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Sermon material
on the Catholic press
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SERMON MATERIAL
ON
THE CATHOLIC PRESS



A Series of Four Sermons and Added
Helpful Information for Pastors' Use
During Catholic Press Month



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Introduction

The Sermon Outlines contained in this booklet were prepared for His Excellency the Most Rev. James A. Griffin, Bishop of Springfield, Illinois, who, beginning February 7, will combine his diocesan paper, *The Western Catholic* with *Our Sunday Visitor*. The sermons will be used by the pastors on the four Sundays of February, Catholic Press Month. They are included in this booklet with the thought that they will prove valuable to other Bishops who will want their pastors to boost the Catholic Press in their dioceses.

When such use is made of the Sermon Outlines the pastors will, of course, use the name of their own diocesan paper or refer to the national edition of *Our Sunday Visitor*. The sermons will be available to pastors in booklet form or in the February issue of *The Acolyte*.

The Editors

Our Sunday Visitor, Inc.

OUR SUNDAY VISITOR LIBRARY
HUNTINGTON, INDIANA

Decidifed

Our New Diocesan Paper

We announced last week through the reading of a pastoral letter from our Most Reverend Bishop that beginning on February 7, our Diocesan paper would be combined with *Our Sunday Visitor*. Copies of the first issue of this new and enlarged paper will be distributed after the Masses today. We want every family to be sure and obtain a copy of it.

This is Catholic Press Month and, therefore, the logical time for the placing of a Catholic paper in every home. The reason for the selection of February as Catholic Press Month is that the patron of the Catholic Press is St. Francis de Sales, whose feast falls on the eve of this month, or January 29.

For many years the *Western Catholic*, edited by the late Monsignor Foley, was a weekly visitor to the homes of most Catholics in the Diocese of Springfield, but henceforth you will receive an enlarged Catholic newspaper, together with the finest magazine supplement, all at the price of one paper.

Our new paper will be printed in two or three colors, will be profusely illustrated, will bring to you valuable information, will furnish answers to questions frequently asked, will contain special instructions for parents, high school students, and even for the little tots. In addition, it will supply the best comments on seasonal sports, and will bring to you wholesome fiction, and keep you in touch with the boys now in the army and navy service.

This paper not only reaches every Camp, but

carries articles and letters penned for and by the soldiers.

The paper will not be entirely new to several thousand families in the Springfield Diocese, because they have already been regular readers of the National Edition of *Our Sunday Visitor*, which has been distributed at the exits of their respective churches on Sunday. But from now on, they will receive the same instructive and entertaining Catholic paper besides several pages devoted to Catholic world news, and several other pages devoted to the special interests of their own diocese.

During this month of February your Bishop and your pastor want every home, in which there lives even only one Catholic person, to be reached by the new paper, recognized, after tests to determine reader interest, to be the best in the world.

Immediately after February the season of Lent begins, and our new paper will contain some very helpful Lenten reading.

For your convenience, and to make the gathering of subscriptions both easier and swifter, you will find envelopes in your pews, on the face of which you are asked to write clearly your name and address, and in which you are requested to deposit the subscription price. Then you will drop the sealed envelop into the collection basket.

We should like to have this manner of gathering subscriptions completed during the first two weeks of February so that if the response should not be one hundred per cent, the ones who did not promptly volunteer their subscription might be canvassed.

If there should be any who fail to subscribe, the Bishop and your pastor would much prefer that they

were the best rather than the indifferent parishioners.

Many good Catholic people subscribe for two or three Catholic papers and magazines, while the ones who actually need such reading most do not subscribe for any.

We hope, therefore, that no Catholic man or woman will hesitate to subscribe because his wife or her husband is not a member of the faith. The Catholic paper is needed in such a home more than in any other, and may become the guiding instrument for the conversion of the non-Catholic party, and it certainly will be very helpful for the instruction of the children. A conversion story appears in every issue of this paper.

The Catholic paper should also reach the homes of one-time Catholics who have given up completely the practice of their religion. If the spark of faith has not become completely extinguished, it may once more be fanned into a flame through the regular reading of an instructive Catholic paper. There are surely in every parish some people who, believing whole-heartedly in the benefit of the Catholic press, will be glad to pay for a subscription for some non-practicing Catholic.

The Cost

What will be the cost of the new paper? Only \$2.00 a year, less than four cents a week? This is exactly the same price which was charged for *The Western Catholic*. For it you will now receive the finest Catholic paper in the country. It is a bargain rate, offered in a day of rising prices.

Do you hesitate to purchase the daily paper which circulates in your community, even though it

costs twenty cents a week, or more than \$10.00 a year? Do you hesitate to pay twelve cents every Sunday for a Chicago paper which, in its nearly one hundred pages, does not contain a single inspiration, not a single wholesome instruction, not a single appeal to your soul or to your heart?

Do you think that the funnies are worth more to your children than the lessons contained in the Catholic paper?

Do you suppose that Almighty God will excuse you for providing members of your home with secular reading matter, and with no regular reading matter of a religious and spiritual character?

Because your Bishop and pastor do not want you to be without a Catholic paper for one single week, the new paper will be distributed at the church door during the Sundays of February, while your personal subscription to be sent to your home address is awaited and entered on the parish list.

One parish will vie with another in an effort to reach the target placed at one hundred per cent of all homes in which one or more Catholics live. If you procrastinate you may be to blame for the failure of our parish to go over the top. You who, in the past, paid a few pennies each Sunday for *Our Sunday Visitor* at the church door, will not be paying more for it in the new way, although you will be paying for it for a whole year at one time instead of in fifty-two installments. And with it you will receive all of the contents of your old diocesan paper.

Every Catholic should subscribe for this paper (1) on principle—for there certainly should be a Catholic paper in every home if secular papers enter that same home; (2) to become informed on the

accomplishments of his Church; (3) to refresh his mind with the old truths learned from the little Catechism but which have been long since forgotten; (4) to have the ready answer for almost any question which may be asked of him about his religion, about the reason for his Church's attitude towards this or that social movement; and (5) to start the children reading the Catholic paper regularly, so that they will, in their turn, become ardent advocates in later life.

Literature: Bad And Good

The Bad

The printing press was invented by a Catholic exactly five hundred years ago. But little did the inventor dream that the product of his genius would become the greatest instrumentality for the furtherance of evil instead of good.

It was hoped that it would serve the cause of God and of Christ principally, but today it is used against God and against Christ in a measure almost incomprehensible. It is used for all sorts of propaganda purposes, for propaganda against democratic forms of governments, for propaganda against religion, and for war. Atheistic, Communistic and fanatical societies and organizations make far better use of the press than does religion, and they promote their cause with far greater zeal than do the followers of Christ.

The printing press was first devoted to the publication of parts of the Bible, and then of the whole Bible.

Hundreds of publications now emanate from the printing press which contain nothing but dirt and smut. A large number of them is denied the privilege of the mails, despite the fact that the United States laws are very lax in relation to the admission of printed matter to the mails. Yet these publications find their way to every city, town and hamlet, and are exposed on magazine racks as a temptation

to the curious. Scores of them are forbidden to enter our neighboring country, Canada, and also other countries.

Most of the popular magazine literature today is very detrimental to morals and, therefore, to faith which lays stress on morals. It has been found necessary to organize throughout the United States a National Organization for Decent Literature in order to curb this evil, just as, some years ago, it was necessary to organize the Legion of Decency to fight the trend in the motion pictures to entertain people by appeal to their lowest instincts.

The United States Post Office found it necessary, last year, to withdraw the second class mail privilege from forty-four magazines, and to deny the same privilege to twenty-two new applicants. But there are still one hundred magazines, whose editors know that their products would be too filthy to even hope for the second class mail privilege and, therefore, never applied for it. Their periodicals are transported throughout the nation by freight, truck and other means of conveyance. They are sold from 240,000 newsstands, and reach ten times more people than are reached by the religious press.

Not only should no Christian-minded person read them, but they should protest against their sale in every community, because they spread mental and moral poison. But the least any Christian could do would be to counteract their influence by becoming missionaries for the right kind of literature, that which tends to strengthen faith, to promote good morals and, therefore, a healthier state of society.

The publishers of most story magazines think

only of personal profit and not of the benefit they may render to their readers. They have discovered that it is profitable to sensationalize, to publish stories which depict and detail the private lives of individuals, "whose glory is their shame."

Realizing that two-thirds of American youths have never had any training in religion or moral principles, and that they are motivated much by curiosity and by their animal impulses, unscrupulous publishers seek to gratify those particular tendencies.

End Doesn't Justify Means

On principle, their products should be left severely alone, for their "end does not justify the means" employed. They are doing more harm to the American people than all the churches are doing good, and the disastrous effects of their mode of making a fat living will be felt severely in the early future.

Of course all stories called "true" are not "true" and are not written by the persons to whom they are credited. Many of them are written by a staff of writers in New York who also write them only to sell them and to profit financially by the moral poison they spread.

A few years ago Frederick Collins, writing in *Liberty*, declared that he had evidence that much of the moral filth circulated and advertised was definitely connected with a Communist effort to demoralize and deChristianize our nation. Even for patriotic reasons, therefore, we should take a determined stand against their nefarious work.

Dr. James J. Walsh, the noted physician and

author, calls attention to this evil in his work *Religion and Health* when he says :

Religion is the only agency in modern time that tries to regulate the reading of young folks and indeed of others in this dangerous matter of sex excitation. A great many books seem to be written at the present time for no other purpose than to excite sex feeling—and thereby to make money.

The Good

Some years ago Pope Pius X pointed out the futility of devoting ourselves to one essential of religious work and neglecting another. Why waste time, sacrifices and finances in erecting beautiful churches and maintaining magnificent schools if we let the benefits of preaching and education get lost for most of the people by exerting only a half-hearted interest in the spread of the Gospel through the Press?

Pius X unmistakably decried this fallacy :

“Ah, the press! Its importance is not yet understood. Neither the faithful nor the clergy give it the attention that they should. The old sometimes say that it is a new work and that in the past souls were saved without troubling themselves about newspapers. In the past! In the past! But these short-sighted people do not consider that in the past the poison of the bad press was not spread everywhere and that in consequence the antidote of good newspapers was not equally necessary. The question is not about the past. We are not living in the past; we are living today. Very well, then. It is a fact today the Christian people is deceived, poisoned and corrupted by impious newspapers. In vain will you build churches, preach missions, found schools: All your good works, all your efforts will be destroyed, if you cannot at the same time wield the defensive and offensive weapons of a press that is Catholic, loyal and sincere.”

The ratio of good periodicals in relation to the bad is so meagre that it might be compared to a little creek in relation to the mighty ocean. There are more than 2200 daily papers in the United States which reach practically every family in the nation. There are more than 700 weekly and monthly magazines, which deal with practically every human interest, but the majority of them are the story magazines which deal with sin and, for the most part, encouragingly.

There are about 140 Catholic papers, largely diocesan, having a total circulation of less than 4,000,000, and reaching less than half the Catholic people—and only that half which is in the least need of it. More than one-third of this entire circulation is enjoyed by two national Catholic weeklies, one of which is *Our Sunday Visitor*, which will be a part of your new diocesan weekly. This is the only Catholic paper which has a considerable number of non-Catholic subscribers.

In order to ease their own consciences your Bishop and your pastor will do their utmost to get this Catholic paper into every home, and it will rest with parents and their children to read it regularly.

The body of Bishops of the United States, in order to insure an excellent religious news service, equal to and far more dependable than secular press associations, provided a large subsidy to establish the National Catholic Welfare Conference's News Service, which now has reporters and correspondents in nearly every capital of Europe.

Diocesan papers have been subscribers to this service, but many of them have found it advisable to merge with national weeklies, because they

could not individually and separately afford to engage the services of experts on news-analysis, experts in philosophy, theology, youth guidance, sports, women's interests, cartoons, illustrations, etc.

If all Catholics got behind the Catholic press, it would become our nation's strongest bulwark against the pernicious ideologies fighting for domination in the new post-war order.

The most wide-awake statesmen of our day contend that the Catholic Church is any nation's strongest bulwark. This bulwark would become even stronger if it were possible to influence the 100,000,000 non-Catholic Americans by bringing to them a knowledge of Catholic teaching, of her sound moral and social principles. If those to whom the welfare of our nation is entrusted reflected a bit, they would give every encouragement to the religious press, precisely because the first thing that Stalin and Hitler did was to suppress it. If they insist that ours is a Christian nation, they would demand publishers of newspapers and magazines to recognize Christian standards before they could hope to have the mail and common carrier instrumentalities of the nation circulate it at the expense of the taxpayers. We presume you know that the Government loses several cents on every pound of the millions of tons of papers and magazines it carries through the mail.

Help The Cause

During *Catholic Press Month*, therefore, let every family in the parish see to it that a subscription is entered for our new Diocesan paper and let everyone become a missionary for the Catholic paper. You have been supplied with envelopes for this purpose. Many of you entered your subscription last

week, but others have put off this most important matter. We hope they will delay no longer. Simply write your name and address on one of the envelopes, insert \$2.00 in it, and place it in the collection basket. That will insure your receiving your new and enlarged paper every week for a year.

False doctrines today depend on the press for their spread. The Communist, the Socialist, the Jehovah's Witness, the Mormon, the Seventh Day Adventist, those belonging to organizations which are either anti-Christian or at considerable variance with the Catholic and Protestant religions, make good use of the press, and every member is expected to be a missionary for its wider introduction. If error can be so zealous, then, of course, truth should be ten times more zealous. But as a matter of fact the cause of Christ has few lay workers.

Your new paper has a great many non-Catholic readers who are deeply appreciative of the paper, and has probably been instrumental in the conversion of more people than all other Catholic papers combined—for the mere reason that the others do not reach many non-Catholics.

Therefore let the Press Month motto of every one of you be "The Catholic paper in every Catholic home, and some informative Catholic literature in every other home."

The first step towards any conversion is the removal of the barrier of prejudice and the presentation of the correct teaching of the Catholic faith.

This preparatory service is rendered by an instructive Catholic Press, of which your new paper is the outstanding unit.

How To Help Others

All the evils with which the Catholic Church has to contend, such as indecent literature, Communism, propaganda for Birth Control, loose morals and allied things, are born not in the Catholic zone comprising 30,000,000 of our countrymen, but in the non-Catholic zone, comprising 100,000,000.

In the Catholic zone of 30,000,000 there is an abundance of good literature, sound philosophy, excellent moral principles that should flow out into the big non-Catholic zone, but which, due to the indifference of the laity, not only remain confined within the limits of the Catholic fold, but reach only the best people in that zone.

A flood of indecent, suggestive, "sexy," and subversive literature, published and circulated in the bigger zone, floods the Catholic zone as well— and to counteract it very little is done by the Catholic people.

Although the Catholic population in relation to the total population of the United States is only as one to four or five, Catholics actually constitute the leading religious organization in thirty-three out of the forty-eight states. Because they are an urban people, most of the cities located in the large area between the Ohio State line and the Atlantic Ocean, and from Maine down to the Mason and Dixon line, are from one-third to one-half Catholic; and since this large region contains about two-fifths

of all the people in the United States, Catholics should wield a far greater moral influence than they do.

In this populous area Catholics could compel city dailies, of which they constitute one-half the readers, to treat the Catholic Church with respect and keep out of their columns everything detrimental to morals. They could also make better use of their columns to answer the calumnies and misrepresentations which so frequently get into the secular press. They could, by a little planning, get a Catholic paper into the hands not only of editors and physicians and lawyers and school teachers, but into the homes of all people who, because of their public prominence, assist in forming public opinion in the community.

An Obligation Of Conscience

Is the Catholic bound in conscience to receive and read the Catholic paper?

We believe that every theologian would answer that question by an emphatic "yes" today. In by-gone years, when there were no bulky newspapers, all doing their best, even if unwittingly, to weaken one's attachment to faith, to lofty moral standards, to the pursuit of spiritual things; when there were no "liberal writers" presenting Communism and irreligion in an attractive light; when there was far less crime to report and to feature; when there were no lurid advertisements to appeal to the worst that is in man; when there was no noticeable international effort to prejudice people against the interests of Christ; when most of adult America went to church and most children were enrolled in Sunday Schools; when the secular editors believed in the sacredness of marriage and of the family and

denounced divorce; when the dailies vehemently opposed Socialism and Communism as does the Catholic press—in other words, when secular literature was rather on the side of God than against Him, there was no such obligation to support and read the Catholic paper as there is today.

Do you suppose for a moment that Almighty God would not hold guilty the Catholic who pays \$10.00 or more a year for the daily paper, who purchases week after week the 10-cent magazine, and month after month the twenty-five or fifty cent magazine, who spends hours—the women more than the men—reading things which, to say the least, have absolutely no beneficial influence on their minds or their hearts; who listens for hours every week to radio programs, yet who will not spend \$2.00 a year for the Catholic paper, nor fifteen minutes a week in perusing it; who will not seek information designed to explain the Catholic position towards many problems, nor look for the Catholic answer to questions which are frequently asked about his faith? Spirituality must decline if the mind and heart are fed only one wholesome meal a week at church, while they are over-fed day after day in the things that injure spirituality.

We not only believe but are convinced that he is guilty before God, who will not read religious as well as secular literature, who spends hours each day in frivolous reading and in listening to radio programs, and will not devote even a fraction of the same time to the reading of spiritual books. Yes, such a person will be adjudged guilty before God.

Parents are guilty of many sins of omission which, in the eyes of God, may be far greater than

their sins of commission, yet the latter alone they seem to recognize.

Week after week the Catholic press finds it necessary to answer slanders and calumnies, but these answers never get into the daily papers which carried the falsehoods. They come to the Catholic people only through the Catholic press.

From all portents the times are to become steadily worse rather than better, more unsafe for youth than ever before; therefore, it is the duty of parents to set their children the example of reading the Catholic paper every week, and of having them read those portions of it themselves which are intended for them. Youths in high school and beyond should read the several instructive articles, as well as the news which appear in our new Catholic paper.

We wish you could see for yourselves the many letters which come to the Catholic editor from non-Catholics who want guidance and direction, who want literature explanatory of Catholic teaching and practice, who declare very pointedly that they are dissatisfied because of the doubts with which they are troubled.

Many among these people, after receiving the first literature want more of it, and finally, led by the grace of God, become Catholics.

What the Catholic Church needs is *salesmen* in every parish for the glorious things which she has to offer to the general public.

Advertise Your Religion

You should know your religion thoroughly and then be salesmen for it. If there be anything that deserves advertising through the press, over the

radio, in pamphlet and leaflet, it is the Catholic religion. It is the one genuine passport to union with God here and hereafter, as against the hundreds of counterfeits and frauds, and thorough acquaintance with it would win for it innumerable friends and converts.

Ask yourself the question and answer it honestly: Have you ever lent yourself seriously to works of *Catholic Action*.

Interest in your faith for your own good is a prerequisite for any efficient Catholic Action for the benefit of others. Resolve to make up for lost time and restudy your religion, engage in Study Clubs, read the Catholic press and pass it on or order it sent direct from the office of publication, to others.

Pope Leo XIII called the Catholic paper "a perpetual mission in the home."

Pope Pius X wrote "I would make any sacrifice, even to the pawning of my ring and pectoral cross, in order to support a Catholic newspaper."

Pope Pius XI, writing to the faithful, says "Anything which you will do for the good press I will consider having been done for me personally."

The last three Popes have endorsed *Our Sunday Visitor* very warmly and offered a special blessing to its every reader.

The introduction of your new Diocesan paper will give you opportunity to be just such a salesman. Remember, it is not just a newspaper, but a newspaper with a magazine supplement. In that supplement you will find articles of instruction, comments on current news of interest to Catholics, and other material which will keep you well informed and en-

able you to "sell" your religion to non-Catholics who are interested in it.

In your new paper there will also be sports and fiction features and other articles not of a strictly religious nature which will provide entertainment for every member of your family, from the little tots to the parents.

We reminded you during the past two weeks that envelopes have been placed in the pews for your use in entering your subscriptions. Many have responded, but there are still some who have not subscribed. We ask those to do so today. The yearly subscription rate is only \$2.00. Place that sum in one of the envelopes, fill in your name and address, and deposit it in the collection basket.

Our Bishop has called upon every pastor to see to it that his parish is enrolled 100% on the subscription lists of our new paper. We want to reach that goal, and cannot do so without your cooperation. Your new paper is the best in the nation. It is three times as large as was our *Western Catholic*, yet is offered at the same price. That price is made possible only on the assumption that every family in our Diocese will become a subscriber. Don't let your parish and Diocese down. If you haven't subscribed, do so today.

IV

Even Parochial School Instruction Is Inadequate

How much does the child learn? If religious instruction in the grade school proves to be inadequate, as experience has taught it to be, it is because it is assumed that the child, after having majored in religion for eight years, will be able to give a good account of himself.

But this child has hardly learned as yet how to study, how to assimilate. Lessons may have been well memorized, but they were not fully grasped.

The little Catechism contained no reference to the special dangers and social evils which the child must confront in life.

Unfortunately most Catholic children must go from the parochial elementary school into the public high school, where religion is conspicuous for its absence, where it must fraternize with children who never learned its ABC's, where God, Christ, Grace the Sacraments, or even Sin, are never even alluded to in the classroom.

This association and this atmosphere tend to weaken the fervor of Catholic practice, and much of the instruction received in the parochial school is forgotten.

When the seventeen or eighteen year old Catholic boy and girl, therefore, finish high school, their knowledge of religion is seldom any greater, and

usually considerably less, than it was when they finished the eighth grade, as the thirteen or fourteen year old child.

With that religious mentality they enter a social environment, in which the subject of religion is seldom discussed, in which only a small minority of non-Catholics is able to discuss it at all, let alone, intelligently.

The youth who finishes high school continues to read, to write, to use his arithmetic, his grammar, his geography, but does not usually continue the study of his religion. Even parents seem to take for granted that their child becomes a graduate in religion after it will have received the Sacrament of Confirmation, in the case of children who are not in the parish school, or after the eighth grade if it will have attended the parochial school.

Is it any wonder that adult Catholics are almost fearful of talking about religion lest they be asked questions that they are unable to answer? Is it any wonder that they regard their religion as a purely personal and private matter; is it any wonder that they do not try to interest their non-Catholic neighbors and friends in their religion—when they know so little about it themselves?

Now if no reflecting person can expect the inadequate religious instructions, which the boy and girl possessed at the time of leaving school, to suffice to enable them to explain to their equals why they differ from them in matters doctrinal, moral, social, do you not see instinctively the need of an instructive Catholic paper?

Unless the Catholic boy and girl will read Catholic books and papers after school days are over

they will have at the age of twenty-five or thirty the religious knowledge they had at the age of fourteen. In the meantime they will have discovered that their faith was in conflict with the viewpoint of most non-Catholics. In the meantime, also, they will have probably entered the married state with the religious knowledge they had at fourteen—when they knew little about sex, about the Christian idea of a family, of the marriage laws of the Church, etc.

They will probably continue going to Mass because they were taught that their religion was instituted by Christ Himself Who, they were emphatically taught, was God; but they feel incompetent to engage in an active apostolate, to take leadership in parish sodalities, etc.

If the home from which the boy and girl came was indifferent, they may not turn out even half as well as we are assuming here.

A young man or a woman with such a weak religious foundation must begin to display an interest in the sound principles of Catholic philosophy and theology, which are most necessary in these days.

It is only after six years following adolescence that the child begins to evolve into maturity. But it is during these six years that he adjusts himself to his environment, and must rely on himself and his own judgment for the first time in matters of human relationship.

Discussion Clubs

Further instruction, through the Catholic paper and books, might be regarded as "follow up," and the

youth should pursue it before he has become too much a part and parcel of the pagan world in which he lives. For that reason we recommend "Discussion Clubs," which should be started by the priest hand-picking a few of the most religious-minded youths and have them go out "to bring them all in." You can be sure that we can never expect even the best-willed Catholic, at whatever age, to defend his faith if his store of knowledge does not exceed that which he had at the age of fourteen or fifteen. He imbibes secular knowledge unconsciously, day after day, but not religious knowledge. On the contrary he will likely have his scanty supply of religious knowledge all upset, if not distorted, by what he hears and reads from non-Catholic sources.

The adage "give me the child for seven years and I care not who has him thereafter" no longer holds good. It had merit some years back when nearly every non-Catholic child was in a Sunday School and learned definite doctrine, when nearly all parents attended church, when the Catholic moral code was quite generally accepted. Every priest has seen school children of promise greatly disappoint him, because when they entered real life they were too weak to hold their own, when the knowledge of the Catechism did not guide their steps.

A Sunday Practice

You may not be able to read the Catholic paper before the Sunday following its receipt, but isn't Sunday the proper day to have all members of the family read it thoroughly? Hundreds of thousands of Catholics go home from church on Sunday with a copy of the National Edition of *Our Sunday Visitor*, just as every child and adult who attend

Protestant Sunday School classes return home with a religious paper.

Formerly it was not assumed that the Sunday was fully observed by mere attendance at Mass in the morning. Before the days of the automobile there were usually afternoon services in the church for all the people, and a special religious instruction for the children. Sunday evenings were usually spent at home because there were no theatres showing motion pictures, and the reading of the Catholic paper and of religious books was a very common practice in Catholic homes. If there was ever need for the revival of that practice it is today.

The Prophet of old said: "All the world is filled with wickedness because there is no one who thinketh in his heart." Today, few indeed actually think and reflect on the most momentous matters, and it is the chief reason why the world is topsy-turvy.

Some years ago Rev. Ernest R. Hull, S.J., editor of the Bombay Examiner, emphasized the necessity of a Catholic paper which fully covers the instruction field. He wrote:

"My sympathy goes out to those who are naturally pious, and who need a strong foundation of intellectual principles in order to keep themselves up to the mark; who are constantly being flooded with all sorts of anti-religious ideas which upset their minds, destroy their grip of the faith, and drag them down—some into indifferentism, others into positive unbelief. Such men, I say, need fortifying intellectually. Their minds want filling with Catholic ideas and Catholic principles, and Catholic knowledge—so that they can give a reason, to themselves and to others, of the faith which is still precariously lingering in them. I want to draw back those who have already gone far on the

downward grade, and also, by anticipation, to keep back those who are in danger of beginning to slide.

“Hence my own program is, first to furnish the more or less educated reader with a mind full of Catholic knowledge, both of facts and principles; secondly, to present this knowledge in so simple and entertaining a way as to make him feel interested and appreciative, and to wish for more.”

As a nation we were blessed by God beyond all other nations and, because we have not been ourselves deserving of His continued favors, we are now involved in this frightful war. Our crime rate is the highest in the world. So is our divorce rate. Our educational system is an open insult to God, Whom it bars from the classroom. Our people no longer base their actions on a firmly established moral code. They sin and deny the existence of sin. Right or wrong they predicate on a subjective rather than an objective basis. The situation will not become better unless our nation turns back to God, unless it embraces Catholic principles. It, therefore, needs the Catholic press, even if it does not realize it.

We are nearing the close of Catholic Press Month and we would, therefore, exhort you not to postpone another day your subscription for the Catholic paper.

During the last three weeks you have had opportunity to see your new paper. If you have read it, you will admit that it is an excellent paper, well worth the small sum asked for a yearly subscription. Yet there are some who have not subscribed.

Envelopes for this purpose are still in the pews.

To become a subscriber you need only fill in your name and address on one of the envelopes, place \$2.00 in it, and deposit it in the collection basket.

This is our last chance to make good in this Catholic Press campaign. It is our Bishop's and my wish that every family in the parish receive our new and enlarged diocesan paper every week. We depend upon every one of you for your wholehearted cooperation.

There is nothing selfish in the appeal of the Catholic Press. It serves no personal interest. Like the Church itself, its principal reason for existence is to assist the faithful in their endeavor so to live that they will attain eternal happiness with God in heaven.

Many people misinterpret the appeal for the supporting of the Catholic Press. They seem to think the press wants support more for its own sake than for the readers' sake.

The late Pope Pius XI called the Press his voice. Another Pontiff, Pius X, deplored the lack of interest and warned both the clergy and the laity:

“In vain will you build churches, preach missions, found schools. All your good works, all your efforts will be destroyed, if you cannot at the same time wield the defensive and offensive weapons of a press that is Catholic, loyal and true.”

After subscribing for the Catholic paper resolve to read it, to have all the members of the family read the instructive articles, your grown-up boys and girls to devour the Youth Section; and it would be a nice thing if, as a family, you had “round table discussions” on the subject matter con-

tained in the current issue. We feel certain that you would actually enjoy it, and we know that you would profit from it.



Help Make Catholic Paper Do Good

A few weeks ago an interested reader of *Our Sunday Visitor* sent to the editor a check in the amount of \$1,000.00 to extend the influence of this paper, and of the sound doctrinal, moral and social teaching contained in the hundreds of pamphlets which are published under its auspices. Since *Our Sunday Visitor* wants no money for itself, it immediately agreed to match that contribution, and to use the \$2,000.00 as a nucleus of a fund to which, it is sure, thousands of our readers will be glad to add their mite—in order that the influence of the religious press may be extended far more widely.

Even those among our readers who would rather miss their Sunday dinner than to have *Our Sunday Visitor* fail to pay them its regular Sunday visit, with few exceptions, do not seem to feel any responsibility for the placement of the paper in the hands of others who do not receive it. We note “a few exceptions,” because we must not fail to recognize that there are individuals who make the distribution of good literature their hobby.

A few months ago we referred to a gentleman in Chicago who began, more than twenty years ago, to gather up all the “left-over” papers from the churches and to see to it that not one of them would fail to have several readers. He actually built up a large organization of men and women who agreed

to remain their paper every week, and he claims that during these twenty years he has been responsible for the distribution of more than 2,000,000 copies.

A Detroit gentleman wrote us sometime ago that beginning in the year 1924 he sent papers to institutions and poor parishes in whose behalf appeals were made by letters appearing in the *Readers Speak to Readers* Column. He tells us that he was well repaid during the first six years by the many letters he received from those to whom he mailed a bundle of papers every week. Then he decided to order 350 copies of the *Visitor* to be sent directly from the Huntington printing plant to individuals in many cities. He writes:

Between 1924 and 1940 I sent out nearly 20,000 copies a year, or a total of 300,000. These little papers are "little missionaries" going forth to many nations and spreading the true faith. Who can measure the good they have accomplished? It is a privilege to have some part with Christ in His work. No form of lay Catholic Action is more satisfying. Individuals or societies could find no greater return for the money invested than this apostolate.

A Minnesota pastor, who has contributed many articles to this paper, and who has systematically spread it among indifferent Catholics and non-Catholics in his territory, writes us that the United States needs a Paul and a Xavier to preach Christ to the pagan Gentile hordes all around us. He believes that if the Church is not making greater progress in her work of evangelizing these millions at her door it is due largely to the fact that Catholic doctrine and Catholic social philosophy seldom get outside Catholic ranks.

We have frequently urged Catholics to give help to their many non-Catholic friends who are outside all the churches, and have asked them to work and pray for their conversion. Thousands of them would really like to do something about it, but they hardly know where to begin. They not only hesitate to start to talk to these people about religion, but they are not so certain that they would be able to answer satisfactorily some of the questions they might ask. But why not begin by sending them our paper, which is brimful of instructive matter? Why not see if they would become interested by letting them read your own paper for a few weeks, pointing out to them how helpful the Youth Section would be for their children? If they begin to acquire an appetite for religious instruction and guidance, they will want more of it either through pamphlets or books or through a visit to their homes fifty-two times a year by the Catholic paper.

In making this appeal to you we are not thinking principally of expanding the circulation of *Our Sunday Visitor*, which already reaches every state of the Union. We are just thinking of the need which the 100,000,000 non-Catholics in the United States have of some religious stimulating influence.

The editor of the *New York Times* recently analyzed a poll taken among 50,000 children attending public schools in New York City, and the analysis is amazing. It disclosed that only 16,000, or one-third of the total, ever heard of the Ten Commandments. Then from other sources of information it observed that only twenty-five per cent among the 49,000,000 youths of the United States have ever been inside a church.

If these figures mean anything they point out that the America of the future will have no religious foundation on which to build either a religious or a moral life. The only conclusion is that the parents of tomorrow will be unreligious and unmoral; in other words that they will know nothing about religion and will have vague ideas concerning what is actually right or wrong.

They imply that, even after the war, the American citizenry will be no different from what the German citizenry was before Hitler. They imply that the Congress and Senate of the United States in another generation will be quite indifferent towards all religion; they might even imply that most Americans would not worry about any anti-religious program of Communism, if it only provided more bread and butter.

Now, dear reader, do not depend on the other Catholics to do something about this. You do something about it, and see that the Catholic Church would at least be properly understood by your next door neighbors, by your acquaintances, by your fellow workmen.

