

THE SERAPH

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The Blessing of the Chrism on Maundy Thursday by P. Villanueva

The Seraph

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THE SERAPH

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Bishop Giles Butler, OFM DD

To understand the Sacrament of Confirmation, we should generally know the requirements or the definition of a Sacrament. A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace. The Sacrament of Confirmation fits nicely into this definition and is true. To be valid, every Sacrament must have the proper matter, form, and intention. While there may be some theological debate about what constitutes the matter and form of the Sacrament of Confirmation, there is no doubt that these must be present for the validity of the Sacrament. Many consider the anointing with the Chrism (holy oil mixed with balsam blessed by the Bishop on Holy Thursday) the matter. The bishop's words in the anointing are the necessary form ("I sign thee with the sign of the cross and confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."). Some hold that the prayer the bishop says over the candidates at the beginning of the ceremony is the proper form.

The Sacrament of Confirmation is a Sacrament of the living and must be received in the state of grace (not in the state of mortal sin). Baptism must precede all the other sacraments, so if the baptized person has reached the age of reason, he should prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation by a worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance (Confession). "Baptism of Blood" or "Baptism of Desire" are not true Sacraments and do not suffice for admittance to the other Sacraments. It is, therefore, proper to have some documentary proof of previous Sacramental Baptism before receiving this Sacrament.

In the early Church, and still in some places, it is customary to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to infants immediately after their Baptism. In the Latin Church, it is customary to wait until the child reaches the use of reason (Generally considered to be between seven and twelve years of age.). At this stage, the person must prepare to receive this Sacrament by dili-

gently studying the principles of the Faith. (Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Seven Sacraments, especially the teachings of the Church concerning Confirmation.) The candidate for Confirmation should prepare for the reception of the Holy Ghost by pious prayer and an ardent desire, and, if possible, to receive the Sacrament fasting.

Confirmation, while distinct from Baptism, is a crucial part of the Faith. It signifies the consummation of Baptismal grace. Baptism is essential for our salvation, but Confirmation, though not essential, is a significant step in our spiritual growth. It would be imprudent, if not sinful, to neglect the reception of this Sacrament when it is available to us. Jesus instituted and gave us this Sacrament, so His intention and desire is that we receive what He gives us.

As Jesus promised to give the Holy Ghost to the Apostles, He offers us the gift of the Holy Ghost in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Among the gifts of the Holy Ghost, the most important is fortitude. We are expected to be and continue living in the state of Grace. To do this, we should cooperate with the Holy Ghost in the courageous practice of faith,

hope, and charity through wisdom, understanding, counsel and strength, knowledge, piety, and the fear of God. Confirmation gives us grace and makes us Soldiers of Christ. A Catholic Soldier must always be ready to defend the Faith and even prepared to die in defense of the Faith.

As with the other Sacraments, it is necessary that we do our part and that we cooperate with the Graces of the Sacraments. The gifts of the Holy Ghost may be considered like armor or weapons of a soldier. It is not enough to have been given armor and weapons. The good soldier must put on the armor and wear it regularly, if not constantly. He must practice correctly using or employing the weapons that he has. In Confirmation, we receive the Holy Ghost's gifts, but these must be taken up and implemented daily. We must strive to become ever more proficient in using these graces. Our faith must increase and strengthen through study and practice – implementing the True Faith in our prayers, thoughts, desires, and actions. The virtue of Hope must expand and grow and manifest in our prayers, thoughts, desires, and actions. The highest of virtues, Love (or Charity),

must increase, develop, and manifest in our prayers, thoughts, desires, and actions. And we could continue this with every virtue, grace, and gift of the Holy Ghost that we receive in the Sacrament of Confirmation and the other Sacraments.

Too often, people think that when the Holy Ghost comes upon us, and we receive the gift of “Wisdom” (We are using Wisdom as an example, but it applies to the other gifts as well.), we are now “wise” and therefore we have nothing more to do. This is far from the truth. Many who have been Confirmed are not wise. The fault does not lie in the Sacraments, but rather with the person who received the Sacrament and did nothing with these graces. The truly wise person seeks to become even wiser still. The person who truly loves seeks to love even more.

These gifts of the Holy Ghost are not static. They are like seeds that have the potential to continually grow and increase within us our entire lives here on earth. The gift of Wisdom, for instance, is a small seed of wisdom with the potential to increase in our hearts, minds, and souls continually. We must actively nurture and cul-

tivate these seeds, seeking to grow in wisdom, understanding, and love throughout our lives.

We must apply constant effort or work to accomplish this growth or increase. We must sincerely ask the Holy Ghost for this increase in our prayers, but then we need to cooperate with Him in developing the gifts.

We need constant efforts to grow, mature, and survive in our physical lives. It is not enough to give an infant food, shelter, clothing, etc. (environment) to grow and move. The infant must learn and develop. The moving or exercising of limbs develops, and the infant learns to crawl, but this is not the end goal of being able to coordinate and move our limbs. The infant should increase this coordination and movement and learn to walk, run, hop, skip, etc., coordinate his arms and hands, and learn to feed himself, dress himself, etc. The ability to make sounds should progress, allowing the child to speak words and sentences to communicate his thoughts and desires to others. Speaking is a great gift, but it can constantly be improved with better grammar, syntax, diction, etc.

Suppose we can see that the physical or material gifts God has given us need to be nurtured, developed, matured, etc. In that case, it should be simple enough for us to understand that God's spiritual gifts need to be nurtured, developed, and matured.

Baptism opens up and begins our spiritual lives, but in Confirmation, we receive additions to the Spiritual Life to enable us to preserve and increase this life within us. Confirmation gives us the tools to defend our souls, the Church, and the true Faith against all the assaults of the devils, the world, and our fallen natures. We must remember and understand that these gifts need to be constantly activated and put to use if they are to remain strong and viable within us.

To increase our physical strength, we need to exercise our muscles; to improve our spiritual strength, we also need to exercise them. To grow stronger, we must lift ever-increasing weights. The gift of fortitude grows by successfully passing through the many small assaults upon it. As the gift increases, the assaults also increase. This cycle continues our entire lives here on earth. Success in a little thing makes us stronger but brings us to a

greater test. Our rest from all these assaults will only be in Heaven. As Soldiers of Christ, we must not grow weary or tired of the fight but constantly renew our intentions and goals as we strive to know better, love, and serve God in this world. God gives us the necessary grace for the present situation, but we must increase this grace and prepare for the next one.

Falling or failing does not necessarily mean that we are bad or that the grace of the Sacrament was insufficient. It means that we are weak. We need to prepare ourselves better. In the physical world, we need to improve our diet, exercise, etc. In the spiritual realm, we need to humble ourselves better, pray better, receive the Sacraments and graces offered to us, and not lose hope and fall into despair but be renewed and filled again with hope. Like Saint Paul, with the grace of God, we can rise from our falls, and mistakes and "do all things in Him Who strengthens us." This is what Confirmation gives us or opens up for us to accomplish. Good Soldiers of Christ take up the gifts that they are given and work constantly to develop and increase them.



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HOLY OILS & HOLY WEEK

Father Anthony Lentz, OFM

Contained in the Roman Ritual, there are blessings for practically anything. There are blessings for things we use or have in our everyday life, such as cars, tools, animals, etc. There are also blessings for things we use or have in our everyday spiritual life, such as rosaries, Holy Water, medals, religious pictures, etc. According to the Roman Missal, any priest may confer the blessings of the Church, except those reserved to the Pope, to bishops or to others. One such blessing reserved to the bishops and only done once a year on Holy Thursday is the blessing of Holy Oils.

In his book *The Visible Church*, Rt. Rev. John F. Sullivan beautifully explains the purpose and the deep spiritual symbolism of oils and why the Church uses them: "In many countries oil is a necessary of life. It is used to prepare food, as a remedy, and as a means of furnishing light; and in ancient times, it was employed by athletes to give suppleness to their muscles. Hence, its use by the Church symbolizes the giving of spiritual nourishment, the cure of spiritual ailments, the

diffusion of the light of grace in our souls, and the imparting of strength for our conflict with Satan." This profound spiritual symbolism of holy oils connects us to our faith and uplifts our spirits.

The liturgical blessing of oil is a very ancient custom within the Church. One of the oldest records we have extant is the *Prayerbook of Serapion*, dating back to the 4th century, written by Bishop Serapion. It gives us the formula for *the blessing of the oil and chrism for those who had just received Baptism, which was, in those days, followed by Confirmation in such a manner that the administration of both Sacraments constituted a single ceremony.* (Catholic Encyclopedia 1917)

The Church employs three specific kinds of oils in Her ceremonies: *Oleum Infirmorum* (oil of the sick), *Oleum ad sanctum Chrisma* (oil for the Holy Chrism), and *Oleum Catechumenorum* (oil of the catechumens).

Again, in his book *The Visible Church*, Bishop Sullivan explains the purpose and use of each of these oils:

*The **oil of catechumens (oleum catechumenorum)** – also called simply **oleum sanctum** (holy oil), – is used in the ceremonies of Baptism, in the blessing of the baptismal font on Holy Saturday, in the consecration of churches, in the blessing of altars, in the ordination of priests and in the coronation of Catholic kings and queens.*

*The **holy chrism (oleum ad sanctum Chrisma)**, which is the matter or essential substance for the administration of the sacrament of Confirmation, is olive oil in which a small quantity of balm or balsam has been mixed. It is applied by the bishop in the form of a cross on the forehead of the person confirmed. It is used also in the ceremonies of Baptism, an unction (blessing) being made with it on the crown of the head; in the consecration of a bishop and of a church; and in the blessing of chalices, patens, baptismal water and church bells. The word **chrism** signifies a scented ointment.*

*The **oil of the sick (oleum infirmorum)** is the matter of the sacrament of Extreme Unction. It is also used in the blessing of bells. This oil is always pure in the Churches that follow the Latin Rite; in the Eastern Churches, it contains a little wine or ashes.*

Since ancient times, Holy

Thursday has been signified by three liturgical functions: the blessing of holy oils, the reconciliation of penitents, and, the most important, the solemn commemoration of the institution of the Holy Eucharist and Holy Orders. The faithful would be more familiar with the last two since they are both highlighted during the evening service, *Coena Domini*. The reconciliation of penitents is preserved by the *Washing of Feet* (after the sermon), and the Epistle and Gospel recounts events of the Holy Institution.

The blessing of the oils takes place in the morning at the *Chrism Mass*. This beautiful ceremony was restored to a place of honor with the *Restoration of Holy Week* in the 1950s. The reason why the Church blesses holy oils on Holy Thursday is a practical one. In the early centuries, she designated Holy Saturday as the day for baptizing catechumens, so an ample supply of oil would be needed. This function has always been reserved for the bishop, although according to ancient rituals, priests could bless the oil for the sick when the need would arise. This is why only the Sacred Chrism and Oil of the Catechumen was originally blessed on this day. Now, it is the practice of the Church that the bishop blesses all three

after the Consecration of the Mass.

Many scriptural references are given in the Chrism Mass about the practical use of holy oils in the early Church. Both the Epistle (*St. James 5:13-16*) and Gospel (*St. Mark 6: 7-13*) reference this use, particularly in the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. Although it is not contained in the ceremony, my mind automatically goes to the parable of the Good Samaritan. In this parable, Our Lord tells how the Good Samaritan cared for the injured man and tended his wounds with wine and oil. Here is an explanation of the deeper symbolism of this parable taken from *A Practical Commentary of Holy Scripture* by Bishop Fredrick Justus Knecht, D.D.

According to the Fathers of the Church, the following deeper interpretation can be given to it. Jesus Himself is the Good Samaritan, as proved by His treatment of the robbed and wounded human race. Sin and the devil are the robbers who have despoiled man of his robe of innocence and all supernatural gifts and grievously wounded him in his natural gifts. Thus man lay, weak, helpless, and half-dead. He is still, it is true, possessed of his natural life, but he had lost the supernatural life of grace, as well as the prospect of eternal

life, and was powerless to raise himself from the misery of sin by any effort of his own. Neither priest nor Levite, i.e., neither sacrifice nor law of the Old Covenant, could help him or heal his wounds; they only made him realize more fully his helpless condition. Then the Son of God, moved by compassion, came down from heaven to help poor fallen man, living at enmity with God. He healed his wounds with the wine of His Most Precious Blood and the oil of His grace, and took him to the inn, His Church. When He left this earth to return to heaven, He gave to the guardians of His Church the twofold treasure of His doctrine and His grace and ordered them to tend the still weak man until He Himself came back to reward everyone according to his works. This inconceivable love of the Incarnate Son of God for all men is the great reason why we ought to love our neighbor and even our enemy. (page 558-559)

From this commentary, we can understand that holy oils symbolize God's grace, which touches our souls more intensely during this most sacred week of the year.

VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD

Very Reverend Lyman A. Fenn, S.S., D.D.

CHAPTER ONE

WHAT IS A VOCATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD?

WHAT is a vocation? This is a question which seems to demand an answer at the outset of any discussion on the ways and means of fostering vocations. We must know precisely what we are to look for before we can begin the search. Yet there are so many factors entering into the problem that the word “vocation,” so often used, may leave but confusion in the mind.

We are sure of this much: we know that Christ Himself called His first priests; their vocation was divine. We are equally sure that Christ has been calling boys and young men to the priesthood ever since Apostolic times. The call to the priesthood always was, always will be divine. There are certain minor differences, to be sure, between the vocation of the Apostles and that of the modern boy, but the central Figure in every true call is the Person of our High Priest, beckoning, inviting,

drawing to Himself those “whom He would.”

Here, therefore, is something certain to start with, and something we may usefully carry all the way through the discussion. For the purpose, then, of obtaining a clearer notion as to the nature of a vocation, we shall consider:

I.) Christ’s call of the Apostles, as it is told in the pages of the Gospel;

II.) Christ’s call of the youth of today;

III.) The definition of a vocation;

IV.) The implications contained in the above for those who search for vocations.

I. Christ’s Call of the Apostles

A. THE GOSPEL STORY

John the Baptist was preaching at the ford of the River Jordan. With him were a few followers, who had gathered round the Baptist and had begun to receive from him a

special training. They had often heard him tell the wondrous story of the Promised One. They had listened reverently to his lessons on prayer and on the necessity of the practice of penance. As the Baptist spoke, there appeared a Figure coming toward him on the opposite bank of the river. There seemed nothing extraordinary about the Man. He was dressed in the working clothes of a Galilean. He now walked down the river bank, as He had often walked in the lanes of Nazareth, where not a neighbor had detected in Him anything of note. He walked on, head bowed in meditation. So ordinary did He seem that those about John would not have heeded Him, save perhaps to remark that there passed a fellow countryman, for John's followers were also Galileans.

But John recognized Him. He recalled a meeting on another day, when this same Young Man had presented Himself for baptism. The heavens had opened and a voice from heaven had said: "This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." John now recognized Him, and could not let Him pass by, for he was there to bear witness to Him. The time had come to declare Him. "Behold the Lamb of

God." On the day previous the same Figure had passed, and John had pointed Him out with the same quiet, simple words. This time, however, the "Ecce" struck a note of curiosity in the hearts of two of the disciples. They crossed at the ford to the other bank to discover for themselves what it was that made John single out the passing Stranger.

Timidly they followed the steps of the "Lamb of God" in silence and at a little distance, until at last He turned to query: "What seek you?" For the first time they looked upon the face of Jesus. His eyes met theirs; they were the glad eyes of a friend meeting a friend. There was in His manner that which commanded respect; yet there was a friendliness which invited companionship. They were caught by Christ's loveliness. Spontaneously they hailed Him with the title "Rabbi," a name reserved to teachers in Israel and to those held in high esteem. "Rabbi, where dwellest Thou?" Then Our Blessed Saviour answered in a way that gladdened their hearts. "Come and see." "They came and saw where He abode and stayed with Him that day."

Such is the story of the meeting of the first Apostles with Our Lord. In the weeks

that followed He searched out others, now by the shores of the Lake of Galilee, now while passing a man sitting in the customhouse. To each He issued the compelling call: "Follow Me," and when He had gathered twelve men about Him, He impressed upon them in a most solemn manner, and after a night spent in prayer, the fact that the call to the apostolate went out from Him and from Him alone. Our Lord reminded them of this again in that touching hour after the Last Supper, when He was bidding them farewell. "You have not chosen Me; but I have chosen you; and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit; and your fruit should remain."

Christ — the Twelve — John the Baptist — these are the persons with whom we are concerned in the vocation of the Apostles. A closer examination of the Gospels will reveal the part played by each.

B. ANALYSIS OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE CALL OF THE APOSTLES

1. He Who Called

He who called the Apostles was Almighty God. Christ in His Own Person did the

selecting; for, as St. Mark tersely puts it: "He called unto Him whom He would Himself" (Mark iii. 13).

God had prepared these men for their high calling long before their meeting with the "Lamb of God." By His providential design He had made them to be the sons of sturdy Jewish families, had given them by bent of nature and training those dispositions of generosity and good will, of ready sacrifice, of obedience and reverence, which were to play so large a part in their wholehearted response to Christ's invitation when the time came for Him to issue it. God's Finger, then, was upon them from the beginning, fashioning in their souls those traits of character, those signs or marks of a vocation, as we now call them, which our Blessed Lord was to purify and elevate into priestliness.

With His own designing providence, His Divine knowledge, His power to read human hearts, the Son of God knew perfectly the caliber of the men whom He chose, their strength and weakness. "All things are naked and open to his eyes" (Heb. iv. 13). "Whence knowest thou me?" asked the puzzled Nathanael at first encountering Christ. "Jesus answered and said to him:

Before that Philip called thee, when thou was under the fig tree, I saw thee” (John i. 48). He foresaw with divine clarity how they would develop under His influence and how they would bear the responsibilities He was going to entrust to them after their ordination to the priesthood.

2. Those Who Were Called — The Apostles

The Twelve came within the circle of Christ’s friendship with a fundamental fineness, with solid virtues, and with a grand spirit of generosity which prompted them under God’s grace to meet our Lord’s demands. This was their chief desert — their eager reaching to the heights of Christ until they followed solely out of a pure love for Him.

But this did not come about in a day or week. Even though they brought fine qualities to the first seminary, where Christ was the Master, they were by no means ready for ordination. They had faults to overcome; for example, they were inclined to be jealous at times of their own ambitions, and sluggish in giving up their opinions. Though they possessed an innate sense of reverence and piety, it was vague, with only the

beginnings of a love of Our Lord, and with no fixed desires for the priesthood; for they were as yet ignorant of Christ’s Person and His mission; they did not yet understand the nature of His kingdom, nor did they know what wonderful plans He had in store for them.

They needed training, and Our Saviour spent the greater part of His earthly ministry in instructing and educating them. The end of His training was Himself, and His purpose was to induce in them utter devotion to Himself, union with Him, action for Him.

Thus, when they had become priests, no longer did the selfish desire for leadership in a worldly kingdom intrigue them. Only their Master and all that was His, His Holy Church and the souls He had come to save, filled their lives and inspired their actions. Thus was established for all future generations of priests the single motive that alone is worthy in one who aspires to the priesthood—the love of Christ, of His Church, and of mankind. To this motive we now give the name of “right intention.”

3. John the Baptist’s Role in the Call of the Apostles

It is true that Christ in His own

Person, with His voice and beckoning gesture drew to Himself the first candidates. But we must not forget that even in so doing, in some important instances, He had other men, human agents, bring those candidates to Him or point Him out to them. Andrew, in his joy at finding the Messiah, hurried off in search of his brother Simon and brought him to Jesus. "And Philip findeth Nathanael." St. John the Baptist was never destined to be a priest; yet in the plan of God he was the first to encourage vocations, for he directed the steps of the two disciples to the Source of priestliness. These men had never before heard of Jesus, and from the human point of view we may say that the Lamb of God would have passed unnoticed and forever unknown had not John pointed Him out. Thus the Forerunner became the type and symbol of all those human agents, parents, priests, teachers, whom God uses to bring promising young boys to Himself. Their motto might well be: "Behold the Lamb of God."

I. Christ's Call of the Youth of Today

Although it is true that Christ no longer walks in the flesh,

that He does not now visit our homes and schools and playgrounds, going about among our boys audibly, visibly, tangibly drawing to Himself those whom He would, what a falling short of faith it would be to think that His influence, because of that, is now less real. There is, indeed, a parallel to be drawn between the call of the Apostles and the vocation of the youth of our own times.

1. God's Providence and Vocation

Both reason and faith tell us that nothing happens in this world by chance, that every circumstance, every detail of life occurs according to the knowledge, will, and permission of Almighty God. Let us now apply this general doctrine of divine Providence to the case of a vocation to the priesthood.

It was by God's design, as we have seen, that the Apostles were prepared in body and soul for their fruitful meeting with Jesus, and their subsequent response to His schooling. Just so, God decrees to bring this or that individual boy into the priestly state. As a consequence of this decree He creates and endows the selected person with fitting

qualities of grace and nature. The natural and the supernatural meet in him to form a happy blending of physical, moral, and spiritual characteristics that will make for a successful life in the ministry. He will be ready for his meeting with Jesus and for the Saviour's invitation to "come, follow me."

Most frequently the chosen one is born into a deeply religious family. His first teacher is a pious mother, who imparts her own spirit of faith to him and gives him a respect and reverence for all things Catholic. It may be that he is sent to a school, where he falls under the influence of splendid teachers and zealous priests. But however mysteriously God reveals the working of His plans (and those plans never seem exactly alike in every case), reveal them He does to those whose duty it is to have eyes to see and ears to hear. The selected one has God's stamp upon him in the shape of those discernible traits of character which are called the signs or marks of a vocation.

These signs take on a very great importance to those who search for vocations. Our Blessed Saviour no longer treads the lakeshores of the earth to discover with the

glance of God those who are fitted for the priestly state. He has passed that glorious privilege on to us, His priests and His religious, poor men, who possess no power to read minds or to peer into the future to see how this little boy or that will get along in the priesthood. But, as always, Our Lord does not leave us without guidance. Upon His chosen ones He has placed the telltale signs, which we, with our prayers, our prudence, and our powers of observation, must set out to find.

2. The Right Intention and Vocation

Not every fine Catholic boy, who may appear to us well equipped for life in Christ's ministry, is destined for the priesthood. To those fitting qualities of body and soul must be joined the God-given desire to be a priest.

What the genesis of this desire is we do not know, for it is preeminently the work of grace. We have seen how Christ attracted His disciples, and how attraction grew to strong desire, love, friendship. He did so by His own winning personality and influence, and He who said: "Behold, I am with you all days" still continues to exercise His influence upon our boys.

The grace, merited by our Redeemer, although invisible, is a spiritual reality which swells in the soul, and touches the mind and will. It inspires thought; it prompts desire and action. Then there is the Presence of our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, which is the chief vehicle of grace to the heart of a boy. In his Holy Communion he comes to look, as it were, upon the beauty of Christ's face, and like the Apostles his interest is caught. Soon will come the question: "Master, where dwellest thou?", and just so soon will follow the invitation: "Come and see." When the spell of Christ's friendship is upon him, a word is dropped by his mother or teacher, a sermon is heard, some little pamphlet is read, some priest attracts him, and the shining vision of the altar swims into his ken. The desire to be a priest thus springs into being.

It will not be very clear at the beginning. In some boys it will be little more than the general reverence and Catholic goodness that prompts them to respect the priest; in most the desire will be vague and motives obscure and un-analyzed. More cannot be expected of a small boy in this regard than that he be generous and that under proper advice he betake himself off to

Christ's own school, the seminary.

The chief purpose of the seminary will be to clarify, to purify, to elevate that desire into the "right intention," love of Our Lord, and love of souls, and to stabilize and secure the permanence of the intention by all the habits of obedience, chastity, and the rest that the priesthood requires. Once in the seminary, removed from the world's deadening influence, Christ will have the young man for Himself. Here He may work. His will upon the mind and heart of the boy, and once again the effect of Our Saviour's friendship prevails. As in any friendship, the young Levite by his being daily with Jesus must come to have likes and interests in common with Our Lord. A new flame of love burns ever deeper in his heart and he is won over gradually to Christ. As he advances closer to ordination, more and more the person of the Master comes to the foreground of his love and affections. Ever more surely he learns to surrender himself wholly to his jealous Lord, to think with Christ, to look upon things from Christ's point of view, to will with Christ. And so, yet another time is the training of the Apostles in Galilee re-enacted in the case of the boy of today.

3. The Call of the Bishop and Vocation

Not all desires for the priesthood are God-given. Sometimes boys who are manifestly unfit, who lack this or that important quality, or who have some serious obstacle blocking their entrance to the seminary, will wish to be priests. Not rarely they stubbornly cling to their determination. Who is to determine finally whether a candidate is a fit subject for ordination?

As the priest is a public minister of the Church, who but She, the Spouse of Christ, can decide officially upon one's worthiness for the office? She does so through the bishop of the diocese for which the young man is to be ordained. The prelate, either personally or through the seminary faculty, issues what is known as the canonical or ecclesiastical call.

II. Definition of a Vocation to the Priesthood

Piecing together the various features explained above, we see that there are two elements in a vocation to the priesthood — the divine and the ecclesiastical.

Considered as a divine call a vocation may be defined as

that disposition of Divine Providence whereby God, according to His pleasure, chooses certain men for the work of His sacred ministry, endows them with the qualities and graces necessary for the work, and places them amid such surroundings that they will eventually obey the call that goes out to them from Him.

The ecclesiastical call places the *Nihil Obstat*, as it were, on the divine call; that is, it authoritatively establishes the presence of the true, God-given calling in a particular case, giving out the decisive word that the candidate possesses the due characteristics, together with a pure and worthy intention of wanting to become a priest. Thus the two elements combine to form the complete vocation, the canonical call being based on the divine call, and presuming and confirming its reality.

All this doctrine has been clearly stated in a decision, made on June 20, 1912, by a commission of cardinals and approved by Pope Pius X. "In order that one may be rightly called by the bishop, nothing further is required beyond the right intention, together with that suitability which is based on such gifts of nature and

grace and which is proved by such probity of life and sufficiency of knowledge as will give a well-founded hope that the candidate will be able to discharge the duties of the priestly state properly and fulfill the obligations of that state in a holy manner.”

III. Implications Contained in the Foregoing for Those Who Search for Vocations

The priests of the parish and the teachers of the school will not be concerned with the canonical call, which is the business of the bishop, nor with the long testing of the candidate’s moral fitness and sufficiency of knowledge, which is done in the seminary. Rather they have to do chiefly with the boy during that period of his youth before he enters the seminary. Theirs is the wonderful privilege of looking for and helping to develop the Divine side of the vocation.

Their task is twofold. They will ever be on the alert for the promising boy, who gives evidence of being of priestly timber. They will consequently know well those positive and recognizable traits which are the marks of God’s calling. In order to help them toward this knowledge, we shall devote the second chapter to the enumeration and explanation

of the marks of a vocation as they are to be found in the growing boy.

They will, in the second place, be ready to assist the genesis of a desire for the priesthood, which evidently must take hold of a boy before he will even dream of becoming a priest. They will hold up the beauty of the priesthood before the eyes of likely boys; above all they will direct them to the Person of Our Blessed Lord, the Source of all priestly longings. “Behold the Lamb of God” will be on the lips of these John the Baptists of the present day. The third chapter, consequently, will treat of the various means of fostering the desire, of reaching the heart of a boy.

To Be Continued.



IS GOD CALLING YOU?

“Be not conformed to this world; but be reformed in the newness of your mind, that you may prove what is the good, and the acceptable, and the perfect will of God.”

Romans 12:2

Do you love serving God and neighbor?

Do you find yourself increasingly unsatisfied by the life of the world?

Do you yearn for something more?

Not all of us are meant for marriage or a life in the world. Some souls are set aside by God for special tasks. These are the souls that find joy and contentment in the religious life or sacred priesthood.

Do not be deterred by what you think you know or by what the world tells you. Find out for yourself. If you feel called, then at least learn more.

Any happiness we may have on earth and all the joy we hope for in heaven depend on answering God’s individual call for us. The sooner we do His Will, the happier we will be.



THE COMMUNIST THREAT

Father Joseph Noonan, OFM

Part Thirty-Four: The Undermining of Education

*Note: The information in this article comes from **The Deliberate Dumbing Down of America** by Charlotte Thomson Iserbyt.*

1982

Profiles in Excellence: 1982–1983: Secondary School Recognition Program: A Resource Guide (Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education: Washington, D.C., 1982) listed the Kennebunk, Maine High School as one which schools across the nation might wish to emulate. The Guide stated:

The major goal of the school's curriculum is to individualize the learning process for the student. The district is in the process of developing a data bank for students and a testing program for determining expectancy instructional levels for each student. Once this is in place, staff will develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for each student to meet individual needs. The major difficulty the school is encoun-

tering in implementing this new process is the secondary staff who are trained as subject matter teachers. Teachers need to be retrained to focus on individual needs rather than on content areas.

“From Schooling To Learning: Rethinking Preschool Through University Education” by Don Glines was published in the January 1982 issue of the National Association of Secondary School Principals' Bulletin.⁶ The following are excerpts:

The implications of these global concerns for schools, educators, and education, are monumental if the views of most future writers are correct. Early recognition of this came in the 1974 book, *Learning for Tomorrow: The Role of the Future in Education* by Alvin Toffler (Random House: New York, 1974), and *The Third Wave* (William Morrow: New York, 1981) [by the same author].

One passage states: “American education is obsolete; it produces people to fit into a rea-

sonably well-functioning industrial society and we no longer have one. The basic assumption driving American education, one both deceptive and dangerous, is that the future will be like the present. Schools are preparing people for a society that no longer exists. As society shifts away from the industrial model, schools will have to turn out a different kind of person. Schools now need to produce people who can cope with change.”...

What do people who will be in their prime in the year 2050, assuming society makes it through the coming transitional decades, need to shape their futures? Is the current curriculum — history, mathematics, science, new versions of Dick and Jane, all taught as separate subjects, really appropriate for the concluding years of the twentieth century? The majority of futures writers have a clear answer: No. They illustrate that instant information retrieval not only ends jobs in the world of work, it ends subjects in the world of learning!...

The potential technology exists to eliminate most current classrooms before the turn of the century, moving from a campus to a community-oriented learning system. A

post-literate society is on the verge of arriving; reading will become a luxury, a leisure pastime, or a choice, but not an absolute essential.

Yet, the seventh grade programs in junior high and middle schools continue with the bleakness of 50 years past. Most still require English, History, Science, Math, and Physical Education, along with a semester of Art and a semester of Music. They have period 1, 2, 3 schedules; A, B, C report cards; tardies, notes from home; textbooks. Perhaps even worse is the fact that most colleges still prepare teachers for this antiquity; and administrators, who in spite of the goals professed in graduate courses, continue to perpetuate the system. Is it any wonder that Learning for Tomorrow labeled today's education obsolete?

Ron Barnes, in *Tomorrow's Educator: An Alternative to Today's School Person* (Transitions, Inc.: Phoenix, Arizona, 1977), has listed his descriptors of a New Age educator — a person who thinks systematically; accepts and promotes diversity; demonstrates a holistic perspective toward life; strives for self-awareness; promotes interdependence; is comfortable with the unknown; considers human values of highest priority; is ex-

perimental; works toward changing schools; has a more open approach to knowledge; and is a true futurist.

Outcome-Based Instructional Management: A Sociological Perspective by William Spady was published in 1982, supported by a contract from the National Institute of Education (NIE-P-80-0194). This important paper, which provided a complete overview of the philosophy behind OBE, the organizational dimensions of outcome-based practice, the operational character of outcome-based practice, etc., also carried some interesting comments regarding OBE's relationship to Project Follow Through. Excerpts follow:

Implications for Follow Through... Despite the limitations of formal validation data sources, however, there is a strong case to be made for implementing fully developed OB [outcome based] models in Follow Through sites. Philosophically, as well as empirically, this approach is inherently suited to the clientele served by Follow Through programs and possesses an operational character that is well suited for affecting positively both the cognitive and affective outcome agendas sought by a variety of current Follow Through models.

Recognizing that OB practice resembles some of these models, its unique power appears to be that it possesses a fine balance between focus and flexibility, and structure and responsiveness, and that it contains elements suitable to a variety of student motivational and learning styles without leaning heavily toward any one orientation. That is, it is as inclusionary in its methodology as it is in the conditions for student learning success it tries to establish.

A final point regarding the inherent appeal of OB practice for Follow Through implementation is its basic openness. Public involvement in goal setting, public visibility of objectives and standards, and performance records and reporting systems which describe the actual behavior being sought all help to "demystify" the educational process and facilitate clearer understanding and communication between parents and the school. The Network for Outcome-Based Schools itself represents a unique and powerful resource for technical assistance and implementation to any sites oriented toward OB practice.

Charlotte Iserbyt's Note: The above excerpts should be of interest to those promoting

DISTAR/Reading Mastery, the Skinnerian “systematic, intensive, scientific research-based” phonics reading program which was one of the Follow Through models. How ironic that William Spady should say that the outcome-based practice which “conservatives” say they detest is similar to the Follow Through model which they have embraced. It is obvious Spady is not referring to the Open Classroom Follow Through model, since that model did not include “public visibility

of objectives and standards, performance records and reporting systems which describe the actual behaviors being sought.” In other words, Spady is making it clear that OB practice is a fraternal twin of the Follow Through’s Direct Instruction model developed by Siegfried Engelmann, which has also been embraced by “conservatives”!

To be continued.

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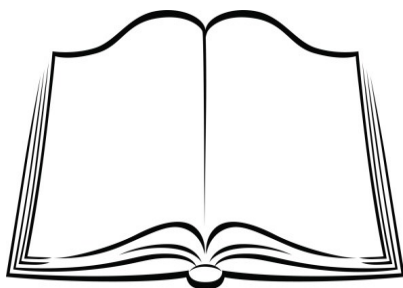
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The Catholic Mother to Her Children

The Countess de Flavigny



EIGHTEENTH LESSON

GOOD FRIDAY

“And Jesus crying with a loud voice said: “Father, into Thy Hands I commend My spirit.”
St. Luke 23:46

Good Friday! Ah! What a mournful day! What painful remembrances it recalls to our minds! How grieved in heart do we not feel today, when we think of Our Blessed Savior’s death! And yet, we must not forget, my children, that this day of mourning is at the same time a thrice-blessed day for us. Jesus Christ’s sufferings, grieve us, it is true; they make us shed tears, but nevertheless they redeem and save us. For Thee, O Lord the hour of sacrifice was awaited with joy, so great was Thy desire to offer Thy Life for the salvation of men. Oh! While meditating on thy sufferings, let us try to penetrate the deep mystery of Thy exceeding

love, and to fill our hearts, O my God, with the deepest gratitude.

The night had been spent by Our Lord, my children, in the midst of the most terrible outrages. At day break, the chief priests and ancients of the people held council against Jesus, that they might put Him to death. And they brought Him bound, and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate, the governor. Then Judas, seeing that Our Lord was condemned, repented of his crime, brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and ancients saying: “I have sinned, betraying innocent blood.” But they answered: “What is that to us? Look thou to it.” Casting down the pieces of silver in the temple, Judas then, not finding in his heart that confidence in God which

alone can inspire true repentance, despaired and hanged himself.

My children, when Jesus appeared before the governor, the latter, after having questioning Him, finding he could convince Him of no crime, sent Him to Herod. From all Herod had heard of Jesus, he had long eagerly desired to see Him, and hoped to witness some miracle or other; so he put a number of questions to Our Lord, Who did not vouchsafe to answer any of them: then He was treated as a lunatic, a madman, and became the laughing-stock of Herod's Court; every one loaded Him with mockery and insults; and He was sent back to Pilate.

The Divine Savior was thus dragged along from street to street, from tribunal to tribunal, in the midst of insulting outcries. Of all the sick and maimed He cured, the afflicted He had consoled, the poor He had helped, not one lifted up his voice to defend Him. All disowned Him, and even united with His enemies to insult Him. At least one might suppose His beloved disciples would appear to assist or deliver Him? Where are they? Alas, my children, Jesus is betrayed by one,

denied by another, forsaken by all! O my Savior! There is no kind of affliction Thou has not wished to bear for our salvation, and no doubt not the least cruel of Thy sufferings were those caused by the desertion of Thy friends, and the ungratefulness of those who's benefactor Thou has been!

Pilate, fully convinced of the innocence of Jesus, considered how he could deliver Him. It was the custom every year, on the day of the feast of the Pasch, to grant at the petition of the people a free pardon to whatever prisoner the people should by their right choose. At that time, there was in prison a man named Barabbas, accused of having committed murder.

When all were gathered together, Pilate said: "Whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas or Jesus that is called the Christ?" It was already for Our Lord, my children, a great humiliation to be compared with a criminal, but think what He must have felt on hearing this malefactor preferred to Him! For the princes of the people, having excited the multitude against Jesus, all exclaimed: "We want Barabbas!" Pilate saith to them: "What shall I do then

with Jesus that is called Christ?" — "Let Him be crucified!" — "Why, what evil hath He done?" But they cried out only the more saying: "Let Him be crucified." Then Pilate, seeing that he could not prevail against them, asked for some water, and washing his hands before the people said: "I am innocent of the blood of this just man, look you to it." And the whole people said: "His blood be upon us and upon our children!"

Alas, my friends, this guilty wish has been but too well granted. Proscribed, persecuted during a long number of centuries, the unhappy Jews, are even to the present day without a country they can call their own: they are all wanderers on the face of the earth.

Pilate then released to them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered Him unto them to be crucified. But the fury of the enemies of Jesus was not appeased, and before crucifying Him, they loaded Him with fresh insults. The soldiers of the governor, taking Jesus into the hall, scourged Him and put a scarlet cloak about Him; then plating a crown of thorns, they thrust it on His adorable head; then they struck Him with a reed, and

spitting upon Him, they bowed down before Him, and mocked at Him, saying: "Hail, King of the Jews!" After having thus mocked Our Lord, who remained calm and patient, His enemies laid a heavy cross on His shoulders, and led Him on to Calvary to be crucified. His poor Body, worn out by pain, covered with bleeding wounds, sunk under the burden of the cross. A man from Cyrene named Simon, who was passing on the road, was stopped and forced to carry the cross of Jesus.

Our Lord was followed by a great number of people, and by women who wept and showed great sorrow. Turning towards them, He said: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves!" Let us also, my children, if on this day our heart feels moved at the remembrance of such suffering, let us weep over ourselves, over our sins, which were the cause of Jesus Christ's sufferings.

At last Our Lord reaches the place of execution, my children, His clothes are taken off, He is laid on the cross, He is nailed to it by driving large nails through His hands and feet, and the cross is set into the ground, between two other crosses, on each of which a thief is crucified. All those who passed

by blasphemed against the Savior, His meekness, His resignation, the agony He endured, could not disarm their wrath. Now from the sixth hour until the ninth there was darkness over the whole earth. About the ninth hour, the excess of His sufferings wrung from Jesus this heart-rendering lamentation: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsake Me?" But Jesus forgets His own sorrows to think of us. He sees His poor bereaved mother, and the well-beloved disciple, standing at the foot of the cross. So mustering all His strength, Our Lord showing St. John to Mary said to her, "Woman, behold thy son." Then turning to St. John, showing Mary, He said: "Behold thy mother." And from that hour, the disciple took her to his own house; since that moment also, my children, and thanks to this precious legacy of Our dying Savior, Mary loves us as her children, and we love her as our mother.

Death was fast approaching, and Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, bowed His Head, saying: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." — and He expired. At the same instant, the veil of the Temple was rent in twain, from one

end to the other, the earth quaked, tombs burst open, and all nature was convulsed.

Ah, my children! Words cannot express the feelings this picture ought to excite in our hearts. The tenderest of friends, Our Redeemer, expires in torments for our salvation. We are the culprits, and it is He Who bears the penalty we have incurred. Our sins and His love are the cause of such numberless sufferings. Let us remember this at the foot of the cross on this day; let us reflect on this every day of our life, so as to cling forever to Jesus Christ, so as to renounce sin, for which He atones in such a cruel manner.

Good Friday is the only day of the year on which no Mass is said. The morning service begins by the reading of a lesson, taken from Holy Scripture, and in which Moses explains the ceremony of the Paschal Lamb, which we many consider as a figure of Our Lord's Sacrifice. Another lesson, taken from Isaias, contains the fullest extent all the particulars of the Passion of Jesus Christ, so that while reading it one is lead to imagine that it is rather the narrative of an eye-witness, than a prophecy, so minutely are the slightest circumstances

related therein. These lessons are followed by the chanting of the Passion according to St. John. Thus, my children, the Church sets before us one after the other, the Passion as figuratively related by Moses, the prediction of the Passion by Isaias, and the narrative of the Passion by St. John. This reading of the Passion is followed by several prayers for the different orders of the Church, for the king, or head of the government in Catholic countries; for those who suffer or who are in affliction, for heretics, pagans and Jews. On this day on which Our Lord dies for all men, the Church believes she can ask for boundless graces and implore Him for her enemies. And in this manner, she also wants to show us that no culprit, be he ever so criminal, should despair of obtaining his pardon by the merits of the death of Jesus Christ.

These prayers are followed by the Adoration of the Cross, a very touching and ancient ceremony. You understand, my children, that it is not the cross we adore, but Our Lord Who died on the cross, and whose sacred wounds the faithful respectfully kiss. Then the clergy go in procession silently, to adore the Holy Host placed in the tomb, and

which after this adoration is taken from thence for the priest's Communion. Vespers are then recited, not sung.

In the evening after Tenebrae, it is the custom in France, to sing the Stabat Mater in the chapel where the Blessed Sacrament reposed. The Stabat, my children, is one of the most beautiful and most moving hymns of the Church; it tells of the cruel sufferings endured by the Blessed Virgin at the Foot of her Divine Son's Cross, and the feelings inspired by this hymn, piously end the sad emotions of this day.



THE LITTLE CATECHISM OF THE CURÉ OF ARS

*Selected passages from the
writings of
St. John Marie Vianney*



EXPLANATIONS AND EXHORTATIONS ON PRAYER

Our Catechism teaches us, my children, that prayer is an elevation, an application of our mind and of our heart to God, to make known to Him our wants and to ask for His assistance. We do not see the Good God, my children, but He sees us, He hears us, He wills that we should raise towards Him what is most noble in us—our mind and our heart. When we pray with attention, with humility of mind and of heart, we quit the earth, we rise to Heaven, we penetrate into the Bosom of God, we go and converse with the angels and the saints. It was by prayer that the saints reached Heaven: and by prayer we too shall reach it. Yes, my children, prayer is the source of all graces, the mother of all virtues, the efficacious and universal way by which God wills that we should come to Him.

He says to us: “Ask, and you shall receive.” None but God could make such promises and keep them. See, the Good God does not say to us, “Ask such and such a thing, and I will grant it;” but He says in general: “If you ask the Father anything in My Name, He will give it you.” O my children! ought not this promise to fill us with confidence, and to make us pray fervently all the days of our poor life? Ought we not to be ashamed of our idleness, of our indifference to prayer, when our Divine Savior, the Dispenser of all graces, has given us such touching examples of it? For you know that the Gospel tells us He prayed often, and even passed the night in prayer? Are we as just, as holy, as this Divine Savior? Have we no graces to ask for? Let us enter into ourselves; let us consider. Do not the con-

tinual needs of our soul and of our body warn us to have recourse to Him who alone can supply them? How many enemies to vanquish—the devil, the world, and ourselves. How many bad habits to overcome, how many passions to subdue, how many sins to efface! In so frightful and painful a situation, what remains to us, my children? The armor of the saints: prayer, that necessary virtue, indispensable to good as well as to bad Christians.

Within the reach of the ignorant as well as the learned, enjoined to the simple and to the enlightened, it is the virtue of all mankind; it is the science of all the faithful! Everyone on the earth who has a heart, everyone who has the use of reason ought to love and pray to God; to have recourse to Him when He is irritated; to thank Him when He confers favors; to humble themselves when He strikes.

See, my children, we are poor people who have been taught to beg spiritually, and we do not beg. We are sick people, to whom a cure has been promised, and we do not ask for it. The good God does not require of us fine prayers, but prayers which come from the bottom of our heart.

St. Ignatius was once travelling with several of his companions; they each carried on their shoulders a little bag, containing what

was most necessary for them on the journey. A good Christian, seeing that they were fatigued, was interiorly excited to relieve them; he asked them as a favor to let him help them to carry their burdens. They yielded to his entreaties. When they had arrived at the inn, this man who had followed them, seeing that the Fathers knelt down at a little distance from each other to pray, knelt down also. When the Fathers rose again, they were astonished to see that this man had remained prostrate all the time they were praying: they expressed to him their surprise, and asked him what he had been doing. His answer edified them very much, for he said: “I did nothing but say, Those who pray so devoutly are saints: I am their beast of burden: O Lord! I have the intention of doing what they do: I say to Thee whatever they say.” These were afterwards his ordinary words, and he arrived by means of this at a sublime degree of prayer. Thus, my children, you see that there is no one who cannot pray — and pray at all times, and in all places; by night or by day; amid the most severe labors, or in repose; in the country, at home, in travelling. The good God is everywhere ready to hear your prayers, provided you address them to Him with faith and humility.



FRANCISCAN SAINTS

APRIL 14TH

The Servant of God Pica

Mother of Our Holy Father

St. Francis, Tertiary

The Franciscan menologium says concerning the Servant of God Pica, that she not only gave bodily birth to St. Francis, but by her prayers and the example of her virtues gave him as a brightly shining light to Holy Church.

Pica was descended from a noble French family of the Bourlemonts. In France she was given in marriage to the wealthy Italian merchant, Peter Bernardone of the house of Moriconi, the father of St. Francis.

Concerning the birth of her first child, our Seraphic Founder, an old manuscript, which is preserved in the Vatican, relates the following: When Pica had for several days suffered the severe pains of labor, there appeared an unknown stranger, in pilgrim's garb, and announced to

the mother that her child would not come into the world until she had been conveyed to a stable. Tradition relates that the chapel which now bears the title, "To St. Francis, the Little One," was the stable wherein the mother happily gave birth to her first son.

When the child was carried about later, the manuscript continues, again a mysterious stranger came, made the Sign of the Cross on the child's right shoulder, and recommended that the greatest care be tendered the child. Being a truly Christian mother, Pica did that. One can readily assume that it was she who animated the boy if, as St. Bonaventure records, Francis grew up from his earliest youth with a passionate love for the poor.

His father was not so compassionately inclined. When, at the beginning of the extraordi-

nary career to which God called him, Francis had sold his riding horse, and gathered alms to restore a ruined church, his father went out in search of him, laid hold of him, maltreated him, and cast the twenty-five-year-old young man into a dark room in the cellar of his home. His mother, however, who in dealing with her son recognized the workings of God, did not in any way sanction the actions of her husband; soon after, when he was gone for a few days, she set Francis free. Undoubtedly, she had on that account to hear reproaches and angry words upon Bernardone's return, but in this son of hers she had the comfort of seeing the signs of holiness stand out in ever bolder relief.

After the death of her husband, Pica committed herself to Francis' spiritual guidance, donned the penitential garb of the Third Order, and lived a secluded life devoted to piety and the practice of good works.

ON THE HABITS OF CHILDREN

1.) How exceedingly important is the rearing of children and the cultivation of habits in children! When an

angel announced to the mother of Samson, who had been long without children, that she should receive a son, and she reported that to her husband, the latter bade God almighty to send the angel again, so that the angel might instruct him how to rear that son. When the angel really came, the father of Samson said to him: "When thy word shall come to pass, what wilt thou that the child should do? or from what shall he keep himself?" (*Judges 13:12*) To accustom children to the things they should do, and constantly to protect them from the things they should not do, is the most difficult duty in the entire process of rearing. On that account did the venerable Pica receive such a great reward, that she accustomed her son Francis from his earliest youth to those acts of tender mercy which brought such great blessings to his labors.

2.) He who must rear children will often experience how difficult it is to inure them to what is good: cleanliness, orderliness, obedience, sociableness — especially when their disordered nature rebels against it. How much effort must be expended to break them of bad habits, of lying, pilfering,

quarreling, and the like, if their natures are thus inclined. But the longer and more determinedly one applies oneself to the task, so much the easier will it be for the child to overcome itself. Finally, it will do what is good, and it will as easily desist from evil as it formerly did the opposite; habit will become second nature. Such is the power of habit. Have you not already experienced this yourself? It is, therefore, a weak and pernicious love if one does not want to hurt the child, and as a result gives the child over to the influence of its lower nature. The Holy Ghost says: "He that loveth his son, correcteth him betimes" (*Prov. 13:24*).

3.) Consider what a fortunate thing it is for a man throughout his life if he has been well

trained in his youth. "A young man according to his way, even when he is old, he will not depart from it" (*Prov. 22:6*). If he has accustomed himself to diligence, self-conquest, obedience, compassion, to regular prayer, attendance at church, and the reception of the Sacraments, how many dangers will he then escape throughout life, how many merits will he gather for eternity, how grateful will he be to his parents on his deathbed that they trained him to do good! But if they did not train him thus, how will it be with him then? "The things that thou hast not gathered in thy youth, how shalt thou find them in thy old age?" (*Ecclus. 25:5*)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

O GOD OF HOSTS, THE GIVER OF ALL GOOD THINGS, IMPLANT IN OUR HEARTS THE LOVE OF THY NAME; MAKE US TO GROW IN FERVOR; FOSTER IN US THAT WHICH IS GOOD, AND IN THY LOVING KINDNESS, OF THAT WHICH THOU FOSTEREST, BE THYSELF THE SAFEGUARD. THROUGH CHRIST OUR LORD.
AMEN.

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