

# THE CATHOLIC SUNDAY SCHOOL



FEENEY



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The Catholic Sunday school







# THE CATHOLIC SUNDAY SCHOOL:

SOME SUGGESTIONS  
ON ITS  
AIM, WORK, AND MANAGEMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

I have requested Rev. Bernard Feeney to put into print the lectures given by him, during the past year, to the students of the Seminary of St. Paul. I believe that a perusal of those lectures will be of service to the pastor of souls, one of whose chief duties is the instruction of childhood and of youth in the lessons of the Catechism. The lectures, it may be, teach few things that are new; but the old things which they do teach are of such vital importance in the exercise of the pastoral charge that lest, now and then, they slip from memory, or be overlooked in practice, frequent effort should be made to hold them ever in vivid freshness before the mind of the priest, so long as he is left by the Master to his work of teacher and sanctifier of the little ones of the flock. Olden things, too, may be made new in being adapted to new needs and new circumstances. And this is what happens in the present instance. Father Feeney speaks for our age and for the special circumstances attending the work of the priest in our country. His lectures are eminently practical; and this is no small merit in a treatise on Catechetics.

The time to fasten mind and heart to the teachings and the practices of religion is that of childhood and of youth. The rule is—such the boy or the girl, such the man or the woman. The exceptions are most rare; they should, in the work of the priest, be counted as non-existent. How fearful, then, the responsibility resting upon the priest! Every child in the parish must be well instructed in its religion: else, almost certainly, the future has in store for the Church another nominal or tepid Catholic, if not another betrayer of holy faith. He is not the shepherd, who does not know by name every lamb of the flock; who does not supply it with food and drink; who does not follow it when it wanders afar, to wrest it from the perils of briars and thorns amid which it may have fallen; who is not able to say to the Lord, that through his neglect or indifference not one has been lost of those confided to his watchfulness. Whatever else the priest does—building churches, preaching sermons, guiding and exhorting the elders—his parish is on the eve of ruin and death, if the children are not instructed; whatever else he overlooks along the lines of ministerial labor, the parish will survive and, one day, will be rich in blossom and fruit, if, within its borders, the children have been cared for and duly taught to know and to love the Al-

mighty God, to know and to love the Saviour and His Holy Catholic Church.

The true shepherd never forgets that the Lord will demand from him an account of every child, who, at any period of his pastorship, was under his jurisdiction to be duly instructed in the teachings and the precepts of divine faith.

But what do the words mean—The child must be duly instructed in the teachings and the precepts of divine faith? Is the work done, when the child is able to repeat the letter of the Catechism, from the first to the last chapter? To think so, were a fatal mistake. The most valuable part in Father Feeney's book, which above all others I commend to the reader's attention, is that in which he tells what the religious instruction of the child must ever mean, what that instruction is which alone will last into coming years and bear fruit unto the saving of the soul.

The child, indeed, must be made to learn by heart the text of the Catechism. There must be lodged in the memory formulas of doctrine, norms of belief, around which lessons of teachers, readings and experiences of later years can group themselves in explanation and development. Formulas of doctrine are too serviceable in the preservation and the growth of faith, to be overlooked or neg-

lected in the training of the Christian child. But formulas not thoroughly understood and assimilated into active thought are mere beatings of the air. Every word of the Catechism must be explained in language that the child easily grasps. The classic terms, so numerous in Catholic theology, must be translated into plain English words. Abstract ideas must be reduced to concrete forms through imagery from the common things with which the mind of the child is familiar. The teaching of the Catechism is the breaking of the bread of the strong for use by the humble and the weak. In speaking to the child, the teacher must, as it were, make the limited intelligence of the child to be his own, and then address it in words the meaning of which it readily understands. A test of success will be that the child, at the close of the lesson, is able to put the formulas it has at first learnt by heart into words of its own finding, drawn from its daily manner of thought and speech.

Great care must be taken to guard the child from imagining that religion is something apart from the life of humanity, or from its own personal life, a mere abstraction of thought or an isolated entity, not to be encountered in other regions of knowledge, unrelated to daily thinking and acting. Here is

one of the gravest defects in the teaching of the Catechism, one of the most fateful causes of unbelief or of neglect of religious duties in later years. Religion is presented to the mind somewhat as a dry mathematical theorem, void of con-creted existence, with the result that it quickly vanishes from the memory, or, if it is remembered, remains, through later life, what it was in the beginning, a supramundane dream, a formless abstraction utterly separate from the living world of men, unconnected with the work and the aspirations of practical activity.

The foundations of religion should be shown to have their place in the universe around man, in the being of man himself. Illustrations to this effect may be drawn, in a manner perfectly intelligible to the child, from the order and the beauty of earth and sky, from the rudimentary sciences learnt in the school-room, from the affections and hopes vibrating with the child's own heart. Revealed religion should be shown to be a vital part of the history of humanity throughout its many ages. The story of the patriarchs and the prophets will be narrated; the Incarnation and the Redemption will be studied in Bethlehem and on Calvary, in the miracles of Jesus Christ, in the establishment and the continued duration of the Church.

Dates and facts will be recalled, so as to make the mysteries of divine truth appear as human realities, from which the world in its ever-continued evolutions cannot loosen itself. The virtues to be preached to the child must be exemplified by the rehearsal of the acts of the Lord, and of His saints and followers. Equally so must sacraments and prayers be explained by actual applications to the circumstances of life, by detailed appointments of times and places, by practical exemplifications of the conditions of soul that should accompany them and of the results in thought and act that follow from them. No; the Catechism is not taught, religion is not infused into the living soul, there to remain and produce fruit, without a materialization of its truths and precepts, a concretion of the spirit of the divine in nature around us and within us. This is most true even in the teaching we owe to the adult Christian: but yet more emphatically true is it, when we are in the presence of the child, incapable of abstract reasoning, to whose soul access is scarcely possible if it be not through the visible and the tangible.

Nor is mere intellectual instruction sufficient for the religious education of the child. Intellectual instruction is necessary; it is the fount from which all else will flow. But the child must be led, as

by the hand, to put into daily practice the truths with which its mind has been saturated, to attune to them its will, to diffuse through its whole daily life the rays of light encircling its higher faculty. This training of the child in practical religion must be frequent, almost continuous, so that faith become a habit under which, almost without previous thought, or constraint of will, the soul moves, as by instinct, along the pathway of belief and piety. How forceful such habit will be in resisting the dreadful temptations sure, in later years, to confront manhood and womanhood, in repressing the storms of passion sure, from time to time, to burst into fury to the menace of peace and innocence! When we consider the awful perils of faith and virtue inseparable from the atmosphere of unbelief and indifference with which we are, perforce, surrounded, what else, we may ask, but the deeply rooted habit of faith will steady the soul beneath the attacks of error and moral evil, allowing it time to pray for grace and to gather together its forces for the final effort towards victory? One of the most precious safeguards of the Christian through his earthly pilgrimage is the habit of faith and virtue: childhood is the season of its formation; early religious instruction, the means of implanting it in the soul.

Clearly the teaching, speculative and practical, for which I plead, is not a matter of months, or of a limited number of years. Father Feeney calls for the religious instruction of the child from its seventh or eight year to the fifteenth or the sixteenth. He is eminently right. Many are the years devoted to secular education, to instruction in science and mathematics, in literature and history. Is religion less important than the branches of secular knowledge marked upon the catalogues of grammar-school or college? Or is religion more easily learnt? Religion, as understood and practiced in the Catholic Church, is science and art of highest form, complex and extensive in range of doctrine and law, intricate and arduous in its rules of discipline. It is no religiosity, no mere sentimental uplifting of the soul towards God; no vague belief in the Written Word, no simple code of natural morals. Religion, in the Catholic Church, means dogmas, sacraments, commandments of God and of the Church, together with manifold traditions and devotions. All these must be known and practiced by the Catholic, in a lesser or greater degree, as his faith is less or more enlightened, or his piety less or more fervent. But, even the lesser degree, that which constitutes the something more than the nominal or the superficial Catholic, is so



wide-embracing that it is reached only through serious and protracted study. To the Catholic child, the learning of the Catechism is no holiday task: long time and, meanwhile, hard work are the necessary conditions.

I shall not argue against the notion that the instruction sufficient in a Catholic child is provided for by Catechism classes, preparatory to first communion and to confirmation, covering, in each case, as it usually happens, six or eight weeks. The absurdity of the notion is apparent, so soon as mention is made of it.

Local circumstances in each parish determine the form best suited in the organization of the school of religion. Parishes differ very much, one from another, in material means, in the number of Catholics, in the greater or lesser proximity of the population to one common centre. Manifestly, no one form can be indicated as befitting all parishes. Several possible forms are discussed by Father Feeney. The main point to be borne in mind, is that childhood and youth must be adequately instructed in the faith. That much said, the pastor will decide for himself as to means and methods. Means and methods are secondary matters, provided the end is sure to be ultimately attained.

The ideal in the teaching of the Catechism is the

Catholic school, where the religious instruction goes hand in hand with the secular, where religion takes its place in the daily programme of studies, where the atmosphere is permeated and perfumed with faith and piety, entering every moment into the very soul of the child, and fashioning it into the living exemplar of things divine. Nothing supplies the place of the Catholic school in the religious formation of mind and of heart. The child, left outside its portals, will, nearly always, be wanting afterwards in Catholic life and spirit, whatever other means were devised to develop in him the germinal graces of his baptism. The true priest will make every sacrifice to build up a Catholic school, whenever the undertaking is at all within reach, and will spare no effort to induce parents, by persuasive word, in season and out of season, to entrust to it the education of the little ones.

In the Catholic school, no matter who be the ordinary teachers, no matter how well fitted they be to impart religious instruction, the priest has his own work which he must not delegate to others. In the religious education of children, the teachers of the school are the auxiliaries, the substitutes of the priest. Their teaching the priest is bound to supplement by direct teaching of his own. Their words he must seal and confirm with his priestly

voice and authority. The priest is the divinely appointed teacher of religion: the child must be made to recognize his sacred office, and to profit by its influences and graces. The priest is by divine commission the teacher of religion; the teacher of religion to the entire flock he must ever be, in act as well as in profession.

Nor is all done in a parish, when it is endowed with a Catholic school, and the priest is taking his share in the work of the religious instruction of the pupils. Not always, as a matter of fact, does the Catholic school-house harbor all the children of the parish. Some there are who attend other schools; those must be carefully followed up and brought within the reach of religious instruction. The children outside the Catholic school should, in a manner, be the special objects of pastoral zeal. They are the needy; in charity, as well as in justice, they appeal to the special compassion of the priest. In his letter on "The Teaching of Christian Doctrine" Pius X says: "In the larger cities, especially, where there are public academies, colleges and universities, let classes of religious doctrine be established for the purpose of teaching the truths of faith and the precepts of Christian morality to the youths who attend such public institutions wherein no mention is made of religion."

How to give a sufficiency of religious instruction to the children of a parish, where there is no Catholic school, or to the children who do not attend the Catholic school where one is to be found, is one of the most serious problems awaiting the attention of the pastor of souls. Classes are to be organized under competent teachers, and the children must be induced to take part in them. But tasks these are that challenge, to the utmost, the zeal, the energy, the tact of the priest.

In small missions, the priest, perhaps, is able to teach all the children of the parish, dividing them off into different classes and appointing for each class a special day or hour. When this is possible, nothing better need be sought. No lay person will influence the children as will the priest; no lay person will know so well how to break to the little ones the bread of spiritual life. But there are the larger parishes, where the pastor, even with the coöperation of assistant priests, cannot suffice. In those cases he must invoke the aid of intelligent men and women, who under his counsel will gladly lend aid to his ministry. The choice of such helpers must be made with greatest judiciousness; constant attention must be given to hold them to their work and fit them to do it in the proper manner. Father Feeney treats very

completely this question of lay-teachers in classes of Christian doctrine. I need add nothing to his words.

But the teachers secured, the problem remains, how to secure the attendance of the children? "Hoc opus, hic labor." We may argue, as we wish, as to the responsibilities resting upon the parents or upon the children themselves. Children will prefer the quiet of the home, or the joy of the play-ground; parents will be indifferent or indolent in the discharge of their duties. Meanwhile, the souls of the little ones, remitted by the Saviour to the love and the care of the priest, are perishing of hunger and thirst, and the ranks of the future soldiers of the Church are being woefully depleted. The priest it is who will come to the rescue, if a priest's heart beats within his breast. His first work is to make up a census of the parish, so as to know who attend, and who do not attend the classes. Then absentees should be visited in their homes and invited, coaxed even, to attend. The roll will be called regularly, at the opening of the class; those who fail to answer, will be reminded of their fault, either by a card sent through the post-office or by a personal visit. Nothing pleases children so much as a proof of this kind that they are remembered by the priest, that they are missed

when their seat in the class is vacant. Let the class be made interesting to the pupils—so interesting that they will seek there pleasure no less than instruction. Appeals will be made to their conscience: the sentiment of duty to God and to their own souls will be quickened by language that stirs up the emotions of the heart, while it convinces the mind. There will be a timely distribution of sacred pictures and pious booklets. Each year there will be the reading of notes, the distribution of medals and of other tokens of reward—something to which the child will have been looking forward with gladsome expectancy throughout the preceding year. But, some one will say, how much labor all this presupposes, how much gentle patience, how much paternal love and winning tact! True, most true. But will anything less succeed in bringing children to the classes and holding them there week after week in punctual attendance? And if a priest is not equal to so much labor, so much patience, so much tact, does not the question arise, is he equal to the responsibilities of the ministry of souls?

At the close of the lessons given by lay-teachers, the pupils of the several classes will be brought together to listen to a short address from the priest. In this manner the priest keeps himself in direct

touch with the pupils, and will leave upon all the impress of his personal influence.

Classes preparatory to first communion and to confirmation will, of course, be in all cases taught by the priest himself.

Where, as it often happens in western dioceses, the population of a parish is spread over a wide territory, with families quite remote from the church, the remedy is in the formation of several centres of religious instruction, use being made of school-houses, or of the homes of pious and willing Catholics. To each centre teachers will be appointed; and teachers and pupils will receive frequent visits from the pastor.

The crowning of the work of the religious instruction of childhood and of youth is the "Catechism of Perseverance." This might be designated the post-graduate course. The pupils are now of mature years, and capable of higher mental effort. They are in need, too, of special training of thought and of affection, in view of the perils and trials awaiting them in the broad world beyond the threshold of which they are so soon to venture.

The priest himself will be the teacher of the "Catechism of Perseverance." He will discuss, largely, the "apologetics" of religion. He will

treat of the being and the personality of God, the spirituality and the immortality of the human soul. He will unfold the historic proofs of a divine revelation, bring into light the divine authority of Holy Writ, illustrate the establishment and the history of the Church. Nor will he neglect to review separately each one of the chief doctrines of the faith, each one of the seven sacraments—giving in every case the exact teaching of the Church, to guard against current mis-statements, assigning to dogmas and to sacraments their several places in the general economy of the supernatural order and in the scheme of the Redeemer for the sanctification of souls. Nor will he neglect to picture, much more fully than in classes of younger children, the moral beauty of Christian conduct, to warn against temptation and sin, to tell of the helps to victory to be gained from fidelity to prayer and to practices of piety. And, throughout, he will supplement his own words by references to standard books on each subject, urging that the books be sedulously read, thus fostering a taste for religious reading—a thing to which our laity are, to their grave misfortune, almost totally unused.

I am aware of the peculiar obstacles the priest must encounter in keeping up a “Catechism of Perseverance,” obstacles much harder to be overcome



than those previously encountered in lower classes of Christian doctrine. Nor do I believe that he may count on the attendance of a large number of youths. Nevertheless, I insist that the "Catechism of Perseverance" be an institution of the parish, that utmost care be expended upon it, that urgent invitation to take part in it be frequently spoken. Some, at least, will attend the class; and these, later, will be an "élite" of Catholic intelligence, the leaders of Catholic thought and action, by whom the whole parish will be leavened into a higher Catholic life. The "Catechism of Perseverance" is so beneficial to religion, and, on the whole, is so well within the reach of energetic zeal, that no true priest will fail to establish it in his parish and to watch over it as the very apple of his eye.

Will it be said, as page after page of Father Feeney's book is turned over, that he is asking too much from the pastor of souls? I do not think so. It is too plain that the religious instruction of childhood and of youth is one of the most important duties of the ministry and that nothing under what has been stated suffices to provide this instruction in requisite measure. Who hold in the hand the childhood of to-day, hold in the hand the manhood and the womanhood of to-morrow, the

whole future of the Catholic Church in America. Tell me to what degree the children of the Church are being instructed in the faith; and I will tell whether victory or defeat awaits us in the coming years.

JOHN IRELAND,  
Archbishop of St. Paul.

# THE CATHOLIC SUNDAY SCHOOL

## CHAPTER I

### GENERAL IDEA OF SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK

A Catholic Sunday School is a religious service in which our Catholic children learn to know and love their religion and are trained as much as possible in the practice of it.

Its regular work consists of the following exercises: 1. Opening prayer; 2. Roll-call; 3. A hymn; 4. "The Daily Practice;" 5. Review of last lesson; 6. Recitation of the day's lesson; 7. Explanation of the next lesson; 8. Director's address; 9. A hymn; 10. Concluding prayer and dismissal.

The first of these exercises that calls for explanation is "the Daily Practice." This is a prayer, a virtue, or some other pious work recommended

the preceding Sunday for practice during the week. The children are asked to examine themselves regarding its observance, and to make an act of sorrow for voluntary neglect of it.

The object of the division of the teaching work into Review, Recitation, and Explanation, is this. By a threefold repetition of the lesson, it is expected that a lasting impression of the truth taught will be made on the soul of the child. Hence, the lesson explained on Sunday is memorized during the week, recited the following Sunday, and, a week afterwards, reviewed by the teacher. In each of these exercises (Explanation, Recitation, and Review), all hard words are defined, a paraphrase of each answer is given, and an intelligent knowledge of the lesson is impressed on the memory and understanding. But the teacher aims at something beyond this—something without which the truth remains a dead formula. He strives to picture it to the imagination, to stir up the emotions most directly suggested by it, to make it personal, and to bring out distinctly and forcibly its practical bearing on the child's daily life.

Let us not deceive ourselves. There is no real

teaching of religion without some such presentment of it to the imagination, feelings, conscience, and will. Religion is not a philosophy that can be learned through definitions and formulas. It is, above all things else, the Christian shaping and regulation of man's life, of which shaping and regulation the memorizing and understanding of a catechism lesson are but the beginning—the starting-point—the foundation.

Few things need bringing home to the Catholic Sunday School more than this, that the teaching of Christian truth and duty is not the whole or the chief work it has to do. Its mission is to the whole soul—the whole child, not only to its memory and intellect, but to its heart and will, to its conduct in the home, the church, the school, on the street and on the playground—in a word, to its whole life. Much of this training can be done in Sunday School; but the greater part of it has to be done in the home, under the supervision of parents. Hence the necessity of their cordial coöperation.

The following are some examples of the religious and moral training that may be practised in the

Sunday School: Decorum on entering and leaving church; how to take Holy Water; reverence in the presence of the Most Holy Eucharist; how to pray; how to hear Mass; how to receive the Sacraments (the children are put through the different actions); courtesy and kindness; obedience; self-control, etc. Besides these practices, each class makes acts of faith, hope, charity, contrition, thanksgiving, etc., in accordance with the truths taught. Example: God lived and walked in human form on this earth of ours, to prove to us how much He loves us, and to win our love in return. Let us tell Him from our hearts that we love Him. "O my God, I love Thee with my whole heart."

There can be no real teaching in a Sunday School, nor, indeed, anywhere else, unless the pupils actually *learn* what is taught them. Hence, attention, interest, and coöperation, on the child's part, are as essential as clear exposition and impressive enforcement, on the part of the teacher.

In other words: teaching and learning are correlatives.

Sunday School teaching, however efficient it may

be, does not produce grace. It prepares the way for it—disposing the mind and heart, removing obstacles, urging motives, pointing out Jesus Christ to the child: but it is Jesus Christ Himself who, by His Holy Spirit, draws the child; it is He alone who, by the same Holy Spirit, gives supernatural enlightenment to its understanding and supernatural inspiration to its will, by which it is enabled to believe, hope, love, repent, etc. Our action as teachers, therefore, is solely preparatory and dispositive. “I have planted,” writes St. Paul, “Apollo watered, but God gave the increase.” (I Cor. iii, 6.) “Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.” (Ps. cxxvi, 1.) Hence, the cure of bad habits, and the practice of Christian virtue, and the use of the helping means of grace are wholly due to the free coöperation of the child with the light and help given it by the Holy Ghost. Therefore, anyone attributing such spiritual effects to his own efforts, deprives God of the glory which belongs to Him, and deserves no blessing on his work. “When you shall have done all these things that are commanded you, say:

We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which we ought to do." (Luke xvii. 10.)

The crowning work of a Sunday School, then, does not wholly depend on the exertions of the director or the teachers. Children who have been taught their religion thoroughly will sometimes neglect it in after life. The Sunday School is not to blame; and those engaged in it need not be discouraged. The drill-sergeant is not held accountable for the desertion of the soldier in the face of the enemy. It would, indeed, be disheartening in the extreme to know that the bulk of the children we teach and train would fall away from the Church and be ultimately lost. But our reliance on the mercy and love of our Father in Heaven inspires us with confidence, that the seed we plant with such anxious care will not die, but will grow and produce manifold fruit. "Going they went and wept, casting their seeds. But coming they shall come with joyfulness, carrying their sheaves." (Ps. cxxv, 5, 6.)

The sanctification of the child is, then, God's share in its religious education. Hence, one of the chief agencies by which that sanctification is



secured, namely, prayer, must be a prominent feature of every Sunday School. The director and teachers must themselves vividly realize its importance, which they must also inculcate with all possible force on their children. They must make it an essential part of their own preparation; and they must have frequent recourse to it in every lesson. Let such class-prayer, however, be short and informal; let it be directly connected with the subject explained; and, better still, let it be the culminating point of some aroused emotion: and we need never fear that it will weary or alienate the class. On the contrary, most of them will feel a keen zest for such short prayers, and will set higher value on our teaching on account of them. *Love of prayer is the surest test of an efficient Sunday School.*

Another test, not so crucial or unequivocal, yet absolutely necessary, is organization, discipline, order. Without them, there can be no permanent work done either in teaching or in training. Besides, they have a high moral value for the child, not only as an exercise of obedience, but also as a means of establishing and maintaining that order

in its external life on which material success depends; and, still more, that order in its interior—its imaginations, thoughts, desires, resolves,—which conditions its spiritual well-being.

To enforce order and discipline is difficult; but the Sunday School teacher has to do something more difficult still. He has, while enforcing them, to retain the affection of his pupils and to endear his teaching to them, notwithstanding the restraints attending it. This demands so rare a combination of qualities, that we might despair of finding suitable teachers, if one supernatural quality did not make up for all others, and if that quality were not attainable by everyone. Thank God, there is such a quality; and its name is Love. Let a teacher of ordinary ability and judgment love his class with an individual, impartial, supernatural love, and he will be loved by them in turn, and, unless he be foolishly weak, he will be also respected and obeyed.

## CHAPTER II

### AIM AND SCOPE OF SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK

In the last chapter we have seen (1) that a Sunday School aims at much more than communicating religious knowledge. This, indeed, is the foundation of its work; but on this it aspires to build a sincere *love* of religion and the faithful *practice* of it. (2) Religious instruction, to be remembered, has to be repeated often; and to be loved and practised, it has also to be impressed on the imagination, the feelings, and the will. (3) The training of the child has to be chiefly accomplished in the home, but it is materially helped by "the Daily Practice." (4) As all the Sunday School can do is to bring the child to Jesus, prayer, which is a most efficacious means to this end, must be frequently intermingled with the teaching, and form a prominent feature of all the exercises.

Ideally, the Sunday School is opened to children from their sixth to their sixteenth year. To

secure the best results from its work during those ten years, it requires punctual and regular attendance, the sympathetic coöperation of parents and secular teachers, and a complete equipment of teaching-helps (pictures, maps, library, etc.).

At the end of the course, it aims to turn over the child to the immediate charge of the Church with a well-formed Christian character, possessing a solid, comprehensive knowledge of its religion, a sincere love for it, and a thorough training in it.

The Christian character so formed will be endowed with the divine virtues—faith, hope, and charity, and the moral virtues included under these four heads—prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. As growth in these virtues is a condition of perseverance, and the child cannot grow in them without supernatural help, the Sunday School trains it in the use of those means by which the help is obtained. The principal means are: prayer, the Holy Mass, and the Sacraments.

The teaching and training work of the Sunday School, then, consists in teaching the *knowledge* of religion, in inspiring a *love* of religion, and

in training in the *practice* of religion. These will be explained in detail in the course of the work; but it is necessary to give an outline of them here, to show the scope of the Sunday School.

1. *Knowledge of religion.* This is taught through the Catechism, Bible History, Church History, and Liturgy.

A. The Catechism. It is the nucleus, "the text" of all Sunday School work. It has to be memorized; the words and sense have to be explained and understood; its main truths have to be impressed on the imagination and brought in touch with the emotions, and, finally, practical application of them has to be made to the life and conduct of the child.

B. Bible History. (a) In all the classes, even the lowest, Bible facts are used to illustrate or prove the truths taught. (b) In one of the upper classes is learned the outline-history of the chosen people of God, as an introduction to the detailed history of our Divine Lord and His apostles. (c) The Perseverance class gives one or two terms to the study of the Bible itself.

C. History of the Church. A summary is given

in connection with the catechism lessons on the Church. Toward the end of the course, the subject is treated more fully.

D. Liturgy, or the Devotional Life of the Church. In this division is shown the Church in prayer—discharging her sublime office of divine worship. By a beautiful arrangement of the year, and with the aid of dramatic, lyrical and musical art, she brings the mysteries of faith home to the imagination and feelings, as well as to the mind and heart, of her children. The order, symbolism, spirit and teaching of the Church's public service are explained in this most important branch of Sunday School work.

2. *Love of religion.* This, like every other spiritual effect of Sunday School work, must come from the direct illumination and inspiration of grace. All a teacher can do is to remove obstacles and excite proper dispositions.

(a) The *influence* of the Sunday School has more to do with the love of religion than any formal instruction or exhortation. Sometimes, that influence creates aversion and disgust, which, unfortunately, extends beyond the teacher to the

truths and duties he teaches. A director cannot be too solicitous about removing whatever excites such feelings.

(b) The teacher's own love for religion will give an unction and warmth to his words that will tell favorably on the child.

(c) It is very helpful also to have before our minds while teaching, the *express purpose* of inspiring our class with the love of religion. It will save us from any word or act liable to cause unnecessary irritation.

(d) The Childhood of Jesus, described in the simple words of the Gospel, has singular power in drawing the hearts of children to Him.

(e) The history of the child-saints will also help toward the same end.

(f) Describe the beauty, nobility, attractiveness, happiness of Christian life. Contrast with it a life of sin, so miserable, degraded, shameful, etc.

(g) Above all, the frequent and fervent reception of the Most Holy Eucharist is the most efficacious means of inspiring children with the love of religion. In fact, the love of religion is inseparable from the love of Communion.

3. *The practice of religion.* Sunday School training in this is confined to the few duties and observances mentioned already. All it can do is to awaken and develop the conscience, to show it in detail the Christian law by which it is to be guided, and to propose such motives for right living as are apt, with grace, to influence and determine the will.

Indirectly, however, the Sunday School can do very much for the Christian training of children. The director can win the earnest coöperation of parents in the work; and, by individual interest, kindness, friendly recognition, etc., he can acquire such influence with the children themselves, as will be equivalent to personal supervision. It is, indeed, most advisable that both director and teachers be acquainted with the home-, street-, and school-life of their young charge, not for correction or reproof, but for affectionate counsel and protection.



## CHAPTER III

### NECESSITY OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

By the knowledge, love, and practice of religion, the Sunday School aims at forming the character of the child in a Christian mold. Repetition, illustration, emotional presentment, practical application, "Daily Practice," home-coöperation, prayer, the Sacraments,—these are the chief means and helps by which the work is accomplished. But we must ever bear in mind that its spirit, its efficacy and merit, its permanency, are wholly due to the Divine Teacher.

This work of forming the child in a Christian mold, has not been always done in the Sunday School. In the early and middle ages of the Church, a Sunday School was not necessary; for the religious education of children was sufficiently provided for by three agencies: the Mother; the Home; and the Church.

1. *The Christian Mother.* The Mother felt her-

self consecrated by her Christian marriage to the sanctification of the family. She had few interests and no attractions outside the four walls of her home. She gave herself up heart and soul to her life-mission, of which the religious training of her children formed the chief duty. Her knowledge may have been limited; but her sense of responsibility was keen and urgent; and her love was unbounded. That love brought her down to their level, made her lisp her words to them, and taught her to adapt herself to their dawning intelligence. They, in turn, took in all she said as part of herself. They believed what she believed; hoped as she hoped; loved as she loved; and did as they saw her doing. Never again after those impressionable years of childhood, will mother or other human teacher have the same absolute influence she then possesses over those souls, to shape them in Christian mold and give their growth a Heavenward bent.

2. *The Christian Home.* Its history has yet to be written. Created, and fostered by the Church, it was the nursery of saints. Mutual dependence and respect, love, purity, obedience, prayer—these

formed its atmosphere; and it was in this atmosphere that children were brought up, and from which cloisters drew their saints, knights "without fear or reproach" went out to do battle for the weak and wronged, and soldiers poured in myriads under the banner of the Cross to wrest the Holy Places from Islam desecration.

3. *The Church.* In the early and middle ages, the Church had a means more efficacious than books of bringing home to young and old the mysteries of faith and their embodiment in saintly lives. It consisted in the symbol-lessons of her feasts, her ceremonies, her stained-glass windows, her pictures and carvings, her music and architecture. To speak only of the first of these: besides the fifty-two Sundays of the year, there were about forty feast-days, on which the faithful were obliged to hear Mass and abstain from servile work. Most of them were preceded by vigils, that is, by days of fast and abstinence; and all were ushered in with ringing of bells from early dawn, and surrounded with all the splendor, solemnity, and grandeur that vestments, lights, incense, chant and organ could contribute. Such a realistic method

of teaching the leading truths and honoring the canonized heroes of Christian life appealed to and touched sense and soul alike—aye, and the sense and soul of the child who imbibed the lesson they taught, as much as of the mother who explained it.

The modern mother, in very many cases, has too many social, literary, and humanitarian engagements, to have any leisure for home duties. The modern city home is largely but a “baby-farm” for the little ones, and a boarding-house for the other members of the family. And the modern Church?—well, thank God, she is ever the same; but, like her Divine Founder and Teacher, she adapts herself to the age in which she lives. In the last century, she warned the Christian world against the disruption of the home—the dissolution of domestic ties—with which it is threatened. She would re-create the Christian family after the ideal and model of the Family of Nazareth, thereby making it as efficient as it once was for the religious education of the child. Society, however, turned a deaf ear to the warning. Mothers more and more consider children as a burden and a

drag, and the home is becoming more and more de-Christianized.

But the Church cannot leave the child in spiritual darkness. The present Sovereign Pontiff has imposed on the conscience of every bishop throughout the world the solemn obligation of having the Catechism taught for an hour on Sundays and holy days in all the churches of his diocese.

Hence, it is no longer optional with pastors to have a Sunday School or not. They are bound under grave obligation to have one, unless they have its equivalent in a parochial school. Neither is it any more optional with parents to send or not to send their children to the Sunday School, if, through the week, they send them to the public school. The young must be taught their religion; and parents, pastors and bishops are equally bound under pain of mortal sin to see that they are taught it—and taught it efficiently.

The Catholic Sunday School is particularly necessary in this country. First of all, it is necessary, because the sad experience of the past shows what a leakage from the Church has been caused

by ignorance of religion. The leakage will be stopped only by the knowledge, love and practice of Christian truth; and this, if not acquired in youth, will in all likelihood never be acquired in after life.

The Sunday School is also necessary to safeguard the Catholic laity against the influences of non-Catholic literature and non-Catholic society. If we run the risk—as, no doubt, we sometimes have to do—of contact with those influences, we are bound, at least, to provide ourselves with an antidote against harm from them. The surest antidote is that intelligent loyalty to our Church's teaching which only comprehensive knowledge of our religion can inspire.

The distinctive spirit of this country may be one or other of the three master-passions mentioned by St. John, or it may be all three working separately or in fusion; but whatever else it be, it certainly is not Christian. And yet it has a fearful momentum, which only an iron grasp of Christian principles can withstand. What will the grasp be, if the principles were memorized without intelligence only a few weeks before Confirma-

tion, and forgotten before the child-soldier of the Cross had lost the sensation of the bishop's fingers on his cheek?

Finally, a Sunday School is necessary to enable the Catholic of the next generation to give to honest inquirers an intelligent and satisfactory account of the doctrines and practices of the Church. It is a reproach to our laity that it can do so little for non-Catholics in the line of doctrinal explanation and instruction. "Lay Apostleship" is an idea as old as Christianity; but it has lain dormant for centuries, and is only now awakening in the consciousness of the Catholic mind. There is no doubt that a Catholic who has led a clean, upright, Christian life for years in the midst of non-Catholics, does much to prepossess them in favor of the Church; but how much more might he do, were he able to explain with simplicity and clearness the grounds of his faith and the reasonableness of distinctive Catholic practices?

## CHAPTER IV

### THE DIRECTOR

To sum up what I have hitherto advocated :

1. The Sunday School takes charge of the child from its sixth to its sixteenth year. 2. It aims in that time to form its character in Christian mold by the knowledge, love and practice of religion. 3. The knowledge of religion embraces the Catechism, Bible History, the History of the Church, and Liturgy. 4. The necessity of a Sunday School arises partly from the changed conditions of society, and partly from recent ecclesiastical legislation. 5. For many reasons a Sunday School is particularly necessary in this country.

As an organization, a Sunday School is composed of three elements: the director; the teachers; and the children.

The director has to gather in all the children of the parish, and so attach them to the Sunday School, that they will come without pressure. He



has to select, organize, and train teachers. He has to grade the school and the work, and to determine what each teacher has to do. He has to draw up a well-arranged list of subjects for "Daily Practice." He has to supply the school with all necessary helps—pictures, maps, books, etc. He has to be present from the beginning to the end of the session, all eyes and ears, but never interfering in the work, even to correct mistakes. He has to give a short address on the "Daily Practice" toward the end. He has to see that the children attend Mass and Sacraments regularly. He has to keep up a constant communication with the parents regarding their children. Finally, he has to hold a conference with his teachers at least once a week, to encourage them, help them in their preparation, and consult with them about the welfare of the school.

Only a few of these duties need special comment.

1. *To bring children to Sunday School.* In repeated sermons and instructions, the director must develop in parents a keen, terrifying sense of responsibility for the souls of their children. He

must tell them over and over that it is not sufficient to *send* them, but that they should make sure of their attendance at Sunday School. He must, besides, speak with parents individually in their homes on this responsibility, and insist on their making wilful neglect of it a matter of Confession. If public and private admonition fail, he must refuse Sacraments to all those who persist in disregarding his words. (Of course, I speak here only of parishes in which there is no parochial school.)

The personal influence of the pastor or assistant tells, even more than preaching, on the spiritual life of his people; but it tells with special force on the young. Let a child hear its parents speaking of him with affection and admiration; let it see him respected by everybody; let it find him strong, manly, dignified, courteous (even to children), kind, considerate, even-tempered, and, at the same time, grave, masterful, decisive—let a child see all these characteristics in a director, and it will be *proud* of him; and it will love him as only the young can love; and it will be ready to go through fire and water for him; and,—*what*

is more to the point—it certainly will not refuse his invitation to attend Sunday School.

The chief difficulty in regard to the attendance of children is not to bring them one or two Sundays, but to keep them coming regularly and cheerfully. Some go to Sunday School as reluctantly as they go to a dentist to have a tooth drawn. These may memorize and recite lessons in catechism, and repeat prayers by rote; but they do not become religious-minded; they have no love for what they learn; their conscience is not awakened, much less enlightened and formed; there is no moral improvement in their home relations; in a word, their real lives remain untouched by the means devised to penetrate and reform them.

Here is the most serious difficulty of the director's office. He must not be satisfied with material attendance, even though he has gathered in every child in the parish. He must overcome antipathy; he must overcome indifference; he must make the school attractive; nay more, he must aim at making it more attractive than the ball-game, the interesting story, the rollicking companion, etc., etc. Spontaneous attendance, hearty

goodwill, earnest co-operation, are absolutely indispensable in children, that the Sunday School confer on them some permanent spiritual good. But how are these dispositions to be created and developed? Prayer and humble reliance on the Divine Teacher will do much. Much also will be done by the influence of the director of which I have already spoken. The loving kindness of the teacher is an essential condition and will help very much. Then everything possible must be done to please the eye and ear of the child; especially, there should be an abundant variety of colored pictures and of hymns set to simple, catchy airs. We know that the young are passionately fond of stories that project new, strange, even weird images on the imagination, that excite the feelings, that contain elements of mystery, complicated situations, descriptions of strength, bravery, heroism. Give them all they want, from the Bible, Church history, the lives of the saints and of great Christian heroes, books of travel, etc.

A director whose heart is in his work will find many other expedients for attaching his children to the Sunday School. He will keep in mind that

they do not take kindly to religious knowledge, prayers, discipline,\* memorizing, and brain-contact with hard words. Nor are regular attendance, orderly conduct, and correct answering sure indications of the surrender of the will to grace; for children have wonderful power of hiding their true selves under outward compliance with pressure. Knowing all these things, the director will aim, above all other objects, at the conquest of the heart for Jesus; and this he will seek to achieve through the senses, the imagination and the feelings.

Personal magnetism is a desirable quality in a director. It attracts and attaches teachers and children alike to the Sunday School. It is a valuable natural gift, for it saves the possessor of it from much labor and worry. It enables him with little expenditure of energy to produce brilliant results. His teachers resemble officers on parade, and the children march, countermarch, sit, stand, sing and recite automatically. All this is excellent, as far as it goes; but the pity is, it very frequently does not go any farther. Those military Sunday Schools teach all *about* religion, but they

do not always teach religion. They are wholly taken up with external show—accidentals, helps, means, organization—and they push the *end* into the background. Their work would be perfect, if they paid as much attention to the *substance* as they pay to the *form*.

The lack of personal magnetism is abundantly made up by single-minded, self-sacrificing zeal. Once it is known that the director is wrapped up in his school, that he is sparing no effort or expense to make it as efficient as possible, that he has no other motive than the spiritual welfare of the children, that he needs help and co-operation—once all this becomes known, the best elements in his parish will sympathize with him, and gather round him, and offer their services and material contributions, thereby enabling him to make his Sunday School as nearly as may be a realization of his dreams.

This zeal will be the outcome and expression not only of his belief in the necessity and vital importance of the work; but, still more, of the great love he bears to his little ones. His soul is on fire with it. It haunts him through the day. It

distracts him at his office. He dreams of it in his sleep. It is commensurate with the love he bears for his Divine Master; for it is primarily supernatural, looking to the child's soul, redeemed by the Blood of Jesus Christ, adopted to the sonship of God, destined for a participation in the Divine Nature. He looks to the child's soul, still clothed in its baptismal robe of grace; and he thinks of the long and dangerous journey before it; and with all the tender solicitude of a mother, he provides it with every help and safeguard; and he never stands at the altar without pleading for it with the Sacred Heart.

The director's great love for his children will make him zealous. It will also make him patient. There will be numerous disappointments. Some parents will not send their children to the Sunday School; some children will be sent, but they will not come; others will never learn their lesson; teachers will prefer their own method of instruction; they will be harsh with their pupils, or too lenient; they will be dissatisfied with their classes, think themselves slighted, give way to jealousy, dissension, backbiting, etc. Even a gen-

eral strike is possible, notwithstanding that "The Master" whose work they abandon is Jesus Christ Himself.

Surely, here is ample provocation to discouragement; yet the director of apostolic spirit will be self-possessed, unruffled, sweet-tempered through it all. He will utter no reproach, no expression of wounded feeling. If the Lord of the vineyard does not supply laborers, he will do the work himself, sustained and cheered by the thought, that God can as easily give blessing and increase to his single-handed effort, as if he had St. Paul or St. Francis Xavier for his assistant.

But a director's patience will be saved much strain, if he exercise tact in his dealings with parents, teachers and children. For example, he may, without intention, appear to act the autocrat, or to wound the feelings of others, or to demand sacrifices that are unreasonable; and his school may be seriously injured by such thoughtlessness, whereas a little reflection on the possible consequences of his bearing toward others would have led him to modify it, so as to gain friends where he has made enemies.



Tact is nothing more than sound judgment and common sense determining our actions in view of their consequences. In other words, it is the cardinal virtue of prudence, which is rightly presumed to regulate the life and conduct of every priest. Why, then, mention it here? Solely because a director's single-minded, self-sacrificing zeal for his Sunday School is liable to deceive him into believing that others take a similar enthusiastic interest in the work. Hence, he is apt to be over-exacting of services, to expect heat from icicles—to demand too much from those who work with him. Tact will save him from these serious mistakes.

## CHAPTER V

### TEACHERS: HOW TO PROCURE THEM

The director is the official teacher of the Sunday School. His assistants are his agents, in whom he, as it were, multiplies himself for the convenience of those taught. He alone determines the matter, method, extent of the teaching; he alone is responsible for its adequacy and correctness; appointments, changes, removals exclusively belong to him. This absolute control of the director over the work done in his Sunday School extends to religious as well as secular teachers. It is not only justified, but rendered gravely obligatory, by the necessity of safeguarding the unity and purity of Catholic faith. No intelligent teacher, imbued with the spirit of religion, will take umbrage at it, or be made less zealous by its restrictions.

For a properly equipped Sunday School, a minimum of ten teachers is required—five for the boys'

and five for the girls' classes. Where are so many volunteers to be found? In the parish, of course; as it is presumed that there is no religious community and no parochial school. But pastors know what general apathy prevails among our people regarding active participation in the religious instruction of children; and they know how diffident even educated Catholics are to undertake this work in a Sunday School. Is it possible to overcome the apathy and to change the diffidence into earnest coöperation? Yes; I believe it quite possible, if the director be satisfied with a small beginning, and be not over-eager for rapid growth, and be not discouraged or disappointed at partial failures, and leave spiritual results entirely to God.

Parochial conditions and circumstances are so various, that no suggestions of general application can be given a director to assist him in this difficult work. His own great love for his children, with patient zeal and prudence, will be his best guide. Still he may be helped by one or more of the following hints.

1. Start with any Sunday School already ex-

isting in the parish, no matter how inefficient. Make it your foundation. Develop, reform, build, slowly and warily; but pull nothing down. Remember, zeal is constructive, not destructive.

2. Speak from the pulpit of the charity, results, blessings, rewards of instructing the ignorant in the truths of faith. Enlarge on the immense spiritual advantages that will accrue to the teachers themselves, in their clearer, fuller, and more inspiring conception of those truths, from communicating them to others.

3. Establish a Christian Doctrine Society; or add its rules to those of any sodalities or societies already existing in the parish. You must not ask all to become teachers. It will be enough to get them to promise active help. The weekly meetings will give an opportunity for preparing the lessons of the next Sunday School.

4. Enlist the interest and goodwill of the leading families of the parish in your Sunday School. Try all you can to win the young people in those families for teachers. Most of them have studied in Catholic colleges and academies, and have not only learned their religion comprehensively, but

have been trained in the sincere love and faithful, intelligent practice of all its duties. By the zealous, painstaking efforts of their teachers, they realize to their very finger-tips the paramount obligations of charity, especially toward the soul of their brother-man. Only a few words, then, will be needed to make those young people your right-hand coöperators.

5. In the last place, I would suggest something which I believe to be a most valuable help; yet I fear it will be considered an innovation, although it is such only in form. *Have a week's mission* in your parish, with the primary purpose of arousing enthusiasm in favor of your Sunday School. Instead of the stereotyped subjects treated in those revivals, let there be sermons on the duties of parents toward their children, the characteristics of the ideal Christian home, the Catholic layman's need of fuller knowledge, deeper love, and more faithful practice of his religion. His mission, opportunities, possibilities should be expounded, illustrated, urged and enforced with all possible earnestness and zeal. Then the means of forming an ideal Christian manhood and womanhood

should be developed—the Sunday School, home training, religious societies, Catholic literature, etc. Lastly, the mission should end with some impassioned appeals to the young people of the parish, rousing them to enthusiastic interest and coöperation in Sunday School work.

I must add, however, that the results of the mission will not be permanent, unless a well-chosen collection of Catholic books be introduced into every home in the parish. But of this I will speak hereafter in connection with the home training of children.

When a director has overcome the reluctance of young people to teach in the Sunday School, he will have next to dissipate their distrust in their intellectual fitness. For this purpose, he may assure them that what he looks for primarily in them is the moral qualities which will be treated of in the next chapter. As to fitness, it will grow with exercise. In the beginning, they will be asked to do little more than hear the lesson and explain a few hard words. Afterwards, they will add a simple paraphrase, then give an example or illustration to fix the truth in the imagination, and

so proceed to touch the feelings and influence the will. But all this is to be done by slow degrees—becoming masters, by months of practice, in each form, before ascending to a higher. This gradation will be an inducement to them to begin; after which, the trouble will be to hold them back and check their tendency to sermonize.

It is much more difficult to procure male than female teachers for a Sunday School. Young men are, I believe, as religious-minded as young women; and if it were not for the influence of the set to which they belong, they would cheerfully coöperate with their pastor in this or any other work of his. And right hearty workers they are—God bless them. But they are too much afraid of the railery of their companions. They would willingly sacrifice two or three hours weekly in church work, provided Brown, Jones and Robinson could be hoodwinked, so as not to see it or know of it. Well; the best thing for a director to do, is to bring Brown, Jones and Robinson into the work; for, practically, it must be all or none.

And such young men, once secured for teaching, will exercise wonderful influence over boys, who

are invariably captivated by simple, straightforward manliness in those who educate them. The boys' Perseverance class, in particular, should, if at all possible, have male teachers.

This class should be the best recruiting-ground for Sunday School teachers. Surely the training will be somewhat to blame, if the graduates from it are not competent and willing to communicate to others the instructions they have received. Without relying very confidently on this source of supply, a wise director will from time to time place before the class the motives for instructing "many to justice."

In his efforts to persuade young people to join his Sunday School, a director will find it extremely useful to have on hand several motives, by the discreet use of which he may hope to overcome the apathy or disinclination of the individual he is addressing. A few of those motives I give here; but I leave it to the director himself to supply the local coloring and the earnest enforcement, necessary to make them effective.

1. Teaching in a Sunday School is a spiritual work of mercy, most dear to the Sacred Heart of



our Divine Saviour. "They brought to Him young children, that He might touch them. And the disciples rebuked those that brought them. Whom when Jesus saw, He was much displeased, and saith to them: Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." (Mark x, 13, 14.)

2. A Sunday School teacher promotes very effectually the welfare of the Church. For one of the Church's worst enemies is the ignorant, nominal Catholic; as one of her greatest helps is an educated, religious-minded laity. She fears little from without, if within she find loyalty, knowledge, zeal, and docility.

3. Modern society is, at the root, a creation of the Catholic Church; and it can be saved from disruption only by intelligent, faithful adherence to Catholic principles and Catholic teaching. This adherence must begin in earliest childhood and become closer and more deeply rooted year by year. It is the sublime privilege of the Catholic mother and, with her, of the Sunday School teacher to instil into the young soul the germs of those divine truths which are at the same time the basis

and bond of human society. Who, then, is a greater benefactor of our race than the Catholic parent and the Catholic teacher?

4. The world applauds and rewards him who saves a human life. And deservedly; for our common kinship makes human life precious to us. But, to the eyes of faith, how little is the saving of the body from physical death, compared to the saving of the soul from the eternal death of sin? Yet this higher salvation is what the Catholic teacher helps to secure for the child committed to him.

5. Work faithfully done rewards itself in the glow of pleasure, the satisfaction, the self-approbation and happiness which the thought of it produces. And the reward is in proportion to the nobility, the usefulness, and the difficulty of the work. No one realizes this better than the teacher, when, returned from Sunday School, he takes his well-earned rest after his hour's well-prepared, well-executed work with his class.

6. A teacher's own intellectual and spiritual nature is wonderfully enriched and perfected by his

efforts to stamp on the souls of others an intellectual and spiritual impression of divine truth.

7. The supernatural reward in store for the faithful, persevering teacher in the Sunday School is inconceivably great. It is a share in the reward of the apostle and the missionary who have baptized the world in the Blood of the Lamb. "They that are learned shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that instruct many to justice, as stars for all eternity." (Daniel xii, 3.)

## CHAPTER VI

### THE TEACHERS: THEIR QUALIFICATIONS

There is a secondary but most important object attained by securing as many teachers as possible for the Sunday School. It is, the spiritual good of the teachers themselves. They learn by teaching. They must have a comprehensive knowledge of religion, to be able to impart it to others. They must love divine truth, when they inspire love for it. They must be trained, to train. A director will never lose sight of this indirect result of the Sunday School on his assistants. He will not speak of it, as it is best to let it develop of itself; but all his instructions at the weekly meetings will be influenced and colored by it.

In view of this secondary object, he will not insist at the start on the actual possession of the following qualifications. All he will ask is the disposition and earnest desire to acquire them—

and this, not spasmodically, but slowly and patiently, as one learns an art or a trade.

I do not speak here of all the *desirable* qualifications of a Sunday School teacher, as they include all the habits and qualities of one ideally perfect. It is more practical to confine our attention to the minimum of necessary moral and intellectual equipment; and this I place in: good character; goodwill; docility; even temper; ability to keep order; practical knowledge of religion; good elementary education; and love of children. I say nothing about good sense, gravity, propriety of dress, refined habits, and other obvious requirements.

1. *Good character.* We cannot expect saints for teachers; neither are we to confine ourselves to those young people who have acquired a local character for piety. Moreover, it would be uncharitable and cruel to exclude certain individuals who are "talked about," without any definite, proven charges against them. These we must stand by, as long as they are not otherwise unworthy or incompetent—and this, at the risk of losing some immaculate candidates who may refuse to work

with them. The line, of course, has to be drawn somewhere; and I would draw it solely at public scandal, which is, of course, to be excluded. This being very rare, thank God, the requirement of good example need not give us any trouble. Let us receive the average young man or woman who comes to us, close our eyes to their failings, and make the best of them. At the same time, for their future guidance, we must point out to their good sense the necessity of standing well with their pupils—of winning their respect and esteem along with their love.

2. *Goodwill.* Of all the qualifications of a teacher, this I consider the most necessary. If it does not include the others, it includes the desire and resolve to acquire them, and, therefore, the desire and resolve of removing the obstacles and using the means to their acquisition. Hence, generally speaking, goodwill is the test of an efficient teacher.

But the goodwill must not be a mere sentiment that dies out at the sight of solid, steady work. It must be accompanied with grit and courage and patience. It must not be appalled by failure or

disappointment or necessary correction. It must rise above jealousy and envy, be satisfied with the lowest place, and feel it a privilege and an honor to be connected in any way with Sunday School work.

In goodwill, the motive is the most important element. This should not be grounded on transitory considerations, such as personal regard for the pastor, the presence of another teacher, affection for one or other of the pupils, etc. Upright natural motives, indeed, may strengthen goodwill; and there is no obligation of excluding them, provided they be kept secondary to one that is higher and more permanent. Needless to say, this should be supernatural.

3. *Docility.* Every teacher must recognize that it is the exclusive office of the director to determine the matter to be taught in each class and the method in which it is to be taught.

(a) The matter of a lesson is not to be considered fully taught, unless it be impressed on the intellect, memory, imagination, feelings, and will. However, as I have mentioned already, the teacher is to take these grades successively, and

he is to be satisfied with doing the fundamental work (explanation and memorizing), until the director judges him capable of ascending higher. Here arises the necessity of docility; for some are apt to cling tenaciously to the traditional memorizing of the lesson and not go beyond it, while others are liable to run into the opposite extreme, and seek to make their work wholly illustrative or emotional. Besides, docility is required to take correction in a kindly spirit. Every lesson must add something to the child's love of religion and must facilitate the practice of it. The purpose of doing this must be a "working idea" in the teacher's mind; and it must manifest itself in all his relations with his class. When he forgets himself and deals harshly with them, he must receive with docility the director's kindly-worded reprimand, and not fly into a passion or seek to justify his conduct.

(b) Method of teaching. This is to be primarily synthetic. God has spoken to the world, and we accept His word without questioning. The truths revealed in it are to us as first principles that neither need nor are capable of proof. Believ-



ing them by the help of Divine grace, we make them the antecedent of those practical conclusions on which Christian life is based. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed." These words of Jesus Christ are the justification of the traditional synthetic method by which the Church fulfills her office of catechetical instruction and training. She does not undertake to explain the mysteries of revelation as natural truths are explained in the class-room: she tells the child emphatically that they cannot be explained to the satisfaction of reason; because they belong to a higher region of thought than ordinary human knowledge.

Yet the analytical method holds an important though secondary place in all religious teaching. A truth of faith cannot be apprehended without the apprehension of its terms; and as these are generally abstract, we teach their meaning by concrete terms familiar to the child. So, too, a fact of revelation is brought home by an analogous fact of everyday experience.

Teachers will sometimes show lack of docility in preparing their Sunday School work. They

will come irregularly to the weekly meetings; or when they come, they will idle their time and distract others. The director's prudence will guide him in dealing with such people. At first, he will be very gentle and patient with them, giving their good sense an opportunity of bringing them into line with the others; but if they show no sign of improvement, the interest of the school will oblige him to use kindly pressure imperceptibly tightening around them until it begins to tell. After this, they may be expected either to change for the better or to leave.

4. *Even temper.* This qualification does not mean that the temper should be always the same, but that the teacher should have it under perfect control and that it should be held on a level with the occasion and circumstances.

One who cannot command his temper should not be a teacher. Children will not respect him, will not learn well for him, will not keep order for him—on the contrary, will do many things purposely to annoy him. His influence is prejudicial to the formation of Christian character in his pupils; for meekness and self-control are essential ele-

ments of it, and his example draws in an opposite direction.

An even temper does not imply a dead temper. It would help to spoil children, if the teacher's placidity gave them to understand that he was indifferent to what they did, said, or learned in class. There is useful moral training in letting a disorderly, stubborn, or idle child see at once what the teacher thinks and feels about it. The expression of the thought and feeling may be made as clearly and forcibly by a look or a movement of the hand (not by a blow), as by word; but it should be characterized by mildness and self-restraint.

5. *Ability to keep order.* This depends much on the preceding qualification, and the two are generally found combined. It depends still more on the teacher's power of inspiring interest; for an interested class will itself enforce order on the luckless member who will attempt to disturb it. If the Sunday School be held in the church, the children should be impressed from the start with the sacredness of the place, and be given very emphatically to understand that no wilful levity

shall be tolerated. When this becomes the uniform attitude of the teachers, they will have little trouble in maintaining order. Should the school not be held in the church, the teacher will be put more on his mettle; but firmness and tact, combined with gentleness and patience, will eventually overcome the most stubborn resistance.

6. *Practical knowledge of religion.* In this qualification is implied a substantial knowledge of the catechism, not merely as a system of religious ideas, but as the authoritative spiritual and moral guide of the soul. It implies also a conviction of the necessity and blessings of religious instruction and training, from which conviction springs the desire of coöperating in the work.

A director, without formal examination, will endeavor to find out how much the candidate knows about the catechism; and where he finds sincere goodwill, joined to a desire of re-learning what has been forgotten, he will make liberal allowance for hazy religious knowledge. Indeed, he should never dismiss anyone on account of ignorance; because although he may not be able to engage such a one as a teacher, he can make him registrar or time-

keeper, meanwhile insisting on his learning his religion more thoroughly.

7. *Good elementary education.* This requirement needs no comment. Children would be apt to despise a teacher who could not speak the vernacular correctly. To enable him to do this, an elementary education ought to be sufficient.

8. *Love of children.* It is the source of that goodwill of which I have already spoken. I have left it for last, to give it a climax-position, on account of its supreme importance. The teacher who loves the children of his class will be loved by them in turn; they will obey him cheerfully; they will do nothing deliberately to give him annoyance; they will overlook or excuse failings in him that would repel or disgust them in others. In one word, his influence over them is unbounded. Moreover, this love will sustain him more than any other motive in the arduous work of preparation for teaching. It will make him obedient, docile, eager for counsel, thankful for correction. It will include most of the other qualifications, or, at least, inspire the determination to acquire

them. In fine, it is the strongest incentive to, as well as the surest guarantee of, perseverance.

This love of children is a growth, the root of which is the natural love we all feel for the young and innocent. Of all the phases of life, childhood is the most beautiful. It is the only realization we ever meet of that world-old dream of humanity—the Golden Age. But although in its human form it should be retained and treasured as a divine gift, it has to be supernaturalized, or it will avail but little in the Sunday School. A child is a ward of Jesus Christ, an object of tenderest affection to Him, an earthly symbol and memento of His Father's court. It is still clothed in its baptismal robe,—the fruit of His Passion; it partakes of His own Divine Nature by sanctifying grace, and by virtue of its adoption it is called one day to share in His glory and happiness. A child, then, has more than the fresh flower-like beauty of opening life to draw our hearts to it. For this, indeed, we shall always love it; but we shall love it still more, because Jesus Christ loves it with such a special love, because He bids us to love it and to be gentle and reverent toward it,

because of its nearness to God, its likeness to God, its revelation of God.

The more a teacher grows in this supernatural love of his pupils, the better and more permanent work he will do. Yet a director will keep in mind that it is a growth; and he will not look for much manifestation of it, at first, in his assistants. He will be satisfied to find in them a healthy human sympathy with child-life, and a strong interest in its education and training. This sympathy and interest he will try to spiritualize by motives of faith and divine charity,—but cautiously and indirectly, so as not to create alarm or discouragement.

Children are quick to perceive and resent any simulation of love for them. You must be sincere with them, or you will never win their confidence or affection. Hence, those who are indifferent to them and who undertake Sunday School work chiefly from a sense of duty, will never make good teachers.

A teacher's love of his pupils is liable to one great danger—partiality, or favoritism. Few things are more hurtful to a class than this. It

arouses resentful feelings in the unfavored, prevents their progress, and makes the school odious to them. A director must stamp it out at any cost.

Finally, a teacher must never allow affection for his class to induce him to take side with it against the administration of the school. To express disapprobation of any decision or arrangement of the director would be most harmful to discipline; and to do this for sake of popularity, would manifest a weakness of character of which the children would very quickly take advantage.



## CHAPTER VII

### INSTRUCTION OF TEACHERS

Having secured as many teachers as the parish will supply, the director sets about instructing them in their work. He meets them once or twice a week, gives them a simple, informal "talk" on what they will have to do, shows them how to prepare a lesson for teaching, and gets each in turn to give one to the others. I give an outline of matter for those talks, not for the guidance of the director, but for the benefit of young teachers, who, by this means, will be enabled better to assimilate and practise the instructions given at the meetings.

1. There are three agencies at the command of every teacher: prayer; example; and teaching. Of these the first two are the most necessary and the most potent. Prayer especially should always form part of our preparation for teaching.

2. To "teach" is to make another know and

remember something of which he was previously ignorant. I say "remember," because the knowledge communicated should be impressed on the memory as well as on the understanding. Nor is the work of teaching complete, if the person taught is not able to express the knowledge received. It follows from this, that there is no teaching in a Sunday School, unless the child is made to know and enabled to carry away with it some spiritual idea or truth that it did not know before.

3. If religion were an abstract or speculative science, the knowledge of its truths would satisfy the end of teaching it. But it is not, primarily, abstract or speculative,—it is action, work, practical, everyday duty; it is an art, demanding, indeed, knowledge for its foundation, but above this, training, exercise, skill. Now, as no one thinks of learning an art, solely or chiefly by learning the theoretic principles of it, so, no one should think of learning religion, by merely learning the truths which are its groundwork. Practical religion is the supplement of the speculative truths taught in the catechism, and should not be separated from them.

“As the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.” James ii, 26.

4. The object of all Sunday School work is threefold: the knowledge of religion; the love of religion; and the practice of religion. Hence, teachers are to be disabused of the old error, that *hearing* a catechism-recitation is *teaching* catechism. It is not teaching at all; and, certainly, not teaching religion.

5. Is it to be inferred from what has been here said, that the speculative truths taught in the catechism are of secondary importance? Certainly not, any more than the foundation of a house is secondary to the house erected on it. Besides, the speculative truths of faith have a distinct and independent value, inasmuch as they inform and perfect the intellect.

6. It is of prime importance that teachers should inspire their pupils with a love of religion; for, although it is true that we love only what we know, there is truth also in the apparent paradox, that “we know only what we love.” If children love religion in general as something good and beautiful and useful, they will be drawn to study

it with more zest and interest, than if it were indifferent to them. Moreover, the practice of religion under coercion and constraint produces no permanent habit in the soul. Experience shows us that when the pressure is removed, the practice is very soon dropped—often with a swing of the soul toward infidelity and vice. Such, then, is not the knowledge or practice of religion that the Sunday School must aim at. The child must be led to look on it as so beneficial and necessary, that the spiritual work it enjoins would be performed, though there were not a teacher or a superior within a thousand miles of it.

7. As to the religious training of children, much cannot be done in the Sunday School, as the home is the chief training-ground for it, under the direction and supervision of their parents. Still something can be done in the Sunday School also; for example: respect for the House of God; faith in the Most Holy Eucharist; truthfulness; mutual courtesy and kindness; obedience; self-control; modesty; helpfulness; forgiveness of injuries; order; politeness, etc. Our principal training-work, however, consists in the Daily Practice (to be ex-

plained hereafter), and in the pious acts, corresponding with the lesson taught, which will be suggested by the teacher.

8. Before instructing teachers in the details of their work, it is most useful to give them a definite idea of the equipment and endowments of a pupil on finishing the Sunday School course; and each teacher should know how much the work of his class is to contribute to that object. The following is a summary of the acquirements of a graduate from the Perseverance class:

A. *The knowledge of religion:* (a) A thorough knowledge of the catechism; (b) General knowledge of the Bible—the number, authorship, inspiration, and subjects of the books; (c) Bible history—old and New Testaments; (d) The Life of our Divine Lord—summary of His teaching, His miracles, parables, prophecies; (e) Outlines of Church history, including that of our country and state; (f) Knowledge of the ceremonies of the Mass and the Sacraments, of the feasts of the ecclesiastical year, of the chief popular devotions.

B. *The love of religion.* As this, like everything else connected with man's spiritual life, is a

growth, all we can expect is hopeful signs of its future development in children. Those signs should manifest themselves in the following directions: (a) Sincere attachment to the Church, and sympathetic interest in her apostolic work all over the world, especially in one's own country, diocese, and parish; (b) Ability and eagerness to defend religion; (c) Earnestness in helping and instructing honest searchers after divine truth; (d) Cordial appreciation of the devotional life of the Church; (e) Admiration for those men and women of the past whose lives were an embodiment of the highest teaching of the Gospel; (f) A taste for spiritual reading and Catholic literature; (g) Liberal coöperation with Catholic charities.

C. The practice of religion. (a) Morning and night prayers; (b) Mass, sermon, and evening service on Sundays and holy days; (c) Monthly Confession and Communion; (d) Avoidance of unhealthy associations; (e) Membership in some church society; (f) Coöperation in parish work.

## CHAPTER VIII

### INSTRUCTION OF TEACHERS (*Continued*)

From the two preceding chapters teachers will form a good general idea of the qualifications they should bring to their work and of the main outlines of that work. (A) The qualifications are: good character; goodwill; docility; even temper; ability to keep order; practical knowledge of religion; good elementary education; and love of children. (B) As to the main outlines of their work, they should be thoroughly impressed with these fundamental truths: (a) Prayer and example are at least as necessary as teaching; (b) There is no teaching without learning; (c) Religion is not taught adequately, unless we inspire love for it and train in the practice of it; (d) Teachers should keep clearly before them the definite results aimed at by the Sunday School.

The director will next describe in detail the best method of bringing home to the souls of children

the adequate knowledge of a revealed truth. This method consists: (1) in making the truth understood; (2) in impressing it on the memory; (3) in picturing it to the imagination; (4) in making it personal and bringing it in touch with the emotions; and (5) in applying it for the guidance of life and conduct.

In the present chapter I will confine myself to the first two of these processes—the understanding and the memorizing of the truth.

1. *The apprehension of the truth.* We teach children to apprehend a truth when we explain the words used in its enunciation and their connection. This last presents no difficulty, as the sentence-forms of the answers in the catechism are plain and intelligible when the word-meanings are understood.

What the knowledge of materials and tools is to a builder, word-meanings are to a child learning its religion. Every teacher knows how limited is a child's vocabulary; but not every teacher keeps the limitation in mind while instructing it. The language of the Church and of the catechism is largely abstract and technical. Many of the words



used are never heard in ordinary conversation; they are not found in secular class-books; nor are they employed by secular teachers; they do not touch on the narrow sphere of a child's home-life. Hence, it is an error to presume, that, because a pupil is in the seventh or eighth grade, it knows the meaning of the abstract or technical terms of the catechism. Whoever has to instruct the young, particularly in matters of religion, should presume on their knowing extremely little.

Teachers, then, must be impressed with the absolute necessity of explaining almost every presentive word used in the lesson taught, and explaining it in the child's vocabulary. Moreover, the explanation of the more important words should be illustrated by example. Take for instance the word *Redemption* which occurs in the tenth lesson of the catechism. The teacher gives its meaning: the freeing or delivering of a person from bondage. This definition may be clear enough; but on account of its importance he should make it still clearer by giving the example of a prisoner or slave set at liberty by the payment of a sum of money or other means. If such illustra-

tions be given in the form of stories, they will secure the interest and attention of the class, and help to make the Sunday School very attractive.

Word-meanings have not only to be brought home to the child's understanding; they have also to be stamped on its memory. This is done by repetition. Let the teacher be instructed never to tire of repetition. Children take kindly to it, because it does not entail much mental work; and it is the only means of making acquired knowledge a permanent possession.

One of the chief difficulties encountered by children in learning religion is the frequent use of abstract words. Many of these may be explained by other abstract terms familiar to everyone; for example, the word *Redemption*. Most of them, however, have no corresponding synonyms, intelligible to children. In such case I would recommend that those words be explained by the concrete forms from which they are taken. Thus, in explaining the Incarnation, I would speak of the Incarnate God, or, God made flesh—become man for us. Such concrete expressions are easily un-

derstood, and they imprint a definite image on the imagination.

Without forestalling what I have to say on the affective element in teaching, I would mention here, that no meaning of an emotional word is adequate that does not include some development of the feeling suggested by it. The sight of human blood fresh from an open wound excites a painful feeling in most people; but this feeling would be lost in overwhelming gratitude, if I realized that the blood was shed to save me from death. Has the mention of the Blood of Jesus Christ, of His Scourging, His Crowning with Thorns, His Five Wounds, any similar effect on me? When I say, "my Father," the idea is suffused with emotion; but when I say, "Our Father who art in Heaven," the mental picture is as colorless as a photograph. Words used in the teaching of religion should be painted in color—not outlined in black and white.

When the hard words of an answer in the lesson have been explained, the teacher gives the answer in simpler form; in other words, he paraphrases it. In doing this, he places the explained and the explanatory word side by side; or if he

has made a concrete presentment of the answer, he points out the connection between the abstract form and the corresponding form of the paraphrase.

2. *Impression of the truth on the memory.* This is something altogether distinct from the memorizing of the lesson. It is work to be done with the child as a necessary part of the explanation of the next Sunday's lesson. The idea is, to explain the meaning of each answer, to impress that meaning (not necessarily the words) on the child's memory, and then to give a fuller explanation, through the imagination, feelings, and will, of the central truth of the lesson, usually indicated by the heading.

The best and, perhaps, the only method of impressing a truth on the memory of a child is, to question often and to repeat often. The latter is analogous to the repeated blows of a hammer; it drives the truth home. The former impresses the truth by the effort the child makes to express it.

## CHAPTER IX

### INSTRUCTION OF TEACHERS (*Continued*)

A teacher will have done much when he has impressed a truth on the intellect and the memory of a child. For a considerable time he may not be able to do any more; and if so, he should be content to strive for perfection within the sphere of the work he can do. Yet the knowledge he thus conveys is merely intellectual. It does not touch the imagination, the feelings, the heart and will—it is not spiritual knowledge,—it is not the adequate presentment of Christian faith as the root-principle of Christian life. “My just one liveth by faith.”

The Sunday School teacher should fit himself to give this fuller and deeper spiritual knowledge; and the method of giving it, as I have already pointed out, is: (1) to represent it to the imagination, (2) to make it personal and to bring it in touch with the emotions, and (3) to give it practical ap-

plication by an act of the will (a resolution or a prayer).

1. *To represent a truth to the imagination.* This is done in different ways according to the character of the truth.

(a) Give the fundamental truths in the form of facts, as they are laid down in the Bible. Creation, Original Sin, the Incarnation, Nativity, Life and Death of Jesus Christ, also His Resurrection and Ascension, as well as the Descent of the Holy Ghost—all these truths, if given in the narrative form of Sacred Scripture, will imprint very vivid and definite pictures of them on the soul.

(b) The nature and attributes of God, grace, prayer, virtue, vice, and, generally, all other abstract truths, are to be brought home to the imagination by comparisons. A friend making us a present illustrates God's giving us all things; a mother helping her child with its lessons, giving it a new dress, granting something it asks, displeased with something it has done—these comparisons give body and shape to the abstract ideas of grace, actual and habitual, prayer, and sin. Teachers, of course, will use for illustrative pur-

poses only objects, facts, and truths familiar to children.

(c) The Sacraments, being external actions, are easily described to children. I would, however, give the principal details of the administration of each, before pointing out its essential elements (matter and form). Besides, I would explain the Sacraments in general, only after I had explained them separately. The Sacramentals should be described in a similar manner.

(d) To stamp the Commandments on a child's imagination, let the teacher take an ideal Christian home, describe the actions of parents, children and servants, and show how those actions fulfil the Commandments of God and of the Church.

(e) Narrative and verbal descriptions are not wholly sufficient to impress a truth vividly on the imagination. The eye as well as the ear of the child should be enlisted to form the impression. Hence, pictures, especially those that are colored, are most valuable helps to a teacher in this part of his work.

2. *To make a truth personal and bring it in touch with the emotions.* A verbal or pictorial

representation of a truth will arouse some elementary emotions in a child; but they will be transitory and ineffectual without the direction and enforcement of the teacher.

A revealed truth, no matter how definitely pictured in the imagination, will not arouse any keen emotions unless it be made personal to the child. Therefore the teacher must accustom the child to think of the revealed truth or fact as intended for it personally. "I live," writes St. Paul to the Galatians, "in the faith of the Son of God, who loved *me*, and delivered himself for *me*." Without this personal appropriation of the truth learned, emotion will remain sentiment, and will never develop into desire and resolution.

The principal emotions which a teacher may aim at exciting in a child are the following: liking and disliking; happiness and sorrow; hope and fear; love and hatred; self-respect and shame; courage and dread; joy and pain; desire and aversion; pity and contempt. Besides these, there are, admiration, awe, horror, enthusiasm, gratitude, etc. For a teacher to excite any emotion, the first thing necessary is, that he himself be genuinely



moved by the truth, in the direction in which he would move the child. Secondly, he must aim at exciting but one emotion, and that the most directly suggested by the truth. Thirdly, he asks the child to fancy itself in the scene described or depicted, not as a looker on but as an agent or participator, and to think of the scene itself as a reality, happening not a long time ago nor a long way off, but here and now. "What would you feel and think," he asks the child, "if you were so placed? . . . Should you not feel and think the same now? for is not this truth revealed for you personally?" Fourthly, to prolong and deepen the emotion, he repeats what he has already said about it. Fifthly, he asks the class to join in a short prayer, that the impression made may grow into desire and resolution.

For example take the Goodness of God. This includes the Fulness of being, infinite Holiness, and infinite Kindness. This last form of the Attribute is the one which the teacher will try to bring home to the child's imagination and feelings. He will say: "A very kind friend has been sending you presents for a long time. Some of them have

come through your parents; but most have been given you by himself directly, although you did not know it. He is always very near you, and he loves you very much, and he desires you to love him in return. (Don't you think he deserves it?) He is ever so patient; and when you do something that displeases him, he does not punish you as he might; but he waits until you are truly sorry, when he forgives you and takes your word that you will not again give him pain. (Does not your heart warm to such a friend?) He is very great and strong and powerful; and he lives in a magnificent palace where all his friends are exceedingly happy, because he is so kind to them and gives them every thing they can desire. After some years he intends to take you there, and then you will see him for the first time, and you will live with him and his friends, full of all joy and happiness for ever. Now, you have been guessing who that kind, good friend is; and I am sure you have guessed right. It is God. Is he not good? . . . Do you not feel grateful and thankful to Him? . . . Should you not do something for Him in return? . . . Do you think of anything you can do to give Him

great pleasure? . . . Let us ask His help to be kind to every one around us. . . .”

Such abstractions as sin, virtue, grace, prayer, etc., may be brought in touch with the emotions in the following manner. They are, first, put in concrete form—a sinner, a good child, a holy child, a child that says its prayers, etc. Next, the attribute is made specific:—for sin you take lying; for virtue, purity; for grace, the inspiration to be kind and gentle with brothers and sisters; etc. Lastly, the person possessing these qualities is described vividly and minutely, and the child is asked to imagine himself such a person. How would he feel to be distrusted and scorned by every one as a liar? . . .

3. *To give practical application to a truth by an act of the will.* Theology treats divine truth in an impersonal way; and there has been a strong tendency to teach the catechism in a similar manner, making children *hearers* of the law, indeed, but taking no heed of their becoming *doers* of it. Under stress of adverse circumstances, this is sometimes inevitable; and in such circumstances it has been invariably found that the Holy Ghost supplied for

the practical moral training that the pastor could not give. In normal conditions, however, Church history teaches, that unless children's knowledge of their religion be made the groundwork and the motive of their practice of it, an abundant crop of ignorance, vice and superstition will be the result—the mournful heritage of the next generation. I am profoundly convinced, then, that children ought to be trained in the practical application of the principal truths they learn in the catechism, for the regulation of each one's life and conduct. The lessons on the Sacraments and Commandments easily suggest this application; but it is *the doctrinal foundation* of the Sacraments and Commandments, especially the Incarnation of God for us, that we have, above all things else, to bring home to the *hearts* of our young people.

It is not practicable to urge on a child more than a few external practices in any one lesson. Therefore, although each truth taught and impressed on the memory should, as far as possible, be brought home to the imagination and feelings, not more than one or two at a time ought to be made formally directive of external conduct.

The practical lesson should be adapted to child-life; and it should be easily deducible from the truth explained. The following are some practices that a teacher may draw frequently from the lessons: a reverent attitude toward God and holy things; prayer, Mass, and the Sacraments; respect for the authority of pastor, parents, and teachers; cheerfulness, help and obedience in the home; loving kindness to brothers and sisters; truth; honesty; temperance; purity; trustworthiness; gentleness with everything weak or helpless.

The oftener these lessons are repeated, the better. Occasionally, too, they should be given all together, as the chief characteristics of a boy or girl.

To draw a practical conclusion and persuade a child to it, the teacher proceeds somewhat in this manner. Every emotion has an element of desire or repulsion in it. (For convenience' sake, I speak here only of the pleasurable emotions, as those of the opposite kind are developed similarly.) When we feel something to be good, beautiful, useful, conducive to our happiness, we instinctively begin to desire it, if we think it at all attainable.

Such desire grows rapidly into a craving or longing; and this becomes all the more urgent and persistent, the longer the object is kept before the eyes or the imagination, and the more fully the want of it is allowed to take possession of the soul. Hence, the teacher will use the different forms of repetition, to prolong the emotional glow which his words have created; and at the same time he will suggest the practical resolution.

As the mental excitement subsides, the child will begin to feel a reaction setting in, opposed to the resolution. This reaction the teacher will meet, by answering objections and removing difficulties, before they have acquired strength and definiteness. He then says with the class a short impromptu prayer for grace to keep the resolution, and leaves the rest to the working of grace.

## CHAPTER X

### RUDIMENTARY MORAL TRAINING

There are some natural habits underlying the practice of religion in which children should be trained. A wise teacher will lose no opportunity of developing them, as far as his limited supervision permits. However, the well-ordered Christian home is the best training-ground for them.

The first of those habits is self-control, or, its practical equivalent, self-denial. It is intimately connected with the spirit of religion; and the necessity of it is one of the first convictions forced on the dawning intelligence of a child. Yet, it is a necessity against which most of us maintain a life-long warfare.

There can be no training in self-control where the child has everything its own way, is thwarted in no inclination, and finds those around it anxious to gratify its every whim. This is no preparation for the hard battle of life, and it certainly does not

dispose the young for the acceptance and practice of *vital* religion. The Sunday School teacher must, therefore, prepare the ground for his future work by showing the beauty, the good, the nobility, the material advantages, the necessity of self-control. He must also recognize and praise every manifestation of it in individual members of his class. A child comes regularly and punctually to Sunday School; it has always memorized its lessons; it is docile and attentive; it gives no trouble. Such a child shows a large amount of self-control, and the teacher who does not manifest his approval fails in an important duty. Another child comes late and irregularly, and scarcely ever knows its lesson. What is to be done in such a case? Punish? No; I should rather advise recognition of the self-denial manifested in the child's coming at all, with encouragement to come more regularly. It is probable that this child gets too much of its own way at home; that, in consequence, its self-will has been growing without check; and that in coming on the present occasion it has done as much violence to its natural inclination as was done by the other in coming every Sunday. If mild, per-



suasive measures be found ineffectual for training a child in self-control, increasing pressure must be brought to bear on it; but so gently, that the child will not be made reckless or led to consider itself a "black sheep."

Respect for the authority of parents, pastor and teachers is another rudimentary moral habit that has to be ingrained in children by training and instruction. They instinctively recognize their own weakness and other limitations, and are disposed to bow to the authority of those over them, as they are disposed to lean on their strength and to be guided by their knowledge and experience. The authority, however, must be wisely and equitably administered; and while its touch on the child's life should be generally light and, as far as may be, pleasurable, it should be always perceptible as a kind, strong guiding influence.

Truthfulness does not invariably characterize all children attending the Sunday School; so we sometimes find that we have been building a superstructure of religion and pious practices on a foundation of little liars. The home is primarily to blame; but we, too, are not without fault in

neglecting to use the most drastic means, if necessary, to crush out lying from the souls into which we are pouring divine truth. An untruth is such an easy and obvious way out of a difficulty, that children are tempted to have recourse to it from a very early age. And the temptation becomes very much stronger, if an undetected lie has once saved them from impending punishment. Hence, it is wise and by no means unjust to presume on so much of this habit existing in our class as to make it a duty to speak often and strongly against it.

A teacher has many opportunities of training his class in the habit of truth-telling. If a child, on being asked, why come so late, looks down and says nothing, it should be blamed, indeed, for irregularity, but commended for loving truth too much to invent an excuse. When some one holds up his hand, as a sign that he knows the answer to a given question, and it turns out that he knows nothing whatever about it, he should be told that one may be as guilty of a lie by a false sign as by an untrue word. Yet, I would give such a one credit for not knowing this, and acquit him of formal un-

truth; because children set a high value on the good opinion of their teacher, and will make a considerable sacrifice to retain it.

A child's love of truth should not be tested by asking it in the face of severe punishment: "Did you say that improper word?" "Did you break that window?" It is very rarely, too, that one child should be asked to give evidence against another. The inducement for getting the other off by a lie is too great.

Cultivate a sense of honor in children. Make it a feature of your class to feel and show a hearty loathing for all meanness, selfishness, and low deceit and cunning. Teach them to be ladies and gentlemen, not in the conventional sense of the words, but in the sense of self-respect, courtesy, thought for the feelings and claims of others, association with nothing vile, coarse or vicious. No doubt, there is danger of such self-respect developing into pride; but this danger will be removed by telling the child that the reason for self-respect is the dignity and value conferred on a soul by sanctifying grace, and not the worth of anything we are or have of ourselves.

The director will take heed that these rudimentary habits are given frequently for "Daily Practice." He will also keep as close a watch on the children's manners as on their morals; for manners and morals are very closely intertwined, and usually stand on the same level. Allowance, nevertheless, must be made for home influences.

It is needless to say, that I do not attach any supernatural value to those rudimentary habits that I have been recommending, unless they be influenced by motives of faith. But here I would caution the Sunday School authorities against a tendency which is by no means imaginary. It is that of drawing too sharp a line of demarcation between the natural and the supernatural, between home life and Sunday School life, between religion and domestic work. People, young and old, are only too apt to keep these things separate; and the consequence is, that the supernatural comes to be relegated to a very obscure narrow corner in men's lives. The Sunday School is bound to break down this wall of separation, to show that religion is as much in place by the fireside as it is in church, that God is worshipped by the service of a child

minding the baby for mother, as He is worshipped by night and morning prayers, that common household drudgery is often as acceptable to Heaven as fasting and prayer, that, although the love of God is a duty to be discharged by the heart and the tongue, it is also discharged by the hands, in doing faithfully the work of the hour. Let us teach by all means such truths as the Infallibility and the Indefectibility of the Church; but let us remember always that our chief duty is to bring together, to combine and blend the knowledge of the Church with the knowledge of common life, so that the one may be as familiar to us and form part of our daily thought and life as the other. To do this, we must often speak of the home and of homely things, and we must make a specialty of infusing religion into the most commonplace, matter-of-fact duties of children,—making it a living influence rather than a system of abstract ideas.

## CHAPTER XI

### GRADATION OF CLASSES

In some rural missions, zealous pastors, finding it impossible to procure sufficient teachers, adopt an alternative to the classification of children, which certainly has many advantages, and this in particular, that it impresses the essential truths and duties of religion on the minds and hearts of the young, at the same time that it revives the fading impression of them in the minds and hearts of the old. The Sunday School in those missions is conducted in the following manner :

Before the parochial Mass, some teachers mark the attendance and hear each child recite the catechism lesson. Then, as soon as the congregation is assembled, the pastor brings the whole school to the front of the altar and, vested in alb and stole, he explains to them and the people the lesson just recited, asking questions as he proceeds to keep up the attention of his hearers, and giving

them abundance of illustrations to make the matter explained intelligible and interesting to young and old. Each instruction has a practical conclusion sharply pointed and driven home with all the earnestness and vigor of a true priest of God. In this manner, the whole catechism is explained in the course of a year; after which the same work is repeated from the conviction that the catechism is all that can be taught well under the circumstances.—There is no Bible history, Life of Our Divine Lord, Church history or Liturgy, except what is introduced incidentally for illustration.

This plan is admirable where a better one is not practicable. It may be relied on with grace to turn out good Christians. But here in America we need something more—we need our people to be as intelligent as they are good, to know their religion as thoroughly as they practice it, to be able to convince others as fully as they are convinced themselves of its reasonableness, its truth, its divinity. Our people, with their lot cast in the midst of error and unbelief, must be accustomed to see in their religion a distinct form of life, divinely superadded to their natural, rational life;

they must be accustomed to regard it as a gift beyond all price, conditioned by their appreciating, safeguarding and developing it. Now, they have it dinned into their ears daily, that it is but a chimera, a dream, a human invention. What are we to do? Doubt its reality? Certainly not; the grace of faith makes us shrink from doubt as treason. Close our ears to those who would rob us of it? It is impossible: their voice is in the books we read, the society around us, the spirit of the time, the very air we breathe. What, then, are we to do? Simply what we would do with a gold piece which some one would snatch from us. We tighten our hold on it; we defend it; we secure it. In other words, we think of what the Christian life is to us, what it has done for us, what we should have been without it, what it promises to do for us. Then we strengthen our belief in it and our appreciation of it, by reviewing in a spirit of loyalty and gratitude the foundations of our faith; and, convinced of their impregnable strength and equipped with ample knowledge, we are prepared to lend a helping hand to earnest seekers, to bring



them into the light and life which we ourselves possess.

This fuller knowledge of religion has been always inculcated by the Church; for she recognizes that her worst enemy has ever been the ignorance of her own children. It has been always inculcated; but modern conditions of social life, especially in this country, make the acquisition of such knowledge an imperative duty of Catholics in our day. How is it to be acquired? Let adults consult their conscience and their pastor; but the young—the rising generation—can acquire it only in the Catholic school or, where there is none, in the Catholic Sunday School.

As the knowledge I speak of consists of a variety of subjects adapted to children from their sixth to their sixteenth year, it is evident that the course must be graded, and that the pastor must depend largely on lay help. No one instruction, no matter how simple, can be made equally intelligible and interesting to all children. They must be divided into classes, and the teaching must be so graded, that the knowledge imparted in one will be continued, amplified and added to in the next. In

this way, step by step, Sunday after Sunday, and year by year, the divine plan of Creation, Redemption, grace and salvation will be unfolded to the child, not as a dead page of human history, but as a present, living reality, touching each one's life, wound up with each one's eternal destiny, and appealing to each one's conscience for its uplifting and guidance.

From this course of instruction, education, and training in religion, the Church expects, through divine grace, a renewal of the face of the earth,—a stirring, an awakening, an energizing of Christian life, as if the souls of men were again agitated and fired by the rushing wind and the tongues of flame of the first Pentecost.

We shall follow the usual division of the Sunday School into five classes or grades: the Prayer class; the Confession class; the Communion class; the Confirmation class; and the Perseverance class. Each of these is divided according to sex, and therefore requires two teachers. If the attendance be very large, there should be corresponding subdivisions, as not more than ten or twelve children can be well taught by one person. Usually, how-

ever, where the attendance exceeds a hundred, there is a parochial school, and its grades are retained in the Sunday School.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE PRAYER CLASS

In this class are placed all children who cannot read the catechism, and who in consequence have to be taught orally. They are mostly under seven years of age, and they know their prayers very imperfectly, if they know them at all.

They know a multitude of miscellaneous things, which they have grouped under two distinct heads: things they like, and things they dislike. They learn eagerly and rapidly, but only in their own way—through the senses; and unless they be taught in this way, the little they learn in any other will be generally classed by them under the head of their dislikes.

Yet they make one exception—a most important one for the teacher to bear in mind: when they come to love him, they will try their best to learn whatever he teaches and to love whatever he loves or asks them to love. He is thus enabled to do a

vast deal more by influence than he could ever hope to do by mere words.

They have a very limited vocabulary; and, what is worse for the teacher, it is by no means the same in all. Besides, it is extremely difficult for grown up people to see objects flushed with deep emotional coloring, as they are seen and felt by children. Still, you must get over the difficulty as best you can; for they are disappointed and will shut you out from their confidence and love, if you do not share in their vivid estimate of things.

A few other peculiarities of theirs may be grouped together, as they are intimately connected. These are, their restlessness, their love of variety, and their short-lived interest in things brought under their notice. All these characteristics must be carefully noted and turned to account, in dealing with children generally, or the work done in any class will be more or less unsatisfactory; but in the Prayer class, it will border on failure.

Let the teacher introduce all the orderly movement he can into the children's work. Let him seem not to observe any restlessness of hands, feet,

tongues or eyes that does not interfere with others. Above all, let him vary, every two or three minutes, the subject taught. A picture is shown, examined, and described; easy questions are asked about it; a short Bible story, full of life and color, is told; some one is invited to repeat it; all stand up and with joined hands recite a little prayer or one of the acts in common; a verse of a hymn is memorized; a question in the Catechism is explained; then there is a practice in genuflection, the Sign of the Cross, etc., and the same varied exercises are gone over again.

Were it not for the disturbance of the other classes, I would have as much as possible of the work done by singing. But the airs sung should be simple and lively, and the words intelligible and interesting. And, next to music, I would teach this class (and others too), as much of their religion in rhymed verse as I possibly could. Such verse is easily committed to memory, and is much less liable than prose to be forgotten in after years. The catechism in verse would be a great boon to the Sunday School.

And now for the teaching. If you are wise,

you will *propose* to teach nothing. You will simply promise your little ones to give them a "good time" by showing them beautiful pictures and telling them pretty stories; and you will keep your word faithfully. The reason is, that they dislike the idea of serious work; and if under the form of play or any other form they like, the serious work be done by them, there is no necessity for giving it an obnoxious name. They shall be brought soon enough face to face with work as work: let them while they can, do it as play.

The work generally mapped out for them is, to memorize the Lord's Prayer, the Angelical Salutation, the Apostles' Creed, the Acts, grace before and after meals, and a few lessons in the catechism. Furthermore, they are to learn how to bless themselves, genuflect and take Holy Water devoutly.

But it is not the memorizing of prayers or the performance of devotional acts that a teacher should set before himself primarily in this class. The essential work to be done is to give the child an idea of prayer, a love of prayer, and a desire to practise prayer. Then before teaching any set form of words, the child must be told what the

words mean, to whom they are addressed, why we are to pray to Him, who composed the words. It is a beautiful arrangement of Divine Love, that prayer, the most necessary act of religion, can be understood and loved and practised as easily by a little child as by one of the saints. For what is it but speaking with our Father? It matters little what we say to Him, or where or how we say it. All He wants is our presence before Him, and the pouring out of our thoughts and wishes, and the confidence that we shall be heard and answered.

So, too, before showing how the sign of the Cross is to be made, the teacher must tell what it signifies, what intention is to be had in making it, why and how often it should be made. And similar instructions are to be given in regard to all other pious practices—genuflection, kneeling, taking Holy Water, etc. All this, I repeat, has to be done, not as a preliminary to the memory work, but as *the* work of the class, to which everything else is secondary. So much am I convinced of this, that I think it would be advisable to have no formal prayers at all learned by rote for the first



term. There really is little or no learning in the process; and as for the prayer in it—why, one hearty “Thank God” would be worth it all.

I have said that “the essential work to be done is to give the child an idea of prayer, a love of prayer, and a desire to practise prayer.” To say formally that you are aiming at this result, is neither necessary nor expedient. The aim must be “a working idea” in the teacher’s mind, resulting in the mind of the child in an unconscious growth. We do not tell young people that candy is sweet, nor do we bid them eat it. We give it to them, and they do the rest. Let us give them God by showing them His love and power and interest in them, by abundance of Bible stories; and they will go to Him almost spontaneously.—They will pray without knowing it.

Let us give them Bible stories as stories, not as illustrations of moral lessons. The stories, if wisely selected, will, with the help of a word or two, point their own moral. We should take for this class chiefly examples of the loving Goodness and the infinite Power of God. The terrible punish-

ments inflicted on sin should at most be glanced at, as they do not bear on the end in view.

The prayers, acts, and some few lessons of the catechism have to be memorized; but let the memorizing be, as much as possible, a labor of love. Explain the petition before you use the formal words that contain it. For example: "Once on a time a child knew that its father had wicked enemies. It saw that he was very sad; so it climbed on his knee and pulled away his hands from his face; and whispered to him: "Papa, I wish that people would be good to you and love you." This is what we say to God when we repeat the words: "Hallowed be Thy name."

At the end of the two years occupied in this class, besides the knowledge, love and practice of prayer, suited to their years, the children may be expected to be able to relate several stories from the old Testament, and in the New, all about the Birth and Childhood of our Divine Lord as well as many of His miracles and parables. They will also have memorized, but not mechanically, the prayers and acts already mentioned and also some simple hymns. (In this and the other classes, teachers

should insist on proper articulation, pronunciation, and emphasis.)

Frequent repetition and frequent questioning are necessary in all the classes, but particularly in this, on account of the inability of such young children to keep their minds fixed on any lengthy explanation.

When they come to memorize the Angelical Salutation, they should be taught and trained in a solid, tender devotion to our Blessed Lady. The director will see that growth in this devotion be a marked feature of the entire school.

Finally, the best teacher should be selected for this class—one who is able and willing to become a child with children.

I will now give in detail the work to be done in this class. The director will arrange it in whatever order he thinks best. He may consider the matter too much for the little ones; but the amount is of slight importance, compared with the thoroughness of the work; and this depends largely on repetition.

The time to be allotted to it is two years. These are divided into four terms, or sessions, with a min-

imum of twenty Sundays each, making eighty Sunday in all.

The special end of the class is to be kept in mind, as the teacher's "working idea."—It is the love of prayer.

The work of the class will be done under the following heads: I. Knowledge of religion; II. Love of religion (prayer); III. Practice of religion.

I. Knowledge of religion. This will include (1) Bible history, (2) prayers, (3) hymns (4) catechism, (5) Church history, and (6) liturgy.

#### I. BIBLE HISTORY

This is to be taught in stories, in which God is to be the central figure. Those revealing His Infinite Power and Goodness are to be preferred. No dates are to be given, and but few proper names introduced. Each story should be illustrated by a picture, and should be repeated by the children, at least twice. Of course, the teacher may introduce other anecdotes into the lesson—the more the better; but the Bible story is to stand out as a special feature of the day's lesson. It should be

either read from the Bible or given as nearly as possible in Bible words.

The following list of subjects is merely tentative.

1. Creation.	Genesis, I.
2. Paradise, Adam and Eve.	“ II, 8-25.
3. The Fall.	“ III.
4. The Deluge.	“ VI.,VII.,VIII.
5. The Tower of Babel.	“ XI., 1-9.
6. Sodom and Gomorrhah.	“ XIX., 10-29.
7. The Ten Plagues. (Selections.)	Exodus, VII. to XII.
8. Passage through the Red Sea.	“ XIV.
9. The Manna.	“ XVI.
10. The Ten Commandments.	“ XIX., XX.
11. Passage of the Jordan.	Josue, III.
12. Fall of Jericho.	“ VI.
13. David and Goliath.	I. Kings, XVII.
14. The Temple.	III. “ VI., VIII.
15. Elias and the false Prophets.	III. “ XVIII.
16. The Three Children in the Fiery Furnace.	Daniel, III.
17. The Handwriting on the Wall.	“ V.
18. Daniel in the Lions' Den.	“ XIV.
19. Death of Antiochus.	I. Machabees, VI.
20. The Seven Machabees.	II. “ VII.
21. Annunciation of the B. V. M.	Luke, I., 26-38.
22. Birth of Jesus Christ.	“ II., 1-20.
23. Presentation in the Temple.	“ II., 21-39.
24. Adoration of the Magi.	Math., II., 1-12.
25. Massacre of the Innocents.	“ II., 13-23.
26. Finding of Jesus in the Tem- ple.	Luke, II., 41-52.
27. The Wedding at Cana.	John, II., 1-10.
28. Draught of Fishes.	Luke, V., 1-10.

29. The Man Sick of the Palsy. Matt., IX., 1-7.
30. Cure of the Centurion's " VIII., 5-13.  
Servant.
31. Raising of the Widow's Son. Luke, VII., 11-16.
32. Miracle at the Pond Beth- John, V., 1-15.  
saida.
33. The Storm Calmed. Matt., VIII., 23-27.
34. Cure of the Daughter of " IX., 18-26.  
Jairus.
35. Miracle of the Loaves and John, VI., 1-15.  
Fishes.
36. Jesus Walks Upon the Sea. " VI., 16-21.
37. The Woman of Canaan. Matt., XV., 22-28.
38. The Deaf Mute. Mark, VII., 32-37.
39. The Transfiguration. Matt., XVII., 1-9.
40. Parable of the Unforgiving " XVIII., 23-35.  
Servant.
41. Parable of the Good Samaritan. Luke, X., 30-37.
42. Parable of the Prodigal Son. " XV., 11-32.
43. Parable of Dives and Lazarus. " XVI., 19-31.
44. Parable of the Pharisee and " XVIII., 10-14.  
the Publican.
45. Parable of the Laborers. Matt., XX., 1-16.
46. Jesus' Love of Little Children. Luke, XVIII., 15-17.
47. Raising of Lazarus. John, XI., 11-44.
48. Triumphal Procession of Matt., XXI., 1-14.  
Jesus.
49. Parable of the Marriage " XXII., 1-14.  
Feast.
50. Parable of the Wise and " XXV., 1-13.  
Foolish Virgins.
51. Parable of the Talents. " XXV., 14-30.
52. Description of the Last Judgment. " XXV., 31-46.

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|---|----------------------|
| 53. Story of Judas.                                 | Matt., XXVI., 47-50. |
|   | “ XXVII., 30.        |
| 54. The Agony in the Garden.                        | “ XXVI., 36-46.      |
| 55. Denial of St. Peter.                            | “ XXVI., 69-75.      |
| 56. The Scourging and Crowning<br>With Thorns.      | “ XXVII., 26-31.     |
| 57. The Crucifixion and Death.                      | “ XXVII., 31-60.     |
| 58. The Resurrection.                               | “ XXVIII., 1-10.     |
| 59. The Ascension.                                  | “ XXVIII., 16-20.    |
| 60. Descent of the Holy Ghost.                      | Acts, II., 1-11.     |
| 61. Story of Ananias and Saphira.                   | “ V., 1-11.          |
| 62. Conversion of St. Paul.                         | “ IX., 1-20.         |
| 63. St. Peter delivered from<br>Prison.             | “ XII., 1-17.        |
| 64. Voyage and Shipwreck of St.<br>Paul.            | “ XXVII.             |
| 65. Vision of the Throne of God.                    | Apoc., IV.           |
| 66. Vision of the Blessed.                          | “ VII.               |
| 67. “The Woman clothed with<br>the Sun.”            | “ XII.               |
| 68. “The Great White Throne.”                       | “ XX., 7-15.         |
| 69. “The New Jerusalem.”                            | “ XXI., 10-27.       |
| 70. “The Tree of Life.”                             | “ XXII., 1-7.        |
| 71. Repeat 1 Creation.                              |                      |
| 72. “ 2 The Fall.                                   |                      |
| 73. “ 21 Annunciation of the<br>B. V. M.            |                      |
| 74. “ 22 Birth of Jesus<br>Christ.                  |                      |
| 75. “ 46 Jesus' Love of Lit-<br>tle Children.       |                      |
| 76. “ 54 The Agony in the<br>Garden.                |                      |
| 77. “ 56 The Scourging and<br>Crowning with Thorns. |                      |

78. Repeat 57 The Crucifixion and  
Death.  
79. “ 58 The Resurrection.  
80. “ 59 The Ascension.

## 2. PRAYERS

The prayers to be explained and memorized in this class are the Our Father, Hail Mary, I believe, Glory be to the Father, grace before and after meals, and short acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition. All through the first term, let the teacher keep impressing on the child what prayer is—speaking with God, who is our Heavenly Father. Let short improvised prayers be suggested, such as: Our Father who art in Heaven, bless papa and mamma; bless my brothers and sisters; bless our pastor; etc. Then, without mentioning the “Our Father,” let each of the seven petitions be suitably explained (one at a time), and embodied in a little prayer. Lastly, let all the prayers be understood before they are memorized; let there be no hurry or crowding; and, above all, see that the child grows in goodwill and interest for what it is taught.



## 3. HYMNS

Four hymns—the first two stanzas in each—will be sufficient for this class. Before the child is permitted to sing them, they are to be explained and memorized. The following are recommended for their simplicity and devotional Spirit: “What lovely Infant can this be?” “Jesus, teach me how to pray;” “There is one true and only God;” “My God, how wonderful Thou art.”

## 4. CATECHISM

The explanation of the Creed will include much catechetical teaching. Let this be conveyed in the words of the catechism; and let those words be repeated by the child, until it becomes familiar with them. This will facilitate the memorizing of future lessons, and will save the pupil from the confusion of different forms of explanation.

In a similar way will be taught the four primary truths of religion: the Unity of God; the Trinity of God; the Incarnation and Death of the Second Divine Person; Heaven and Hell.

Finally, the Seven Sacraments and the Ten Com-

mandments will be summarily explained and memorized.

After the first year's work in this class, the children will receive some simple instructions from the pastor on Confession and the method of preparing for it and making it. It is best that those instructions should not form part of the class-course. They are not in a line with it; and a lay teacher cannot give them with the authority, impressiveness and unction of the divinely appointed minister of the Sacrament. (Similar preparatory instructions will be given to the Communion and Confirmation classes.)

#### 5. CHURCH HISTORY

The talks under this head can be made most interesting to the class; but they must be very elementary, and confined chiefly to the Church of our own day.

(a) Tell the child about the parish or mission in which you teach—when was it established? who belong to it? who is at the head of it? who else live in it besides Catholics? how is a Catholic known from a non-Catholic?

(b) Tell about the parish church—its object; when people are obliged to attend it; what they do there; what you see in it (Cross, candles, pictures and statues, altar and tabernacle.)

(c) Who is the pastor? What is his work? (Mass, the Sacraments, preaching, catechising, etc.)

(d) Several parishes joined under one superior or head is called a diocese. Name of this diocese? When established? Who is the bishop? What are his duties?

(e) Are there parishes and dioceses all over the world? Have they bishops at the head of them? Who is the supreme or head bishop who rules all the other bishops and the universal Church? Who was the first pope? By whom was he appointed? How many popes have there been? Who is the present pope?

## 6. LITURGY

(a) Teach how to make the sign of the Cross, to bow the head at the Name of Jesus, to genuflect before the Blessed Sacrament, to kneel at prayer, to behave in church, to enter and leave it, to take

Holy Water, etc. (This teaching is to be combined with training and practice.)

(b) Explain the purpose of every sacred object which attracts the attention of the child in church.

## II. LOVE OF RELIGION

See what is said on this head in chapter II.

## III. TRAINING IN RELIGION

(a) Training in ritual observances (the sign of the Cross, genuflection, etc.) is combined with the teaching of the signification of those actions and the dispositions with which they are to be performed.

(b) Training in moral duties belongs mostly to parents in the home. The "Daily Practice" will help very materially, if teachers keep urging it Sunday after Sunday and the child be reminded of it frequently during the week. Moreover, much important moral training can be accomplished in class by insisting on mutual kindness and courtesy, obedience, truthfulness, unselfishness, etc.

The order of exercises, then, in this class will be: first, repetition of last Sunday School work; and,

secondly, Bible story, prayers, hymn, catechism, Church history, and liturgy. This special order is not essential; but if adopted, it should be followed uniformly.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE CONFESSION CLASS

At the beginning of this and succeeding classes, at least a month ought to be given to revision of previous work. The love of prayer in particular should be inculcated and strengthened by additional motives all through the course.

The primary aim of the Confession class is to impress deeply and permanently on the child's soul a great horror of sin. This horror will produce a sincere sorrow for past transgressions and a fixed determination to avoid them in future. Moreover, it will lead the child to study and use the necessary means of ridding itself at once of everything in its soul that makes God seriously displeased with it.

The work occupies two years, but does not terminate in a formal first Confession. This is made by many in the previous class, and by the others toward the end of the first year in this class. Dur-

ing the time that remains, the children are practised in the habit of confessing regularly and fervently. Hence the work consists more in training them in the proper reception of the Sacrament of Penance than in preparing them for it.

But here teachers must beware of a fatal mistake sometimes unwittingly committed. Heart-felt repentance of sin, as the primary and most essential disposition for the Sacrament, is not insisted on as earnestly as its paramount importance demands. The examination of conscience and the Confession hold the largest place in the instructions; and the consequence is, that the child gives most of its attention to them, and is apt to content itself with very doubtful contrition. And the habit of doing so remains in after life, and leads to much deplorable abuse.

I would advise, therefore, that Confession be not mentioned at all, until the nature, necessity, and conditions of Contrition have been deeply impressed on the young soul. Yet, I would aim at making it, more a slow growth in the child, than a temporary mental state—often unreal and factitious—produced by direct argument and persua-

sion. The best teaching is that which helps the pupil to think and act for himself.

The understanding and memorizing of the catechism will be, of course, the fundamental work of the class. The lessons taught, however, will be selected and arranged with a view to the primary aim in the teacher's mind. The following is the order I would suggest: first, lessons one to eleven consecutively; secondly, lessons twenty-nine to thirty-seven inclusive, on the Commandments of God and of the Church; and, thirdly, lessons thirteen and fourteen and seventeen to twenty-one, on the Sacraments in general, Baptism and Penance. In these lessons, the class will learn the nature and kinds of sin, the injury and ingratitude of it, and the Mercy of God, who instead of punishing it in us as He did in the angels, sent his only Son into the world to atone for it and supply us with the means by which, after we have committed it, we may be restored to Divine favor. As the teacher will constantly keep in mind the primary aim of inspiring a great horror of sin, the special direction and coloring thus given to each lesson will, with God's grace, have a cumulative effect on the child's



soul of turning it habitually from everything seriously displeasing to our Heavenly Father.

It may be thought by some, that it is inadvisable to direct a child's mind so much to the nature and kinds of sin. I would agree with them, were there a question of giving minute details of sin to which children are liable to be tempted, particularly sin against the Sixth Commandment. But such details are never given in the Sunday School. We take a broad, comprehensive view of the child's life. We know its awakening passions, its future temptations, its struggles and dangers, its need of forewarning and of all the helps and safeguards on which its safety depends. We shall not have it long with us. In a few years, it will go out into the world, where it will be in inevitable contact with sinful influences of various kinds. We, therefore, think it right and necessary to give it such knowledge and hatred of sin as will be a guide and defense in the hour of trial. Indeed, they unwisely minimize the ruinous consequences of sin, who blame the religious teacher for seeking to protect the young against their worst enemy. The false sentimental tenderness that would keep them

in ignorance of the malice of sin while they are committing it, is akin to the inhuman folly of leaving a man to sleep in a poisonous atmosphere, lest awakening him should cause him pain or distress.

The explanation of every lesson should be directed to bear on sin and its malice. An example of this direction may be taken from the first lesson. The subject is, the End of Man. In the course of the lesson we are told that man is made to know, love, and serve God, in this world, and to be happy with Him for ever in the next. If we neglect to learn who God is, we commit sin; if we do not love God, we commit sin; if we do not serve God, by doing what He tells us to do, we commit sin. And what will be the consequence? God will not take us to Heaven to be happy with Him for ever. On the contrary, He will cast us down into a dreadful place of darkness and suffering, where we shall be for ever miserable.

The Bible stories, told in the Prayer class, will be retold here to illustrate God's hatred and punishment of sin. They should be given in the order of their occurrence; but any of them that relates

specially to the lesson taught should be repeated in connection with it, even though taken out of its historical order or told already in a previous lesson. It will add considerably to the interest of those illustrations, to impress on the children's minds by frequent repetition a brief outline of Jewish history and of the Life of our Divine Lord.

Illustrations from Church history will be supplied by the martyrs who suffered death for conscience' sake, the many great saints who had once been great sinners, and the apostolic missionaries whose heroic labors had for object the destruction of sin by the spread of Christian light. The lives of some child-saints may also be given.

Finally, it will help much to bring home to the class the malice of sin, to explain the penitential fasts and services of the ecclesiastical year—Advent, Lent, Ember Days, Vigils, Friday abstinence, Holy Week services, etc.

The following schedule will be a guide to teachers in the preparation of the lessons to be taught in this course. The numbers in parentheses refer to the list of Bible stories in the last chapter.

NO.	LESSONS.	QQ.	ILLUSTR.
1.	I.	1-6	(1) (2)
2.	I.	7-12	(51) Cain Gen. IV.
3.	II.	1-8	(4) (5)
4.	III.	1-6	Sacr. of Isaac. Gen. XXII.
5.	III.	7-11	(7) (8)
6.	IV.	1-8	(9) (10)
7.	V.	1-6	(2) (11) (12)
8.	V.	7-12	(3) (13) (14)
			IV.
9.	VI.	1-9	(15) (16)
10.	VII.	1-6	(21) (22)
11.	VII.	7-12	(23) (24)
12.	VII.	13-18	(25) (26)
13.	VIII.	1-8	(56) (57)
14.	VIII.	9-16	(58) (59)
15.	IX.	1-8	(60) (61)
16.	X.	1-6	(17) (18)
17.	X.	7-12	(19) (20)
18.	XIII.	1-8	(21) (22)
19.	XIII.	9-16	Baptism of Jesus. Matt. III.
20.	XIV.	1-7	(24) (25) (8)
21.	XIV.	8-14	(26) (27)
22.	XVII.	1-8	Power of Keys, Jno. XX.
23.	XVIII.	1-7	Power of Keys, Matt. XVIII.
24.	XVIII.	8-13	(32) (33)
25.	XIX.	1-8	(42) (44)
26.	XIX.	9-16	(34) (35)
27.	XX.	1-7	(36) (37)
28.	XXI.	1-7	(38) (39)
29.	XXIX.	1-5	(X) (40)
30.	XXX.	1-8	(41) (43)
31.	XXX.	9-16	(45) (46)
32.	XXXI.	1-7	(47) (48)
33.	XXXI.	8-14	(49) (50)
34.	XXXII.	1-8	(51) (52)
35.	XXXII.	9-16	(53) (54)

NO.	LESSONS.	QQ.	ILLUSTR.
36.	XXXIII.	1-6	(55) (56)
37.	XXXIII.	7-12	(57) (58)
38.	XXXIV.	1-8	(59) (60)
39.	XXXIV.	9-16	(61) (62)
40.	XXXV.	1-8	(63) (64)
41.	XXXVI.	1-11	(65) (66)
42.	XXXVII.	1-7	(67) (68)
43.	XXXVII.	8-13	(69) (70)
44.	I.	St. Mary Magdalen, July 22.	
45.	II.	St. Paul, Jan. 25.	
46.	III.	St. Irenaeus, June 28.	
47.	IV.	St. Thais, Oct. 8.	
48.	V.	St. Augustine, Aug. 28.	
49.	VI.	St. Mary of Egypt, April 9.	
50.	VII.	St. Patrick, March 17.	
51.	VIII.	St. Boniface, June 5.	
52.	IX.	St. Bernard, Aug. 20.	
53.	X.	St. Francis, Oct. 4.	
54.	XIII.	St. Dominick, Aug. 4.	
55.	XIV.	St. Margaret of Cortona, Feb. 22.	
56.	XVII.	St. Ignatius, July 31.	
57.	XVIII.	St. Aloysius, June 21.	
58.	XIX.	St. Stanislaus, Nov. 13.	
59.	XX.	St. Francis Xavier, Dec. 13.	
60.	XXI.	St. Lewis Bertrand, Oct. 9.	
61.	XXIX.	St. Vincent de Paul, July 19.	
62.	XXX.	St. Francis de Paul, July 19.	
63.	XXXI.	St. Paul of the Cross, April 28.	
64.	XXXII.	Advent, a Time of Penance. St. John.	
65.	XXXIII.	Penitential Vestments.	
66.	XXXIV.	Other Symbols of Penance in Liturgy.	
67.	XXXV.	Lenten Fast.	
68.	XXXVI.	Ash Wednesday.	
69.	XXXVII.	Passion Sunday. Veiling of Crucifix, etc.	

NO.	LESSONS.	QQ.	ILLUSTR.
70.	VIII.	Palm Sunday.	The Procession.
71.	IX.	Office of Tenebrae.	
72.	X.	Holy Thursday.	
73.	XIII.	Good Friday.	
74.	XIV.	The Holy Sepulchre.	Collection.
75.	XVII.	The Seven Dolors of our Blessed Lady.	
76.	XVIII.	Holy Saturday.	
77.	XIX.	Ember Days.	
78.	XX.	Vigils.	
79.	XXI.	Friday (and Saturday) Abstinence.	
80.	XXIX.	Penance in the early Church.	

#### PRAYERS

Those learned in the preceding class will be repeated. Afterwards, the children will memorize those sung by the whole school. In selecting them, the director will aim at preparing a choir to sing at Mass and other Church offices.

#### PRAYERS

The Confiteor and the longer Acts given in the Catechism will be explained and memorized. A few short ejaculatory prayers against temptations will also be suggested. Overcrowding the young mind with prayers must be avoided. The Our Father should be so explained, that the child will love it above all other prayers.

## LOVE AND PRACTICE OF RELIGION

The love of freedom, self-indulgence, excitement, applause, etc., which every healthy child develops, is not to be rooted out as a vice, but moderated and directed wisely and sympathetically, so that it may not come into unpleasant conflict with the love and practice of religion. Go a certain distance with the young in their direction, and you will find that they will go a long way with you in attention, responsiveness, and serious effort to keep their manifold propensities under reasonable control. Hence, for this and the succeeding classes, I would make the following suggestions: 1. Try your best to feel and show a real sympathy with children in their love of everything that is not sinful; 2. Explain to them simply and affectionately, where excess begins, and why it is forbidden; 3. Blend encouragement with correction; 4. Rather than overwork, bore, or alienate your class, give them a holiday; 5. You will inspire love of religion only to the extent you yourself love it.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE COMMUNION CLASS

A child brings to this class a love of prayer and a horror for sin. These two habits will, with God's blessing, result in that cleanness of heart to which the vision of God is promised. "Blessed are the clean of heart for they shall see God." (Matt. v. 8.) The vision of God by practical faith is realized in this life chiefly by the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ.

The sole aim of the Communion class will be to show the child Jesus Christ and bring it to His Feet, so that He may unite Himself with it in the sacrament of His Love—the Most Holy Eucharist.

The formal work of the class will consist of a review of the catechism-lessons already learned, and the study and memorizing of those that remain, especially of the three Eucharistic lessons (22, 23, 24,). The review and study, however,



will be made from a special standpoint, namely, the Love of Jesus Christ for us and the love we owe Him in return. The Creed, the Sacraments, the Commandments are all manifestations of the Divine Love of Jesus Christ and of His claims on the warmest affection of our hearts.

1. The Creed. Most of it is contained in lessons one to twelve. Faith is the union of the human with the Divine Intellect—the outpouring of the latter into the former, according to its capacity and needs. It reveals God to us as Infinite Love. “God is charity.” This is the one key to all revealed mysteries, not giving us comprehension of them, indeed, for God is essentially incomprehensible to the creature; but giving us contentment and satisfaction in proportion to the depth and spirituality of our faith.

2. The commandments. We love Jesus Christ when our will becomes one with His, when we are so impressed with His Beauty, His Goodness, His Lovableness, His Wisdom and Sanctity, that we merge our life in His, seeing with His Eyes, thinking with His Mind, willing with His Will. Now, He tells us Himself that His will is

made known to us by His Commandments. "He that hath My Commandments, and keepeth them: he it is that loveth Me." (John xiv. 21.) So, too, the Commandments of the Church are assured manifestations of His Will. When He endowed His apostles with power to teach His Gospel, He said to them: "He that heareth you, heareth Me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me." (Luke x. 16.)

3. The Sacraments. These appeal in a special manner to our love. Each is a personal contact of Jesus with the individual soul; it is a gracious act of His, done to that one particular human being, for his sanctification and salvation; it is the application, by Jesus Christ Himself, of His blood to that one individual, out of the whole human race.

Of all the Sacraments, the Most Holy Eucharist will receive the largest and most earnest attention and exposition from the teacher. The three Catechism-lessons—22, 23, 24—give an admirable abstract of the doctrine; but they have to be put in concrete form and supplemented with much oral instruction. Needless to say, this instruction

has to be repeated over and over, and the children have to be questioned frequently about it. The following are the chief points to be impressed on them.

1. Long before the Son of God became Man, He prepared men for His coming by giving several intimations of what He was to be, and of the manner in which He was to redeem the world. Some He gave in prophecies, through the Holy Ghost; others He gave in types. (A type is some historical person or action by which is foreshadowed something in the future, to which it bears an analogy.)

2. As the Most Holy Eucharist is the culminating point of our Redemption, and a mystery most difficult of belief, the Son of God has given us several types of it, the chief of which are: the sacrifice of Melchisedech, the Loaves of Proposition, the Manna, the Hearthcake, and especially the Paschal Lamb.

3. During His Public Life, Jesus Christ performed some miracles, by which men's minds were prepared to accept His revelation of this divine gift. Among them were His changing water into

wine, and His multiplication of the loaves and fishes.

4. About a year before His Death, He clearly and emphatically promised to give His Flesh and Blood for the life of the world. (Children should memorize verses forty-eight to sixty of the sixth chapter of St. John, in which are given the words of promise.)

5. The night before His Death, He fulfilled His promise by changing bread and wine into His Body and Blood, which He gave to His disciples. He then told them to do the same in memory of Him.

6. This is what every Catholic priest does, when he celebrates Mass and distributes the Most Holy Communion to the people.

7. But the Blessed Eucharist was to be more than a sacrament by which the souls of the faithful were to be nourished. It was instituted primarily as a sacrifice, commemorating and renewing the sacrifice of Calvary, without, however, the shedding of blood.

8. The inventive love revealed in the doctrine of the Mass could be conceived only in the Heart

of an Incarnate God. He desired to stay with us to the end of time; and He desired to keep His Death before our minds as a fresh, energizing, love-inspiring fact. Yet it was decreed that He should ascend into Heaven, clothed in His glorified human nature. By the exercise of His Divine Power, He has reconciled these two—His desire to stay and the decree to go. He has multiplied His Sacred Humanity; so that, while seated at the right hand of His Father, He is still with us under the white veil. Every day, all over the earth, He renews the Sacrifice of Calvary, by His Real Presence, by the apparent separation of His Body and Blood, and by His making the same offering of Himself on the altar before which we kneel, as He made on the Cross on which He died.

9. The Sacrifice of the Mass was instituted and first offered by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper. The liturgical form, as given by three of the evangelists and St. Paul, was extremely simple, as became the occasion, the High Priest, and the participants. Round this simple form, in course of time, under the direction of the Holy Ghost,

various symbolical ceremonies have been entwined, the understanding of which not only instructs the faithful in the nature and effects of the Sacrifice, but inspires ardent devotion toward it and prepares for worthy participation in it. And yet we should guard scrupulously against the danger of losing sight of the end and purpose of those ceremonies, and of allowing their wealth of ritual significance to shut out the central idea of the Mass—Jesus Christ offering Himself to His Father for us, while He gives us His Flesh for our souls' food and a pledge of our future glory.

The object aimed at in this class—the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ—is not to be attained by direct exhortation or appeal. Very little of this is to be employed; otherwise, the result will be a factitious, evanescent sentiment, followed by discouragement and reaction. Let the truths by which the child's will is to be influenced, be vividly and emotionally presented and their bearing on conduct briefly pointed out.—Grace will do the rest. The fervor of First Communicants is very interesting and consoling; but it is not the end of our teaching. What we aim at is a

fervor with "staying power" in it—a fervor, not like a cut-flower, withering in a day or two, but, like a healthy young plant, growing out of a deeply-rooted love of Jesus. Such fervor as this is the product of divine grace, directing the under-current of thought and feeling and desire in the child's soul.

To excite admiration for the character of our Divine Lord, the teacher will, from time to time, give incidents of His Life revealing the following features: His gentleness and strength; His tender compassion for pain and suffering; His unselfishness; His untiring labors; His unbounded mercy for sinners; His casting His lot voluntarily among the poor; His life-long devotion to the uplifting and salvation of our race; His patient endurance of wrong; His calm courage in facing disgrace and death, etc.

The children ought to be reminded often of what they learned in the preceding classes about prayer and the horror of sin. To other motives already given for this last, will now be added the supreme motive of love. "Jesus Christ is too lovable, too good in Himself and too good to me, to be ever

again offended grievously by me." To make this truth a working principle in the child's life, the Morning Offering should include an explicit resolution of doing all the actions of the day for the love of our Divine Lord. As there is danger that this offering may lead young people to excessive introspection and self-examination, it should be explained, that all it demands of them at present is careful avoidance of sin and a bright, genial, kindly disposition.

As a remote preparation for their First Holy Communion, the class should be trained in the following practices: 1. To come to church gladly, recalling to mind the kindly welcome they will receive from their best Friend, Jesus; 2. On entering the church, to accustom themselves to think and feel: "I am now in the presence of my God and Saviour. From behind the white veil, He sees me and He loves me"; 3. To take Holy Water with some such prayer as this: "My Jesus, cleanse me from all my sins, that I may speak to Thee with pure lips from a clean heart"; 4. Not to genuflect mechanically before the Tabernacle, but while bending the knee to the ground to say in



their hearts: "My Jesus, I believe in Thee; I adore Thee; I love Thee"; 5. On going to their places, to kneel down and say a short prayer; 6. Finally, to keep in mind during Sunday School, how pleased their best Friend will be with them, if He sees that they try hard to be obedient, to attend, and to learn.

A few words may be said here about long devotional practices sometimes imposed on children in this class. I consider them inadvisable. They are uncongenial to children, and frequently prejudice them against religion. They make "goodness" appear dreary and unlovable. They have little merit on account of being compulsory and mechanical. They are generally unintelligible, and no sufficient motive is given for practising them. Hence, there is no training in them; and children are no more disposed to continue them on leaving school, than a released prisoner is disposed to continue working on a treadmill.

Yet we must not wholly conceal from the child the austere side of Christian life; on the contrary, we are bound to train it in self-repression and in the patient doing or bearing of disagreeable

things for conscience' sake. This, however, has to be accomplished slowly, tactfully, judiciously. Parents do not exact a full day's work of their young children. Light jobs, with intervals for rest or play, approval or praise for honest effort, occasional rewards, over-zeal checked, neglect or carelessness corrected,—in this way, the younger members of the family are exercised and prepared to do a day's work. And when they grow up, they take a manly pride in doing it, which they would not take five years ago, when it was beyond their strength. Let us, then, take a lesson from the home, and not impose on little children devotional exercises which we could scarcely induce adult Christians to perform.

#### SCHEDULE OF COMMUNION-CLASS WORK

(The illustrations will be found explained in Rev. A. Urban's "Teacher's Handbook to Bible History".)

#### A. GOD'S LOVE OF US

NO.	LESSON.	ILLUSTRATIONS.
1.	I.	Creation. Endowments.
2.	II.	The Earthly Paradise. Heaven.
3.	III.	The Promise of a Redeemer.

NO.	LESSONS.	ILLUSTRATIONS.
4.	IV.	God's Patience with Sinners.
5.	V.	The Ark. The Rainbow.
6	VI.	Call of Abraham. Promise. Melchisedech.
7.	VII.	Moses the Deliverer.
8.	VIII.	The Paschal Lamb.
9.	IX.	Passage of the Red Sea.
10.	X.	The Manna.
11.	XIII.	Mt. Sinai and the Ten Commandments.
12.	XIV.	Entrance into the Promised Land.
13.	XVII.	Gideon.
14.	XVIII.	Sampson.
15.	XIX.	Samuel.
16.	XX.	Saul.
17.	XXI.	David.
18.	XXIX.	Solomon.
19.	XXX.	The Temple.
20.	XXXI.	Elias.
21.	XXXII.	Eliseus.
22.	XXXIII.	Jonas.
23.	XXXIV.	Tobias.
24.	XXXV.	Isaias.
25.	XXXVI.	Jeremias.
26.	XXXVII.	Ezechieh's Vision of the Resurrection.
27.	XI.	Daniel.
28.	XII.	Eleazar.
29.	XV.	The Seven Machabees.
30.	XVI.	Judas Machabeus.

## B. WHY WE SHOULD LOVE JESUS CHRIST

31.	XXII.	Being God, He became Man for us.
32.	XXII.	He was born in poverty for us.
33.	XXIII.	He was persecuted for us. Flight into Egypt.

NO.	LESSONS.	ILLUSTRATIONS.
34.	XXIII.	He led a humble, laborious life for us.
35.	XXIV.	He loves children.
36.	XXIV.	All powerful, He walks on the sea.
37.	XXV.	“ “ He calms the storm.
38.	XXVI.	“ “ He raises the dead to life.
39.	XXVII.	“ “ He rises from the dead.
40.	XXVIII.	“ “ He ascends into Heaven.
41.	I.	All merciful, He pardons the sinful woman.
42.	II.	“ “ He pardons Mary Magdalen.
43.	III.	“ “ He pardons His enemies from the Cross.
44.	IV.	“ “ He pardons the apostle who denied Him.
45.	V.	“ “ He promises Heaven to the penitent thief.
46.	VI.	All tender-hearted, He revives a dead child.
47.	VII.	“ “ He cures the ten lepers.
48.	VIII.	“ “ He cures a man born blind.
49.	IX.	“ “ He cures a child possessed.
50.	X.	“ “ He feeds the multitude by miracle.

### C. THE GREATEST PROOF OF HIS LOVE

51.	XI.	His Agony and Sweat of Blood.
52.	XII.	He is seized and bound.
53.	XIII.	He is betrayed by one apostle and denied by another.

NO.	LESSONS.	ILLUSTRATIONS.
54.	XIV.	He is struck on the face.
55.	XV.	He is blindfolded and spat on.
56.	XVI.	Barabbas is preferred to Him.
57.	XVII.	He is scourged.
58.	XVIII.	He is crowned with Thorns.
59.	XIX.	He is mocked and struck.
60.	XX.	He is sentenced to death.
61.	XXI.	He carries His Cross to Mount Calvary.
62.	XXII.	His Hands and Feet are nailed to the Cross.
63.	XXIII.	He hangs on the Cross for three hours.
64.	XXIV.	He is mocked in His Death Agony.
65.	XXV.	He is given vinegar and gall to drink.
66.	XXVI.	He dies. His Side is pierced with a lance.

#### D. HIS MEMORIAL OF IT

67.	XXVII.	His Body and Blood under the appearances of bread and wine.
68.	XXVIII.	Prefigured in the sacrifice of Melchisedech.
69.	XXIX.	Also in the Manna and the Loaves of Proposition.
70.	XXX.	He promised this Gift some time before His Death.
71.	XXXI.	He gave it to the apostles at the Last Supper.
72.	XXXII.	He gives it to us in the Blessed Eucharist.
73.	XXXIII.	This is a Sacrifice as well as a Sacrament.
74.	XXXIV.	As a Sacrifice, it is the same as that of the Cross.

NO.	LESSONS.	ILLUSTRATIONS.
75.	XXXV.	It is intended to show the death of the Lord.
76.	XXXVI.	It is called the Mass, and is offered every day.
77.	XXXVII.	Its institution is commemorated on Holy Thursday.
78.	XXII.	Also on the Feast of Corpus Christi.
79.	XXIII.	Jesus Christ is always present in the Tabernacle.
80.	XXIV.	Daily Communion is recommended to all the faithful.

Instead of these last fourteen "Illustrations", the following may be preferred:

1. The Eucharist, prefigured in the sacrifice of Melchisedech;
2. The Eucharist, prefigured in the Manna;
3. " " prefigured in the Loaves of Proposition;
4. " " prefigured in the Paschal Lamb;
5. " " promised at Capharnaum;
6. " " instituted at the Last Supper;
7. " " commemorated on Holy Thursday;
8. " " commemorated on Corpus Christi;
9. " " in Benediction;
10. " " in the Viaticum;
11. " " in Exposition (40 Hours);
12. " " in the Tabernacle;
13. " " Devotion to the Sacred Heart;
14. " " Daily Communion.

The immediate preparation of the class for First Communion will be made by the pastor in suitable instructions apart from the Sunday School work.

Similar instructions are given before First Confession and Conformation.

#### HYMNS

The *Tantum ergo, O salutaris*, and *Laudate Dominum* will be explained and memorized.

#### PRAYERS

This class will be taught to say the Rosary, and urged to say at least a decade every day. They must be told over and over that the central, primary object of this devotion is to meditate according to their ability on the mysteries connected with our redemption.

Teach them how to use a Prayerbook at the various Church functions, and when preparing for the Sacraments. Explain difficult words occurring in it, and also many passages, unintelligible to children. Recommend a Prayerbook of solid, practical piety.

#### CHURCH HISTORY

Describe the beautiful apostolic practice in the early Church, of all Christians communicating daily. So marked and universal was the charity

enkindled by this practice, that their enemies exclaimed: "See how those Christians love one another!"

Afterwards, faith and piety grew cold, and the Sacraments were very much neglected. In consequence, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, excommunication was pronounced in a general council against those who do not receive Communion, at least once a year, at Easter time. This penalty is still in force.

At the Reformation, Protestants abolished the Mass, and thereby deprived themselves of the most precious gift bequeathed by Jesus Christ to the world.

In the present day, a great revival of devotion to the most Holy Eucharist has been inaugurated by the sovereign pontiff (Pius X.). Daily Communion is becoming general in religious congregations; and by the zeal of pastors the practice is spreading among the laity.

#### LITURGY

Explain the Mass thoroughly. Show how Communion is received. Tell the meaning of Bene-



diction, the Forty Hours' Exposition, processions of the Most Holy Sacrament, and the Viaticum. Teach the boys of this class how to serve Mass and assist at Vespers, Benediction, etc.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE CONFIRMATION CLASS

It is unusual, and it may be impracticable; yet I would have two or three years' Sunday School work intervene between the child's First Communion and its Confirmation. The first of those years would belong to the Communion, the other one or two to the Confirmation class. The reason for this suggestion is, that when a child has received a Sacrament—say, First Communion—it should be exercised in the reception of that Sacrament, before it enters on formal preparation for another. Moreover it is likely that some children will not attend the Perseverance class, after they have been confirmed. They will go to work; or their parents will lose control over them; or they will go away from home, and their pastor will be unable to trace them. Therefore, to insure to these the minimum of religious knowledge, I would give one or two years to the Confirmation class, and

have the Sacrament administered only at the end.

The primary aim of this class will be to inspire living faith in the Holy Ghost, practical love of Him, and sincere devotion to Him. This work would be unsuited to children, if we could not present to them some visible embodiment of Him in which He abides and through which He acts. We have such an embodiment, and it is the Catholic Church. Therefore we teach the class faith in the Church, as the representative, the organ, the agent of the Holy Ghost; we inspire love of the Church as a symbol and manifestation of His beneficence; and we inculcate devotion and loyalty to the Church, as invested with His Sanctity and Authority.

The formal work of the class, covering two years, will be divided into two parts. The first will be given to a special study of the catechism-lessons on the Holy Ghost, the Church, and the Sacrament of Confirmation, followed by a review of the whole catechism. In the second, the class will take for text-book "Faith of our Fathers," "Catholic Belief," or some such work. As in teaching the catechism, so here, each chapter or section is ex-

plained one Sunday, recited the next, and the following Sunday, reviewed. Except Scripture texts, there is to be no verbal memorizing; but each pupil will be required to give a clear, intelligent statement of the substance of the lesson.

At the opening of the class, the teacher will give some lessons to the re-inforcement of the duties of Prayer, Horror of Sin, and Love of Jesus Christ, already inculcated.

“The Church” will be the main subject of oral instruction. The reason is, because Confirmation is the Sacrament of the Holy Ghost; and the Church, as I have said, is His organ, His agent, His manifestation. It is through the Church we know Him, not only by the faith in Him which she teaches; but because by her life and unbounded activities, she is every day revealing Him to us. Our knowledge of her is, constructively, knowledge of Him; and our love of her points and leads to love of Him. Our faith hears Him speaking in the sermon and the catechetical instruction; it sees Him sanctifying the child in Baptism, and forgiving the sinner in Penance, and cleansing and strengthening the departing soul in Extreme

Unction. We love the Church for her untiring solicitude and zeal; but in the heart of the Church we see the main spring of that solicitude—the Holy Spirit that Jesus Christ sent to abide in her forever.

It will be the primary aim, then, of the Sunday School to instruct this class in the institution, constitution, and general history of the Church. But this instruction will be of small account, unless the child be trained in the love of the Church, and in loyal coöperation with her in the regeneration and salvation of humanity. The layman's sphere of help may be narrow—it may be limited to the duty of giving those around the example of a noble Christian life. But it is not the littleness of what the layman can do to help, that tells against the Church: *it is his unconsciousness of his incorporation and oneness with her in her world-wide ministry.*

The following suggestions outline the oral instruction to be given by teachers.

1. *Knowledge of the Church.* (a) Begin with the Church of the present day. Distinguish it from the material building. Compare it with some

local society known to the class. (Object, president, members, laws, founder.)

(b) Give an idea of the vast number of Catholics who make up the Church (over two hundred millions). If all the Catholics in the world passed singly in procession before the sovereign pontiff, the vicar of Jesus Christ, and if they kept passing day and night without interruption, each taking a minute to make his obeisance,—such a procession would require nearly four hundred years to enable all to file by.

(c) Next, take a rapid survey of the countries of the world, and show how the Church is found working in each, somewhat as she is working in our own parish:—preaching, baptizing, absolving from sin, repeating the Sacrifice of Calvary, feeding the multitude with the Bread of Life, teaching the child, helping the helpless, consoling the afflicted, kneeling by the death-bed, and with the last Sacraments preparing the soul for its appearance before its Judge. This survey will give the class an idea of the material Catholicity of the Church. (Here a map of the world will be almost indispensable.)

(d) To teach the Unity of the Church, describe her organization. Draw on a blackboard or on a large sheet of paper four concentric circles with a point for a centre. The outside circle represents the laity; the next the priesthood; then come the bishops; and, within, the archbishops; while the central point represents the pope, the supreme visible head of the Church. The laity are governed by their respective pastors; the pastors, by their respective bishops; and the bishops by the pope. This last has a supreme and direct authority over the universal Church—bishops, priests, and laymen. Bishops have direct authority over all Catholics in their dioceses. Pastors have direct jurisdiction over the Catholic laity of their parishes. In this well-compacted organization, there is but one faith, one centre of authority, one Ritual (the Mass and the Sacraments), or, as St. Paul expresses it: “One Lord, one faith, one Baptism.” (Eph. iv. 5.)

(e) The Catholic Church of to-day is identical with the Church which Jesus Christ founded on His apostles. This identity, or Apostolicity, is illustrated by dividing a straight line on the black-

board into nineteen sections, one for each century. Trace her history backwards, giving (or reading) the names of the popes for each section or century, and mentioning in connection with it some leading historical event, to show how, always the same, she has stood before the world, from age to age, the minister of Christ and dispenser of the mysteries of God.

(f) Another line, similarly divided, will help to impress belief in another mark of the Church—her Holiness—the evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. In connection with each section or century, sketch the life of some saint who embodied the spirit of Jesus Christ, for the correction and enlightenment of his age.

(g) And now to show that the Church to which we have the grace and happiness of belonging, is the same as that founded by Jesus Christ, we ask the class to imagine themselves listening to Him as He spoke about His Church. In one place He calls it a fold, of which He is the Shepherd; and He says that He must bring in those who are not yet of this fold; “and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd.” This is precisely what the Church



teaches. Outside her pale, there is no salvation. Besides, it is evident that the fold of Jesus Christ must be something *visible*; otherwise how could people find their way into it? And He says that there shall be one fold, that is one Church. Therefore it is wrong to hold that it does not matter to what church one belongs. There are many churches but only one that is true. In another place, He said to His apostles: "Going therefore teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.) As Jesus Christ is to be with His Church to the end of time, she can never die out, or fail; for He could not be with her if she no longer existed. Hence, she must be indefectible, that is, unailing—ever visible, ever "exalted above the hills," so that all nations may flow into her. Furthermore, as He is to be always with His Church in teaching the nations, her teaching must be always true—she must be infallible.—He could not be with her in teaching error. Lastly,

He distinguished one of His apostles from the others, by many marks of preëminence. One day, He said to him: "Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven." (Matt. xvi. 16, 17.) After His Resurrection, our Divine Lord asked this same apostle three times: "Lovest thou Me?" and upon St. Peter answering each time: "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee," he received this commission: "Feed My lambs—Feed My sheep." The lambs and sheep make up the entire fold of Jesus Christ; and the word *feed* in Scripture language means *rule* or *govern*. Hence St. Peter and his successors received supreme power over the whole Church—bishops, priests, and laity;—and no one can belong to the fold of Jesus Christ who does not acknowledge the divine source of this power, when exercised in teaching and governing the universal Church of God.

*Love of the Church.* It matters little how much children know about the Church, if they do not love her and coöperate with her, cordially and loyally, not only in every parochial work, but also in

every work of Catholic zeal, whether it be a diocesan charity, or a Catholic university, or a mission in Japan or Central Africa.

Formal motives for this love, proposed and urged in the Sunday School, are helpful but not sufficient. Children identify the Church with those who in any way represent her and with whom they come in close contact. These are, principally, the pastor, the parents, and the Sunday School teachers. These three, to a large extent, determine the future welfare of the Church in their locality—not so much by what they teach, as by what they do. Their sincerity, their piety, their beautiful Christian lives, simple and human, but eminently noble, their kindly, sympathetic relations with the child—it is the Church revealed in such lives and characteristics, not the Church of the catechism, that touches the child's heart and wins for her its first love. Hence, the obligation of pastors and of all others engaged in the religious education of the child, to try their best to endear themselves to it for the sake of the Church they represent. Hence, too, the obligation of parents, never to speak disparagingly or disrespectfully of their

pastors or of religion, in the presence of their children.

3. *Training in practical love of the Church.* This training seldom forms part of a child's Christian education. The consequence is, that we leave, unorganized and undeveloped in the Church, an immense wealth of material resources. The pennies of Catholic children might be made a more effectual protection of our foreign missionaries than all the warships and bayonets of an anti-Christian government.

Sincere love of the Church is manifested in respect, loyalty, and help: respect for what she is and for what she does; loyalty in standing by her and defending her; help, by never turning a deaf ear or an empty hand to her, when she appeals for material means to carry on her spiritual work. 1. To train children in *respect* for the Church, we begin by teaching them to salute their pastor, his assistant and other clergymen they know, and to speak to them and about them with reverence. We, next, tell them of the bishop, the chief pastor of the diocese, the successor of the apostles, and the divinely appointed ruler of the priesthood and laity

in his charge—whose laws priest as well as layman is obliged to obey. Finally, we train them in affectionate filial respect for the supreme pastor of every Catholic throughout the world—our holy father the pope. We ask them to say a prayer for him from time to time, and to offer at least one Holy Communion for him every year. 2. We instruct children in *loyalty* to the Church, by cautioning them against ever speaking disrespectfully of her teaching or authority. When they hear others speak ill of her, they must not lose temper, in their zeal to defend her. On the contrary, patience and self-control do her more honor than the most impassioned harangue, when tinged with rancor and uncharitableness. Let them be taught to give a clear explanation of any disputed Catholic doctrine, when an opportunity offers; but if it be not given with modesty and calmness, better a hundred times not give it at all. During Sunday School years, however, children will best show their loyalty to the Church by studying their religion so diligently and practising it so faithfully, that in after years they may have the ability as

well as the will to defend it with effect against all gainsayers.

Loyalty to the Church is specially tested in our day by the attitude of Catholics toward condemned societies. That attitude must be uncompromising opposition and repudiation; and the earlier children are trained to assume and hold it, the less danger will they incur in after years of being drawn away from it by the influence of excommunicated men.

3. The means of training the young in practical help of the Church is, to train them in contributing something toward ordinary and extraordinary collections for religious or charitable purposes. Many parents give each of their children a cent or two to put on the plate at the Offertory, every Sunday. This is an admirable practice; but it should be more general than it is, and it should gradually educate the child in the willing sacrifice of *something of its own* for church purposes. Besides, as I have intimated already, both young and old ought to be trained in practical sympathy—material help in money—for all church work, not alone within the parish, but outside—first, in the

diocese, secondly, in the nation, and, thirdly, in every part of the world wherever the Church's ministry is cramped for want of generous Catholic help.

In conclusion, a few words about scandal in the Church. Prepare children for it, as it is hopeless to keep it from their knowledge. Show how it was foretold by our Divine Lord, and permitted among His apostles; and that it is the inevitable consequence of the Divine economy of Redemption, which has arranged that men, not angels, should be the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God.

## SCHEDULE OF CONFIRMATION CLASS WORK

### I. INTRODUCTION

CLASS.	SUBJECT.	LESSON.	ILLUSTRATION.
1.	Love of Prayer.	XXVIII	Luke XI 5-13
2.	Horror of Sin.	XVIII	Matt. XXV 41-46
3.	Love of J. C.	XXII	Matt. XXVI 26-28

### II. THE HOLY GHOST AND CONFIRMATION

4.	The Holy Ghost.	IX (1)	Jno. XIV 25-26
5.	“	IX (2)	Jno. XVI 7-14
6.	Confirmation.	XV (1)	Acts II 1-12
7.	“	XV (2)	Acts VIII 14-24

CLASS.	SUBJECT.	LESSON.	ILLUSTRATION.
8.	Confirmation.	XVI (1)	Is. XI 1-3
9.	"	XVI (2)	Matt. V 1-12
10.	"	XVI (3)	Gal. V 22, 23

## III. THE CHURCH

11.	The Church	XI (1)	Jno. X 1-16
12.	The Church.	XI (2)	Matt. XVI 13-19
13.	The Church Par. of "Cockle."	XII (1)	Matt. XIII 24-30
14.	The Church "The Mus- tard-seed."	XII (2)	Matt. XIII 31, 32
15.	The Church "The Fish- ing-net."	XII (3)	Matt. XIII 47-50
16.	The Church "The Mar- riage-feast"	XII (4)	Matt. XXII 1-14

## IV. REVIEW

While reviewing the whole catechism, the teacher will continue his oral instructions on the Church. The list of the popes is given in "Catholic Belief," and need not be transcribed here. The following schedule of leading events and representative saints will be found helpful. For reference, Darras' History of the Church and Butler's Lives of the Saints will be found the most accessible.

CENTURY.	EVENT.	REPRESENTATIVE.
1.	Death of Jesus Christ.	St. Paul.
2.	4th General Persecution.	St. Justin.
3.	7th General Persecution.	St. Cyprian.
4.	Council of Nice.	St. Athanasius.



CENTURY,	EVENT,	REPRESENTATIVE.
5.	Fall of the Roman Empire.	St. Augustine.
6.	Spread of the Gospel (Spain and France).	St. Gregory.
7.	Spread of the Gospel (England).	St. Isidore.
8.	Spread of the Gospel (Germany).	Venerable Bede.
9.	The Church and the Empire. (Charlemagne).	St. Leo IV.
10.	Spread of the Gospel (Poland, etc.).	St. Dunstan.
11.	"Canossa."	St. Gregory, VII.
12.	The Crusades.	St. Bernard.
13.	Religious Orders. Christian Schools.	St. Thomas Aquinas.
14.	The Popes in Exile. (Avignon.)	St. Catherine.
15.	Triumph of the Papacy.	St. Antoninus.
16.	The Reformation.	St. Ignatius.
17.	Jansenism.	St. Vincent de Paul.
18.	The French Revolution.	St. Alphonsus.
19.	The Church persecuted.	St. Benedict Joseph.

## HYMNS

Besides the hymns sung by the whole school, the children of this class will memorize the English version of the "Veni Creator Spiritus."

## PRAYERS

The teacher will give a fuller explanation of the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father. He will also teach the prayer of the Holy Ghost, with the antiphon, versicle and response that precede it.

## CHURCH HISTORY

Matter under this head is given in tracing the Unity and Apostolicity of the Church.

## LITURGY

Oral instructions given in the previous class on the Mass, Holy Communion, etc., are reviewed. The ceremonies of the other Sacraments, especially of Baptism, Confirmation, and Extreme Unction, are explained.

The director will appoint one Sunday in each month, on which, after the ordinary class-work, these additional instructions on prayer and liturgy will be given.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE PERSEVERANCE CLASS

The habit of prayer; a great horror of sin; the love of our Lord Jesus Christ; whole-souled loyalty and devotion to His Church—these are seeds we have been planting and watering in the young soul for the last eight years. They include religious knowledge, but they are specifically distinct from it; for they are qualities of the will not of the intellect, of the spiritual, not of the rational, life of the soul.

These seeds, which we have been tending and watching, would be amply sufficient for the sanctification of the after-life of the pupil, were his dispositions and surroundings to remain always what they are during his school years. But after his Confirmation, in his fourteenth or fifteenth year, our young graduate is probably leaving school and "entering on life," as the change is significantly called. He passes from restraint to freedom; from

parental and school supervision to self-direction and government; from safety to danger; from dreamland to reality; from theory to practice. How will the young conservatory flower bear transplanting? Like wise gardeners, we must keep an eye on it and save it from the night frosts and the biting winds, until it has taken firm root in the new soil. This the anxious, loving pastor does for his Sunday School pupils, after they have received Confirmation. He brings them together every Sunday, not any longer as children, but as young men and women whose confidence and love he has long since won, and with whom he now converses, more as a trusted friend and adviser than as a teacher or superior. He recognizes and appreciates the self-conquest, the sacrifice of freedom and pleasure, implied in their attendance; and he is not niggardly in his praise of it.

Here, then, is the ultimate object of the Perseverance class—to insure, as far as possible, the continuous and vigorous growth of the principles of Christian life in our young people for the first few years of their contact with the world. It will be a great gain if we succeed in keeping them

with us, no matter how little they learn; for we may rest assured, that all goes well with them as long as they take pleasure in coming back to their pastor and sitting with him for an hour or so once a week. Imagine the permanent advantage, then, they will derive, if they not only attend, but enter with spirit and zest into the two years' work of this class.

The immediate object aimed at is a fuller, more active and more intelligent Christian life; but the means employed are not direct preaching of practical religion—cautioning against bad books, bad company, habits of intemperance, profanity, &c. The Daily Practice, indeed, will be directed against the most obvious dangers to which young people are exposed. This, however, will take only five minutes, and, consisting mostly of self-examination, it will be the work of the pupil more than of the teacher.

No; the work of the Perseverance class is the continuation and, as far as may be, the completion of the work done in the preceding classes. It will be a fuller knowledge, a deeper love, and a more facile practice of religion.

The course of instruction in this class is completed in two years. The first is given to the Bible (the Old and New Testaments); the second, to the Church—her history and her devotional life. Each year is divided into two sessions.

The following is suggested as an outline of the work of each session.

#### FIRST YEAR

First Session. Geography and topography of Palestine. Outline of Jewish history. What is the Bible? Inspiration; Canon; divisions. The Old Testament. Its division into historical, didactic, and prophetic books. General idea of each, with its relation, by type or prophecy, to Jesus Christ. Some illustrious personages. Readings.

Second Session. Jerusalem and its environs. The Temple. Chief places mentioned in connection with our Divine Lord. Manners, customs, domestic life of the Jews. Historical books: (a) The Gospels. Distinctive features of each. Order of events in our Divine Lord's Life. Proofs of Catholic doctrine. (b) The Acts of the Apostles. Summary of contents. Journeys of St.

Paul. Proofs of Catholic doctrine. (c) Didactic books (Epistles). Their authors; scope; salient features of Church constitution and discipline revealed in them. (d) Prophetic book (Apocalypse).

## SECOND YEAR

First Session. The history of the Church. Persecutions of the first three centuries. Defense of the Incarnation of the Son of God. Conversion of the heathen. Schools and universities. The Crusades. Development of the Christian home. The Renaissance. The Reformation. Discovery of America. The Church in this country, in this province, in this diocese. Survey of the Church all over the world at the present day.

Second Session. The devotional life of the Church. The Mass; the Divine Office; Ceremonies of the Sacraments; other liturgical functions. The Sundays of the year. The Life of our Divine Lord represented historically (in the principal mysteries), and mystically (in His saints), throughout the year. Nature, history, and use of Sacramentals.

Under favorable conditions, all this work can

be done within the time allotted. The completeness of the work, however, is not of such vital importance, that, to secure it, we should run the risk of wearying or disgusting our pupils. As a first condition of success, we are bound to interest. Yet it is not present interest in a subject we are to strive for; but that permanent interest that will lead the pupil in after years to pursue the study of which we give him a foretaste. If, however, notwithstanding all our efforts, we find it impossible to make our class eager to learn what we teach, let us reconcile ourselves to the disagreeable truth that we simply cannot teach it, and turn to some other subject.

But lack of interest and attention in a class is often due to the teacher's unskilful presentment of his subject-matter. Biblical names, for example, should not be mentioned until the persons or things for which they stand be fully explained. Neither should a lesson be crowded with strange proper names, no matter how clearly they are described.

Immensely more important than covering the whole field of any of those subjects, is the keeping of the central idea, the central object, and the cen-



tral purpose of them before the pupils' minds. The central idea is Jesus Christ; the central object is to show the preparation for His Coming, the details of His visible Life among men, and His continuous Presence in the Church; while the central purpose is to make Him recognized, honored, and loved—the soul of every individual life, and the mainspring of its activities. Jesus Christ, the central thought, as He is the central Figure in the world's life; Jesus Christ, the central thought and Figure in the life of each individual—let the grandeur, the beauty, the truth of this idea grow in your pupils, and there will be no lack of interest in anything you teach them about Him.

I will mention here a few helps by which the teaching of this class may be made more productive of permanent results.

1. *Note-taking.* Ask the class to take short notes, and to copy them at home into a neatly kept manuscript. In the beginning, dictate what you wish them to write and show them a model of the kind of work you expect. To prevent discouragement, tell them that you do not require formal “compositions”—only as many words as will re-

mind them of the substance of the lesson. Tell them also that what you look for most is not perfection at the start, but improvement as the class proceeds.

Some will take kindly to this exercise and persevere in it; others will begin it enthusiastically, but give it up after a few trials; and more will not undertake it at all. The director's prudence will enable him to decide when it is to be made obligatory, when left optional, and when it is best omitted.

2. *Supplementary reading.* The subject-matter for each lesson is so extensive, that, without home-reading, the pupils will have but a very superficial and unsatisfactory knowledge of it. Hence, for permanent results, home-reading is absolutely necessary. But this presents difficulties and obstacles, in many cases almost insurmountable, the chief of which are, distaste for religious reading, no books, and no time. A word about each of these will not be amiss.

(a) You may safely presume that many children of the Perseverance class have acquired a taste for light reading. This taste almost inevitably im-

plies a repugnance for serious, and, much more, for religious, reading. What, then, are you to do? First of all, do not be extreme in your denunciation of novels. They are eating into the intellectual, as well as the spiritual, life of our young people. The habit of reading them has most of the characteristics of the drink-habit, and must be dealt with in a similar manner. Give the novel-fiend a healthy story, as a reward for reading Genesis or Exodus. Promise him another for doing double this amount of serious work. Give him in the course of this treatment a stirring book of travels, say, in the Holy Land, instead of a work of fiction. Afterwards, give him a biography—even Plutarch's Lives. Meanwhile, keep reasoning with him. "Surely," you say to him, "a child would not take food, no matter how appetizing, which its mother told it contained poison. So, too, you should not read a book which I, your pastor, tell you will lead you away from God and kill your soul."

Next, point out as vividly as you can how much more rational and conducive to a clean, noble manhood or womanhood it is, to feed the mind on

truth rather than on falsehood, especially as truth is often stranger and more interesting than fiction.

Lastly, in the book for supplementary reading which you recommend, point out interesting passages, so as to create a desire for reading it throughout.

(b) No books. A Sunday School can work without a library, but it will not produce the best results. At any sacrifice, it ought to be provided with one; and every child, able to read, should be given a book on Sunday for home-reading during the week. Were this done from the Prayer class upward, a taste for Catholic literature would be developed, and our children would be largely saved from the corruption of the dime novel. With a slight initial outlay, the school pence would make such a little library self-supporting; and the management—except, perhaps, the financial part—might be entrusted to a committee of the oldest children.

But whether or not such a library can be supplied for the whole Sunday School, a suitable collection of books ought to be on hand for the Per-

severance class. For the two Bible courses the Book itself provides the most necessary and ample matter; but this should be supplemented with works on Jewish history, manners and customs; also books of travel in Palestine; but especially a Life of our Divine Lord, with lives of our Blessed Lady, of St. Joseph, St. Paul, &c. For the other two courses, provide short lives of the saints in chronological order.

(c) No time. "Where there's a will, there's a way." Other children find time to read novels;—some are seen reading them in the street-car, going to work. Can ours not be persuaded to give half an hour of an evening to reading about Jesus Christ? Yes; I think they can—at least many of them. Let us supply the books—if necessary, out of our own library; and we may rely on it, that very few of them will be returned unread.

3. Besides note-taking and supplementary reading, there is another help which is found very useful for confirming the impressions made by the Sunday School lesson. It is the *home-repetition* by the pupil, each Sunday evening, of all that was learned in that day's class. Not the child alone,

but every member of the family, will benefit by such repetition. With God's grace, indeed, it may have somewhat of the effect of a sermon; for is it not written: "Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise?"

It is advisable to make as much distinction as possible between this and the other classes of the Sunday School. Give the Perseverance pupils all the privileges compatible with discipline and earnest work. If convenient, let them be taught at a different time and in a different place from the others. But if this cannot be, and the class is held in the church, let them have the place of honor, nearest to the altar; and let each division have a banner in front of it, with a painting of some mystery or of a patron saint. To show trust in them and to avoid all appearance of pressure, I would have no roll-call for them, and would distribute among them no attendance tickets.

The lesson should be thoroughly prepared and taught in a masterly way; otherwise the class will dwindle down to zero. Therefore, as a rule, the teaching will have to be done by the director him-

self or another priest, unless there be some religious community to which it may be entrusted.

There is some slight danger that children who receive this higher religious education may become self-conceited, bigoted, argumentative, &c. To guard against such danger, the teacher must, first of all, see that genuine simple piety and knowledge of religion grow simultaneously in the members of his class. Not that he is to look for freedom from faults and even vices; but surely he may expect to find in their demeanor in church, their regular attendance at Mass, and their monthly reception of Sacraments, a guarantee of earnest purpose to subdue their passions and lead upright Christian lives. Furthermore, children of this class are to be cautioned against provoking religious discussions among their companions at their work or elsewhere. When appealed to or the occasion demands it, let them explain Catholic doctrine modestly and temperately, but let them remember always that "to *live* religion, not to *talk* it," should be the motto of every true Christian.

A word in conclusion about the best means of keeping up the attendance in the Perseverance

class. Devise plans to interest and attract *each child*. Win its love and use the powerful influence you will thus acquire. Give prizes and outings. Secure the coöperation of parents and employers. Pray, and leave the issue in the Hands of God.

One of the most useful features of the class will be frequent, informal conversations on practical questions affecting the children's future lives. Those conversations must have nothing of the sermon or lecture in them. The director must invite and urge all to take part in them. It would be advisable even to have debates on some of the more interesting subjects.

I would suggest the following questions for the boys' class. The girls will, if possible, be taught by Sisters, who will know best the subjects most suitable for the purpose.

1. How to choose a profession or state of life.
2. How to succeed in life.
3. Is it helpful to cultivate a sense of honor?
4. What is the bearing of refinement on moral conduct?
5. What to read for mental culture.



6. The value of true friendship.
7. How to choose one's friends.
8. How to form correct opinions on public questions.
9. How to cultivate conversational powers.
10. Should a Catholic layman take an active interest in ecclesiastical affairs?
11. Should he help in parish work?
12. What can he do for the Church?
13. What can he do for his non-Catholic friends?
14. Should he belong to some Catholic society?
15. Should he make himself competent to defend Catholic faith against unbelievers?
16. Are healthy amusements beneficial to the young?
17. What are the chief rocks ahead of young men? The safeguards against them?
18. How is a young man to make friends among strangers?
19. How to recover from a false step?
20. What are the advantages of a Rule of Life?

## CHAPTER XVII

### ORDER OF EXERCISES

The exercises of a Sunday School ought to be varied. The character of the work to be done calls for variety; and it is demanded especially on account of the restlessness of children who can scarcely give undivided attention for any long time to a serious subject. In this variety there must be order; and the order must be the same for all the classes. The teacher's own alertness in obeying the signal for a change of exercise, should be an object-lesson to the class in punctuality and promptitude.

No precise order can be laid down as best under all possible circumstances. Each director will judge for himself which is most suitable for his own school. But it is most important that any order that has been once adopted should be observed permanently.

The following arrangement has been found to

work satisfactorily; yet it is given here only by way of suggestion.

- 3.00 P.M. Prayers.
- 3.05 " Hymn.
- 3.10 " Roll-call.
- 3.15 " Daily Practice.
- 3.20 " Review of last lesson.
- 3.30 " Recitation of day's lesson.
- 3.55 " Explanation of next lesson.
- 4.10 " Hymn.
- 4.15 " Address.
- 4.25 " Prayers and dismissal.

I. *Prayers.* The bell is rung at five minutes to three. Each child on entering receives an attendance ticket. (This ticket is chiefly meant to be proof of attendance.) A certain number of tickets presented at the end of a term will entitle the holder to a prize. The safe keeping of them will be a training in carefulness and forethought. When all are assembled, the director says the prayers—Our Father, Hail Mary, I believe, Glory be to the Father. The prayers are said by all in common, slowly and in a loud voice.

2. *Hymn.* For a few Sundays, the hymn se-

lected is explained by the teacher, without being sung. The children are taught to recite or sing it as a prayer—not a mere vocal exercise. Great care must be taken in the selection of words and music. The former are often too gushing; while the latter is too slow and solemn for children. The hymns are not changed until they are thoroughly memorized.

3. *Roll-call.* Each teacher marks attendance on a card, which he afterwards gives to the registrar. To train in punctuality, no child is marked present who has not an attendance ticket.

4. *Daily Practice.* Toward the end of the previous Sunday School, the director in his address recommended and explained some duty or good work, to be performed by the children during the week. They are now asked, each class by its teacher, to call to mind how often they have knowingly failed to perform it, and to make an act of contrition for any negligence of which they may find themselves guilty. It is evident that this exercise can be made an invaluable help toward the formation of the child's character. But the purpose of it will be frustrated, unless the teacher

attach special importance to it and surround it with a certain solemnity. It is better to make it separately in each class, than to have the whole school to make it in common. The following method may be adopted:

(a) The teacher asks what the Daily Practice is, and how it should be performed. What did the priest say about it?

(b) The class kneels down and recites a Hail Mary, to obtain, through the intercession of our Blessed Mother, light to ascertain how far the duty or work was knowingly omitted.

(c) After about a minute's silent examination, all recite the Confiteor together, and resume their seats.

5. *Review of last lesson.* It must be brief, yet include a summary of every important matter explained. It is to be made by questioning the whole class (not individuals), and the questions are to be put in such a form as to call for brief answers. The same order is followed as in the recitation of the preceding Sunday. (Meaning, paraphrase, illustrations, emotional aspect, bearing on conduct.) After the summary, the teacher

shows the connection between the last and the present lesson; and—what is equally important—he shows the connection of both lessons with the main divisions of the catechism. (The Creed, the Sacraments, the Decalogue.) The interdependence of revealed truths, their mutual relations, the manner in which they are dovetailed one into another—all this forms a most useful and interesting element in Sunday School education.

6. *Recitation of the day's lesson.* This is the longest of the exercises, and the backbone of Sunday School work. The lesson must be memorized perfectly by every child in the class. Whether it be understood fully, or only in part, or not at all, it must be memorized. Impress this on your class from the start, and you will save yourself much unnecessary worry and friction. Give short lessons, and instruct your children how to commit them to memory during the week—two or three answers daily and all together on Saturday. If there be a particularly dull pupil in your class who manifestly does his best, but is unable to memorize the lesson, either excuse him publicly before the others, or ask the director to arrange for

his separate instruction. But for all the rest of the class, make it a strict rule that each prepares his lesson during the week and comes with it "on his fingers' ends" to Sunday School. The director will see that this rule is enforced uniformly through the school; so that, in this matter at least, no one teacher gain a character for greater leniency than another.

By appealing to parents for their coöperation, the director will save his teachers from any odium that might be occasioned by the rigid enforcement of satisfactory memorizing. No child can long hold out against the united pressure of home, church, and school influence.

As the lesson of the day was explained in the last Sunday School, the teacher will ask something more than the bare words of the catechism. He will ask also the meaning of hard words, a paraphrase of the answer given, some illustration of it, the personal realization of it, the emotional effect it is calculated to produce, and the influence it ought to exercise on conduct. These questions are to be put to the whole class, so as to keep attention fixed on each recitation. Here, however,

the kindest allowance is to be made for incorrect answering; for children are not likely to remember unfamiliar truths told them but once. Let the interrogation, then, be made an occasion for repeating briefly the explanation already given.

In exceptional circumstances, the director will find it necessary to recommend class-memorizing. The drudgery of this work is distasteful to everyone engaged in it. When it has to be done, the teacher, first, explains the words and paraphrases them. He then asks the class to read aloud and together each answer half a dozen times. To relieve their attention, he shows and describes a picture, or relates an example, illustrative of the lesson. Lastly, after one more rehearsal, he examines, first, the whole class, and then each individual. A lesson thus memorized has to be repeated two or three successive Sundays.

Dull pupils have to be treated with great gentleness. Do not force them to memorize—the words have no meaning for them. Teach them by pictures, especially of the Life of our Divine Lord, arranged in chronological order. Let them study



each well before passing to the next. Ask them easy, encouraging questions; and be satisfied if they know the essentials of religion. Save them as much as possible from all feeling of shame or disgrace; and, above all, shield them from the ridicule of their class-mates.

7. *Explanation of the next lesson.* This must be prepared with scrupulous care and minuteness. The interest of the class must be aroused and upheld; and the threefold aim of religious instruction (knowledge, love, practice), must be kept clearly in sight. Although the explanation occupies but fifteen minutes, at least an hour during the week ought to be given to preparation. In the beginning, this should be made under the immediate supervision of the director. He will appoint an evening for a meeting of his teachers, in a suitable room or hall, provided with an abundant supply of reference books and other helps—among them some copies of a large dictionary. (The old, cheap edition of Webster is quite satisfactory.) He will also furnish each teacher with a note-book, in which will be entered whatever items cannot be trusted to memory. The teacher will then prepare

the lesson in some such order and manner as the following:

(a) He will read the lesson carefully, and trace its connections, immediate and remote, with preceding lessons.

(b) He will mark all words in the lesson that a child is not likely to understand, find out their meaning, applications, and synonyms, and prepare himself to explain them satisfactorily.

(c) He will make sure that he can paraphrase the answers in simple child-language.

(d) He will next take the subject-matter of the lesson (usually given in the heading), and study how to illustrate it or picture it on the imagination of the child. This is to be done by verbal and pictorial representations. He will be helped in preparing the former by following the suggestions given in the ninth chapter. For the latter he will require to study in detail a colored painting illustrating the subject.

(e) He will now contrive the best means of making the truth, the help or the duty, personal to the child. "The good God thought of *me* and revealed this truth for *me* individually . . ."

(f) He will ask himself, what emotion is naturally suggested by this personal application and appropriation of the truth, how it is to be aroused, prolonged and deepened, and how made grow into desire and resolution.

(g) Lastly, he will prepare some motives by which the child may be led to regulate its conduct in one or other direction by the truth explained.

8. *The address.* This is the only other exercise of the Sunday School that needs to be noticed. Its object is to explain, illustrate and enforce the Daily Practice for the coming week. The director will make the common domestic and social virtues—but, especially, CHARITY,—the subject-matter of this short and animated discourse. As a rule, he will speak of the vices only indirectly and incidentally. He will insist on personal effort and urge abundant natural motives, ending, of course, with the supernatural. In proposing these latter, great prudence is necessary, lest the child be led to think, that “it is no good” to be naturally good, unless one be a saint. All wise religious teachers are on their guard against *over-seeding* the young mind with the supernatural.

It is advisable to draw up a list of subjects for these addresses, and to arrange them in the order of their importance. Every practice of Christian life, suited to children, is to be included. Nay more: the principles of polite behavior—courtesy to females, the old, the poor, and strangers; table manners; personal cleanliness; unselfishness; regard for the feelings of others;—in a word, all the details of daily home-life will be among the practices recommended. But charity in domestic and social relations will be the keynote of all his addresses.

Subjects are to be repeated over and over, until they are known to have taken hold of the conscience of the child. Parents are the best judges of this; and the director should have frequent conferences with them about it, assuring them that neglect of the Daily Practice implies forfeiture of half the benefit of the Sunday School.

From weekly to daily examination of conscience, the passage is direct and easy. When, therefore, the children have been accustomed for some time to examine themselves every Sunday on the practice recommended to them, they will

have little difficulty in undertaking the more important daily examination of conscience that should be made, as part of their night prayers. Needless to say, this examination should be very short and simple.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### SUNDAY SCHOOL APPARATUS

Under this head I include all the helps needed by a teacher in his Sunday School work. The chief are: the Bible; the catechism and other text-books; colored pictures; maps; blackboard; and library. A few words on each of these will be sufficient.

1. *The Bible.* Though not a text-book in the ordinary sense, the Bible should be constantly used for reference. No teacher can pretend to improve on the simple, direct language in which it records facts or enunciates divine truths. Besides, its words have a singular impressiveness and charm for the child-mind. Therefore, the stories of Creation, the Fall, the Deluge, etc., as well as the history, miracles, parables, and other teaching of our Divine Lord, should be read in the original text, not given in paraphrase. I would go farther, and recommend that such passages be found

out and read by members of the class—not by the teacher. The pupils would be thus familiarised with the Bible and led to appreciate its value. Previously, however, the sacred character of the Book and great reverence in using it should be impressed on them. For this purpose, it might be advisable to ask them to kiss it before and after reading. (In connection with the use of the Bible, let each teacher make clear to his class, that the Church alone is its divinely authorized and infallible interpreter.)

2. *The catechism.* It is presumed throughout this work, that the class-book of Christian doctrine used in the Sunday School is the Baltimore Catechism. I am aware that some pastors find fault with it, and go so far as to substitute another in its stead. I cannot agree with them. It is *not*, as some expect it to be, a manual of self-instruction; for faith comes from hearing, not from reading. Neither is it intended to be intelligible to children without a teacher—to be written in the vocabulary of the nursery. Its object, like that of all other official catechisms, is to give a summary or memorial of Christian doctrine, which is

to be explained by the pastor, according to the capacity of his hearers. It designedly contains numerous technical and abstract terms, (1) for sake of correctness, (2) for sake of brevity, (3) in order to stimulate the learner to think and inquire, and (4) to assist the memory. Yes; even to assist the memory; for it is well known to practical teachers, that one or two unfamiliar words in an answer make it more easy to memorize, than if the answer were all composed of words in everyday use.

The selection of a catechism for use in a diocese belongs to the bishop. This being a matter of ecclesiastical discipline, its discussion does not fall within the scope of the present work. Something much more pertinent is the respect due by pastor, teachers, and pupils alike, to whatever catechism is used in the Sunday School. The pastor or director should not find fault with it before the teachers; and the teachers must not be allowed to criticise it before the pupils. It is both unwise and unbecoming in one who instructs others to depreciate the class-book which he puts into their hands. He thereby makes the book



practically useless to them. And the pupils themselves should be taught to pay great deference to the catechism, as a compendium of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, composed by eminent scholars, with the approbation of ecclesiastical authority. Every child should be taught to treat it differently from other class-books, to handle it with reverential care, and to keep it, when not in use, in a place by itself. These suggestions may appear trivial, but their observance is found to produce valuable results. That teacher does not train his class wisely, who permits children to make their catechism that coverless, dog-eared, unsightly thing that is often seen in their hands.

3. *Colored pictures.* They are almost indispensable in a Sunday School. No words of director or teacher, however eloquent, can supply their place in the religious education of a child. They image divine truth to the imagination; they stir up the emotions; and they powerfully influence the will. Besides, they attract, and go far to insure a full attendance every Sunday.

*Colored pictures* are best. Children are more taken with them than with photographs or en-

gravings, because they more closely resemble life and reality. Some object to them on account of their unartistic finish, forgetting that we are teaching religion, not art; and that any distortion of the æsthetic sense produced by them will be easily set right in after years.

Each lesson ought to have a distinct and appropriate picture to illustrate it. As there is no series (as far as I know) adapted to the Baltimore Catechism, the director will be obliged to make a selection and arrangement of the pictures in hand for the different classes. If the sections of a class be not given the same lesson, one picture may be made to serve each division in turn on successive Sundays.

The pictures most suitable for Sunday School are of large size, on cardboard, with frames open at the back, into which the pictures may be slipped as required. They are suspended from poles, about eight feet high, set in the position most convenient to the children.

The class-picture should be studied carefully beforehand by the teacher. The class will sometimes ask rather puzzling questions about it, and

will not be satisfied with vague or evasive answers.

4. *Maps.* Some knowledge of geography is necessary for all the classes, except the lowest. Even this should know in what direction the Holy Land lies, and about how long it would take to go there in a straight line, traveling at the rate, say, of a hundred miles a day. The other classes will learn as they advance its size, figure, boundaries, physical features and chief cities and towns. They will learn especially the relative positions of Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Capharnaum. For this purpose, a good map of Palestine is essential. Other maps will be needed by the Confirmation and Perseverance classes.

5. *A blackboard.* Every live teacher does a large portion of his work by means of a blackboard; and it can be made as helpful in teaching religion as in teaching mathematics or any other secular subject. But a practical question arises here, when Sunday School is taught in church. Is one blackboard to supply the requirements of all the classes? or should there be one for each? The difficulty suggested by this question is solved satisfactorily in one Sunday School I know, in the

following manner. The back of the picture-frame already mentioned (22 x 28) is made of wood, tin, or canvas, and is covered over with a composition, easily procurable, which makes it answer all the purposes of a blackboard. As each section is supposed to have its own picture frame, it is enabled by this simple expedient to have also its own blackboard. The best features of this contrivance are its cheapness and convenience.

6. *A Sunday School library.* Something has been already said about this library in connection with the Perseverance class; but it is quite as helpful in most of the others. It is unnecessary to dilate on the advantages to be derived from it—the Christian ideals it furnishes, the religious sense it develops, the pure atmosphere it creates, the immense good it is capable of producing in the home, the permanent bent toward the higher life it gives to the young soul. It is an invaluable help to the teacher also, provided he selects the books to be read by his class and takes heed that they bear in some way on the matter he is teaching.

I am fully aware that most parochial libraries

are doomed to premature death. Members fail to pay their subscriptions, lose their books, want a supply of undesirable literature, etc. Notwithstanding all these and many other drawbacks, experience proves that such a library can be made a permanent, self-supporting institution. This is especially possible in case of a Sunday School library, because the regulations are easily enforced. Let it be a growth. Begin with the Perseverance class; and lend the books at a nominal charge, and only as a reward of merit. Select such books as will create an appetite for reading. Give over the management to a committee of the older children. Extend the circulation to the rest of the school, but slowly and always as a favor.

This is not a place for details. I have only to assure pastors, that without a children's library much of their Sunday School labor will be fruitless. The initial outlay is small. Let them give the scheme a fair trial; and if it comes to nought, the books, though lost, will do good somewhere.

## CHAPTER XIX

### CO-OPERATION OF PARENTS

Parents are strictly bound to coöperate with the Sunday School in the religious education and training of the child. They are bound to assist in making the school efficient; they are bound to see that the child attends the school punctually and regularly; and they are bound to make it learn the lesson, and perform the Daily Practice, and observe the other instructions, given in the school. The Sunday School makes no substantial change in the responsibilities of parents. Their obligation to edify the child, to watch over it, and to correct it remains always the same.

The fulfilment of those responsibilities will not only help the Sunday School; but it is an integral part of the child's religious education. It is the complement of the work done in the Sunday School, somewhat as the practice of the child's music lesson during the day is the complement of

the morning instruction received from the teacher. The instruction would be useless without the practice: the Sunday School work would be almost equally so without home training.

The Sunday School ought to do much to raise the moral standard of the next generation. It will do little, if the children taught in it are not reared in the healthful atmosphere—the invigorating, inspiring influences—of a well-ordered, Christian home. Of those influences, the example of parents is the first and most important. When the child finds that its parents are truthful, honest, temperate, kind, patient, etc.—everything, in a word, which the Sunday School teaches that a Christian should be—that child may be confidently expected to yield to the twofold influence thus brought to bear on it, the influence of the two things it loves most on earth—the home and the Church. It must be admitted, however, that the trend of modern society gives no grounds to hope for the near restoration of the Christian home of the past—for the awakening of parents to the solemn duty of giving their children the example of a beautiful Christian life. The little

ones that Jesus Christ loves so much will be the sufferers. Our religious teaching once a week is not strong enough of itself to stand against the opposite influences of a disorderly home. In spite of all we do, children will sooner or later follow their parents; we shall be like men who plant seed in an unfenced field; and the parents themselves will pass into eternity with the spiritual ruin of their children registered against them.

To coöperate with the Sunday School, parents must not only give their children good example; but they must also remove everything in the home likely to scandalize them. And our Divine Lord Himself gives the reason: "Their Angels in Heaven always see the face of my Father who is in Heaven." (Matt. xviii. 10.) Elderly people are apt to think that a child is safe in reading matter which they themselves can read without moral danger. They commit the same error in regard to pictures, music, dancing, etc. In consequence, they who would not leave a razor within reach of their children, leave edged weapons far more dangerous scattered about the home without a thought of the fatal wounds they may inflict.



Besides good example and the removal of sinful occasions, there are a few other ways of coöperating with the Sunday School, which it is necessary to urge on parents.

1. *Prayer.* It is not enough to tell a child it should say its prayers: the parent is bound to see that it says them, morning and evening, at meals, and when the Angelus rings. Would that the beautiful practice of saying those prayers in common were established in every Christian home. The old Catholic custom of morning prayers at the breakfast-table and the Rosary at night has made many a home united and happy.

2. *Sunday School work.* (a) Study of lesson. Let a time be appointed in the evening for this study. Ten or fifteen minutes will suffice for a child of ordinary ability, as only a fifth part of the whole lesson need be memorized daily. Parents may be assured that a child is benefiting by its Sunday School work, if it takes gladly and spontaneously to this evening task. But should it show disinclination to the duty or urge pretexts for shirking it, scolding or lecturing will be fruitless and unwise. It will be far better for one of

them—say, the mother—to take the catechism and go over the few lines to be memorized along with the child, laying a small wager, that she will “get them by heart” first. When the lesson is learned, and the little one, having won the bet, is glowing with self-satisfaction, a few kind words will be said about the pleasure that always follows from doing what is right promptly and cheerfully.

(b) The Daily Practice. Let parents never forget to ask the child what is the Daily Practice for the week; and let them see that it is observed. Yet care must be taken that it be not considered a penance. Performed against the grain and under pressure, it will do no permanent good. Therefore parents and directors must make its performance as easy and pleasant as possible.

(c) What the child heard. A child, interested in the work of the Sunday School, will be eager to tell all about it when it returns home. Let it have every encouragement to do so. Its impressions of what was taught will be made thereby clearer and deeper; and probably mistakes and misunderstandings will be brought out that need correction.

3. *Consultation with director.* Parents, earnestly intent on the Christian education of their child, will give the director all the help in their power to secure this end. They will help him not only by the religious and moral influences with which they will surround the child; but, more directly still, by making him acquainted with its unfolding character—its dispositions, tendencies, good and bad points, general conduct. Such knowledge is almost indispensable to everyone engaged in the religious education and training of the young. In return, a director will give parents valuable help for the training of their child, by the suggestions which his larger experience will enable him to offer. This combined, harmonious action of home and school may be trusted, with the aid of divine grace, to produce the happiest results.

## CHAPTER XX

### RELIGION IN THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Our parochial schools, as well as our academics and colleges, are increasing fast, thanks to the strong, practical faith of our people. With their continued increase, the Sunday School will become less and less necessary, at least for the formal teaching of religion.—This will be abundantly supplied by the daily lesson in Christian doctrine, which forms an essential element in our Catholic schools.

The day, however, is far off, when every Catholic parish in the land will have its Catholic school. Therefore, for a long time to come, the Sunday School will be the only means of educating and training a large number of our children in their religion. And as long as it is necessary, suggestions for its greater efficiency will be opportune and helpful.

To make such suggestions is the main purpose

of this work. In writing it, however, I have had in view a still larger purpose, namely, to adapt its principles, rules, and methods to the religious education and training of children in our day schools, as well as in our academies and colleges. I now proceed to show how this adaptation can be made; or, in other words, how to make the half hour's instruction in Christian doctrine not only convey an adequate knowledge of religion, but inspire a love of it, incite to the practice of it, and, as far as may be, train in its duties, on the lines laid down in these pages. It is evident that if this *can* be done, it *ought* to be done—especially if it does not add much to the work of the teacher.

1. It is absolutely necessary that the teacher have an adequate idea of the object of the Christian doctrine class. He must aim at making his children not only know their religion, but also love and practise it. In all his instructions, he must keep this threefold aim in view.

2. The distinctively religious character of the class is to be so impressed on the children's minds, that they will regard the half hour's exercise in the light of a church service. Yet, the exercise

must be bright, pleasant, interesting, attractive—everything calculated to open and dispose the young mind and heart for the truths taught. Even for naughty children, that half hour is to be a “Truce of God.”—All punishments are to be suspended; nay, sometimes, wholly remitted. The room is turned into an oratory for the occasion; all books, slates, and papers are to be put out of sight; and the walls are to be covered with religious pictures, each having a suggestion and an inspiration of its own for the class. With practice and organization, this change is made and unmade in a few minutes; and the effect is most helpful to the teacher.

3. In the order of exercises given in the seventeenth chapter, prayer holds the first and the last place. So it should be here. At the beginning, I would have the Our Father recited with pauses; and the Hail Mary at the end—nothing more. I would give the Prayer-class a definite and easily intelligible meaning for each petition and clause of these prayers before permitting their recital, and I would set my face sternly against all routine prayer. I would train children to

mean what they say, and to say only what they mean, when they speak to God, or to the Blessed Virgin and the saints. I would, in an especial manner and with endless repetition, teach them to remember when they go to pray, that God is present, and is listening to them, and is as much displeased with inattention and disrespect, as a father would be with the same faults in a child who came to ask him for something.—I would consider my duty of religious instruction more than half done, as soon as I had taught my class to pray well. .

4. Useful as hymns are, I would not interrupt the work of this class with them. The time is too short. Let another hour be appointed for them; or let one of the classes be given weekly to them.

5. The Daily Practice must never be omitted. To save time, it may be made in this simple way: “Children, you remember what the Daily Practice is?” “Yes; Kindness.” “Very good. Now, let each of you think for a moment whether he has practised kindness to those around him since yesterday morning. . . . let us say the Confiteor, all together, and slowly, for any faults

we may have committed against the virtue of kindness.”

6. The next three exercises—the Review of the last lesson, the Recitation of the present lesson, and the Explanation of the next lesson—are so closely related, that I will speak of them together. The idea is, to bring the matter of each lesson three times before the soul of the child. For example: in Monday morning’s class, I give an Explanation of Tuesday’s lesson; on Tuesday morning, I have a Recitation of it; and on Wednesday morning, I make a Review of it. On Monday morning, however, I do not occupy all the time with the Explanation of Tuesday’s lesson. I have a lesson for the morning, memorized at home and to be recited in class. Nor does the Explanation of Tuesday’s, and the Recitation of Monday’s, lesson take up the whole half hour. I give part of the time to a Review of the last lesson recited on Friday or Saturday morning. In this way, I bring three distinct lessons before the children in each class; and I go over each of these lessons three times, in three successive classes.

There is nothing novel in this arrangement of



class-work; as it is simply the application of two recognized principles of child-teaching—Repetition and Variety. But, strange to say: the novelty consists in *requiring the teacher to teach*. At present, in too many cases, he *hears* a recitation, *marks* for correct answering, *appoints* a new lesson; and then passes to what he considers the business of the day. Now, I would ask, what teaching is there in hearing a recitation? Assuredly, none. Where, then, does the teaching of vital religion, not to speak of training in it, appear in the curriculum of many of our parochial schools? You will say in the daily instructions given by the pastor. But I speak of schools in which the pastor entrusts the entire religious instruction of his children to the teachers and the teachers content themselves with hearing the recitations of the catechism lesson. Of course, those teachers from time to time will tell their children to be good, and to say their prayers, and they will give them pious pictures, perhaps also Rosaries and Scapulars. But they make no attempt to engraft on their souls the living and effectual word of God, to develop in them the latent seeds of the

divine and moral virtues, to equip them with such a knowledge of their religion as will enable them to give an intelligent account of it to outsiders.

Every Catholic teacher ought to be able and willing to give their class an adequate practical knowledge of religion, to inspire them with love of it, and to do all that their position enables them, to train in the practice of it. To do this on the lines I have laid down for Sunday School teachers, they will have to study carefully the directions given in Chapters 7, 8, and 9. It is not advisable that they should do more, at first, than to prepare themselves to explain the meaning of hard words and to give a simple paraphrase of the answers. After some time, their reading will enable them to give comparisons and examples by which the truth explained may be impressed on the imagination. Their own experience will tell them, that something more is still necessary to bring the truth in touch with the conscience. It has to be appropriated, realized, made a present, living, imperative issue. This is done by repeating to the child over and over, that all God's loving kindness to the world

is intended for each one individually. "This truth is for *my* enlightenment; this Sacrament is for *my* sanctification; this Commandment is for *my* guidance." Such consideration, of itself, will appeal to the child's emotional nature; and other appeals will be suggested by the particular character of the truth. These are presented in a few unstudied words; and in a few more, if the truth explained admit it, a practical application is made of it for the child's moral guidance.

There is to be no sermonizing in this concrete and emotional presentment and practical application. The teacher will bear in mind that he is but a sower of the seed, and that a long and anxious time must intervene before he can expect to see any visible growth, and much less the golden fruit of his labors. After God's blessing, which alone gives increase, what he has to rely on most is, the cumulative effect of his daily appeal to the imagination, feelings and conscience.

## CHAPTER XXI

### A CATHOLIC REVIVAL

The whole success of a Sunday School depends on three factors—the pastor, the parents and the teachers. Where these three coöperate, the children will respond and grow, year after year, in the knowledge, love and practice of their religion. Where one or other of them acts independently or lies by as a sleeping partner, there the work will be ill done and the result unsatisfactory.

The coöperation of the pastor may be taken for granted. He will do his part faithfully and zealously. He will gather in all the children of the parish, secure and train an adequate supply of teachers, and urge parents, as a most sacred duty, to second him by example, supervision, correction, and active interest, in the religious development of their children. Furthermore, he will attend the school, Sunday after Sunday, give a short ad-

dress, and see that the work is done systematically and efficiently.

But will parents and teachers give him their hearty coöperation? Will they persevere in giving it? Will the Sunday School, started on the broad lines I have laid down, live through the many obstacles it will encounter—reaction, misunderstandings, dissensions, vicious or disorderly homes, &c.? The answer depends, first of all, on Divine help, which surely will not be refused to humble earnest prayer. Divine help, however, will not do everything for us: we must do all we can for ourselves. Therefore, a pastor must find out and implant in parents and teachers such principles and motives of coöperation as will outlast temporary enthusiasm and overcome the inevitable drawbacks of selfish interests and passions. “The child is an embodiment and revelation of Divine Goodness; it is very dear to Jesus Christ; the future of the Church depends on its religious education and training; an eternal reward is promised for instructing it to justice:”—if these supernatural truths and the motives implied in them be once rooted in Catholic hearts,

parents and teachers will do their part, and the permanence and efficiency of the Sunday School will be secured.

But that such motives be realized and acted on, they must not be isolated spiritual impressions, coexistent with depraved habits or an unchristian standard of life. They must be part of the renovation of the whole being in Christ; and this, part of a Catholic revival throughout the whole community. We are capable of better things than we are doing—of a higher, more consistent, more intelligent Christian life than we are living. Our faith, our assurance of a future life, prayer, Mass, Sacraments, sermons and instructions by men divinely appointed to the office—these should mark us as “a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people.” In politics, business, social intercourse, as well as in questions of the day, we should stand together on the side of Jesus Christ, and take our principles from His Gospel.—In the home especially, we should give evidence of the vital energy of our faith.

The need of such a revival comes home daily with sorrow and pain to every zealous pastor. He has

knowledge of nominal Catholics whose civic conduct brings dishonor on the Church. He has knowledge of traditional Catholics whose religion consists mostly in thanking God they are not like other men. He has knowledge of devotional Catholics without intelligence, and of intellectual Catholics without devotion. Worst of all, he has knowledge of "Liberal" Catholics, who, scarcely believing the elementary truths of faith, speak of the superstition of the Dark Ages, the bigotry and absolutism of Rome, and the enfranchisement of the Christian conscience from dogmatic fetters. Men and women like these are a dead weight on the activities of the Church. They shut out her light and attractiveness for non-Catholics. They cannot be relied on for intelligent coöperation in any religious work.

A Catholic revival has been already inaugurated at the center of all ecclesiastical energy. Leo the Thirteenth, with far-seeing wisdom, exhorted the Catholic world to reconstitute the Christian home on the model of the Holy Family of Nazareth. Following in his footsteps, our present Pontiff Pius the Tenth, having taken for his

motto the inspiring words: "Instaurare omnia in Christo—to re-establish all things in Christ,"—has within a few years urged spirituality in the seminary, the Gospel in the pulpit, and an open Tabernacle for the faithful. These measures, loyally carried out, contain all the elements of the most drastic reform. They secure to the Church an apostolic, not a doctrinaire, priesthood, and a laity fed, intellectually and spiritually, on the Incarnate Word.

A Catholic revival will lead to Catholic organizations, not for recreative or utilitarian, but for charitable and religious, purposes. It will in particular inspire our young men with a public, co-operative spirit that will find vent not only in the discussion of social and economic questions from a Catholic standpoint, but in much practical local work which their pastor will cheerfully intrust to them.

The time is come for our Catholic young men to awaken to the power they have of largely shaping the future destiny of the Church in this country. Let them take the initiative themselves; organize under the sanction of ecclesiastical au-



thority; begin with the study of the burning questions of the day; invite Catholic specialists to address them from time to time; practise debating among themselves; and thus prepare themselves to enter as loyal Catholics into the public life of the nation.

Such a movement has been growing in France for the last twenty years; and many look to it as the solitary gleam of hope for the church of that country. The following account of the organization is transcribed here, to show the vast growth of which a similar organization would be capable in this country.\*

“One of the most important of these (social works inaugurated or carried on by young men) is the *Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Française*, founded in 1886 by Count Albert de Mun and half a dozen young men. They held their first meeting at an old house in the Rue du Bac where the saintly Mgr. Segur had worked and died. The Association spread rapidly. In fourteen months it embraced some twenty groups, rep-

\* Dublin Review, July, 1906. “Catholic Social Effort in France.”

representing about a thousand members. In a very few more years we find eight thousand of its members gathered for a religious celebration in Notre Dame, and fifteen hundred on a pilgrimage to Rome. In 1894 came a brief of approval from the Holy Father; while the last three years have been marked by important congresses, of which more hereafter. It now numbers some fifteen hundred groups and seventy thousand members.

“Its organization and programme have become more clearly defined as its numbers and influence have increased. It consists of a federation of autonomous groups in town and country. Each group yearly elects one of its members to represent it upon the federal council. The council, in turn, elects every second year a general committee consisting of a president, a vice-president, a secretary, an almoner, four “chiefs of sections” and other officials. The “chiefs of sections,” upon whom most of the work falls, deal respectively with exterior communications, intercourse between the groups, finance and literature. This central machinery, together with the excellent fortnightly publication, *Annales de la Jeunesse Catholique*,

keeps the groups in touch and gives unity of spirit and aim to the whole body.

“Yet the groups retain their autonomy, and even support a score of local publications. They represent every stratum of society in town and country. The Association is, in fact, not so much an *oeuvre*, as a grouping of young and active good wills throughout the country. It encourages its members to take up any social work for which their character and environment fit them.

“The tendencies of the Association towards social work has become more and more pronounced every year. Even in its earliest statutes we find its purpose thus defined: Its object is to cooperate in the re-establishment of the Christian social order. Its principles are submission to the authority of the Church and perfect adhesion to her teachings, especially in all matters connected with the social and economic orders. Its methods are Christian devotion, and mutual study and support among its members.”

When will the Church, the home, the school and college in this country develop such public Catholic spirit in the young as will make similar asso-

iations possible among us? The time will surely come; for God has been always singularly gracious to the American Church. But its coming will be, not through miraculous intervention, but rather from small beginnings seconded by grace, enlightening, stimulating, strengthening and sustaining individual pastors in the work.

And when the time comes, what a harbinger those Associations of Catholic Youth will be of growth and perpetuity in our Church! What a blessing they will bring to the homes from which they will have been recruited! What a help they will be to pastors in the Sunday School and other parochial work! Above all, what an inspiring, invigorating influence they will be to the community in which they are established, and to the nation which they leaven!

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE DIVINE TEACHER

A last word: The Supreme Teacher in the Sunday School is Jesus Christ. While we are speaking to the ear of the child, His Spirit is speaking to its heart, breathing on it and warming it into active spiritual life. "Suffer the little children to come unto Me." Yes; that is precisely our mission—to show them Jesus, so Beautiful, so Good, so Gracious, Lovable and Winning; to open the way to Him, and clear it of obstacles, and then say to them: "Run to him, dearest; He is your best Friend."

Jesus Christ is the Supreme Teacher. We prepare the soil, and scatter the dormant seeds of revealed truth upon it; but the vital organic union and growth, His Spirit alone can effect. *Deus autem incrementum dedit.* We tell of the unseen—of God walking here among us, of man's emancipation, of faith, repentance and love, justifica-

tion and salvation; but who will believe our report, unless the Spirit of Wisdom enlightens the eyes of the heart, that those we teach may know what is the hope of their calling, and the riches of the glory in store for them, and the exceeding greatness of the power revealed in their Redemption and sanctification?

Jesus Christ is the Supreme Teacher; and we are but His assistants. Let us recognize our place, and not rob Him of the glory of His work. "The humility of science" is among the latest conclusions of human philosophy. The humility of life—the "Non nobis, Domine" of the psalmist—is the fundamental lesson of Christian faith. It drew the regard of God on a Jewish Maiden, and she became an agent in the world's enlightenment and regeneration. In a narrower sphere,—in the prairie mission or the city parish—it will be blessed with similar results. Probably, we shall not live to see the harvest—to see the child here before us grown to a strong, chaste, healthful manhood, proud of his Church, loyal to her teachings, sharing in her ministrations, upright, trustworthy, broad, intelligent, sympathetic, in varied touch

with life, blessed by all in need of a helping hand, and blessed still more by the many whom his simple statement of Catholic truth, enforced by his noble life, will have led from the dreary darkness of unbelief into the marvellous light of the Gospel. We may not live to see this or other golden fruit of our humble ministry in the Sunday School. But is it not cheering and inspiring to know that the fruit shall be there, and that our race shall be the better for it, and that the good we brought to that young man will, with God's grace, be multiplied in his children and go on spreading in widening circles, till its impulse be lost at the foot of the Throne of Judgment.

We are but assistants of the Supreme Teacher; yet He rewards us as if the work were wholly ours. And He rewards us for it independently of its results. Think of a servant offered fabulous wages for one hour's work in the week, with the assurance that the wages shall be continued though the work prove fruitless. What servant would refuse to work on such terms?—Alas, the servants of the Great King do refuse. There are parishes in which Catholics decline to interest

themselves or to coöperate in Sunday School work. Surely, that is not a saving faith—the faith that is insensible, not only to the duty, but to the ineffable happiness, of helping little children to Jesus Christ. In the plan of Redemption, no man can ordinarily save his soul, except by helping his brother-man according to means, need, and opportunity. Now, there is no help we can give more blessed, than to bring the little child to Jesus, that it may know Him and love Him. Woe, then, to the parish that leaves the pastor to do this work singlehanded; and woe to the man or woman whose only excuse for indifference is the excuse of Cain: “Am I my brother’s keeper!”

Jesus Christ is the Supreme Teacher. Why should we be discouraged by apparent failure? He sees into the future lives of these children, now so wilful and unpromising. He sees that many of them will not come to Him for a long time, and that many more, after coming, will drift away from Him and repay His love with forgetfulness and ingratitude. He sees the obstacles they will encounter; the evil dispositions and tendencies, transmitted through countless generations, that



will ripen into evil acts and habits; the high fever in the blood that will run its course. These vicissitudes and much more He sees in the life of the child; and yet He goes on loving it, and helping it, teaching it, working with it, hovering round it with all the anxious love of a mother. Who, then, are we to despair, because, forsooth, the seed we planted yesterday is not springing from the soil to-day? Our teaching of that child is but the least part of its life. This least part Jesus Christ entrusts to us, taking all the rest on Himself. Patiently, hopefully, lovingly He does the greater work: patiently, hopefully, lovingly He expects us to do the little He condescends to ask of us.

And we will do it with generous self-devotion. And we will help to raise up a Catholic generation, such as made Rome Christian and may make America the brightest glory of the Church of Christ.



## APPENDIX

ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF PIUS X., BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE  
POPE, TO THE BISHOPS OF THE UNIVERSAL  
CHURCH ON THE TEACHING OF  
CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

TO HIS VENERABLE BROTHERS, THE PATRIARCHS, PRIMATEs, ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS AND OTHER ORDINARIES HAVING PEACE AND UNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE, PIUS P. P. X. SENDS GREETING AND BENEDICTION.

VENERABLE BROTHERS :

In this extremely distressing and difficult time the hidden designs of God have imposed on our slender strength the office of Supreme Pastor over the universal flock of Christ. The hardship is great because the enemy has long been prowling around the flock and with subtle cunning has endeavored to bring havoc upon it, succeeding to such an extent that more than ever what the Apostle wrote to the ancients of the Church of Ephesus seems to be realized: "I know that ravening wolves will enter among you, not sparing the flock."<sup>1</sup>

Those among us who are prompted by zeal for the

<sup>1</sup> Acts xx, 29.

glory of God and who seek for the reasons of the present decay of religion ascribe it to various causes, and each, according to his own views, adopts different methods in the endeavor to protect and restore the kingdom of God on earth. To Us, Venerable Brethren, without rejecting the opinions of others, it seems we must agree with the judgment of those who attribute the remissness, or rather the intellectual debility of our times — a condition from which such grave evils arise — chiefly to ignorance of divine things. There seems in our days to be a recurrence of what God said by the mouth of the Prophet Oseas: “There is no knowledge of God in the land. Cursing and lying and killing and theft have overflowed and blood hath touched blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth in it shall languish.”<sup>1</sup>

In fact, in our age it is a common and alas! not an unjust complaint that there are a great many Christian people who are in the densest ignorance about what concerns their eternal salvation. Nor when We say Christian people do We refer to the humbler classes, who often may find an excuse for their ignorance in the fact that the hard rule of their harsh masters does not leave them the opportunity to attend to themselves or permit the disposal of their time; but We speak especially of those who are not lacking in intellectual culture, nay, who are often notably conspicuous for knowledge in profane science, but who in religious matters pass their lives in thoughtlessness and unconcern. It is difficult to explain in what dense darkness they are in-

<sup>1</sup> Osee iv, 1.

volved, and, what is worse, in what heedlessness they live. Of God, the Supreme Ruler and Author of all things, of the teaching of Christianity they have never a thought. They know nothing of the Incarnation; nothing of God's perfect renovation of the human race; nothing of Grace, which is especially required for the attainment of things eternal; nothing of the august Sacrifice of the Mass, or of the Sacraments by which we acquire and retain divine grace. Of the wickedness and foulness of sin they have no appreciation; and hence no care to avoid or to withdraw from it; and they arrive at the portals of death in such a condition that the priest, not to dispel all hope of salvation, is compelled to sum up and teach the very elements of religious truth, instead of devoting those last moments to fostering sentiments of love of God in the soul. Often, it is not even that, and, as too frequently happens, the dying man, in his reprehensible ignorance, regards the ministrations of the priest as unnecessary, and persuades himself that he can enter on the dreadful road of eternity with a tranquil mind and face the anger of God, whom he has not thought it necessary to propitiate. Fittingly has it been said by Our Predecessor, Benedict XIV.: "We declare that the greater part of those who are damned have brought the calamity on themselves by ignorance of the mysteries of the faith, which they should have known and believed, in order to be united with the elect."

Hence, Venerable Brothers, why should we wonder that not only among savage peoples, but even in those nations which are still spoken of as Christian, there

should be such a widespread and ever-increasing corruption of morals and depravity of life? The Apostle Paul, writing to the Ephesians, said: "Fornication, and all uncleanness and covetousness, let it not be so much as named among you, as becomes saints; or obscenity or foolish talking."<sup>1</sup>

Now, the foundation of this holiness and purity of soul, which are to hold evil desires in check, is, as the Apostle declared, the knowledge of divine things: "See, therefore, brethren, how you walk circumspectly, not as unwise, but as wise. Therefore become not unwise, but understanding what is the will of God."<sup>2</sup>

And rightly so. For the will of man now scarcely retains even that love of right and justice which was implanted in the human heart by the Almighty Creator, and which was intended to lead to what is the true good, and not to what is only a shadow. Depraved by the primal fault and forgetful of God, its Maker, it directs everything to the cultivation of vanity and the pursuit of falsehood. Blinded by wicked desires, there is surely need of a guide to lead it in the ways of justice which have been unfortunately abandoned.

Of course the natural guide is the human mind, but if the mind has not its proper light, viz.: the knowledge of divine things, it will be the blind leading the blind, ending only in the ditch. The holy King David, praising God for the light of truth with which He had illumined the intellect exclaimed: "The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us." And he signified

<sup>1</sup> Eph. v, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. v, 15.

what was to follow upon the possession of this gift of light when he added: "Thou hast given gladness in my heart;"<sup>1</sup> to wit, that gladness with which the heart is dilated when it runs in the ways of God's commandments.

Whosoever considers this will perceive how true it is that Christian truth, more perfectly than the mere powers of nature, shows us the nature of God and His infinite perfections.

Why should it not be so? Christian truth bids us revere Almighty God by faith, which is an act of the mind; by hope, which is an act of the will; by charity, which is an act of the heart, and thus it subjects the whole man to its Supreme Author and Ruler. In the same way the doctrine of Jesus Christ unfolds for us the true nobility of human nature, inasmuch as it reveals man as the son of the Heavenly Father, after whose likeness he is made, and holds out to him an eternal and glorious reward. But from this very dignity with which man is invested and from the knowledge of it, Christ wishes us to learn that we should love one another and live as behoves the sons of light, "not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chamberings and impurities, not in contention and envy."<sup>2</sup>

He likewise enjoins upon us to cast all our care upon God, knowing that He will provide for us. He bids us give to the poor, to do good to those who hate us, to place the eternal advantage of our soul above the fleeting pleasures of this world. And, not to speak of all

<sup>1</sup> Ps. iv, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xiii, 13.

these things in detail, does not the teaching of Christ appeal to and command the proud to cultivate that humility of soul which is the origin of true glory? "Whoever, therefore, shall humble himself he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven."<sup>1</sup> It teaches us that prudence of the spirit which wards off the prudence of the flesh; that justice which gives each his own; that fortitude which makes us ready to bear all things, and with resolute heart to suffer for God and our eternal happiness. Finally it teaches that temperance by which we even love poverty for the sake of the kingdom of God, nay, by which we "glory in the cross of Christ, despising the shame." Hence it follows that not only does Christian teaching illumine the mind and enable it to attain the truth, but it inflames the will and enkindles that ardor which makes us aspire to God and unite ourselves with Him by the exercise of every virtue.

It is not Our purpose to assert that depravity of the heart is inconsistent with knowledge of religious truth: Would that facts did not prove the contrary! But We say that where the mind is enveloped in the dark clouds of ignorance, there cannot be either rectitude or morality. For although a man with eyes open can turn away from the right path, the blind man is constantly in danger of going wrong. Moreover, whereas if the light of faith is not wholly extinct, there is always a hope of reformation; depravity of morals, united with ignorance of the truth, leaves scarcely any remedy, and leaves the road open that leads to ruin.

Since therefore so many and such serious evils result

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xviii, 4.



from ignorance, and since, on the other hand, there is such need of and such helpfulness in religious instruction, it is in vain for any one to hope to fulfill his duty unless he knows what that duty is. Upon whom the task devolves to do away with this fatal ignorance and to impart to men's minds the knowledge which it is so necessary to possess, let us now stop to consider.

On whom it devolves, Venerable Brothers, admits of no doubt; for this most important duty regards all who are charged with the care of souls. They are bound by the precept of Christ to know and feed the flock intrusted to them. But to feed is, first of all, to teach: "I will give you"—thus God promised by Jeremias—"pastors according to my own heart, and they shall feed you with knowledge and doctrine."<sup>1</sup> Wherefore Paul the Apostle said, "Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the Gospel,"<sup>2</sup> indicating that the first duty of those who in any degree are set over the government of the Church is the instruction of the faithful in sacred things.

We deem it superfluous to dwell at greater length in praising such instruction or showing its value in the eyes of God. No doubt the pity we manifest in relieving the wants of the poor is most acceptable to God; but who will question that the care and labor by which we procure not transient benefits for the body, but eternal for souls by teaching and warning them are far more acceptable. Nothing certainly can be more desirable, nothing more pleasing to Jesus Christ, the Redeemer

<sup>1</sup> Jerem. iii, 15.

<sup>2</sup> I Cor. i, 17.

of immortal souls, Who said of Himself by Isaias "He hath sent me to preach the Gospel to the poor."<sup>1</sup>

It is important, Venerable Brothers, to emphasize and urge this in a particular manner, that no weightier duty is appointed unto priests, and by no stricter obligations are they bound. In a priest holiness of life must be accompanied by knowledge: "The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge;"<sup>2</sup> and the Church strongly insists upon it for those who are about to enter the sacred ministry. Wherefore does she so insist? Because the Christian people expect from them the knowledge of the Divine law, and God chooses them to impart it: "They shall seek the law at his mouth; because he is the Angel of the Lord of hosts."<sup>3</sup> On this account the Bishop at ordination thus addresses the candidates for the priesthood: "Let your doctrine be the spiritual medicine of the people of God; let them be provident helpers of our order; that, meditating upon the law day and night, they may believe what they read, and teach what they have believed."<sup>4</sup> If these words apply to all priests, what must be thought of those who, having official rank and power, are charged with the government of souls by virtue of their priestly dignity and, as it were by a sacred contract. They are the pastors and doctors whom Christ hath given that the faithful be no longer children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the wickedness of men; but by

<sup>1</sup> Luke iv, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Mal. ii, 7.

<sup>3</sup> Mal. ii, 7.

<sup>4</sup> Pontif. Rom.

doing the truth in charity, they may in all things grow up in Him, Who is the Head, even Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Wherefore the holy Council of Trent, considering the pastors of souls, declared that their first and chief duty was to teach the faithful of Christ. Hence it commands them to explain the truths of religion to the people at least on Sundays and more solemn festivals, and every day, or certainly three times a week, in the sacred seasons of Advent and Lent. Nor is this all, for it adds that parish-priests are bound, at least on these same Sundays and festivals, either personally or by others, to instruct the children in the truths of faith, and to train them in obedience to God and their parents. When, moreover, the Sacraments are to be administered, it orders that those who are to receive them be instructed in plain and simple language regarding their effects.

These prescriptions of the holy Synod, Benedict XIV., our predecessor, thus summarized and defined more distinctly in his Constitution *Etsi minime*: "Two duties particularly are imposed by the Council of Trent on the guardians of souls: one, that they should speak to the people about Divine things on festival days; the other that they should instruct children and all less intelligent persons in the rudiments of faith and of the Divine Law." Rightly, indeed, does the prudent Pontiff distinguish the twofold office: of delivering an address — which is usually called an explanation of the Gospel — and of teaching Christian doctrine. For there may not be wanting some who, for the sake of lessening labor, may persuade themselves that the homily may take the

<sup>1</sup> Ephes. iv, 14-15.

place of catechism — a mistake evident to all who reflect. The sermon on the Gospel is addressed to those who have been already imbued with the elements of the faith. It may be called the bread distributed to grown people. Catechetical teaching, on the contrary, is the milk which the Apostle Peter wished the people to desire without guile. That is to say, the office of the catechist consists in taking up for explanation a truth pertaining to faith or morals, and making it clear from every point of view. And since the purpose of teaching should be amendment of life, the catechist must institute a comparison between what God commands to be done and what men do in point of fact; then, making timely use of examples drawn from the Sacred Scriptures, ecclesiastical history, or the lives of the Saints, he must persuade his hearers, and point out to them clearly how they are to set their conduct in order; finally, let him exhort all present to abhor and fly vice and to pursue a virtuous life.

We understand, indeed, that such a duty as this of teaching Christian doctrine is unattractive to not a few as not being generally held in high estimation, nor perhaps likely to attract popular praise. But for Our part, We consider that such an opinion is founded rather on thoughtlessness than truth. Sacred orators, who, from a sincere desire of glorifying God, justify and defend the faith, or proclaim the glories of the Saints, are certainly to be praised. But this work supposes a preceding one; that, namely, of the catechist; which, if it has been omitted, the foundations on which to build the house have not been laid. Too often do the most ornate discourses, which receive the loud applause of crowded

assemblages, serve only to tickle men's ears, without at all moving their hearts. Catechetical instruction, on the other hand, although unpretentious and simple, is that word to which God Himself witnesseth by Isaias: "As the rain and the snow come down from heaven and return no more thither, but soak the earth and water it, and make it to spring and give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be, which shall go forth from my mouth: it shall not return to me void, but it shall do whatsoever I please, and shall prosper in the things for which I sent it."<sup>1</sup> A like opinion should we form of those priests who laboriously write books in defense of the truths of religion: They are certainly worthy of much praise. But how many persons will study these volumes and draw profit from them commensurate with the author's labor and desires? Whereas, the explanation of Christian doctrine, if it be duly given, is never fruitless for the hearers.

It will further inflame the zeal of the ministers of God to recall the enormous and constantly increasing number of persons who either know nothing at all of religion, or who have only such a knowledge of God and of the Christian faith, that, in the midst of the light of Catholic truth, they lead the lives of idolaters. How many, alas! there are, not children merely, but adults, who, even at an advanced age, are entirely unacquainted with the principal mysteries of the faith; who, when they hear the name of Christ, ask "Who is He that I may believe in Him?"<sup>2</sup> Hence it is that they foment

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lv, 10-11.

<sup>2</sup> John ix, 36.

hatred between men; they form criminal associations; they engage in dishonest business; they usuriously seize the property of others, and consider these and similar things no crime. Hence, ignoring the law of Christ, which condemns not only unclean deeds, but thoughts also and desires, although refraining perhaps, for one reason or another, from obscene pleasures, they reject no sinful thought. There being no religion in their hearts, their sins are multiplied beyond the hairs of their heads. These things, in truth, it is well to remember, occur not merely among the rude and wretched, but also, and perhaps more frequently, among persons of loftier station, and amongst those whom science inflates, who, in the conceit of vain learning, deem religion a thing to be laughed at, and "blaspheme whatever things they know not."<sup>1</sup>

Now if a harvest is vainly expected from ground which has received no seed, how shall we look for good morals in a generation which has not received Christian instruction? Wherefore, we justly conclude, that since faith has so languished that in many persons it seems to be dying, the duty of catechetical instruction must have been negligently performed or altogether omitted. It is but a false excuse to pretend that faith is a gratuitous gift conferred on each one in Baptism. All who are baptized in Christ do indeed receive the habit of faith; but this divinest seed does not "grow up and shoot out great branches"<sup>2</sup> by its own innate power. As there is in man from birth the faculty of

<sup>1</sup> Jude i, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Mark iv, 32.

understanding, which needs the mother's promptings to develop into efficiency, so it does not happen otherwise to the Christian, who, born anew of water and the Holy Ghost, is imbued with faith. He needs Christian formation, that faith may be fostered and may increase and bear fruit. Hence the Apostle wrote: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ."<sup>1</sup> But that he might show the necessity of teaching, he added, "How shall they hear without a preacher?"

If therefore, from all that has been hitherto said, it is clear of what importance is the religious training of the people, it should be Our greatest concern that the teaching of Christian doctrine, than which, to use the words of Our Predecessor Benedict XIV., nothing more useful has been instituted, should always be vigorously maintained, and where it has fallen into disuse restored.

Therefore, Venerable Brothers, wishing to satisfy the weighty obligations of Our high and apostolic office, and desiring to see uniformity of custom everywhere established in so important a matter, We do decree and strictly command that in all dioceses throughout the world the following regulations be observed and enforced:

I. All parish priests, and in general all to whom the care of souls is committed, must teach the catechism to their young boys and girls for the space of one hour on all Sundays and holy days of the year without exception; explaining to them what each is bound to believe and practise in order to attain eternal salvation.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. x, 17.

II. They shall also at stated times in the year carefully prepare these children for the Sacraments of Penance and Confirmation by courses of instruction extending through many days.

III. Likewise, by means of appropriate instructions and exhortations, given every day during the Lenten season, and if necessary also after Easter, they shall, but with very particular care and diligence, prepare their young people of both sexes for a worthy reception of their first Holy Communion.

IV. Let there be canonically established in every parish the association commonly known as the Society of Christian Doctrine, by means of which, especially where the number of priests is small, pastors may secure lay help in the teaching of Catechism; and these lay teachers should apply themselves to their task out of zeal for the glory of God, as well as from a desire to gain the rich indulgences lavishly granted by the Roman Pontiffs.

V. In the larger cities, especially where there are public academies, colleges and universities, let religious doctrine classes be established for the purpose of teaching the truths of our faith and the precepts of Christian morality to the youths who attend such public institutions wherein no mention whatsoever is made of religion.

VI. And since, in our times especially, those more advanced in years stand in no less need of religious instruction than do the young, all pastors and others having the care of souls shall, on Sundays and holy days, and at an hour most convenient for the majority of the



faithful, instruct them in the catechism, using plain and simple language, adapted to their intelligence. This, moreover, is in addition to the usual homily on the Gospel prescribed for the parish Mass, and the hour chosen should not conflict with that of the children's instruction. The Catechism of the Council of Trent should be followed in all these instructions, which ought to be so ordered as to cover in the space of four or five years the entire matter of the Apostles' Creed, the Sacraments, the Ten Commandments, Prayer and the Precepts of the Church.

All this, Venerable Brethren, We determine and decree by Our Apostolic authority; it will now be your duty, each in his own diocese, to put it into effect immediately and in every detail.

Moreover, it will be incumbent upon you to be vigilant in this matter, using your authority unto the end that what We now enjoin be not overlooked and forgotten, or, what would be as bad, that it be not put into effect negligently and listlessly. Indeed, if you would prevent such a result, you must constantly exhort and urge your pastors not to attempt these catechetical instructions offhand, but rather to prepare for them with the utmost care; for thus they will not discourse in the words of human wisdom, but "in simplicity of heart and the sincerity of God."<sup>1</sup> Let them take pattern by Christ Himself, Who though uttering "things hidden from the foundation of the world,"<sup>2</sup> nevertheless declared all things "in parables to the multitudes; and

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. i, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xiii, 35.

without parables he did not speak to them.”<sup>1</sup> We know, too, that the Apostles who were trained by Our Lord, did the same; and St. Gregory the Great used to say that “their greatest care was to preach to the simple people the plainest truths, things not high and lofty, but such as they could easily comprehend.”<sup>2</sup> And in matters of religion it is the same now as then — most men are to be moved and won by what is most simple and direct.

Now it would be a mistake, and far from Our intention, were any one to conclude, from what We have said about this striving after simplicity in religious instruction, that such manner of discourse calls for no effort, no thoughtful preparation. On the contrary, it demands much more than any other kind of public speaking. Far easier is it to find an orator who can deliver an elaborate and brilliant sermon than a catechist able to give a simple but flawless instruction. Therefore, however much one may be gifted by nature with ease in composition or fluency of expression, let him nevertheless be persuaded of this — that he will never derive any real fruit for souls from his instructions on Christian doctrine to children or to the people, unless he has well prepared himself by long and careful study and meditation. It is a grievous mistake to count on the people’s ignorance or slowness of comprehension, and use this as an excuse for negligence in the matter of preparation. The fact is, that the less cultured one’s audience, the greater care and pains must be taken to

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* 34.

<sup>2</sup> *1 Moral*, xvii, 26.

bring within the reach of their feebler comprehension truths the most sublime and far above the reach of the ordinary intelligence,—yet, truths as necessary to salvation for the ignorant as for the learned.

And now, Venerable Brethren, before closing this letter, We shall address to you the words of Moses: “If any man be on the Lord’s side, let him join with me.”<sup>1</sup> Consider well, We entreat and beseech you, what a loss to souls arises from this one cause, ignorance of the things of God. There may doubtless be many useful and praiseworthy works established in your diocese for the good of the flock entrusted to you, yet it should be your desire and ambition, before all else, to urge this present matter with all possible zeal and insistence, to work for and promote this one great end—that knowledge of Christian doctrine may thoroughly pervade and imbue the minds of all the faithful. In the words of the Apostle, St. Peter: “As every man hath received grace, ministering the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”<sup>2</sup>

And while the Most Blessed and Immaculate Virgin will continually intercede for the success of your earnest and zealous efforts, they shall also be favored by Our Apostolic Benediction, which We lovingly impart to yourselves, to your clergy and to the faithful under your care, both as a testimony of Our affection and as a pledge of heavenly graces.

Pius X., Pope.

St. Peter’s, Rome, April 15, 1905, in the second year  
of Our Pontificate.

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xxxii, 26.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Peter iv, 10.

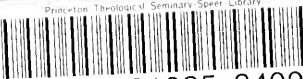








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