, it is assumed that the children are receiving at least some formal instruction in Christian Doctrine in a Catholic school or a Catholic vacation school or a Sunday school.

Among over 200 topics treated are: How to teach children to pray; How to control tantrums; How to teach obedience, truthfulness, purity; How to discover practical ways of teaching children to love God; How to teach religion through pictures; How to tell religious stories; How to teach the life and ways of Christ in the family; How to teach about saints; How to follow the liturgical year at home in a way attractive to children; How to control use of radio in home; How to supervise movie-going; How to co-operate with Church and school; How to select good books.

## AIMS

Briefly then, *Religion in the Home* aims to do the following:

1. To stress constantly the importance of the home to the child.
2. To teach the necessity of creating a supernatural atmosphere in the home.
3. To impress upon parents the necessity for regular prayer, attendance at Mass, and reception of the sacraments.
4. To give practical instruction in home pedagogy.
5. To cite the experience of wise parents in training their children to practice fundamental virtues, like obedience, purity, truthfulness.
6. To tie up home life with the liturgical season.
7. To introduce various plans and devices which help to impress children—such things as a family altar, holy pictures, religious dramas, games, books, songs, hymns.
8. To suggest each month one or two books suitable for the age indicated.
9. To suggest each month one virtue for parents to practice themselves.

## JANUARY

### NO TIME TO LOSE

A year is a long stretch of time for a child. We parents however, find that another twelve months have sped away before we have even made a good start on our plans. We are always busy, of course; for we have the liveliest beings in the world to keep us occupied. But no matter how busy, no matter how exhausted we are, the job of a parent must be performed here and now. There is no possible chance of postponing it. Delay a little and the child has become a man before we have even settled down to teaching him how to be a really good boy. We are fighting against time. We must remind ourselves every day that this present hour is the hour for making our children into real Christian men and women.

### RIGHT AND OBLIGATION OF PARENTS

Our duty in the matter is made clear in a letter on the Christian education of youth written by Pope Pius XI in 1929. He says that God the Creator has given to parents the "right" and "the strict obligation" to educate their children. He insists also that parents may not give up this right. It is "inalienable." Then he continues: "This education must form a true and perfect Christian," who must "live a supernatural life, and display it in his actions."

Let us not forget then, that: *It is the parents' right and duty to teach the children to act as Christians living a supernatural life.*

### IMPORTANCE OF HOME

We parents must begin this education of our children in early babyhood by surrounding them with the supernatural atmosphere of a Christian home. Moreover, during all their school years, we must never yield to the lazy notion that we can sit back and let the school take all the responsibility for educating our children. A little calculation will show

how much less time a child spends in school than he does at home. In the thirteen years of his school life from kindergarten through high school, he spends approximately:

13,000 hours in school (five hours a day)  
37,960 hours asleep (eight hours a day)  
62,920 hours awake at home or elsewhere

The question then is: how shall we make a Christian home in which our children may pass all these waking hours?

The first step is the creation of a supernatural atmosphere in the home. A house closed for a long time is filled with dank, musty air, but when the windows are opened, the rays of the sun irradiate the dead atmosphere. Similarly, a house filled with supernatural atmosphere is one which is irradiated by the presence of God. It is that sort of home we want for our children,—a home in which they are surrounded by the spirit of our Catholic religion. How can we make such a home for our families?

1. We parents must keep remembering that the most important thing in life is for us and our children to be God's children. "Being God's children" means several things:

- (a) It means keeping our souls full of God's grace.
- (b) It means that God lives in us and loves us, and that we should love Him and talk to Him.
- (c) It means that if we do love Him and remember Him, He will make us morally good and spiritually strong.

2. We must often talk about religious truths, so that the children may become familiar with them.

3. We must act so that our children may see that we ardently believe all the truths of our faith.

4. We must make use of the many different means for reminding ourselves and our children of these truths. (Various Catholic practices, the use of pictures, statues, etc., will be discussed in later pages.)



## **AWARE OF THE UNSEEN**

Some parents seem always to be aware of the unseen. They act and speak as if they felt God present in the room and in their hearts. They act and speak as if they remembered that Jesus Christ, God Himself, became man, lived and died to make us God's children. They act and speak as if they believed that Jesus Christ founded a Church to teach them, His own Church of which they are members and whose voice they gladly obey.

## **PURPOSE OF PAMPHLET**

The present pamphlet has one aim: to suggest to parents many things, some great, some small, which they can do to keep their homes full of the sunshine of God's presence.

## **PEDAGOGY—THE FIRST STEP: REGULARITY**

The first step we must take is to establish habits of regularity. We trained our babies in habits of regular feeding, sleeping, playing. Thus we made a good beginning, for the children not only formed good physical habits but also learned the meaning of discipline and restraint. Let us not lose that good beginning. Meals, sleep, play, study, prayer,—all these things should be arranged for and carefully adhered to as they were during the children's babyhood. Some mothers have the children work out a time schedule for their own day and pin it up on the door. Then in the evening they check off to see who has had a perfect day.

## **HABIT FOR THE MONTH**

To start the year off well, we should stress the value of regularity in the formation of good habits of prayer. If we recall that God is with us here in this spot, now at this minute, we realize that of course one of the most valuable practices in life is the habit of turning the attention to Him often, but especially at fixed times.

## **REGULAR PRAYER**

Regularity is our watchword. Can your child throw a straight ball without regular practice in ball throwing? No! Neither can he learn to place himself before God and pray unless he does so regularly. See to it then that your children are absolutely faithful about the following:

1. Morning offering upon awakening,—using any form of expressing the idea: "My God, I offer myself and all I do this day to You." A home-made formula of offering may be the best.
2. Morning prayer on the knees. The Our Father is to be included, since our Lord Himself composed it, the Hail Mary and the Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity.
3. Night prayer on the knees, including the Our Father, Hail Mary, Creed and Act of Contrition. Be sure that the child has the habit of talking to God in a personal way, especially at this time when usually there is no hurry. The custom of praying for relatives and friends is a good one. The intention should be extended to include everyone in need on that particular day, for instance, people without work, soldiers fighting in wars, etc.

## **REVERENT ATTITUDE**

A chief concern of the parents in all prayer must be their own attitude. A devout, reverent manner in the parent conveys better than anything else the real meaning of prayer. If things have gone wrong in the house, you must make it plain that you turn to prayer time with relief. Say, "Well, now let us talk to God." Calm yourself, and drop all signs of irritation. Take refuge in God and your children will follow you to Him.

## **THINGS TO DO**

One of the very best ways to learn religion is to act it. Little plays made up at home are useful in teaching some facts of religion. (Incidentally they give training in speech

and help to cure self-consciousness.) As a matter of fact no Catholic home is complete without its religious theatricals. For January have the children act the story of the Three Wise Men. Trust them to make up plenty of conversation. The Infant Jesus may be represented by a doll. If the children are old enough they will take great pride in writing out the parts for the different characters. If the family is too small, join with one or two other families.

### VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

Trust. Do you believe that God is your Father? Then do not worry, for He is taking care of you.

### BOOKS OF THE MONTH

*The Journey of the Three Kings*<sup>1</sup> is a most beautiful play which you should own if you can. Henri Ghéon, the author, lives in France and does great work with the young people there. The college boys and girls love him and treat him as a kind of hero. He has a dramatic club where they learn religious plays.

For children from 6 to 10 we recommend *The Children's Saint*,<sup>2</sup> the story of St. Madeleine Sophie, the child who was so small that she stood upon the bench to answer in class. There are several illustrations on each page,—sketches to delight the heart of any young reader.

Older children will like *Retreat with St. Ignatius*,<sup>3</sup> a book which contains pictures, charts and a text for a way of life.

### HYMN OF THE MONTH

Try to get the song *We Three Kings of Orient Are*,<sup>4</sup> that well-loved old carol.

<sup>1</sup> *The Journey of the Three Kings*, by Henri Ghéon. New York: Sheed & Ward, 63 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$1.00.

<sup>2</sup> *The Children's Saint*, by Maud Monahan. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 55 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$.50, paper; \$1.40, cloth.

<sup>3</sup> *Retreat with St. Ignatius*, by Geoffrey Bliss, S.J. New York: Sheed & Ward, 63 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$1.25.

<sup>4</sup> *Old Christmas Carols*, edited by S. Archer Gibson, 1st Set (No. 4374). New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 3 East 43rd Street. Price, \$.12. Or *Singalong Carols* for Christmastide. New York: Paull-Pioneer Music Corp., 1657 Broadway. Price, \$.08.

## FEBRUARY

### VIRTUES—GOOD HABITS

A child does not become good just by being told to be good. To be good means to practice virtue. "Virtue," says St. Augustine, "is a good habit suitable to our nature." The first duty of parents, then, is to train their children in good habits. Each virtue,—that is, each good habit,—has to be acquired by repeated acts, plus the grace of God. A child becomes obedient by performing acts of obedience, patient by performing acts of patience, pure by the practice of purity, generous by being generous. Above all he learns the virtue of prayerfulness by praying.

When we begin in earnest to perform our duty and to cultivate virtues or good habits in our children, the first thing to do is to decide just which virtues to strive for. Since all good effort is helped by direct appeal to God for the assistance of His grace, we ought to strive first for the virtue or habit of learning to pray well.

### HABIT AND MANNER OF PRAYER

How shall we pray? Last month we discussed the good habit of regularity in prayer and a reverent attitude when praying. Remembering that the good habit of regular praying is a virtue, suppose that this month we ask ourselves whether these regular prayers are all they might be. Do not let the children get into the gabbling habit. Short prayers said *consciously to God* are something to be greatly encouraged. Say often, "Remember, children, that prayer is talking to God. Look at Him, think of Him, and then speak to Him with love in your heart." With regard to the morning offering,—a habit easily established for life,—remind the children once in a while of what it means. Explain that *they offer themselves* and all their thoughts, words and deeds *to God*. They must then be sure to think good thoughts, say kind words, and do good deeds, so as to have plenty to give to God.

If we talk this way once in a while to our children, they like it. Do not do it every day and run the risk of boring

them. If you have never yet talked of religious things and the children are now thirteen years old, it will be difficult to start; but even so it is possible to make a beginning now by saying that you have been reading how fine a thing it is to train yourself to turn to God the moment you awake. Tell them that you do it, and that they should also begin to cultivate the practice. "Just this once; let's make this one day perfect," is a good family watchword.

### **FAMILY PRAYER**

In many families, all pray together at night. As to this custom, the parents of each family must judge what is best. A good plan is to call the children together at the hour when the youngest go to bed, and recite the regular prayers together. Then say, "Now let each one speak to God by himself"; and have the children kneel in silence for a minute. The child from eleven years up is often best left to himself. The least sign of a desire for privacy alone with God should be respected.

### **FAMILY ROSARY**

Family recitation of the Rosary is a magnificent custom; but parents must carefully observe whether the practice tends to deteriorate into a gabbling or a mumbling of words in a rush to get through. A decade a day is often a nice compromise.

### **OUR CHILDREN'S FRIENDS**

No matter how well we train our children, we all become aware of the way in which their habits are influenced by their friends. We have to know who their friends are. Children up to six or eight years of age are usually satisfied to play at home, to stay near mother, brother and sister. Toys still please them. Then they want to play "tag" and "run-sheep-run." Next they want to be in a "gang." Boys are happy when they join teams for various games. The girls often say "our crowd" or "we girls." Girls like social clubs and getting up fairs and bazaars for various purposes. Since this tendency is general and can be directed to good, parents must arrange so that the gangs and clubs are well ordered. There are several things to do:

1. Be so cordial that all the children's friends like you. Then, if you have a backyard or garden, try to make it the meeting place for play. Know "the gang." Have them indoors occasionally for a celebration and give them plenty to eat. They will come again. Observe them and try to know their parents also.

2. Take an interest in their games. Know what games they play, and *where they play*. If it must be away from home and there is no decent spot for baseball or basketball, bestir yourself. Talk to the priest on the subject or to the mayor or to the councilman.

3. Have the children associate with some Catholic group if there is one. If not, perhaps you can speak to the pastor about the possibility of having a branch of one of the following: 1. Catholic Youth Organization, 2. Junior Catholic Daughters, 3. Catholic Boy Scout Troop, 4. Catholic Girl Scout Troop.

4. Have the clubs meet in your home or in the homes of other trustworthy families. Greet the children pleasantly, talk a little of them, and show interest in their plans. Above all, *absolutely forbid* meetings in halls or basements or other lonely places.

For a full discussion of these matters, read an excellent book, *You and Your Children*,<sup>1</sup> by Rev. Paul Hanly Furfey. If the children do belong to a club, see that they attend meetings regularly. Otherwise they may fall behind in the games and get an unfortunate experience of failure.

Remember that the more time and interest you give to the children and their friends, the easier and happier your own life will become as the years slip on. The child who looks on you as his companion, friend, and the friend of his friends, is least likely to be a disappointment later.

### THE MERRY-MAKING CLUB

"The Merry-Making Club" was the name chosen by a group of little girls aged eight to twelve who used to meet on Saturday mornings to play. Instead of amusing themselves in an aimless fashion, they decided to have a monthly maga-

zine and to give plays for their relatives and friends. They had an editor-in-chief, a sports writer, a story writer, a jokes editor; in short, each person had charge of one department of the paper. All material was given to one girl during the month, after it had been talked about at the meetings. This girl, the oldest, twelve years of age, typed the little paper which was called "The Merry-Makers." In the middle of the month the Merry-Makers gave a play. Sometimes they chose one from a book of children's plays but more often they made one up. Each month they had at least a tableau of the feast of the month.

### **THINGS TO DO—DRAMATICS AT HOME**

Rehearsing plays is an excellent way of doing things in groups at home. The Church of the Middle Ages taught the people by mystery plays,—plays about the life of Christ often acted out in the back of the church or in the church yard. On February 2nd have a little play or a tableau (for children six to ten) of the Purification. Forty days after the birth of Jesus, our Lady takes the Divine Baby to the Temple. Read the story in the New Testament, St. Luke's Gospel, Chapter 2, verses 22 to 40. Also read from the Missal the blessing of the candles; and let the children make up a play in which someone says that the candles are a symbol of "Jesus, the Light of the World." The speeches of Simeon and Anna should be memorized exactly. Finish with a tableau.

### **FEASTS—FEB. 11th, FEB. 3rd, FEB. 5th**

The Feast of the Apparition of our Lady at Lourdes falls on February 11th, and gives a chance for a play about Bernadette. Remember that a miracle is something which we see or perceive, which cannot be done by any natural means. There's St. Blaise for throats on the 3rd of February and St. Agatha on the 5th. Be sure that the family knows all about both. St. Agatha is the patroness of Catania, that city of Sicily so often endangered by the volcano Etna. In Catania, St. Agatha's Day is celebrated with great ceremony, parades, fireworks, and floats. It is a unique celebration to witness.

## VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

While our minds are full of the idea of regularity with regard to the children's affairs, it is a good point to see if we can regulate our own lives a little better, take a little better care of our own souls. The minutes saved by regularity in housework can be used for religious reading, prayer and meditation. Have you a copy of *The Imitation of Christ? The Primer of Prayer*,<sup>2</sup> by Rev. Joseph McSorley, C.S.P., is helpful for beginners.

## BOOKS FOR THE MONTH

*Twenty-one Saints*<sup>3</sup> is a collection of stories that make one feel courageous, like the saints, the soldiers of the fighting Church (usually called "The Church Militant"); and they lead the reader to train himself in courage by bearing toothaches and other troubles because he loves God. This book is suitable for older children, from ten to fourteen.

*Gospel Rhymes*<sup>4</sup> is a collection of gay little poems on incidents from the Gospels, and is suitable for younger children.

## HYMN FOR THE MONTH

*The Magnificat*. If possible, sing it, but at least read it aloud at night prayers every Saturday night. You will find the words in the New Testament, St. Luke, Chapter 1, verses 46 to 55. *The Magnificat*, associated with our Lady, should be said or sung whenever a feast of hers occurs. This month say it on the Feast of the Purification and on the Feast of Lourdes. You will find the music for it in the *Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *You and Your Children*, by Rev. Paul Hanly Furfey, Ph.D. New York: Benziger Bros., 26 Park Place. Price, \$1.50, cloth binding; \$.35, cellophane binding.

<sup>2</sup> *The Primer of Prayer*, by Joseph McSorley, C.S.P. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 55 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$1.00.

<sup>3</sup> *Twenty-one Saints*, by Aloysius Croft. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 540 North Milwaukee Street. Price, \$1.50.

<sup>4</sup> *Gospel Rhymes*, by Father Feeney, Father Martindale, Chesterton and others. New York: Sheed & Ward, 63 Fifth Avenue. Price \$.90.

<sup>5</sup> *Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*, by the Christian Brothers. Page 169. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.25.



## MARCH

### REVIEW

In January we gave attention to the subject of creating a Catholic spirit in our homes; and we resolved to act like good Catholics ourselves, constantly aware of the Unseen Presence of God.

In February we considered the question of training our children in good habits.

### PEDAGOGY—TEACHING BY EXAMPLE

This month we shall think about an easy way of teaching children the Catholic spirit; indeed it is an easy way of teaching anything at all. Even without thinking about the matter, we all instinctively follow this easy way in many cases. This powerful tool in our hands is the force of example. *Children learn by imitation.*

#### PHYSICAL LAW

Most parents today know a great deal about the training of the body. We take great care to train the baby from earliest infancy in the habit of eating wholesome food. We give him correct habits of sleep and cleanliness. We take great pride in his increasing height and weight.<sup>1</sup> This is good. We must, however, remember the child's soul as well as his body.

#### SPIRITUAL LAW

The easiest way to train his soul is by having him imitate the good things his parents do. If Father and Mother pray devoutly, speaking and looking as if they were really in communion with God, the child will imitate them. If Father and Mother go to Confession and Holy Communion weekly, the child will go as a matter of course. If parents read their prayer books and follow the Mass carefully, the children will love to do the same. If Father and Mother are polite and dignified, the children will be gentle and courteous. We might name each Christian virtue and affirm that the child tends to copy it as illustrated in the conduct of his parents.

## PARENTS AS MODELS

Our responsibility, then, is very great. There can be nothing haphazard in our dealings with our children or in our actions before them. We must remember that we, ourselves, are their models, and that they will copy us. We can never afford to slip before our children's eyes; constant vigilance is the price of success. And we must try to exclude from the house those people whom we do not want the children to imitate.

## RADIO

Suppose that we parents are resolved to try our best to be model Catholics and to make our homes as Catholic as possible. Would it then be wise or consistent for us carelessly to tune in the radio and thus let loose a stream of vulgarity, of coarse jokes, of suggestive songs or music? These things will teach the children just the opposite of what we are striving to teach. If we do not want our little ones to go around humming vulgar tunes, we must supervise the radio. The children will certainly imitate what they hear.

## SUPERVISION

Supervision of the radio in our homes is then a clear duty of parents.

## CHOICE OF PROGRAMS

We should direct the choice of programs for the family. We must listen to the numbers the child tunes in. If they are vulgar or indecent, we can explain that such things are only a way of getting foolish people to listen to advertisements. Children soon understand that most sponsored programs are advertisements.

## RADIO CRITICS

Adopt a critical attitude toward them yourself, and your child will not so readily believe all he hears on the air. If you find the so-called "Children's Programs" unsuitable for little people, write to the radio station and say so. And be sure to get all your neighbors to write also. The program makers aim to please you; and if they insult your

good taste by offering vulgar entertainment, they should hear from you. Always remember that they seek to please the public.

#### MUSIC

Magnificent concerts and operas are given in the large cities. To be present at these, costs a large sum of money. People who cannot afford seats, will stand for three hours, just for the joy of hearing good music. Over the radio most of this music comes, without expense or trouble to the hearer. Do the children listen to it?

Fine music has a good effect on the nerves; it helps people to keep calm and reasonable. But remember that if children listen to vulgar music, to endless "swing" and "jazz," they will not have a taste for good music; and therefore, all their lives they will be deprived of the ability to enjoy one of the most beneficial of the arts. If they acquire a better appreciation of sound, they can learn to love the liturgical music of the Church,—about which we shall have more to say later.

#### EFFECT OF RADIO ON CHILD'S STUDY PERIOD

It is the general opinion of teachers in schools that the work of children is seriously hampered by misuse of the radio. To listen to the radio and at the same time to study lessons, is a physical and mental impossibility for most children. Besides failing in his lessons the next day, the child gets into a very bad habit of giving to serious things only a fraction of his attention. Later, even when no radio is playing, he finds it hard to concentrate perfectly. The parents must face this difficulty and work out some arrangement so that the children may listen to radio at certain times with no school work before them, and at other hours study with the radio silent. The combination of the two must be broken up.

#### A TIME FOR RADIO

To say "No radio at all!" would, of course, be extreme and foolish. But a reasonable arrangement of hours will sat-

isfy the children after a week or two, if not immediately. As a final warning, let us repeat that we must not allow vulgarity and indecency to enter our homes by way of the radio. On the contrary, we must train our children to listen to and to imitate the beautiful things that are to be found on the better programs.

### **THINGS TO DO**

In this time of Lent we can do many useful things. Following the Stations of the Cross is a splendid way of impressing upon children the Passion of our Beloved Lord. Try to have all the children say the Stations on each Friday, either at home or in church.

An excellent 5c pamphlet giving beautiful prayers for each Station is *Stations of the Cross for Children*, with pictures.<sup>2</sup>

### **MYSTERY PLAYS**

One of the best ways to gain a clear, vital grasp of the truths of religion, is to act out plays on religious subjects. As was said last month, in the Middle Ages plays called Miracle Plays or Mystery Plays, used to be given in the great cathedrals, in order to commemorate a particular feast.

Let the children select scenes from the Passion and act them. It is often better to have sacred scenes acted without words as it is sometimes difficult to find words sufficiently reverent.

### **VIRTUE FOR PARENTS**

It seems unnecessary to suggest self-denial to Catholic parents whose whole life is usually one long process of doing things for others. What parents might remember is that we ought constantly to unite our suffering and discomforts, lack of sleep, anxiety, and all the rest of our daily hardships with the sufferings of our Lord. The crushing troubles of many a parent will be made lighter and easier, if the thought of the suffering Lord Jesus is present.

## BOOKS FOR THE MONTH

Lent is a good time for beginning to read with the children a life of Christ. Try to read a chapter a day. For children over ten we suggest *Jesus of Nazareth*,<sup>3</sup> by Mother Loyola. For younger children a beautiful book is *About Jesus, Son of God and Son of Mary*.<sup>4</sup> It is illustrated by very striking colored pictures.

*The Hail Mary*,<sup>5</sup> a child's pamphlet, explains in simple terms the meaning of the prayer.

## HYMN FOR THE MONTH

If you can manage it, have the family learn to sing the *Stabat Mater*,<sup>6</sup> the hymn of the Stations of the Cross.

<sup>1</sup> For clear and simple advice on Child Training, two pamphlets, *Infant Care* (10c) and *The Child from One to Six* (15c) can be obtained from: Children's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington, D. C.

<sup>2</sup> *Stations of the Cross for Children*. New York: The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street. Price, \$.05.

<sup>3</sup> *Jesus of Nazareth*, by Mother Loyola. New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 12 Barclay Street. Price, \$1.50.

<sup>4</sup> *About Jesus, Son of God and Son of Mary*, by M. M. and Robin. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 55 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$.45, paper; \$.90, boards; \$1.25, cloth.

<sup>5</sup> *The Hail Mary*, by Rev. Daniel M. Dougherty. New York: The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street. Price, \$.05.

<sup>6</sup> *St. Gregory Hymnal*, Singers' Edition. Hymn No. 23. Philadelphia: The St. Gregory Guild, 1705 Rittenhouse Street. Price, \$1.00.

## APRIL

### EASTER

Easter is the day of joy, the greatest day in the history of Christ, the day when, after having been crucified like a criminal, He conquered death itself.

Usually Easter falls in April, although, as a look at the table of movable feasts in the prayer book will show, in 1941, it comes on April 13th. From then until 1948, it comes in April.

### CELEBRATION OF FEAST DAYS

Thinking about Easter gives us some ideas about the way to celebrate any religious festival. We parents should make this feast a really great day for our children. There are several things to do.

1. The family should, if possible, all go to Mass together and receive Holy Communion.
2. Breakfast should be rather festive. Colored eggs please the children, or a few flowers,—anything to strike the note of joy.
3. At such a meal, father or mother can easily talk a little about how great a miracle the Resurrection was. Then one can say that the whole family must make an Easter resolution to be good in some particular way.
4. The highest way to be good one might say would be to obey and to trust God absolutely, wholly and entirely in everything. The God Who could rise from the dead, triumphant after being crucified, can and will help us to rise up out of sorrow or sickness or sin or failure.

### TALKS ABOUT RELIGION—CONFIDENCE

We parents must speak of the truths of our faith, briefly, and often,—never in a preachy way. We thus establish confidence between ourselves and our children in religious matters. They may think we are old-fashioned in some ways; but they will realize that our faith and theirs is something beyond change, and that in religion there is no

division between the older and the younger generation. In families where the deep intimate truths of religion are talked about, there is a strong bond of union between parents and children.

It is all-important that we retain the confidence of our children and maintain a position of authority in the home. As the children grow from babyhood, where the parent is supreme, into adolescence, we should take care that we do not forfeit the rights and the strength and the dignity of our position.

### **PEDAGOGY—HOW TO TEACH OBEDIENCE**

Obedience is the chief outward form by which children acknowledge the right of their parents. It might be good for us to consider the topic of obedience. We must ask ourselves the question: How shall we teach obedience?

1. *By giving good example.* Parents who disobey God and the Church will have a hard time exacting obedience. As was said last month, we parents ought to make a great effort to get up early on Sunday morning for Mass, to receive the Sacraments weekly if possible, and to follow out the instructions given by the priest. We must let it be evident to our children that we obey all the Commandments ourselves.

2. *By beginning to train the children when they are young.* As was said in January, a child learns the idea of discipline in babyhood. He learns to conform to rules and laws about living, eating, sleeping, keeping clean, etc., and if we parents have not thrown away a golden beginning, we have started our children on the road of discipline and obedience.

3. *By not being over-sentimental.* Mothers have a strong instinct to shield the child from all pain. When the time comes that the child wants to cross the mother's wishes or rules, the foolish mother yields to keep the child happy. This means that gradually the child will become the ruler and the parent the slave. Keep at the job you began when the child was a baby. Retain the mastery you then had.

4. *By making as few unbreakable rules as possible.* If we have a few carefully chosen rules, we can insist on obedience to them. There should be rules like the following:

Say your morning and evening prayers.

Come home at a certain hour.

Study lessons at given times.

Go to bed at a certain hour.

Perform certain tasks in the home.

Treat your parents, brothers and sisters with courtesy.

5. *By being consistent and insistent* about a few rules. Firmness, without any show of anger or temper, is what wins. Children respect firm parents. If we have made the mistake of being too lenient in the past, we can now gradually change our tactics. In this case we must by degrees and very carefully establish our authority.

6. *By teaching the Commandment, "Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother."* If we make our home Catholic in spirit, all the training in obedience should be accompanied by the constant reminder that children obey because God told them to do so. Of course, some parents use this fact as an excuse for acting like tyrants and forcing submission. Such policy leads to hatred of God. Remember that God does not force. He wants our willing submission. That is what we must seek to win from our children,—obedience given willingly.

#### **DISCIPLINE—CALMNESS AND DIGNITY**

While speaking of obedience, we may say a word also about discipline in general. All training, all teaching, should be given in a calm, quiet manner. A young woman coach of a basketball team says that when she arrives at a school the first thing she does is to quiet the girls. When they are all calmed down, she gives them instructions in a quiet, clear tone. The results are like magic. We parents too often are rushed and tired and flurried, so that we give orders in an excited tone, not remembering to get the children quieted down before we speak. If a child is playing



a game, we suddenly called out, "Come in; come quickly." Rebellion is the result. If we must call, it is better to say, "Five minutes more to play, children; please get ready." Then in five minutes, say, "Time up. Come quickly."

This rule applies to all situations. If we mothers are nervous from the endless demands upon us, we shall lessen the strain on our own health and dispositions by quieting ourselves into a calm state before acting. After a while the exterior calmness will spread to the interior and will benefit our nervous systems and even our souls.

### **CATECHISM LESSONS**

In connection with studying lessons at home, we particularly ask all parents to take special interest in the religion or catechism homework. We suggest four points:

1. Go over the lesson with the child.
2. Hear him recite all parts which are to be memorized.
3. After school ask what happened during religion or catechism lesson. Find out whether the child answered correctly.
4. If there was discussion in class, talk about the topic with the child.

### **BOOKS FOR THE MONTH**

*Children of the Lantern*<sup>1</sup> is suitable for children up to ten. It gives delightful accounts of the wonderful experiences of some girls and boys in Rome.

*Jesus and I*<sup>2</sup> is an attractive illustrated gift book for First Communicants.

### **HYMN FOR THE MONTH**

Of all the Easter hymns, the one that every Catholic should know is *Regina coeli laetare*. The English words are as follows:

Queen of Heaven, rejoice; Alleluia;  
For He Whom thou didst merit to bear; Alleluia;  
Has risen as He said; Alleluia;  
Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary; Alleluia;  
Because the Lord is truly risen; Alleluia.

The music with a Latin version can be found in *The St. Gregory Hymnal*.<sup>3</sup>

### FOR FIRST COMMUNION CHILDREN

Special activities for children preparing for First Communion will not be included in these pages this year. We do ask every parent of these little ones to try to secure the famous set of six First Communion Booklets prepared by Mother Bolton. They cost 10c apiece and can be ordered from:

St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N. J. They give a marvelous preparation for the reception of the Blessed Sacrament, and show children what to think about and how to act and live in the blessed months of getting ready for Jesus.

<sup>1</sup> *Children of the Lantern*, by Lamplighter, a Holy Child nun. London: Burns & Oates, 28 Orchard Street. Obtainable through Benziger Bros., New York City, 26 Park Place. Price, \$1.75.

<sup>2</sup> *Jesus and I*, by Aloysius J. Heeg, S.J. Chicago: Loyola University Press. Price, \$1.00.

<sup>3</sup> *St. Gregory Hymnal*, Singers' Edition. Hymn No. 204. Philadelphia: The St. Gregory Guild, 1705 Rittenhouse Street. Price, \$1.00.

## MAY

### THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE

To teach our children to lead Christian lives requires some knowledge of the rules of teaching. But to keep learning and remembering rules is a hard, dull business which we should like to escape. Christ showed us how to get along in a simple way when He said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." We have only to follow Him.

Imitation is,—once again let us recall,—the easiest way of learning. If we imitate Christ, no one can ask more. The way He acted is the way to act; the truth He taught is the truth to believe; and the life He led is the supernatural life we are trying to attain.

### "COPY JESUS"

To our children, then, we can easily say, "Act as our Lord would act." Many mothers succeed very well by continually saying to children (up to about ten years), "How do you think Jesus would act? Don't you think He would be kind and generous to His playmates?" Or, "Don't you think little Jesus when He was six or seven or eight ran quickly when His Mother called?" If the children have been trained to love the Lord Jesus, they will respond to the idea of imitating Him.

"Copy Jesus" might be a good motto for the house to adopt for one month. Have the children make a resolution to act for one month as our Lord would act. If they keep records of their improvement, suggest that they check off each night how often they have "Copied Jesus." They may use columns like this:

Obedient like Jesus	Generous like Jesus	Practiced self-denial like Jesus	Gave in to sister and brother
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### NEW TESTAMENT

There are some of us who have only vague ideas as to the way in which Jesus Christ would act in daily routine. How can we find out His ways? In March, we gave the titles of two lives of Christ for children. Parents

themselves would profit by a careful reading of a Life of Christ written for adults. (We suggest the one by Father Isidore O'Brien.<sup>1</sup>) But besides having the children read books about our Saviour, parents themselves and older children should read the New Testament. There we get the most vivid pictures of our Lord; and we begin to see what sort of Person it is that we must copy as our Model.

### **NECESSITY OF READING**

Once we begin to read about Christ, and to get our children to read about Him, we may begin to discover that some of the children have difficulty in reading. Often a child is bored with reading, not because of the book, but because he does not know how to read easily. This is a serious matter, because poor readers are handicapped for life.

After we set ourselves to read about the life of our Lord, we soon realize how important is the whole matter of reading for the family. Reading spiritual books is a wonderful help to goodness; and poor readers are deprived of this help. It is folly to delay in relieving any boy or girl of this handicap. We had better stop at once, and see what can be done to remedy the situation.

### **PEDAGOGY—DIFFICULTIES IN READING**

It has been discovered in the past few years that many children fail in school and get into serious difficulties with the teachers for no other reason than that they cannot read. All their work becomes difficult. They are ashamed of their own low marks and they begin to be bold and noisy, and before long they are known as bad children. Parents must then see to it that if their children are not easy readers, they should have plenty of practice until they are up to the level of their classmates. Ask the teacher in school about the child's reading ability, and if he is slow, have him read aloud to you every evening. Rapid reading is largely a matter of drill and practice. Do not let a child read one word at a time, but show him that words are used in groups. For instance, we do not read: "A—boy—lives—in—this—house," but "A boy lives—in this house."

If the eye grasps words in groups, the speed of reading is increased. Another help is to have the child read a paragraph, and then stop and tell you what he has read. Ask him, "What was the chief idea in that paragraph?"

From the moment that a child learns to read, he should get the habit of reading at least every week out of some book which is not a school book. If the habit of reading is not formed in childhood, it probably never will be formed, and the child will probably suffer in many ways.

### **CHOICE OF READING FOR CHILDREN**

Suppose that our children read normally well for their ages, what shall they read? First of all, a life of Christ, as was mentioned in March, and as we suggested again at the beginning of this section. Then, of course, we hope parents will try to secure the books mentioned each month.

For general reading books, if parents have any money to spare, there has been founded an organization dealing only with children's books. It is called the "Pro Parvulis Book Club," which means "Book Club for the Little Ones." A lady, who gives her life to this work, selects books for children, under the guidance of a priest. The Club has lists of books suitable for all ages of children. The office of the Club is a little room in the Empire State Building,—the highest building in the world,—situated at Fifth Avenue and 34th Street, New York City.

### **VIRTUE FOR PARENTS**

Let us think every day about our Lady and her life and draw a comparison between her way and ours, with a view to making ourselves more like the wise and gentle Mother.

### **AN ALTAR IN THE HOME**

Parents who have little ones not yet attending school will have read in the Pre-school Pamphlet about the plan of having an altar in the home. Lovely altars can be made from boxes; and, if you let the children do the work themselves, they will take a greater interest. As it is not easy to get a beautiful statue for a small sum of money, many parents

have a picture in the place of honor on the altar. The children will be able to change the picture each month according to the liturgical season. For May, of course, our Lady should be in the place of honor; and the children should try to find flowers to place before her as a token of love. At family prayers before the altar, say one Rosary decade.

### CROWNING OF MARY

If you have a statue of our Blessed Lady, the children will want to crown her. It is a good idea to remind them that they are thus celebrating the crowning of our Lady in Heaven,—the fifth decade of the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary. That decade should be recited.

### HYMNS FOR THE MONTH

During the crowning of Mary sing a hymn. A good one to sing or read is *The Magnificat* (New Testament, St. Luke, Chapter 1, verses 46-55). The music can be found in either the *Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*<sup>2</sup> or *St. Gregory Hymnal*.<sup>3</sup>

### BOOKS FOR THE MONTH

*Benedictus Qui Venit*<sup>4</sup> is a small book of Mass prayers. The lines are broken, have a certain rhythm, and are well divided for reading aloud. It would be a sensible plan to have a child read these prayers aloud, one a day, to make sure that he understands them. Then he may use the book at Mass.

*The Children's Bread—Holy Mass and Communion*<sup>5</sup> is a similar book for younger children and it contains many instructive pictures.

<sup>1</sup> *The Life of Christ*, by Father Isidore O'Brien. Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, Franciscan Monastery. Price, \$1.00.

<sup>2</sup> *Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*, by the Christian Brothers. Page 169. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.25.

<sup>3</sup> *St. Gregory Hymnal*, Singers' Edition. No. 216. Philadelphia: St. Gregory Guild, 1705 Rittenhouse Street. Price, \$1.00.

<sup>4</sup> *Benedictus Qui Venit, The Missal Prayers*, by Rev. W. Roche, S.J. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 55 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$.65.

<sup>5</sup> *The Children's Bread*, by Rev. W. Roche, S.J. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 55 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$1.00.

## JUNE

### MOTIVE FOR GOODNESS—LOVE

In May, we decided that a short cut to goodness was to "Copy Our Lord Jesus."

In June, we are going to find out how to get a strong motive for trying to become more and more like Jesus. The most powerful motive in the world is love. Mothers strain themselves and sacrifice and struggle for their children, working until they are ready to drop from exhaustion. Few people employed at high salaries labor so hard or so long as many mothers. The motive that makes the mother work so faithfully and bear so much is love, a much more powerful motive than money.

Love then is what we must teach the children. When they are small, they love us naturally because we give them all they have. We ought as often as we can to explain that God gives everything, including mothers and fathers. God then is the Person to love most of all. Ask the children to write out a list of all the things they have to be grateful to God for, things like father, mother, dinner, school, toys, sunshine, flowers, etc. This exercise brings home to children how good God is.

### HOW PRACTICE LOVE?

How shall we teach children to love God not only for His goodness, but for Himself? We said in January and February that we learn to do by doing; we acquire habits by repetition of the same acts. We must then have the children perform many acts of love of our Lord. Have them also write out a list of things to do as helps to learn to love Jesus, things like the following:

1. Treat Jesus as a friend. Talk to Him. Think of Him.
2. Say many times a day, "Dear Lord Jesus, I love You."
3. When you are frightened, say, "Jesus is right here with me."
4. Be kind to someone for Jesus' sake.

5. Eat the food you don't like, for Jesus' sake.
6. Give up something for Jesus' sake.
7. Set the table for Jesus' sake.

Try to have the children form the habit of living as if they remembered that God is really here. When they realize that they cannot live at all except for Him, they will begin to be aware of His presence and to love Him.

### **JUNE FOR LOVE**

June was chosen for the month of love because Corpus Christi and the Feast of the Sacred Heart both come in June.

We must make sure to go all together to Holy Communion on Corpus Christi. Jesus loves us so much that before He left this earth He thought up a way of keeping Himself here with us. That way was the Blessed Sacrament, the Sacrament of Love.

### **THINGS TO DO**

On Corpus Christi, if there is a procession of the Blessed Sacrament, be sure to have the children take part in it; and go yourself to see them. On the Feast of the Sacred Heart, tell the story of Blessed Margaret Mary and how our Lord told her of His great love for us. If the family has not already formed the habit of making the Nine First Fridays, begin now to do as our Lord told Blessed Margaret Mary.

### **PEDAGOGY — THE THING THAT GOES WITH LOVE — PURITY**

The virtue that goes best with love is purity. How shall we teach purity? Here are a few principles to follow:

1. At night prayers, when the family recites them together, say: "Keep me pure in soul and body, because I am the temple of God."
2. On Holy Communion days, say that we must never do



anything bad with our bodies, because they are sacred after having received the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

3. Impress upon children that if they see or hear anything nasty or immodest, they should think about our Lord or Blessed Lady, or about some good story,—something to prevent the bad idea from getting strong hold on the mind.

4. Teach them that the body is a good and beautiful thing made by God and that they must not spoil it by doing anything they would be ashamed to do in public.

5. From early days, insist that it is right and proper and polite to keep the hands off the body. Hands are for working and doing good deeds.

6. Above all, do your best to retain the confidence of the children so that when questions about sex arise, they will ask you the answers. From early childhood keep saying, "Always ask Mother or Father if any child tells you puzzling things. Don't ask him to explain,—come home and ask."

### **WHEN TO SPEAK AND WHAT TO SAY ABOUT SEX**

Today, when we live in pagan surroundings, we must be wide awake to discover when our children require sex instruction. Certainly parents must do the instructing, the mothers for the girls and the fathers for the boys. If you have the confidence of the children, they will ask you questions. People talk so freely today that by twelve or thirteen, many children need instructing. Rules to follow:

1. Do not tell lies or fairy tales or silly things about storks. The custom of having little children observe how cats and dogs breed is not a good one in the opinion of this writer. The animal side of sex should not be emphasized. It is far better to give a straightforward yet delicate explanation, always bringing God into your account.

2. Say from the earliest days that God creates each individual soul and gives the baby to the mother. For years this amount of information will suffice.

3. Later, when you think need has arisen, explain clearly and briefly that God creates the soul in the baby inside the mother. The baby's body begins by being a tiny part of the mother. Tell the story of our Blessed Lady,—how she bore the Infant Jesus in her womb, as the "Hail Mary" tells us. For years this may suffice. Everything depends upon the child's companions. If he has been trained not to carry on whispered conversations with other children, and always to refer important things to his parents, he will not learn evil.

4. Later still, explain that life is the result of the love of both father and mother, and that by their union God makes a new person, a baby.

5. Explain the Sacrament of Matrimony. For a splendid instruction on this whole subject of sex, with suggestions as to just what to say, get the pamphlet called *How to Give Sex Instructions*.<sup>1</sup>

#### **PURITY SHINING LIGHT**

Purity really means cleanness. Help the child to keep his thoughts directed to Christ and to love Him so much that he wants to copy Him. Nobody can imagine Christ as anything but a shining white light of purity. Copy Him in that.

#### **VIRTUE FOR PARENTS**

Think about the love of God at odd moments during the day.

#### **BOOKS FOR THE MONTH**

*A Week of Communions*,<sup>2</sup> by Lamplighter, the Holy Child nun, takes short scenes from our Lord's life and leads the child to think and pray about them. The work is skillfully done and allows for the growth of the child's mind as he goes along page by page. Books like this help us to bring up a generation Catholic in thought as well as in act.

With the mother's help, the six-year-old can use this book: and, independently, girls and boys up to fourteen or fifteen can learn golden lessons from it.

*King of the Golden City*<sup>3</sup> is an old favorite which all children love. It is an allegory representing the love of God for the soul of a child.

### **HYMNS FOR THE MONTH**

The family should gather round the June altar every evening, if possible, or at least on Fridays, for hymns to the Blessed Sacrament and the Sacred Heart. Suitable hymns may be found in the *Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*.<sup>4</sup> We suggest:

"To Jesus' Heart All Burning" (page 48),

"Jesus, My Lord, My God, My All" (page 36),

"O Salutaris" (page 192) and "Tantum Ergo" (page 186), should be learned by every Catholic in the land.

The older children and the parents would love to be introduced to the magnificent Eucharistic hymns of St. Thomas Aquinas. Recently they have been printed in a pamphlet,<sup>5</sup> in Latin and English, by the London Catholic Truth Society. The pamphlet department of the International Catholic Truth Society, Bergen Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., keeps on hand a stock of English pamphlet publications.

<sup>1</sup> *How to Give Sex Instructions*, by Rev. P. J. Bruckner, S.J. St. Louis, Mo.: The Queen's Work, 3742 West Pine Boulevard. Price, \$.25.

<sup>2</sup> *A Week of Communions*, by Lamplighter. New York: Sheed & Ward, 63 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$1.00.

<sup>3</sup> *King of the Golden City*, by Mother Mary Loyola. New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 12 Barclay Street. Price, \$.60.

<sup>4</sup> *Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*, by the Christian Brothers. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.25.

<sup>5</sup> *Eucharistic Hymns of St. Thomas Aquinas*. Brooklyn, N. Y.: International Catholic Truth Society, 407 Bergen Street. Price, \$.10.

## JULY

### REVIEW OF THE HALF YEAR

This year so far we have talked of many things:

- January:** 1. The creation of a Catholic home.  
2. The teaching of regularity.

- February:** 1. The fact that a virtue is a habit.  
2. The duty of knowing our children's friends.

- March:** 1. Teaching children by the example of our own behavior.  
2. Giving the children good radio programs.

- April:** 1. The custom of speaking often about religious things.  
2. Teaching obedience through our own firmness and consistency.

- May:** 1. Teaching the children to imitate Christ.  
2. Giving the children good books and encouraging reading.

- June:** 1. Teaching the love of God.  
2. Teaching the virtue of purity.

This month we shall consider the best way to keep the family united.

### TWO HOMES—EARTH AND HEAVEN

We have two homes—one here on earth and one in heaven with God. Life here is a preparation for heaven. The supernatural life we live here is a beginning of the life hereafter. That is why good people die without fear. They know that they pass to a fuller life with God. Can you make your home so lovely that it will seem to be like a little taste of heaven here on earth below? Say often to yourself that your destiny and your child's destiny is to dwell with God in perfect happiness. And say to yourself that your duty is to begin here and now to teach your child to live in God's presence. When things go wrong in the house ask yourself: "Do we act as if God is in this house? Is

this house a home, a garden enclosed, where children feel safe under the protection of loving parents, where one family dwells in peace and unity?"

### **THE WEAKENING FAMILY**

The family is the God-made unit of society, an institution so powerful that it has lasted since the beginning of the world. Today it is weakening. People marry on an impulse, never thinking that marriage means founding a family. Then they divorce each other almost as readily; the family is split, and the children suffer. Or else parents rush off on trips and leave children to servants or neighbors or even alone. Parents become bridge and movie addicts and desert their families night after night.

### **OFFSET BY CATHOLIC FAMILY**

Against this type of family, stands the Catholic model, founded on a sacrament established by Christ. Marriage for life with no divorce—on this rock is built the Catholic family.

#### **GRACE OF MATRIMONY**

That family can be a garden of the Lord, a place of joy and delight for father, mother, children. Since marriage cannot be terminated by man, even Catholic parents who have ceased to be enchanted with each other realize that they have a big job to make a success of the family, and that they can do so by drawing on the grace which God stands ready to give for the asking, grace in the form of courage and serenity and persistence in keeping the family happy and united.

#### **SOLIDARITY**

The family must possess solidarity. It must be a unit. Each child must learn to speak with pride of his home and parents and sisters and brothers. The child lucky enough to find himself surrounded by a loving family has a sense of security which psychologists agree is necessary for a happy childhood.

## PEDAGOGY—HOW BUILD UP SECURITY?

How can we build up this security? How can we make the child feel himself one of the family group? A simple way is by *doing things* together. How many things can parents and children do together?

1. Say family prayers.
2. Go to Mass together.
3. Kneel together at the altar rail for Holy Communion.
4. Have family reading.
5. Have family music and singing.
6. Go on trips and picnics in a group.
7. Clear off the snow, or rake up the leaves or weed the garden together (two or three of the family at least).
8. Play games together.

We suggest that each family add to this list occupations in which the family can unite.

## SINGING AND MUSIC

On the subject of music and singing we shall say a little with special emphasis. Family singing is a thrilling experience to children. Psychologists today talk much about the value of community singing. Schools and colleges have glee clubs and the large cities have choral societies. Singing in a crowd produces friendliness and makes a bond of union among people. Leaders who get crowds together for a song festival certainly help to produce good feeling. Why then should not the family make use of this age-old custom and strengthen the bonds that unite them?

God gave us singing voices, and certainly children love to sing. In school songs and hymns are taught. Encourage the children to sing them at home too. Make it a rule to sing all you can with them. The tunes learned in childhood will never be forgotten.

### GOOD SONGS AND HYMNS

We have mentioned this year, *The Three Kings*, *The Magnificat*, *Stabat Mater*, and several other hymns. We hope the parents are trying to enter into the custom of family hymn singing, which can be developed into a habit which young and old will love.

### SONG SHEETS

We trust that the popular song sheets do not make up the repertory of *any* Catholic families. Let us realize that the emotion aroused by a song has its effect on the child's character. The popular song sheets, set to catchy dance music, are many of them full of pagan ideas of love. "Love" in these songs means "petting"; and the poor child singing such things naturally thinks that love means what the song says. A high Christian notion of love, a great Christian virtue, is distorted, or lost, or never learned.

### MUSIC AND LITURGY

The Pope wants us to sing in church the beautiful things of the Catholic liturgy. In the Middle Ages when the superb cathedrals were built in Europe, a very fine type of music was written and chanted. It is called Gregorian music. There is something uplifting about its tones. To go to church where such music is heard is a great privilege. We come away strengthened for our day's work.

Indeed in many cities there are schools where teachers are trained to teach this music to the children. In New York there is the Pius X School of Liturgical Music<sup>1</sup> from which hundreds of teachers have gone out all over the country. The greatest music critics in the world approve of this kind of singing and if our children have the chance of learning it, by all means let us encourage them. The point is that if we help them to love good songs and uplifting church music, we train their musical taste so that they will feel disgust for the pagan, immoral songs so popular in our time.

## VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

Let us resolve these busy summer days to arrange some system about daily living while we have the children at home all day long. Only so can we preserve our calm and put into practice all the good things suggested.

## BOOKS FOR THE MONTH

In November we shall take up the Mass and the Liturgy. Meantime it would be a good idea to get some books on the Mass. For younger children we suggest, *The Mass Explained to Children*, by Madam Montessori.<sup>2</sup> This is a book which parents should read slowly and carefully with the children at the rate of three or four pages a day. We suggest for older children, *How to Understand the Mass*, by Dom Gaspar Lefebvre, O.S.B.<sup>3</sup> This booklet can be read and studied over and over for many years. It is a booklet to keep for reference. *The Child at Mass*<sup>4</sup> is an excellent pamphlet.

## HYMNS FOR THE MONTH

If the words of the *Magnificat* have not yet been obtained, by all means secure them before July 2nd, the feast of the Visitation, the day when our Blessed Lady said to St. Elizabeth the actual words of that magnificent song. Read the English words in the New Testament, St. Luke, Chapter 1, Verses 46-55. For the music see page 169 of *The Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pius X School of Liturgical Music, Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart, 133rd Street and Convent Avenue, New York City.

<sup>2</sup> *The Mass Explained to Children*, by Dr. Maria Montessori. New York: Sheed & Ward, 63 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$1.25.

<sup>3</sup> *How to Understand the Mass*, by Dom Gaspar Lefebvre, O.S.B. St. Paul, Minn.: E. H. Lohmann Co., 413 Sibley Street. Price, \$.35.

<sup>4</sup> *The Child at Mass*, by Rev. George M. Dennerle. New York: The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street. Price, \$.05.

<sup>5</sup> *The Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*, by the Christian Brothers. Page 169. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.25.



## AUGUST

### **FAMILY UNITY—THROUGH A FAMILY INTEREST**

To keep the children interested in home affairs is a sure way of preserving the unity of the family. We should aim to discover interests in which parents and children can share. One of these interests is pictures. A whole family may educate itself in art and learn the stories of the Old and New Testament by the simple and fascinating way of pictures. A family interest of this kind which can be shared by adults and children is invaluable in maintaining the close contact of earlier years.

### **PEDAGOGY—TEACHING RELIGION BY PICTURES**

Why then should we not make use of pictures to teach religion and to help us create in our homes a Catholic atmosphere?

From the early days of Christianity artists have tried to paint pictures showing some religious truth or telling some story of our faith. The very greatest artists, men like Giotto and Duccio, Raphael, Michael Angelo, Fra Angelico, Perugino, Piero della Francesca, have left hundreds of magnificent pictures, copies of which can be obtained for a few cents. The most satisfactory way of securing sets of pictures is to write for a sample picture and a catalogue to one or two of the publishers of pictures listed on page 43.<sup>1</sup>

### **HOW TO GET PICTURES**

Besides buying pictures, children can watch papers (Catholic and secular) for religious pictures. Often the Sunday editions print copies of great masterpieces.

### **LEARN TO LOVE FINE PICTURES**

If you are not trained to appreciate masterpieces of art, surround your children with them while they are young and they will gradually learn to love them. The great pictures have been admired for hundreds of years because, having been made by great artists, they have in them a

quality which after a while conveys to people the real meaning of the picture.

The Sistine Madonna, of Raphael, is a splendid one for the home. Take a look at the Blessed Mother and you will see why she was chosen to be the Mother of God. She looks noble but meek, gentle but strong, beautiful but commanding, motherly, unselfish and courageous in suffering. *The Tribute Money*, by Masaccio, on the wall of an old church in Florence, shows our Lord with His disciples. There is a figure of the Saviour to give a child an inkling of His Spirit, dignity, power, and gentleness combined.

#### COLLECTING PICTURES

There is a world of knowledge to be gained from religious pictures. Get the children started on collecting them. Have one child search for 15 masterpieces, one for each of the 15 mysteries of the Rosary.

One child might begin collecting all the "Annunciations"; another all the pictures of the Presentation of Our Blessed Lady in the Temple. Any little girl would love to imitate the tiny Mary mounting the high steps in Titian's picture of the subject. That little Mary sees what she has to do and marches straight up with courage and also joy. She was joyful in going where she saw God wanted her to go.

#### THE STORY OF THE PICTURE

Each picture tells a story. Mothers whose children are less than ten can still make story-telling a regular practice. Points to remember in story telling:

1. Know the subject. Read it up in the Bible or in a Life of Christ.
2. Make a list on a paper of the main points (characters, events, places).
3. Use your imagination and when you are telling the story of the Visitation, for instance, say such things as: "Our Blessed Lady had walked miles. Think how tired she must have been. Even if she traveled part way on a donkey's back, she must have been worn out, for riding on a donkey

is not like driving in a car. But, even though tired, she runs over to her cousin, puts out her arms to greet her. See the love showing in her movements."

4. Learn the important words in stories. Children appreciate the wonderful poetic speech of the Bible, and nobody could improve on our Lady's speech in the Visitation story when she says: "My soul doth magnify the Lord."
5. Bring the story home to the children if possible. In the case of the Visitation you can say: "We must do as Blessed Lady did." Then suggest a visit to see Mrs. ———, who needs help or comfort or sympathy or congratulations.

#### SCRAPBOOKS

Collecting pictures leads to many busy hours spent in arranging them in scrapbooks, or, better, mounting them on cardboard, framing a few favorites, and filing the others in some convenient form.

#### RELIGIOUS PICTURES VERSUS HOLLYWOOD PICTURES

Children love to make collections and certainly the parents should see to it that they spend their time and energy in collecting worthwhile things. The current custom of making albums of movie actors and actresses is hardly to be termed educational. Indeed it is tragic to see girls and boys gazing at their cut-out pictures of movie people—many of them several times divorced.

#### MOVING PICTURES—HOW TO CHOOSE THEM

Moving pictures, their use and abuse, will be our next topic. Parents should make rules with regard to movie going. Allow no member of the family to go to a movie which the parents know nothing about. This rule should apply to the parents themselves as well as to the children. The habit of starting off "to go to the movies," and to stumble into any movie in town, is exceedingly dangerous.

How shall we find out what a movie is like? In three principal ways:

1. By consulting the list of the Legion of Decency published in the diocesan Catholic paper.
2. By reading and studying the advertisements of movies. The "ads" usually reveal whether a movie is vulgar or indecent or salacious.
3. By reading reviews in the better newspapers. If parents made it a custom to read the reviews and gradually to learn the character of the reviewer, they would be able to make a fairly good judgment of the quality of the movie by the remarks of the reviewer.
4. By talking to friends and neighbors.

We parents must bear in mind that the education and training given a child at home and in school can be counteracted by the influence of bad movies. We do not want our children to carry in their minds images of vulgar or indecent scenes.

### **ENCOURAGE GOOD MOVIES**

There are many excellent movies which can be a joy and delight to the majority of people. There are also educational films especially made for the young. We ought to encourage the producers of such entertainment. Parents can easily band together to determine the character of movies in their neighborhood. The pastor, the school, the parents, make an unbeatable combination when they express approval or disapproval of a picture.

### **VIRTUE FOR PARENTS**

*Extraordinary patience and calm.* In the doubly difficult vacation days which bring to mothers so many added worries, the soothing effect of patience, calm and silence is more needed than ever.

### **THINGS TO DO**

August is a good month in which to do some of those things for which we could not find time during the school year. A family that has not yet made itself an altar might

do that this month. It would also be a good idea to look over back sections and see whether it is possible to get some of the books which we may have overlooked. Those of us who cannot afford to buy books could take time to go to the nearest public library and ask the librarian to add at least a few of the "Religion in the Home" books to her stock.

#### PLAYS

On the feast of the Assumption, August 15th, a holyday of obligation, we should certainly have a celebration of some kind. A play arranged and acted by the children would be splendid; but as it is not easy to act a mystery like the Assumption, we suggest that the children make up a play about our Lady's life after the death of her Son. The Apostles, Veronica with her veil and Joseph of Arimathea with the winding sheet could all be characters.

#### BOOKS FOR THE MONTH

For younger children we suggest *An Alphabet of the Altar*.<sup>2</sup> This is a large picture-story book of the Mass with many details which give a chance to mother to explain a number of religious points hard to make clear without pictures.

*Daybreak in the Soul*<sup>3</sup> is a book for girls and boys who are leaving childhood behind them. In Father Roche's wise way the book explains some of the deep things about religion which children from the age of twelve up are just faintly beginning to perceive.

#### HYMNS FOR THE MONTH

On summer evenings go through the hymn book and sing all the hymns to our Lady.

<sup>1</sup> The University Prints, Newton, Mass. Catalogue \$.05. Ars Sacra, 15 Barclay Street, New York City. Thomas Nelson & Sons, 385 Madison Avenue, New York City.

<sup>2</sup> *An Alphabet of the Altar*, by E. Vincent Wareing, illustrated by Louis Beyaert and Edward MacCarthy. New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 12 Barclay Street. Price \$.40.

<sup>3</sup> *Daybreak in the Soul*, by William Roche, S.J. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 55 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$.60, paper; \$1.35, cloth.

## SEPTEMBER

### THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

With September comes school, and the excitement of the first days. Wise parents are full of interest, eager to know the name of the new teacher, eager to look at the new school books, and to listen to all the stories about what happened all day. In one very well managed home the children were so full of news, each wanting to talk first, that, after saying Grace before supper, Father made a rule that, beginning with the youngest, each could talk for five minutes, and then start round again.

### CO-OPERATION AND REGULARITY

Be sure to look at the home-work notebooks and see that the young people start the new term well by getting down to lessons promptly. Pay particular attention to the Catechism or religion lesson. The peace and happiness of the home suffers if school duties are not promptly performed. Religion thrives better in an orderly household, and we cannot repeat too often that it is the parents' business to manage the home, and to establish habits of regularity in every member of the family.

### RECALL OUR PURPOSE—LIVING IN TWO WORLDS

With the school term well begun we ought to make a fresh start on our big job,—creating a Catholic spirit in the home. It is wise to think a little of our aim.

What shall we recall?

We know that man lives in two worlds; his body walks the earth, while his soul in the fraction of a second can commune with God in another world, the supernatural world. There are people who live almost wholly in the natural world. There are many who morning and night might pass over in prayer to the other world. But parents should live in God's supernatural world a great deal more than they do. If they are close to God they will take their children with them.

Have you not known people who are always aware of God's presence, of His care and protection, or who in trouble will at once say, "Yes, dear Lord, I bear this sorrow joyfully with You"? They are always seeing God's hand in the beautiful world. They look at the smiling faces of their children and see God there. They are miles and miles removed from those whose attention is absorbed in money, society, dress and all the rest that makes up "the world."

A home with the supernatural attitude toward life is what we want for all Catholic families. A million such homes could set the country on fire with the desire for a better Christian life; a million supernatural-minded parents could clean up the movies, the radio, the magazines.

The home where children breathe a supernatural atmosphere! How can we create it? Let us remind ourselves of a few points we have considered before:

1. Parents must live close to God.
2. They must set a good example in every word they speak and in every act they perform in their children's sight.
3. They would do well to remember all the suggestions made since January, which help to keep religion living and vital in the home, suggestions about:
  - a. Prayers.
  - b. Conversation.
  - c. Family parties.
  - d. Family altars.
4. They would profit by going through all of the preceding pages and writing out a list of things mentioned under the heading, "Things to do."
5. In particular, parents should remember that it is not enough to say, "Don't do this; don't do that."  
Say "Read this"; not "Don't read that."  
Say "Go to this movie," as well as "Don't go to that."  
Say "Suppose we go to the beach today," instead of "Where shall we go?"

Time—Patience—Intelligence are required. If you have a job in a factory, shop or school you may not loaf on the job. At home, in the supreme job of bringing up the children, you may not loaf.

## **PEDAGOGY—LIVING AND LOVING**

Motherhood and fatherhood are not for cowards. Every mother has faced death; most fathers have faced the necessity of battling to support their wives and children.

Let your children know that it is love that makes mother and father brave and heroic and ready to meet death. Love is not a matter of petting and kissing; love is such devotion to another that you give yourself, your time, your strength, your health for that person. Quite small children love to do things for mother and father. Make it a point to encourage them to show their love in deeds. The frequent complaint of mothers, "I have done everything for my boy and now he does nothing for me," is sad; but it is the result of faulty training. Don't "do everything" for the child. Start when he is young and wants to help you, and train him to keep on.

Never let him slacken in his efforts. Now, with the school year beginning, write out for yourself a list of things in which your children can help, talk it over with them, and start to work on it.

### **MOTIVES**

Get the motive right. All children from six to fourteen can be told two things:

1. You help mother and father because you love them.
2. You help them because you love our Lord and want to copy Him.  
He loved and helped His Mother and St. Joseph.

When an occasion comes and the child rebels at helping, then you can say, "Of course it's hard and Mother would gladly do it for you. But if you have no chance to do hard things for dear Jesus' sake, you have no chance to suffer for Him and so show Him you love Him. Why not go to the store or cut the grass because you want to offer to our Dear Lord something that is hard for you?"

### **OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHOWING LOVE**

Suggested helps and things to do for love of mother and God are:



1. **Going to the store.** A girl or boy of twelve or more can go to the stores regularly and should be taught systematic marketing. Have him make a list with you. If inferior goods are delivered make him return them. Go and see the grocer occasionally yourself. Explain that he must wait on your child as scrupulously as he would on you yourself.
2. **Setting the table.** From four years up children can set the table. Systematize the process of laying out knives, forks, etc. Then bread, butter, water, salt, napkins,—a list of things often forgotten should be memorized.
3. **Cleaning, dusting, bed-making,**—even princes and princesses are trained to do these things.
4. **Cutting grass, weeding, arranging flowers** are tasks which children can easily learn to perform.
5. **Brushing clothes, sewing on buttons, polishing shoes** all give good training.
6. **Cleaning silver.** Once a month the whole family may assemble in the kitchen, get out all the silver and have a polishing bee for one hour only—more time becomes drudgery.

What has all this to do with the Catholic religion? It trains children in good habits of generous helping and serving. A child so trained, easily learns habits of prayer, of self-sacrifice, of virtue. The idea of doing things for the love of the good Lord becomes part of the nature of the child.

### THINGS TO DO ROUND THE ALTAR

September 8th is the birthday of our Lady. Celebrate it so that the little ones may realize that it is a day of joy. Of course, have prayers around the altar, and some songs to our Lady.

As for pictures for the altar, it would be interesting to know how many families have come across a picture of the birth of the Blessed Mother. It was a favorite subject among the great artists. In the historic city of Florence, in Italy, in the Dominican Church of Santa Maria Novella, there is a large fresco (painting on plaster) along the right wall of the sanctuary. It shows St. Ann sitting up in bed, receiving lovely ladies who come with gifts for the

new baby Mary. At one side a woman is washing the tiny infant. She has a basin, small articles of clothing and the sort of things that modern mothers have. Ghirlandaio, the artist, followed the custom of many artists of his day; he made the scene, the setting, the house and the furniture like that of his own time, and imagined St. Ann, St. Joachim, our Lady living at that period. Such a picture makes an unforgettable impression.

#### THE HOLY GHOST AND SCHOOL

On the first day of school the family should include in evening prayers a prayer and hymn to the Holy Ghost for light and help in the studies of the year. For a hymn, see section for hymns, below. For a prayer the children should learn to say:

"Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love.

"Send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created.

"And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

"O God, Who hast taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that we may by the gift of the same Spirit, be always truly wise, and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

#### VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

As we see to it that the children study, why should we not decide to study religion ourselves? A good book which answers objections to the Catholic faith is called *The Question Box*.<sup>1</sup> We ought to study a couple of pages a day.

#### BOOKS FOR THE MONTH

Stories about saints told for little children make very interesting reading provided they are told simply and naturally so that the little ones may understand them. Two small books about small saints have recently come to our attention, one called *Little Saint Agnes*,<sup>2</sup> and the other *Little Patron of Gardeners: the Good Saint Fiacre*.<sup>3</sup> Both books have plenty of pictures drawn in a way to please little citizens of the twentieth century.

For older children we highly recommend *Bible Children*,<sup>4</sup> twelve stories with colored illustrations. The children appearing in the stories are such boys as Isaac, Joseph, Benjamin, Samuel, and one girl, the daughter of Jairus. This is the kind of book to read over and over, year after year.

### **HYMNS FOR THE MONTH**

A stirring hymn which children sing with great gusto is *Holy God We Praise Thy Name*.<sup>5</sup> This will be found in both hymn books mentioned in the footnotes.

A hymn to the Holy Ghost to ask His aid in school studies is *Come Holy Ghost, Creator Blest*.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Question Box*, by Father Bertrand L. Conway, C.S.P. New York: The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street. Price, \$.50.

<sup>2</sup> *Little Saint Agnes*, by Helen Walker Homan. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 55 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$.50.

<sup>3</sup> *Little Patron of Gardners: the Good Saint Fiacre*, by Catherine Beebe. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 55 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$.50.

<sup>4</sup> *Bible Children*, by Blanche Jennings Thompson. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 449 Fourth Avenue. Price, \$1.50.

<sup>5</sup> *Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*, by the Christian Brothers. Nos. 128 and 28. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.25; and *Catholic Church Hymnal*, edited by A. Edmonds Tozer. Nos. 200 and 61. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.75.

## OCTOBER

### ANGELS—COMPANIONSHIP

October is the month of the Angels and also the month of the Rosary. Children can make real companions of their Angels and acquire the habit of turning to them at odd moments for help in trouble or for courage at a time of fear. An imaginative child especially, for whom darkness and the woods and the wind suggest terror, should be trained to recall often that a loving Guardian Angel is by his side. Explain that God loves us so much that He never leaves us alone, but sends the Angels, His messengers, to help us.

#### PRAYER TO ANGELS

For children who did not learn in babyhood the well-known morning prayer to the Angels, we print it here:

Angel of God, my guardian dear,  
To whom His love commits me here,  
Ever this day be at my side,  
To light and guard  
To rule and guide. Amen.

### ANGEL FEASTS

The Feast of All Angels falls on October 2nd, and therefore each child may call that day the feast of his own Guardian Angel.

The family should learn something about the greatest Angels also.

#### ST. MICHAEL, LEADER

St. Michael the Archangel is named in the Confiteor, just after "Blessed Mary, ever virgin," and that should remind us that he is very powerful. It was St. Michael who led the battle against the devils, the evil spirits when they, out of pride, rebelled against God. Teach the children then, to pray to St. Michael for help when tempted to be proud. St. Michael's feast is September 29th.

### ST. GABRIEL AND OUR LADY

St. Gabriel (March 24th) is the Angel of the Annunciation, the angel whose words we say in the "Hail Mary." Those children readily love him, who have learned about the coming of Christ.

### ST. RAPHAEL AND TOBIAS

St. Raphael (October 24) should be a close friend of all busy people. He explained to Tobias that he would tell him a great secret, which was that he, the Archangel Raphael, took Tobias' place in prayer, when he was busy doing deeds of kindness. "I offered thy prayer to the Lord," said St. Raphael.

Special devotion to these wonderful spirits appeals to girls and boys. Angels are so beautiful, so bright, so swift, that they please the young fancy. Be sure then to introduce your children to them.

### THE ROSARY

October is as we all know the month of the Rosary also. Blessed Mary is the Queen of Angels and so in this month dedicated to her as Lady of the Rosary we can combine our devotion to her and to the Angels by saying the Rosary before an altar decorated with pictures or statues of Angels. The family should make a heroic effort to say the beads together every night. If that is not possible, try to say them two or three times a week. The mother of a family of ten reports that at family prayers each child says one decade, so that each gets a chance every other day. The youngest, three years old, delights in taking his turn.

We must be sure in saying the Rosary that we remind the family to think about the special mystery of each decade. It is comforting to realize that the Church has arranged such an easy method of meditating on the Life of our Blessed Lord and His Mother.

### THINGS TO DO—ALTAR

The family altar should be very attractive with pictures of Angels. Fra Angelico, a Dominican monk, who was born almost 600 years ago, made the most exquisitely lovely picture of Angels. Another great Italian artist, Melozzo da

Ferli, who lived in the days of Christopher Columbus, made magnificent pictures of Angels, many of which are kept in the Vatican, the home of the Pope. (See pp. 39, 40, for suggestions about getting pictures.)

### THE LITTLE FLOWER

Little St. Teresa's feast falls on October 3rd. She is a model for modern children, who can learn from her how to sanctify the little daily doings of life. Try to make a triduum (3 days) of prayer to her, either before or after her feast. Teresa is so modern that children can play at being "Little Flower" all day. If we read her life and make her name a household word, younger children will dramatize her doing without any difficulty. The story of the Martin family sisters is quite as fascinating as *Little Women*, and many a child will pattern her life after Pauline or Céline or Teresa just as at one time every child wanted to play at being Meg, Jo, Beth or Amy.

### PEDAGOGY—TRUTHFULNESS

Girls and boys whose minds are full of thoughts of our Lady and her Angels and the Little Flower should be interested in the bright and shining virtue of truthfulness, about which we shall do a little thinking this month. Here are some fundamental ideas for parents to implant:

#### SPIRIT OF NOBILITY

Our aim should be to inculcate a spirit of nobility and idealism with regard to truth. We parents understand that God Himself is Truth and that, therefore, truth is sacred. It is not something which we can accept or deny, as we choose. In general conversation in the home subjects arise which involve historical truth, scientific truth, religious truth, or truth about some small detail connected with the household. If we always show that we respect truth, our children will grow up with a sense of loyalty to truth. The greatest thing we can do for them on this point is to develop in them such a habit of truthfulness that they will feel uncomfortable if they are not telling the truth or acting the truth.

## PRACTICE OF TRUTH IN EVERYDAY LIFE

If the spirit of love for truth is part of the life of our homes, it is not difficult to apply the principle of truth-telling to small matters. If a child begins to tell lies, or to be shifty and deceptive, we must show him that he is spoiling a precious ideal. If the children are to grow up with this right sense of truth, of course, they must be trained from early childhood. In small matters, as they arise, say always, "We tell the truth. We are brave and tell the truth even when it is hard." Show that, if the parent or teacher asks who is responsible for some fault which has been committed, there is something fine and noble in standing up and admitting, "I did it."

## PUNISHMENT AND MERCY

Usually lies are the result of fear. The child fears that he will be punished if he admits his fault. This question of punishment is a matter to which parents must give thought. If we have treated our children harshly and cruelly, we may expect them to lie through fear of punishment. If, on the other hand, we have so conducted ourselves that they love and respect us, they will not be likely to lie to us.

In normal cases, justice tempered with mercy works far better than the application of justice alone. Wise parents and teachers often can see their way to excusing a child if he apologizes. Some children are trained to say, "I did it. Please excuse me. I'm sorry." A parent does not lose his power by forgiving a child. Indeed mercy is a great quality and strengthens the authority of the parent who shows it. As Shakespeare said:

"The quality of mercy is not strain'd,  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;  
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:

It is an attribute to God Himself;  
And earthly power doth then show likest God's  
When mercy seasons justice."

A child will not be easily tempted to tell a lie if he lives in a merciful atmosphere.

#### COURAGE

Suppose, however, that there is likelihood of punishment if an offender is discovered. Then courage is needed. Tell the child, "Be brave. Bear the pain of the punishment for our Lord's sake. Never be a coward. You are in training to be a soldier of Christ, full of courage."

#### VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

Faithful recitation of the Rosary, with meditation on each mystery.

#### BOOKS FOR THE MONTH

*Saint Teresa Picture Book*<sup>1</sup> is a charming book in verse, with lively illustrations on each page. It tells of the Little Flower's life as a child.

For older children, there is another beautifully written story about St. Teresa. It is *Little Saint Thérèse*.<sup>2</sup>

For parents themselves who want to read little Teresa's own account of her life there is the large translation made by Father T. N. Taylor called *Sœur Thérèse of Lisieux*.<sup>3</sup> Parents who are interested in the ideal set forth in these leaflets on "Religion in the Home" will see in the Martin household an example of a home filled with supernatural atmosphere. God is there always in the minds and hearts of father, mother, and children.

#### HYMN FOR THE MONTH

*Dear Angel Ever at My Side*<sup>4</sup> is an appropriate hymn for this month.

<sup>1</sup> *Saint Teresa Picture Book*, by A. de Bethune. New York: Sheed & Ward, 63 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$.50.

<sup>2</sup> *Little Saint Thérèse*, by E. von Schmidt Pauli. New York: Macmillan Co., 60 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$1.00.

<sup>3</sup> *Sœur Thérèse of Lisieux*, an autobiography, translated by Father T. N. Taylor. New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 12 Barclay Street. Price, \$1.35.

<sup>4</sup> *The Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*, by the Christian Brothers. No. 111. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.25.



## NOVEMBER

### MONTH OF ALL SAINTS AND OF THE HOLY SOULS IN PURGATORY

In October we recalled the presence of the angels round about us and our children; in November we realize that all the saints, known and unknown, are our friends to whom we may pray, knowing that they will present our needs to our Blessed Lord. We remember, last, but not least, the Souls in Purgatory, those souls, so dear to us, about whose happiness we are often wondering. Have they yet passed on to heaven, into the peace of complete union with God? Or are they still suffering, waiting to make up for the lack of perfection in their lives on earth?

### OUR CHILDREN AND THE WHOLE CHURCH

If the saints and souls in Purgatory are often on our lips, so that they are household names, our children will grow up with a sense of familiarity with them. It will then be easy for us to put into practice in our homes the great doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ. We are all united in Christ: the saints—the Church Triumphant; the souls in Purgatory—the Church Suffering; and we fighting soldiers on earth—the Church Militant.

If the children are familiar with this great doctrine of the union of us all in one Body of which Christ is the Head, then they will more easily prove equal to the future that faces them in the twentieth century.

### SOCIAL JUSTICE—THE CHILDREN'S PROBLEM

No one doubts that a terrible struggle is going on and gathering force between different forms of society. Strikes, labor troubles, panics and depressions, unemployment, misunderstandings between capital and labor,—make up the ordinary news of our times. The children of today must settle these difficulties a few years hence.

The Holy Father and all wise people tell us that there is only one way to a peaceful settlement of that strife. Each man must respect every other man and treat him as his

brother in Christ; each man must gaze across the maze of trouble to the other man, and looking into his eyes, recognize him as another member of the Mystical Body.

Our children may solve the coming class struggle without warfare, if we train them now to understand that the Second Commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," is a definite order from God Himself and not a poetic fancy.

### **PEDAGOGY—TRAINING BY DOING**

What shall we do, then, to train the children to love their "neighbors"?

1. Insist that each child respect the belongings of his brothers and sisters and little friends.

2. Instruct the child to show kindness and consideration to servants, "help" of any kind, elevator men, salesmen at the door, shopkeepers and beggars. In small ways, train the child to practice this perfectly definite commandment. We give a few illustrations:

- a. See that the child says "Please" and "Thank you" to servants and "help" and elevator men.
- b. Never allow the door to be slammed in the face of a salesman. Explain to the child that though you do not buy the article offered you of course treat the man civilly and patiently, even if he is very trying and rudely persistent. Explain to the child that the man has to earn his living in a very difficult way.
- c. In shops, say a pleasant word to the salesman or saleslady and tell the child that you make a point of doing so, because he or she is probably very tired standing and waiting on all kinds of people.
- d. If you are going to give something to a beggar, hand it to the child to give. Thus early he learns how to help others.

In these and many other small ways we can help the children to form habits of looking upon strangers as their neighbors.

3. Never allow a child to speak unkindly to a person of another race, whether white or black or yellow.

4. Restrain yourself from violent and critical talk about other nations. In these days of head-lined newspapers, people's emotions are swayed by propaganda. A good plan is to say, "I wonder what the Holy Father thinks about this. He hears all sides of the question."

### **THE MASS**

While we strive to do our part in bringing about the coming of the Kingdom of Christ, we must emphasize even more strongly that prayer to God is the most powerful means of all to bring about a solution of the terrible struggle of our world. And of all prayers the Mass is the most powerful.

As we walk to Mass let us say to our children that we are going to unite with the priest in offering to God the sacrifice of His Only Son. Repeat over and over that father, mother, children and priest all together have a part in the offering of our Lord to God.

It would be well here and now to make up our minds to speak and act habitually, as if we realized this momentous fact.

### **THE MISSAL**

What can we do to keep vivid our own grasp of the meaning of the Mass? And how can we bring up our children to be aware of what is happening at Mass? In July we advised the purchase of two books about the Mass. In May we recommended two Mass prayer books. This month we ask all parents to try hard to secure Missals and to use them. They can be had in many styles and at various prices. We list a few in the notes on books.

The Missal, the regular Mass book of the Church, is now used by millions of Catholics every day in the year, and of course on Sundays.

Children as young as eight or nine years of age have great delight in following the Missal. There is a fascination in

discovering all the many interesting things which are set out day after day in this prayer book of the Church. Anybody who will faithfully read the Mass prayers for every single day for one year will discover that he has acquired a real education. Even if you don't go to Mass every day you can at least read the Missal. You begin to understand how this Church of which we are members today has gone along through the ages, storing up the wisdom of great saints and composing little prayers about them so that we make their acquaintance in the Collect. If you have not had any experience with the Missal, you may find it hard to believe that there are families in which each child finally gets a Missal for Christmas and you can see them all kneeling in the pew on Sunday, each one following the priest with great interest and excitement.

### **THE MISSAL AND MANKIND**

Steady reading of the Missal gives a sense of the universality of the Church. Children begin to realize that all over the world people of every race and nation are reading those words and thinking those thoughts, and that in the Mass we and they and everybody, including the saints and holy souls in Purgatory, are united in one great powerful sacrifice to God.

### **VIRTUE FOR PARENTS**

Go to Mass every day, if possible, for the souls in Purgatory. If we forget our dead, who will remember them? Should attendance at Mass be impossible we may be able to say the Stations of the Cross.

### **BOOKS FOR THE MONTH**

There are so many styles of Missals that it is difficult to advise parents which ones to choose. The *St. Andrew Daily Missal*<sup>1</sup> has, besides all the Mass prayers for every day in the year, explanations of the liturgy which are very valuable. It has also extremely beautiful illustrations, one for each Sunday and feast day. At the back of the book are to be found the words and music for *O Salutaris, Tan-*

*tum Ergo, Benedictus Deus* (Blessed be God), *Adoro Te*, and the words of the *Te Deum*.

Another excellent Missal (not for every day, but for the Sundays and chief feasts of the year) is *My Missal*,<sup>2</sup> with introduction and notes by Abbot Cabrol. This comes also in short form, with only the Epistles and Gospels given.

A very cheap and useful publication is *The Catholic Sunday Missal*,<sup>3</sup> arranged by the Dominican Fathers, Callan and McHugh.

A useful little pamphlet containing prayers in general use, prayers for Mass and the words of well-known hymns is, *A Prayer Book for Sunday Schools*.<sup>4</sup>

### HYMNS FOR THE MONTH

*Jerusalem the Golden*, that wonderful song composed by Bernard of Cluny, is good to sing on All Saints and All Souls Days.<sup>5</sup> *De Profundis* (Psalm 99) and *Miserere* (Psalm 50) are hymns which Catholics like to know.<sup>6</sup> The English words of *De Profundis* are found in most prayer books and of course can be read in the Bible. It is a good habit to recite this psalm daily for our beloved dead.

<sup>1</sup> *Daily Missal*, by Dom Gaspar Lefebvre of the Abbey of St. André. St. Paul, Minn.: The E. M. Lohmann Co., 413 Sibley Street. Price, \$3.75 to \$9.75, according to binding.

<sup>2</sup> *My Missal*, by Abbot Cabrol, O.S.B. New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 12 Barclay Street. Price, \$.25 to \$3.00.

<sup>3</sup> *The Catholic Sunday Missal*, by Rev. Charles J. Callan, O.P., and Rev. John A. McHugh, O.P. New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 12 Barclay Street. Price, \$.20.

<sup>4</sup> *A Prayer Book for Sunday Schools*, by Right Rev. Msgr. John L. Belford, D.D. New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 12 Barclay Street. Price, \$.10.

<sup>5</sup> *St. Gregory Hymnal*, Singers' Edition. No. 118. Philadelphia, St. Gregory Guild, 1705 Rittenhouse Street. Price, \$1.00.

<sup>6</sup> *Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*, by the Christian Brothers. Nos. 201 and 203. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.25.

## DECEMBER

### ADVENT

Nobody can forget the approach of Christmas. Advertisers keep pounding at us to buy gifts, and, as often as not, they reduce us to an unhappy state of mind, either because we cannot buy all we want to, or because we wear ourselves out shopping. Certainly no one should be fooled into thinking that the absurd Christmas rush is a fit celebration of the coming on earth of God Himself.

What shall we do? As for the Christmas rush business, of course each family has to work out a sane and reasonable scheme for itself. Children should be allowed the precious privilege of making some simple object for father and mother. The tree should be hung with little surprises. But our task is to look beyond the gift giving and to remind ourselves that Advent is a short season of preparation.

### PREPARATION

The old custom of saying 4,004 Hail Marys has one good effect, at least. It impresses upon children that for a very long time the world waited for Jesus, for thousands of years. We wait four weeks! Certainly then we must bestir ourselves to be ready in such a short time.

### DAILY DOINGS

A short list of things to do follows:

1. Attend daily Mass if you live near a church.
2. Follow the Mass with a Missal, if possible, as proposed in November.
3. Say frequently: "Come, O Lord Jesus, and do not delay."
4. Make acts—at least one a day by each member of the family.

### ACTS

The old custom of making "acts" should certainly be established in our homes. The command "Be good" is too vague. Goodness must be translated into specific acts. "Acts" can be of any variety.

### *Housework Acts:*

1. Sweep carpet for mother.
2. Help with dishes without being grouchy.
3. Empty trash basket daily.
4. Run errands.

### *Acts of Self-Denial:*

1. Give up candy.
2. Eat unpleasant things with a smile.
3. Help sister or brother with lessons.

### *Spiritual Acts:*

1. Say extra prayers in morning or evening.
2. Attend Mass and receive Communion.
3. Recite Rosary.

## **THINGS TO DO**

Preparing the Crib should be the work of the children.

### **THE CRIB**

The stable can be made out of a box, and figures of our Lady, the Infant Jesus, St. Joseph, the animals, the shepherds can be added if the family has them. A tiny doll laid in the straw is really all that is necessary.

Whether the crib be plain or elaborate, have family prayers said around it daily, until you take it down on January 12th.

### **THE CHRISTMAS PLAY**

Christmas plays are very easy to get up. The simplest is the tableau, one scene of our Lady, St. Joseph and the Baby. Most children like to make up conversation. They will have St. Joseph and our Lady talking as they travel to the inn. The scene at the inn is easy to imagine. Then the birth, when an angel comes carrying a doll to represent the Baby Jesus.

Families who have been using pictures will find that the children can make up plays easily, as from the pictures they will get ideas of all the scenes connected with the birth of our Lord.

### **CHRISTMAS CAROLS**

A pleasant occupation for Advent is practicing Christmas carols. Some of these songs have come down to us from early days and we do not want our children to miss the joy of knowing them. If you live in a small town, perhaps you

can keep up the old custom of going round on Christmas Eve early in the evening to sing carols outside the windows of your friends. A cheap set of Christmas carols can be obtained from G. Schirmer, Inc.<sup>1</sup>

### **LESSON OF CHRISTMAS**

Wise parents will at some quiet hour start a discussion to find an answer to the question: Why was Christ born? Try to make the children get the true picture. God, the great, all-powerful Creator of all things, reigned from all eternity. Man, poor, foolish, unhappy man had been struggling on since the fall of Adam and Eve. Most men had even lost belief in God. Only the Jews remembered Him, and their attitude was one of awe and fear rather than one of love. God was too distant.

But God loved man and He sent His Son as a tiny Baby. Get the children to think why He came as a baby. They will think of good reasons. Lead them on to see that God wanted to be close to us, a little baby in our midst, because He loves us. One of His names, "Emmanuel," means God-with-us.

The point to make clear is that He came for love. Few people take in the fact vividly that God loves us, and that is, after all, the greatest fact in life. If He loves us, we love Him back. We don't want to displease Him. We thank Him for loving us, knowing that the love of God for us is something so great that we cannot even begin to be grateful enough.

Once the children grasp this idea, many things become easy. Why the sunsets? Because God loves us.

### **VIRTUE FOR PARENTS**

Let us trust our children to God, saying that He Who so loved the world as to send His only-begotten Son, is indeed worthy of our complete trust.

### **GRANDPARENTS**

Any family lucky enough to have a grandmother or a grandfather living, hardly needs to be reminded that the blessing of having them cannot last long. Make them



happy. Keep them in the center of things. Take them to Midnight Mass if they are able to go. Make them feel that they "belong" to the family more than ever on Christmas Day.

### CHRISTMAS DAY

Start with Midnight Mass or at least early Mass and Communion. This is, of course, difficult unless the work has been planned ahead so that there is a chance for some sleep early on Christmas Eve. The whole day is naturally festive, but some of our mothers think that a little less over-eating of heavy food would make the coming vacation week happier.

Apart from the dinner we should try to have a special celebration in the way of a family song-reunion as well as a home-made play or tableau.

### CHRISTMAS SONGS AND HYMNS

Either mother or father or an aunt or older sister could train the children to sing *Adeste Fideles* and have a grand awakening on Christmas morning by letting the children run in to their parents with a song.

Later in the day, perhaps before supper, the whole family can get together for all the Christmas songs. The favorite ones are found in *The Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*,<sup>2</sup> in *The Catholic Church Hymnal*,<sup>3</sup> and in *The St. Gregory Hymnal*.<sup>4</sup> *Angels We Have Heard on High*, we especially recommend, because in it is included the Christmas song of the angels, *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*.

### RADIO

If we parents study the programs as announced in the papers we shall find that several Catholic choirs sing Christmas carols over the air. Children are sure to love these.

Before the year ends we want to ask all Catholic parents to make a point of tuning in on *The Catholic Hour* every Sunday. Anyone who listens regularly and faithfully to that program, sponsored by the National Council of Catholic Men, cannot but receive real education in the Catholic way of life.

## BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS

Parents who have not yet been able to secure the books mentioned each month will, we hope, manage to get some of them for Christmas. The custom of giving children books as gifts grows each year, and if a child has a bookshelf of his own, he will love watching his collection grow.

To those parents who would like new suggestions in books this month, we suggest that they drop a card asking for a Christmas book list to: Pro Parvulis Book Club, New York, N. Y.

Indeed, any publisher mentioned in this pamphlet will send a list of suitable books upon request.

## CARDS FOR CHRISTMAS

Since the sending of Christmas cards has become such a widespread custom, naturally all sorts of people have gone into the business of printing cards. The result has been sad. The stores are flooded with pictures of many styles having nothing at all to do with the birth of Christ.

In some parts of the country an effort is being made to induce shopkeepers to get in a supply of cards with pictures of the Nativity. Many of our parents make a point of asking the salesman: "Have you any religious Christmas cards?" or "Have you any cards with a picture of the event we celebrate on Christmas, the birth of Christ?"

If the answer is: "The dealer does not carry that line," get the shopkeeper to agree to tell the dealer that the customers want pictures suggesting the real meaning of the great feast.

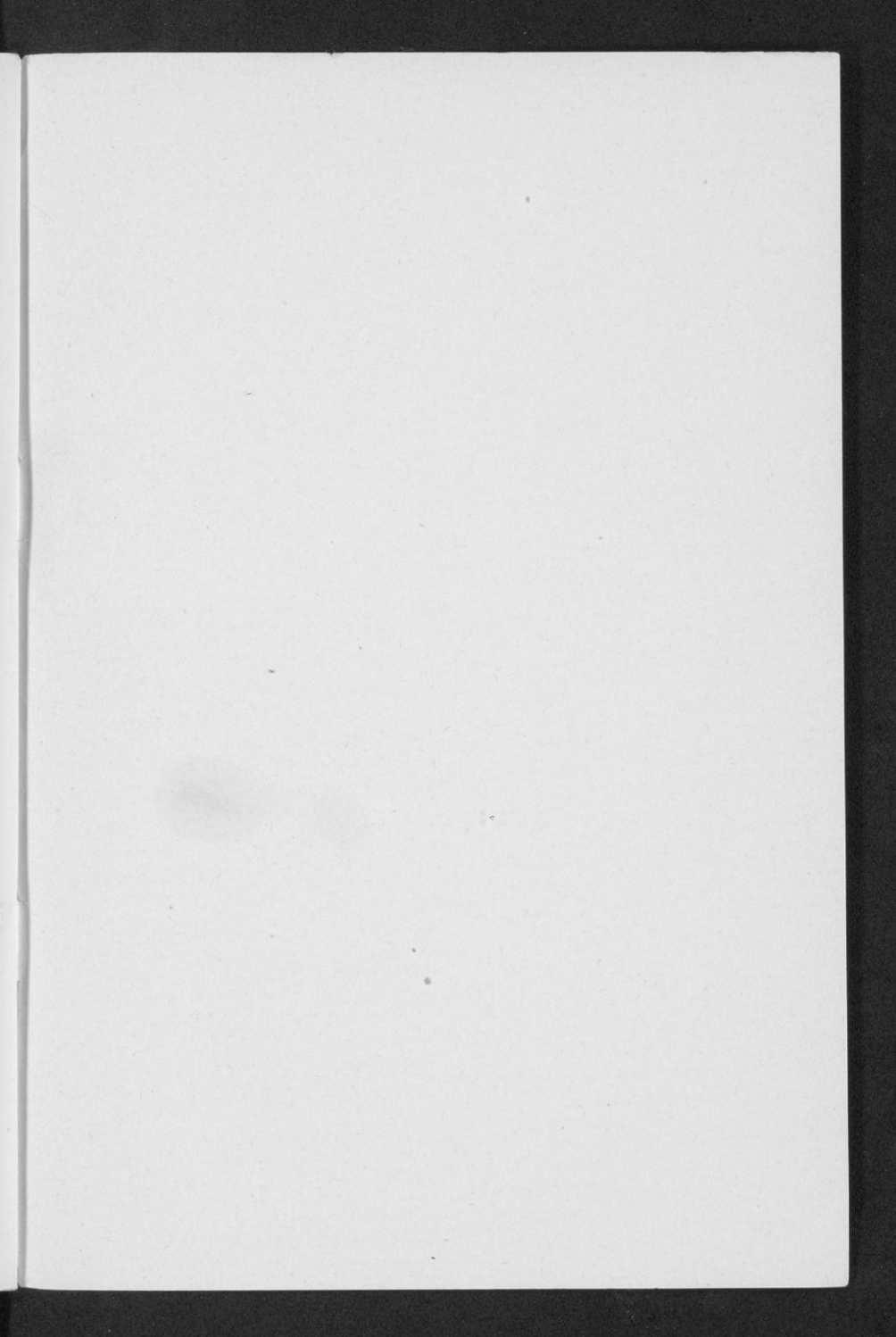
Remember that it is the customer who creates the demand. Each of us should take some small part in showing that Catholics know what they want and that they buy intelligently.

<sup>1</sup> *Old Christmas Carols*, edited by S. Archer Gibson, 1st set (No. 4374). New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 3 East 43rd Street. Price, \$.12.

<sup>2</sup> *Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*, by the Christian Brothers. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.25.

<sup>3</sup> *The Catholic Church Hymnal*, edited by A. Edmonds Tozer. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.75.

<sup>4</sup> *The St. Gregory Hymnal*, Singers' Edition. Philadelphia: St. Gregory Guild, 1705 Rittenhouse Street. Price, \$1.00.



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