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# Home Happiness!





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# Home and Happiness!

By

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**Deacidified**

# Home and Happiness!

“Home.”

Simply see or hear this word, and in your heart and mind there comes a swelling flood of memories.

Memories that bless, comfort and console. Memories that bring joy and peace and happiness to the heart.

For the really happy memories of your life, the truly joyful recollections, the sweetest thoughts, all go back to that most cherished spot of earth. That place which you loved so well, the home of your childhood days. That home which you will cherish always in your soul.

Not in maudlin sentimentality, but rather in calm recollection. In a sweet remembrance of the wholesome joy, the heart-filling happiness, and the sinless contentment which was in the very air you breathed. The atmosphere of protection, security, and understanding love which you recognize now, for what it really was. And it matters not whether this home was in some quiet village or some crowded city block; in a secluded farmland or in a teeming tenement district.

For it was the home itself that matters.

And what makes a "Home?"

At first it would seem impossible to answer this question. Because there are so many different elements which go into the make-up of a real home. Thus in your own life. It may have been because of a splendid father, loyal, true and faithful. Or a magnificent mother, devoted and sweet. Or brothers and sisters, who, naturally, were irritating at times, but yet always bound close to you in a deep, abiding and affectionate love.

Yet in all frankness and honesty, as you look back you know that there was something more. Something which made it "home." Something that was above all material things, something above all human relationships. In that home of yours there was something divine.

And what was this?

God was there!

For it was a Christian home! A home based and built on Christian principles.

In that home of yours, all acknowledged the existence of God, and were happy in the acknowledgment.

All recognized God's protection of the home itself, and His love and care over all who dwelt therein. And hence it was a home where all lived in peace and happiness. With no fear of the present. With no dread of the future.

Thus in that home, God was worshipped and loved for His infinite goodness and kindness. And all faced the truth, without evasion, that to love God meant but one thing. To keep His Commandments. In this home, it was the most natural thing to lift one's mind and heart to God in prayer. To kneel in prayer was the only way to begin the day. The only way to bring the day to a close. To ask God's blessing before meals. To quietly thank Him when the meal was over.

The Rosary was said daily. Blasphemy or obscenity were never heard. The name of Jesus was uttered only in veneration and in deep affection. Need it be said that Sunday was a day of rest, worship, and wholesome joy and happiness.

And so time went on quietly and happily. Childhood and youth slipping away almost unnoticed. And yet every day bringing to you a deepening sense of your innate dignity and worth. Developing your self-respect.

More and more you realized that you had been created by Almighty God. Clearer and clearer was the realization that He had created you "just a little less than the angels." Moreover, He had stamped upon your immortal soul His own image and likeness. And by His sacraments you had become a living child of the Living God.

Thus you were placed in this world, only to make yourself worthy of the priceless heritage of the eternal Kingdom of God in the world to come. The great purpose of your life was to know God, to love God, and to serve God in time; that you might be worthy to be with Him in the endless joy, happiness and love of eternity.

And with this realization of life's true meaning, there was a constantly deepening love and reverence for your parents. For as they had taught you to love and reverence God, He in turn, had taught you to love and reverence them.

And as the years have passed, and as you have gone along your way through life, the memory of this home has been to you a memory beautiful and inspiring. A tremendous source of strength and inward power. And in those inevitable days of trial and darkness, it has been to you a consoling joy and comfort! An unfailling



solace in affliction! A light that never failed!

How true this is, you know only too well!

Surely you would be the last one to dispute or deny it?

And you are no exception! As it has been with you, so it has been with each and every one who has been so blessed.

Never was this more evident to us than in the last few years. In those days of global war, when millions of our young men went forth as soldiers, sailors and Marines to all parts of the world in the service of their country.

Then came the day when the War was over and peace returned to our warring nation.

But hundreds of thousands of these young men had gone forth to their eternal homes. Out beyond the shining of the farthest star. They would never return.

Yet as the transports brought back the others, can these men who were on these transports, or those who awaited their return, ever forget those soul-stirring hours? So much so that later on, in the theatres, as the news-reels unfolded simply the pic-

torial records of these scenes, the vast audiences were tense with emotion.

The soldier boys crowding the rails of the ship, the bands playing, the frenzied shouts of joy as once again they see their beloved homeland. Tears unashamedly rolling down their cheeks. Hearts choked with their overwhelming happiness. Minds and souls breathing forth to God their prayers of gratitude.

But make no mistake, the real reason for all their indescribable happiness, the upsurging waves of joy and gladness, the feeling of gratitude to God, was a pictured memory of some quiet, village street; or some familiar city block; or a loved vista of some elm-shaded, sturdy farmhouse.

For mark you well, it was their homes that held their hearts and very beings enthralled. The well-loved rooms. The well-recalled pictures on the walls. The little knick-knacks and mementos of the passing years. But more than that of course, the beloved faces and figures of their loved ones. The sound of loved voices. The happy smiles and tears of love awaiting them. But, remember this, that above all else, in their homes was what they longed for, that for which their being cried out, that intangible sense of God's Presence.

That feeling of God's love and peace, that joy, happiness and contentment in the home, which made it "Home." That Presence of God which they would find there. That Presence or atmosphere, call it what you will, which would envelop them once again, comfort and uplift them, give them strength and courage, bring the fullness of peace to their tired hearts, minds and souls.

"Home, sweet home!"

Hence it was that even those battle-scarred veterans, toughened fighters, men hard as the steel in their death-dealing weapons of modern warfare, bowed their heads in the overwhelming surge of happiness which possessed them.

But is it not the same in times of peace as well as war? Thus the young man just starting out in the business world. Trying to get ahead, but surrounded on all sides by the ever-present temptations of the day. Temptations to shady practices. To the giving up of his standards of decency and honesty. To the forsaking of truthfulness and uprightness. Practices which will eventually bring only disaster and self-disgust. But nevertheless practices which look inviting and most attractive at the time.

Or the young girl of today, thrown into a world strange but fascinating in its sins. Where purity, goodness, and decency seem to be rewarded only by hours of drab loneliness. While to this young girl opportunity after opportunity is constantly offered for a life of gay excitement in night life, good times and luxurious living. If she will only abandon her moral standards. If she will only forget her conscience. If she will live only for the day and what it brings.

Today, perhaps as never before, to both boy and girl, temptation strikes ruthlessly, mercilessly, constantly.

And certain it is, that next to the grace of God, the one great protection of a boy or girl in temptation and trial, in such times of stress and strain, is the environment and training of a good Christian home. A home where their youthful minds have been permeated with the realization that they are the living children of the Living God. That they are God's own. That within each one is an immortal soul stamped to His image and likeness. That it is God Himself who created this soul, redeemed it, and sanctified it. And that God has placed it here in this world to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him; that it may be happy with Him forever in the world to come.

Hence the deep, basic realization of this relationship of God and the soul is inevitably bound up with the memory of the home, and with the loved ones who dwelt there in goodness and love.

And it is this memory of home and loved ones, this training and environment, which has become a very part of their being, that gives to the boy and girl the fortitude and strength to ride rough-shod over the coarse and crude temptations which face them. Gives them an invaluable aid in the surmounting of all obstacles in the path of decency and purity. Gives them an inestimable help in the avoiding of any and every occasion of sin and rottenness.

For wherever they go, in a certain sense, they take their home with them.

For these boys and girls, wherever they are, secure in their memories of their home, have God ever present in their minds, hearts and souls. For it was in their homes that they learned to know God, love and serve Him.

And hence the love of God, and the love of their homes, have become entwined in their very beings.

Of course, time in its passing, will eventually show to both the young man

and young woman, that only in the keeping of God's laws can they find true happiness and real contentment. That the path of decency and goodness is the only path which leads to that lasting joy and peace which they are seeking. For the wages of sin and evil-doing must be paid to the last farthing. Paid in suffering and shame. Paid in heartbreak and sorrow. Paid in regret and remorse, sharp and bitter.

But until the passing years bring such wisdom, until youthful impatience and impetuosity are under control, this is the time when the heritage of a good home is of priceless value.

Thus it has always been, and thus it always will be, as long as temptations assail. As long as human passions are strong and the flesh is weak.

Surely all know this truth. It is only too obvious. And no one knows this any better than yourself. You have seen it come true in your own life and in the lives of others. For you, who have known the happiness of a good home, treasure it as one of God's most precious gifts to you.

But why speak of this God-given heritage of a good home?

Because you must realize, that like all mankind, the one thing you seek for in

life, is happiness. And in recalling the home of your childhood, surely you must realize that the finest and best, and most abiding happiness you have ever known, you found in this hallowed place.

And does not such a priceless gift of God carry with it a great responsibility that it be preserved? Not only for your own happiness, but also for the happiness of those whom you love. For whether it be a young man or a young woman, make no mistake, in the secret places of the heart, there is the one desire, the one hope, a happy home of their own.

Surely if you really love the one who will share your life with you, and just as surely if you love the little souls which you will aid in bringing into this world, these future children of the Kingdom of Heaven which Almighty God entrusts to your care, such a home must be your ideal.

So mould it, fashion it, start making a real home, now.

For the kind of a home which you wish yours to be, is not thrown together haphazardly. It takes thought and care.

First of all, such a home must be built with God, in God and for God!

Hence the first requirement for this home of yours is that they who dwell there-

in should be one in affection and love. One in ideals and hopes. One in Faith and religion.

It is true that some so-called "mixed marriages" turn out rather happily, and some marriages where one of the parties has no religion whatsoever also seem happy. But such are rare exceptions! And even in these rare exceptions, the Catholic parties to such marriages are the first to admit that something vital is missing from their married life. That much is lacking from the happiness they hoped to find.

But even so, in the vast majority, such marriages turn out to be unions of unhappiness and sorrow. With the children of such homes confused and bewildered, if not totally indifferent, in regard to God and His Faith.

And as the years pass, and the inevitable troubles and sorrows of life close in, this lack of unity in Faith can only mean to the Catholic, a feeling and a sense of loneliness and forlornness which can be heart-breaking. Praying alone. Worshipping alone. Alone at Mass. Alone at Holy Communion. The loss of all that comfort and consolation and strength which come from two people sharing the joys and sorrows of life. How far different when a man and



woman, two children of God, are bound together in love, affection and faith. Thinking alike, believing alike, and worshipping alike! With the same purpose in entering the marriage state! With the same desire of pleasing God and doing His holy will in wedlock!

Now the primary purpose of married life, in God's holy design, is the procreation and education of children. To this the other purposes of the marriage state such as relief of mutual concupiscence, mutual consideration and aid must always remain secondary.

To have God's love and blessing in the married life, then must God's Will be done. And it is God's Will that in performing the marriage act nothing be done deliberately to frustrate its natural power and purpose. Such a sin is against nature. Against God's law. A sin shameful and vicious.

If marriage can not be entered into without such an accord for the fulfilling of God's Will, then better there should be no marriage. For otherwise the outcome can be only in sorrow and regret.

A wife or a husband who consents to this unnatural form of living, at that very moment forfeits the love and respect of the other. They may tell each other differ-

ently, but down in their hearts they know that true, real love is gone. And let some crisis arise and it will become only too apparent. They will realize it only too well.

When a husband and wife accept the privileges of married life, then they must accept the responsibilities. It is the indispensable basis of a happy family life. For a happy home, the husband and wife in their marital relations must always be clean, decent and pure.

To those who do otherwise God has said, in stern warning: "Darkness may cover and walls may conceal. But I am the Witness and I am the Judge." Thus saith the Lord God.

### **Education**

Thus comes the second primary purpose of the marriage state. For after bringing a child into the world, there comes the obligation of the right education for that child. A parent can give life, but as parent can give no more, for the deed stops there. But when parents educate a child they are affecting eternity. They are projecting themselves down through the ages. They can never tell where their influence is going to stop. They can be capable of almost an endless influence, for good or evil, through their children.

And education may make of a child either an atheist or a religious leader. An honest man or a criminal. A joy and happiness to mankind or a scourge to humanity. Almost, it seems, in spite of itself.

And while the school can have wonderful and splendid effects, yet such effects must be supported by the all-powerful and permanent influence of the good Christian home.

Hence parents must ever have a keen realization that a child is begotten not for earth and for time, but for Heaven and eternity. That, on the one hand, the Christian teaching of the child by Church and school can be immeasurably confirmed, deepened and vitalized by the training in the home.

While, on the other hand, no matter how Christian decency and morality may be inculcated by the school and church; the more intimate teaching in the home can neutralize it and scatter it to the four winds.

Thus in a good home, always before the mind of the child there must be kept, and constantly inculcated, a love of the good, the clean, the finest things of life. A reverence for the beautiful, the refined and the cultured. Those qualities which can only be found in Christian religious teachings.

Surely the influence of the father and mother can not be exaggerated. As good food, pure air, wholesome exercise, cleanliness of mind and body build up a splendid constitution, so good example in daily life with good parents, the surroundings of an upright and happy home, build the child into the ideal young man or woman.

In the home, as nowhere else, is the old adage true, "As the twig is bent, so does the tree grow."

Thus too, Holy Writ tells us! "With the holy, thou wilt be holy; and with the innocent, thou wilt be innocent; and with the elect, thou wilt be elect; and with the perverse, thou wilt be perverted."

Hence in regard to the school, it must be, if parents love their children, an aid to the influence of the home. A school which will add to, and confirm the teachings of the home. It is for no foolish whim that the Church is so insistent for the right education. An education which, like the training in the home, has God always in mind. That is why the Church sacrifices time, money, and labor . . . without stint . . . for the furthering of such teaching.

That is why the noblest of men and women leave the world and live lives of the greatest self-sacrifice. Poorly paid.

Poorly clothed. Poorly thanked. That is why Christ promised a special reward to those whose life labor is the teaching of these little ones.

For in the Christian education in the school, as in the upbringing of the home, it is essential that not only the mind be trained, but above all else the will. The keenest intellect without a trained will is one of the most futile mockeries in life. Have you not seen such young men and women? Who know what is good. Who can enumerate the reasons why they should do what is good and refrain from evil. And not only enumerate but demonstrate clearly and convincingly why they should do one thing and not another. And what does it profit them—if they have not the will to do that which they know is right, and not to do that which they know is evil.

What does it profit them, if they are of the type of which the hard, brittle cynicism of the world mockingly says that "They can resist anything—except temptation."

Today as never before, a happy and God-loving home must work hand in hand with an education which also has the love of God as its basis.

So too, with higher education!

For the happiness of the home, always must it be borne in mind that, in the years to come, in its higher education the child of this home will have an education which will continue to train this child to a knowledge of the real truth. That truth which recognizes and acknowledges God as the Creator and Ruler of the universe.

And furthermore an education which will not stop here, but continue to train the will to the doing of good. To practice virtue.

Virtue means right living. And make no mistake, right living can be founded only upon religious principles.

Such education, and it alone, will turn out your sons and daughters as the children you want them to be. And in the final analysis it is this alone, which will make for that joy and peace and contentment in the home.

And if you really love your home, if you really love those who will dwell therein, then such an education becomes not only an ideal, but a necessity. That you keep them close to the God Whose own they are.

For what does the most brilliant of educations amount to, if it causes the one

educated to lose the priceless heritage of his Faith?

You know only too well such young men and women. Wandering here and there. Indifferent. Dissatisfied. Ironical. Cheaply cynical. In their hearts despising their parents, and oftentimes making no effort to conceal their contempt. Weak! Cowardly! Shallow! Cheap, egotistical nobodies!

Education accompanied by skepticism, indifference, and cynical atheism is the greatest possible evil a parent could possibly inflict on a child.

How can parents who love their children insist, even after unquestionable authority warns them of the inevitable danger, on placing their children in such universities, under such instruction? Surely they know that to have their children listening to teachers whose subversive attitude towards the fundamentals of free will, immorality and loose living is well known, is bound to result in sorrow and regret. What worldly advantage is worth subjecting these loved children to such an environment of skepticism, cynicism, and atheistic teachings of immorality?

How can the blessings of God, and the happiness of God abide in such a home or family, where God and His love and teach-

ings are set aside for such imaginary material advantages?

In a home where God dwells in His happiness and joy, there must be always that firm resolve, that no sacrifice be too great, no consideration be too much, that Faith in God and loyalty to His truths be preserved.

And have no fear! Almighty God will not permit you to outdo Him in generosity and love. Whatever sacrifices are made in adhering to God's will, in keeping the home and those that dwell there strong and firm in His Faith and Love, God will reward you, and them, a hundredfold. It is His own promise!

### **Religion**

To make a happy, God-loving home is not an easy task. And no one knows it any more than God Himself. Hence in the sacrament of matrimony God has elevated and consecrated this union of husband and wife and parenthood.

Privileges untold, but the responsibility is also tremendous. To bring children into the world. Future inhabitants of the eternal Kingdom of God for the endless ages. What greater privilege! To nourish, guide, educate, and prepare them for this priceless heritage.



The dignity and reward must be tremendous when you are faithful. And so too, must be the punishment when there is a betrayal of this honor and trust.

Hence the necessity that a keen sense of religion vivify and actuate both father and mother in their lives. That they practice what they preach. No one can sense hypocrisy quicker than a child. Especially one's own child.

Thus the grace of God to help them always.

Thus the sacraments of the Church to aid, strengthen, support them.

Thus the examples of the Saints to guide and inspire them.

Thus the Church places to the right and left of its altars the statues of the great St. Joseph and the Blessed Mother. That at least once a week at Sunday Mass you may look upon them. The ideals for the ideal father and mother. To especially inspire, encourage, and help you in making and keeping your home an ideal home. A home of real joy and true peace, a home of happiness.

What a wonderful Father and Spouse was St. Joseph! Quietly doing the will of God without fuss, without anxiety. Laboring

throughout the day cheerfully and patiently. Whatever God desired, it was to be done without murmuring, without complaint.

The angel appeared to him in his sleep telling him to arise and to take the Child Jesus down into Egypt. Scripture records that he arose immediately, and set out. Set out on a trip of hundreds of miles. A trip that in those days meant incredible hardship in every mile.

Every day in his life could record similar acts of faith and devotion to God's honor. A devotion not of words alone but of deeds. Such was this model for fathers. What father could look upon him, and think of him, and not be a little more patient? A little more considerate of his family? A little more zealous in his desire to do God's will?

For the happiness of the home may I offer a few practical suggestions to the Father and Mother?

A father must never forget—even for a moment—that no matter how insignificant he may appear in the eyes of the world, in the eyes of his little boy or girl he is the most wonderful man on earth. A child almost adores his father, if he will let it. If he will only treat the child with a little kindness, consideration and love. The sad-

dest sight on earth is to see a family where the children desire and long for the love of their father but a fear of him has chilled their hearts.

How can a father quarrel in front of a child, or with the child? The father may forget all about the matter in less than an hour; but oftentimes the sensitive mind of a child has received an impression that time may never fully efface. For years the memory of biting words and the sight of an angry face may be clearly remembered.

Rule by love! Teach by love! Guide by love! This is the better way, and it will attain the best results. But with this one exception. Sacrifice not one iota to sin, or to the occasion of sin. The spirit of today in which license passes for independence, where boldness parades as confidence, where distraction is mistaken for pleasure . . . must be curbed . . . rooted out.

Business troubles have no place in the home. When things go wrong let the family be the last to feel its effects, not the first.

Be such a father that the memory of you, years after you have gone to receive your reward, will bring tears to the eyes of those whom you loved here on earth.

Be such a father that the memory of you, to those whom you brought into the world, will be one of the sweetest memories that life holds for them.

An ideal of the highest attainment. An ideal blessed by God. An ideal which will require constant self-denial, self-control, limitless patience and love.

In regard to the Mother, she should always remember that she is the heart of the family. She it is who holds the family and the home together. She is the all-important factor in developing the ideal of a Catholic happy home life. Hence personal piety must be her first accomplishment.

Of course, the ideal of all mothers is found in all fullness in the Holy Mother of God. Hence the statue of her—that they may look upon her, remember her, imitate her. For to imitate Mary, is to draw closer to God.

“Thou shalt conceive,” said the Angel of God, and the Maid of God bowed her head in ready assent. “Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to Thy word,” she replied. We have some inkling in the Gospel narrative of the suspicion which was attached to her immaculate person . . . yet how patiently and

meekly she bore it. We have some inkling of her hardships in the birth of her infant in a cold, cheerless, comfortless stable in the wintry hills of Bethlehem. We have some inkling of her life of agony among those cold, heartless people who could not, or would not, appreciate the exquisite divinity of her beloved Son. We get glimpses here and there. But they are only glimpses. But even so, they reveal a world of suffering, of loneliness, of apprehensive fear for her divine child.

When she presented Jesus, a mere child, in the temple, she heard those words of prophecy of Holy Simeon: "And thy own heart a sword shall pierce." No prophecy was ever truer! Her heart was pierced, not once but a thousand times. Until at last, in the shadow of the Cross, she beheld the consummation.

Thus with the wife and mother of to-day. If it be God's will that she bring forth a child, she should do it gladly for His sake. When the child is born, she must guard and protect it, surround it with all the love and care that she possibly can. She must assiduously watch for the first dawn of conscience in her child. She knows, or ought to know, that first impressions are the most effective and most lasting. What a delight it should be to take her little child

on her knee and teach it to pray! What pride should be hers when her little one raises its mind and heart to God in the "Our Father."

With the knowledge that her child is also a child of God! An heir of heaven! With a dignity above all other creation. "Just a little less than the angels," says God Himself. She must sacrifice pleasure, her own comforts, everything, that she may make the child better and more pleasing to God. Not forgetting—ever—to pray for her child unceasingly.

### **The Home**

In consideration of the home itself, may I offer one or two more suggestions? Suggestions based on the sound psychological principle that—whether we like it or not—we are constantly being influenced by the environment in which we live.

There should be prominent signs about the house that it is the abode of a family that loves God. There is a feeling among some people, who are swayed by a cheap worldliness or a shallow pseudo-culture, that a religious picture today has no place in the home. But in a home of refined and educated people, just the opposite is the rule. Any artist will tell you that the

Madonna and the Child are the very center of real art and culture. Repeatedly artists inform us that the best pictures of the best artists are invariably devotional. DaVinci, Michaelangelo, Rembrandt, Fra Lippi, Fra Angelico, Raphael, and so the list goes.

Thus in a real Catholic home, good and truly artistic religious pictures give a definite tone to the house. They impress the faith on the minds of the members of the family. Expressing real culture and the true refinement of the family to visitors.

More important, even, than Catholic art, is Catholic literature. These are the days when everybody reads . . . something. It is notorious that Catholics do not buy books as they should. Even our Holy Father has warned us that unless we support a good Catholic press it will be useless for us to build schools and churches.

Now the Catholic Church is not wanting either in excellent writers or excellent publishers. Our book stores are rich in devotional, scientific and recreative literature. The crying shame is that so little of this finds its way into our homes.

Not only should there be this religious literature but a weekly Catholic paper. A monthly Catholic magazine should be on the reading table. Today, as down through

the ages, the Catholic Church is marching on, spreading the Kingdom of God over the earth. These papers should help, and impress upon Catholics their Catholicity.

To my mind the greatest loss and misfortune that has come to America in the last generation has been the dying out, among non-Catholics as well as Catholics, of the custom of family prayer. For the home and family which practiced this custom, of having all kneel together in common prayer, had surrounded itself with a bulwark against which the storms of temptation, vice and sin could beat only in vain.

And may I also urge that beautiful old custom of a crucifix over every bed. Of a holy water font at every bedroom door. Of a prayer book for every member of the family. That wherever they go, they carry with them their rosaries.

And may I add this truth. That such labors are not without their reward even in this world. For in a world which is vainly seeking for real joy and true happiness, it is the inexorable law of Divine Love that into these homes where God is honored and loved and worshipped, God in turn will pour forth in abundance and superabun-



dance His infinite joy and peace and happiness.

Such a home and happiness is surely the greatest gift, the most priceless heritage that parents can bequeath to those they love.

And as time passes, when on that day of days to come, when life's labors are over, when coming through the infinite lengths and breadths of space they stand before the judgment throne of the Almighty, Eternal God—

It will be the one consolation, the one satisfaction, the one contentment to such parents that their children, and their children's children, shall rise up to call them blessed.

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*Christ is the Head of this house!  
The Unseen Guest at every meal!  
The Silent Listener to every con-  
versation!*



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