

Volume XX —Number 38

With Ecclesiastical Approval

Sunday, September 20, 1953

The Holy Gospel

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER
PENTECOST

Matt. 22, 34-46

At that time the Pharisees came to Jesus and one of them, a doctor of the Law, putting him to the test, asked him, "Master, which is the great commandment in the Law?" Jesus said to him, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind." This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like it, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus questioned them, saying, "What do you think of Christ? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "David's." He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call him Lord, saying, 'The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand, till I make thy enemies the footstool of thy feet'? If David, therefore, calls him 'Lord,' how is he his son?" And no one could answer him a word; neither did anyone dare from that day forth to ask him any more questions.

REFLECTIONS

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind." God wishes us to make Him the object of our soul's love, and hence He calls us His beloved. Love is gained and supported by love, and hence the

Parents Take God's Place

One of the beautiful dispensations of Divine Providence is the high honor that is paid to parenthood. When God blesses the married couple with children He makes them His vicars in so many things affecting the welfare of their offspring that it is a sacred trust indeed. The conscientious parent accepts this duty at its full face value.

1. God is our Creator, and our duties to God take precedence over all other duties. The knowledge of



God, therefore, and of His law and the spirit of obedience to His commandments is both fundamental and essential in any plan or process to true education.

2. Every child born into this life has an eternal destiny. The years of this life are but the prelude of the life to come. Parents, therefore,

disciple of love, St. John, writes: "Let us love God, because God first loved us." Never did mother love her infant, nor spouse his beloved, so affectionately as God loves man. He makes Himself man's companion, his food, his ransom, and his everlasting reward. Surely a Being so loving deserves to be loved "with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."

having both the right and the serious responsibility of educating and must provide for their children that form of education which prepares not only for the contingencies of his life but which will enable children to successfully attain that sublime end for which they are created.

3. Education begins in the home and it is a parental responsibility. Parents are never fully relieved of this responsibility. When the school years approach and it becomes necessary to delegate this responsibility of educating, to other teachers, those schools and teachers must be chosen which will fully and adequately provide religious and moral training. In most cases this means that Catholic parents have the obligation of choosing Catholic schools. But when a Catholic school is not available, or when circumstances make attendance at a Catholic school impossible, the religious and moral training for children still is necessary and must be provided by sending boys and girls to religious instruction classes.

The Constitution guarantees religious freedom and the right to educate according to conscience. The Church in America has provided splendid educational facilities from the parochial school level to that of the great Catholic universities. Under such favorable circumstances and in an age when so many thoughtful people are decrying the exclusion of religion from educational processes, it is prudent for us to select the full religious education in a Catholic school for our children.

THE WORD OF GOD
is published weekly by the:

SOCIETY OF ST. PAUL
2187 Victory Boulevard, Staten Island 14, N.Y.
Bulk Subscription \$1.00 per 100
Single Subscription \$1.50 per year
Entered as second-class matter November 12th,
1946, at the Post Office at Staten Island, N.Y.,
under the Act of March 3rd, 1879.
Editor: Rev. Father Contardo, S.S.P.
Asst.: Brother Aloysius, S.S.P.

The First Commandment

"Serve None But Him"

Catechism Chapter 16 — Part I

Perseverance

Thousands of famous men owed their success in life far more to perseverance than to talent or luck. Cato learned Greek when he was eighty years old, and Dr. Johnson learned Dutch when he was seventy. Michaelangelo was eighty-five when he adopted for his motto, "I am still learning."

Dannecker, the famous sculptor, after he had worked two years on a statue of Our Lord, showed it to a little child, and asked her, "Who is that?"

"A great man," she replied, much to the disappointment of the sculptor. He worked at it six years longer, and then called in another child, and asked her the same question.

She gazed steadfastly at the statue—an absorbed look came into her face—her eyes suddenly filled with tears, and then her answer came:—"It must be the One Who said, 'Suffer little children to come unto Me.'" That satisfied the sculptor.

There is no such word as 'can't.' With patience and perseverance almost any obstacle may be overcome.

LOVE AND SIMPLICITY

Blessed Pius X was one of a large family of ten children and he knew well the sting and the anxiety of poverty, writes the historian John Farrow. When he was made a Bishop, he proudly displayed his ring to his mother. The old peasant woman held up her hand, showed the simple band of gold that was her wedding ring, and reminded him that without this he would have no Episcopal ring. When he became Pope, his simple and frugal habits continued and his unmarried sisters attended to his domestic needs at the Vatican. He died poor, and begged a monthly pension not above 300 lire (4 dollars) for these humble women.

The editor of a large metropolitan newspaper reported some time ago the results of a poll taken among 50,000 children attending public school, and found that only one third ever heard of the ten commandments: the paper reported that only 25% of the 49 million youths in America had ever been inside any church!

Half the children of the United States are not affected in any way by the teaching of religion!

Obscene magazines whose editors know that they are so bad they cannot even be sent through the mails, are sold on 240,000 news-stands in the country, and reach **ten times more people** than all the religious publications in the country!

In the United States at the present time, pagans,—that is those who do not even profess affiliation with the church,—number about ninety millions!

Is Christ really being served today? Or is the first commandment being widely forgotten by Christians and pagans alike?

"I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt not have strange Gods before me." To the average Christian who was asked "How can that commandment be violated?" there would probably be prompt reply: "The first commandment forbids us to worship idols."

But what about the millions who think little or nothing of their **positive obligations** of worshipping God, and just drift through life with no religion? Or what about those who belong to some religion but only practice it when they want, and not as God wants? What about the superstitious people who put their trust and faith in some object or set of circumstances instead of putting their faith in God? What about the non-Catholic who picks and chooses his beliefs and moral principles, casting aside the teachings of the Catholic Church which he finds difficult? Are not all these running their life contrary to the spirit of the First Commandment of God?

Christ's reminder to the world:

It was the beginning of Christ's last three years on earth, His public life. Christ had taken time out for

prayer and fasting in union with His heavenly Father for forty days before making His way to Jerusalem. He had spent the time out in a lonely mountainous region. One of the hills not far from Jericho is today known as the Hill of Temptation. It was in this section that Satan appeared before the hungry and weakened Christ. The devil had been twice frustrated in His endeavors to tempt Christ. In one final attempt, Satan appealed to the instinct of pride to the desire for worldly gain, which so many today fall prey to. Showing Christ the kingdoms of the world and their glory and riches he said: "I will give thee all these if thou wilt fall down and worship me." In Christ's answer there is a challenge and a stark reminder to the world today: "**The Lord thy God thou shalt worship and Him only shalt thou serve.**" (Mt. 4:10) Christ had said no more, but in those few words are summed up the essence of Christianity in contrast to the spirit of paganism. That standard is violated by the avaricious man who spends all his efforts on thoughts of money; that standard is violated by the unchaste; that standard is violated by those who make a god of pleasure or of their own will and ease.

Emphasize the positive:

In each of the commandments there is both a positive and a negative aspect. "I, the Lord, am your God. You shall not have other Gods besides Me," (Ex. 20:3) reminds us of certain things we must **do**, as well as reminding us of certain things that are forbidden.

We are obliged in virtue of the first commandment to offer to God the worship due to Him alone, through acts of faith, hope and charity, through adoration and prayer. By faith we give assent to all that God has revealed to the world; by hope we trust in the goodness of God to help us; by charity we love God first of all, and then all others because that is His wish.

You cannot control the length of your life, but you can control its breadth, depth and height.

God Made Marriage

It was God Who created marriage, the Bible tells us. We read there that woman was taken from the side of man. Incredible though it may sound, the Biblical account is not a fairy tale.

In the Book of Genesis we read: **"It is not good for man to be alone. I will make for him a helpmate like unto himself."**

God had already created a great variety of things for Adam's enjoyment — light, the plants, the birds, animals. But in the midst of all this creation, the heart of Adam beat alone. The world was rich and full of marvels, but Adam was lonely. He did not find a helpmate like unto himself.

The Bible story — ancient though it be — already affirmed the high dignity of woman which Christianity still further ennobles. Woman is not to be the slave of man, or his occasional companion, but "a helpmate like unto himself," "flesh of his flesh, bone of his bone."

"So the Lord God made Adam fall into a deep sleep and, while he slept, took away one of his ribs, and filled its place with flesh. This rib, which He had taken out of Adam, the Lord God formed into a woman."

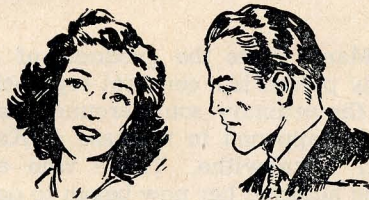
When Adam awoke he discovered a woman. God did not reserve this discovery solely for Adam on the first day of the world. Each day some young man, overwhelmed by beauty and grace, beholds the mystery of womanhood. As a child, as an adolescent, he discovered the world. But one day he leaves the games and dreams of childhood, because he discovers love. His eyes brighten, like those of Adam, as they fell upon a daughter of Eve, who will some day be his wife.

Together with him she will share his pre-occupations, his hopes, his fears, and his affections. She will live in the same regularity, vibrate to the same emotions. But because she is a woman she will bring into all things, and even into their common love, a new note.

The note is above all else one of the heart. It was from one of the ribs close to Adam's heart that Eve was formed. Man's own heart cannot resume its regular beating until woman re-discovers that special place among his ribs.

The discovery of love is so tremendous an experience that man forgets what has been best in his life prior to that moment. He had a family, a father and a mother. He was linked to them by his whole being. His life is their life transmitted to him.

But now that he has encountered that for which his heart yearned, a new life opens before him. Just as



the child leaves the breast of his mother, so the young man or young girl will leave the family. From the moment he saw Eve, Adam prophesied: **"A man will leave father and mother and will cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."**

Note the strength of the last expression. God does not shrink from the realities of life. Love needs to express itself. The greatest act of affection is reserved for man and wife and is blessed by God. He has willed that the total meeting of the two beings should be for them a feast.

Scripture uses a wonderful expression to designate the marriage act: "Adam knew his wife." Adam exulted at the sight of Eve. But he did not yet understand who she was. Then, at the moment they were united together to become one flesh, a tremendous mystery was revealed to their hearts, a mystery of love and a mystery of procreation.

When God said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth," did they realize the grandeur of the offer which was being made to them? Perhaps they thought it already was beautiful enough just to love each other. Yet, love finds its fullness only in producing. Parents are "pro-creators." They are associated in the work of God. Through them creation continues.

Marriage is as old as the world. Marriage is older than sin. It comes from God, Who created it. It is the last act of His creation. Man was not created until the sixth day, when all nature was ready to receive him. Marriage came to crown the work of creation.



Housewife with Purpose

Happiness is a state of mind that is impossible to keep secret. I feel I must share the reason for my new-found happiness with everyone I meet!

Only a few weeks ago it seemed too much for me to face another day of the same work routine of house and children. Someone inspired me to get up early one morning and go to Communion. Our parish priest is making it convenient for many of us who could not make daily Mass but who can spare a few minutes to go to Communion to come early in the morning.

Do you have this wonderful opportunity in your parish? Take advantage of it if you do.

We have the same small house, the same group of little ones, the same amount of work to do but there is a purpose in it all now. My heart sings these days because I'm doing it not just for myself, but for Jesus as well.

You see this is more than just a visit with Him. He becomes a part of me as I receive Him in the Eucharist. The thought of my unworthiness makes me tremble. Think of what we receive and you will know that no one on earth is worthy. God knew our weaknesses and yet He wants us to receive Him. He promises to make us better. He is the vine and we are the branches. As we receive Him we have the promise of life more abundantly here and the salvation of our souls for all eternity. Don't expect to feel exactly the same again.

As you learn to love God more you'll find you love all His creatures more. It's so easy to be charitable when you really feel you love your neighbor. In so many countries today there are Catholics who would give their lives for the opportunity we have of receiving Jesus each day. You might say a prayer for them and offer your day to Him and from experience I can promise you that you'll be the happiest you've ever been. It's all so easy, won't you try it?

—A Housewife.

From "Our Sunday Visitor".



"We are sending you a treasure which you will soon appreciate. Take good care of her."

These words are the contents of a note written by a priest about a girl named Catherine—or Kateri, as she was called in her native Indian tongue. The note proved to be prophetic, because Kateri Tekakwitha is deeply appreciated by her people to this day, although almost three hundred years have passed.

Kateri was born in 1656 about forty miles west of what is now Albany, N.Y., and spent her childhood in a village on the site of present-day Auriesville. Although her mother was a Catholic, she was not baptized, as the infidelity of many of the Indians caused the missionaries to defer baptism until a Christian life could be assured. Death took her mother and father during a smallpox epidemic when she was only four. It seems that God Himself stepped in and brought His graces and gifts to her soul, because though unbaptized and uninstructed she went swiftly and surely along the path of holiness. Growing up among a tribe of pagans, she nevertheless developed many virtues, including a tremendous love of purity.

Kateri was twenty years old when the Jesuit missionary Father de Lamberville came to her tribe. He was amazed at her knowledge of Christian doctrine, and edified by her virtue and devotion. He baptized her on Easter Sunday, convinced that he had brought into the Church a chosen soul.

The Lily Of The Mohawks

—By Fathers Edward and Paul Hayes

Many times the goodness of a holy person is a constant reproach to the ordinary souls around him. This happened in the case of Kateri Tekakwitha. Those who at first admired her now began to despise her. They became tired of her purity, her charity, her penances, her long hours of prayer. Her life was threatened and prudence dictated that she leave. So she fled by canoe and on foot to a Christian Indian settlement near Montreal. With her went a note from Father de Lamberville to her new spiritual guides: "We are sending you a treasure...."

At her new home, Kateri was delighted to see Catholicity flourishing in all its beauty; former enemies living in Christian charity, practicing self-denial and humility. Here the young Mohawk maiden found it possible to give full vent to her love of God. Prayer and work were combined in perfect harmony. Those in the village loved her. When she went into the woods for the winter hunt, she made a little shrine near a stream. There in the mornings she united herself in spirit with those back in the village who were fortunate enough to assist at Mass.

When she died at the young age of twenty-four, the people of the village declared that a saint had passed away. As if heaven confirmed their opinion, fifteen minutes after her death, her features, long ravaged by illness, became so beautiful that priests and people alike were convinced that a miracle had occurred.

Many people have obtained favors through her intercession down through the years. Her clients are now begging for prayers, that the Church may see fit to raise Kateri Tekakwitha to the honors of the altar.

Saints of the Week

Sunday, Sept. 20th — 17th Sunday after Pentecost. St. Eustace and Companions, Martyrs. St. Eustace was a Roman general under Trajan, who with his wife and two sons suffered martyrdom about 118 for having embraced Christianity after a miraculous vision of a crucifix between the antlers of a stag which he was hunting.

Monday, Sept. 21st — St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist. Little is known of St. Matthew after the Ascension. Most accredited opinion is that he remained in Judea for several years where he wrote his Gospel and later became the Apostle of Ethiopia, where he was martyred.

Tuesday, Sept. 22nd — St. Thomas of Villanova, Bishop-Confessor. A professor of arts, logic and philosophy at Alcala University, Spain, he joined the Hermits of St. Augustine. In 1520 he was ordained priest, and elected Archbishop of Valencia in 1544. He was renowned for his personal piety and erudition, his writings on mystical theology and the eloquence of his sermons. But above all he had the spiritual and temporal welfare of his poor at heart, for whom he erected schools and hospitals. He died in 1555.

Wednesday, Sept. 23rd — St. Linus, Pope-Martyr. He is the first successor of St. Peter, and governed the Church for 12 years. To him is attributed the ruling that women must cover their heads in church. He suffered martyrdom about the year 79 and was buried on Vatican Hill near St. Peter.

Thursday, Sept. 24th — Our Lady of Mercy. This feast commemorates the founding in 1223 of the Order of Our Lady of Mercy in Barcelona by St. Peter Nolasco and St. Raymond of Pennafort with the aid of King James of Aragon. Their chief work lay in ransoming Christian captives from the Saracens who held most of Spain. Pope Innocent XII extended this feast to the Universal Church in 1696.

Friday, Sept. 25th — St. Cleophas, Martyr. He was one of the two disciples to whom Christ appeared on the way to Emmaus on the first Easter Sunday. He is said to have been murdered for his Faith in the house where he entertained the risen Christ.

Saturday, Sept. 26th — St. Isaac Jogues and Companions, Martyrs. This feast commemorates the martyrdom of six Jesuit priests and two lay Brothers, who were slain by Iroquois and Huron Indians during the 17th century while serving as missionaries.

No child anywhere was ever born with religious or racial prejudice. He catches it like he does the measles. But he gets over a physical disease much easier.

—J. H. Pollack.