

HOME ATTITUDES

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- Home attitudes...
ADW 1085

FOR YOUTH

by Joseph A. Sommer, S.J.



SCHOOL

HOME

LEISURE

PARISH

SOCIAL

order

ONE OF FIVE
SOCIAL APOSTOLATE
PROGRAMS
DESIGNED TO CREATE
CORRECT ATTITUDES
FOR YOUTH

HOME ATTITUDES FOR YOUTH

by

Joseph A. Sommer, S. J.

THE QUEEN'S WORK

3115 South Grand Boulevard

St. Louis 18, Missouri

Imprimi potest:

Daniel H. Conway, S. J.

Provincial, Missouri Province

Imprimatur:

✠ Joseph E. Ritter

Archbishop of St. Louis

May 9, 1955

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THE QUEEN'S WORK

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FOREWORD

This is the second in a series of five apostolate booklets for teen-agers in parishes and high schools. The first concerns the attitude toward school life. The last three will deal with Church, recreation, and civic life.

This booklet gives practical aids and suggestions to help teen-agers form in their young friends and acquaintances a truly Catholic and Christlike attitude toward life in the HOME.

Today's teen-agers will be tomorrow's parents. Success in any marriage depends in great part on the pattern of life the man and the woman have seen and lived up to in their homes when they were young. Pope Pius XI points this out clearly in his encyclical on Christian Marriage:

For it cannot be denied that the basis of a happy wedlock, and the ruin of an unhappy one, is prepared and set in the souls of boys and girls during the period of childhood and adolescence. There is danger that those who before marriage sought in all things what is theirs, who indulged even their impure desires, will be in the married state what they were before, that they will reap that which they have sown.

How to Use This Booklet

For the sake of orderliness and convenience, this booklet divides home life as follows: God's idea of marriage; God, Mary, saints, angels, parents, brothers-sisters in the home; home and parish, school, recreation; the home as an organization; home and neighborhood; home and society.

This booklet contains much more material than can be covered in a year's apostolate. Hence a group has to decide what items it will work on during the coming year.

Plan and execute each apostolic action according to a lineup used successfully by Communists and other action groups: indoctrinate, observe, plan and carry out action, report every week.

The following six-week schedule is suggested for each apostolic action:

First Meeting. Before this meeting have your group select a division of home life on which it will work during the coming weeks. Each member then comes prepared for discussion. Or at this first meeting the director may give an instruction on the matter.

Toward the end of the meeting, the group looks over the survey questions given in the booklet. The meeting ends with a group resolution somewhat like the following: "During the coming week each of us shall casually find out what two or three of our teen-age friends think about this matter."

MAKING A SURVEY

Second Meeting. First, each member reports whether or not he asked two or three of his friends about the matter. The group then reports and discusses its findings. The meeting ends with a resolution to continue the fact-finding during the coming week.

Third Meeting. Members first report individually upon whether or not they carried out the previous week's resolution. They then discuss their findings further. The meeting ends with a resolution like the following: "During the coming week each of us shall further study what Christ wants in this matter and make a comparison between His ideas and how our young friends act."

Fourth Meeting. Each individual makes a report on whether or not he has carried out the previous week's resolution. The mind of Christ, especially as expressed through His Church, is discussed more and a comparison made between Christ's attitude and the attitude of the young people in the Catholic environment.

The members of the group end with the resolution to get an answer to each of the following four questions during the coming week:

1. What modern man or woman is an outstanding example of this phase of home life?
2. What modern man or woman is notorious for failure in this phase of family life?
3. What words of Christ in the Gospel have some bearing on this phase of home life?

4. What action of Christ in the Gospel displays some virtue needed for this phase of home life?

PLANNING ACTION

Fifth Meeting. Each member first reports his answers to the four questions. The group then discusses possible action that can be taken to bring the attitude of their young friends into closer conformity to that of Christ's. This apostolate can be carried out by action or by word or by a combination of both.

The following questions will help you plan ways of carrying on a campaign among young friends and acquaintances to make them more conscious of Christ's attitude about the particular phase of home life that you are working on and to influence them to make Christ's attitude their own.

A. What shall the prayer elements of your campaign consist of: daily Mass? daily Communion? daily Rosary? daily mental prayer? What sacrifices will you make?

B. What group action will you take? Can two or more members band together and influence other teen-age groups in the parish or school to discuss and take action on this particular phase of home life? Can Christ's viewpoint on the matter be brought up again and again casually in conversations? What can be done in your classes, school assemblies, and extracurricular activities to promote Christ's attitude in this matter? Can you put articles or notices in church or school paper, on the bulletin board?

C. What can be done by you as an individual to influence your young friends and acquaintances in this matter? The following are some helps on how to proceed on your own.

1. Be friendly with the person. Do him a favor, if possible. Be interested in what he is interested in. Pay him a sincere compliment about something good in him. Make some casual remarks about the subject you wish to discuss.

N.B. Keep in mind that the above are not sham actions but sincere efforts to help your friend come to know and love more the greatest Friend that both of you can have, Jesus Christ. You are not really better than your young friend, but for some reason Our Lord and Our Lady have asked you to help your friend come to know them better.

2. Discuss the subject with him alone, and not with others present. Do so during leisure time, not before an exam or some other important event.

a) Be friendly and patient. Do not try to force his free will. Discuss the subject and let him think it over.

b) Be on equal terms. Mention you have trouble with the same point. Tell him how some idea in a sermon or in reading struck you.

c) Ask him for a little favor. That procedure puts you under obligation to him and puts him at ease.

3. Continue your prayer and sacrifices. Be patient. Give the person a chance to think things over.

D. What are various ways of explaining Christ's attitude on this particular phase of home life? How would you express your ideas in an article for the parish or school paper? How would you do so in parish meetings, class discussions, in school assemblies? How could you introduce the matter in a casual conversation with your friends and acquaintances?

E. What objections will your young friends bring up? How will you answer them? What are good ways of presenting these answers? Will your friends try to change the topic of conversation or shrug the matter off as of little importance?

Resolution: After your group covers the foregoing questions, decide on a definite action that you will carry out as a group or as individuals during the coming week. Put your decision in the form of a resolution.

Sixth Meeting. Each member reports on his success or failure in performing the apostolic action decided on at the previous meeting. All describe the various ways in which they have introduced the matter in discussions and conversations, have explained the matter to others, have answered their objections, have persuaded them to action. All these contributions made at the meeting will give all of you a better grasp of the matter and help you acquire valuable apostolic techniques.

The meeting will end with a repetition of the same resolution on this same phase of family life.

During the coming week the group will decide on what new phase of family life they will begin at the next meeting.

I. God's Idea of Marriage

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

At the very beginning of his encyclical on Christian marriage, Pope Pius XI points out that Christ not only made marriage the beginning and foundation of a family but also raised Christian marriage to the rank of a true and great sacrament of the New Law.

St. John Chrysostom called the home a little church. The sacrament of Matrimony is the only sacrament a priest cannot administer. Husband and wife confer this sacrament and its grace on each other. Henceforth both are responsible for each other. This sacrament binds a family together. The weakness and failings of one are repaired by the efforts of the other members of the family. One member united to Christ is enough to save a whole family.

The wedding day is the beginning of a new religious life. Here especially do Christ's words apply, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Thereafter, husband and wife at the Offertory of every Mass offer their marriage and their family to the heavenly Father as a holy, well-pleasing offering. At the Consecration Christ presents Himself as the model of sacrifice in their married life. In Holy Communion they get strength to live out their offertory and consecration according to that model.

Love is the dominant theme of the father who takes care of the souls entrusted to him by God. He takes Christ's place in the family. By being really a father, by continually giving himself to his family, by caring for and protecting his children, he teaches them to love God as a Father.

St. Paul compared the role of the mother to that of the Church. The mother is ready to look death in the face in order to give life. She shelters the treasure of faith in the family. Along with the natural life, she nourishes in the child the supernatural life given in Baptism.

The father is the shepherd of the family, and the mother is the teacher.

Parents are not merely to bring infants into the world. Their job is not finished until the children become adults and can provide for themselves in the world. In fact, the parents' work is not entirely completed until their children are safe in heaven.

(Many of the foregoing ideas were adapted from the pamphlet, "The Family," by Dr. Maria Schlueter-Hermkes, America Press.)

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

During the coming week find out the attitude of several of your young friends toward marriage and the family.

Do they know that the terms of the marriage contract are drawn up by God Himself?

Do they know that the sacrament of Matrimony is identical with the marriage contract between two Christians?

Do they know that the bridegroom and bride administer the sacrament of Matrimony to each other?

Do they think of marriage as God's plan for peopling heaven by having children brought safely into this world and truly educated?

Do your young friends consider marriage a vocation, a calling by Christ, to help Him increase the membership of His Mystical Body?

Do your young friends know that in their family life now they are preparing to build their own successful or unsuccessful families in the future?

Do your young friends intend in the future to follow the Church's ruling on mixed marriages? -- "Everywhere and with the greatest strictness the Church forbids marriages between baptized persons, one of whom is a Catholic and the other a member of a schismatical or heretical sect; and if there is, added to this, the danger of the falling away of the Catholic party and the perversion of the children, such a marriage is forbidden also by the Divine Law" (Canon Law, Canon 1060).

Do they understand why Pope Pius XI in his encyclical on Christian Marriage says, "They, therefore, who rashly and heedlessly contract mixed marriages, from which the maternal love and providence of the Church persuades her children for very sound reasons, fail conspicuously in this respect (that is, to have Catholic marriage approach as near as possible to the union of Christ and the Church), sometimes with danger to their eternal salvation"?

What item in a recent daily newspaper, movie, or TV program showed the evil of divorce? Was there any recent item that glorified divorce?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(First read the explanation of this step on page 7).

What can you and your fellow members do to promote the Catholic concept of marriage among your teen-age friends in the parish and school?

What kind of propaganda campaign can you wage to help Mary develop in your young friends the Christian concept of marriage?

II. God in the Home

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

Marriage is the contract between God and a man and a woman to form a permanent group into which children may come and grow up according to God's will.

Since the chief obstacle to this...is the power of unbridled lust...and since man cannot hold in check his passions, unless he first subject himself to God...it is above all and before all necessary that those who are joined in the bond of sacred wedlock should be wholly imbued with a profound and genuine sense of duty toward God, which will shape their whole lives, and fill their minds and wills with a very deep reverence for the majesty of God.

--PIUS XI, Christian Marriage

In their November 1950 statement, "Citizen of Two Worlds," the bishops of the United States said:

The child... will find his completion only in life with God; and that life... must begin in the home through simple and prayerful practices. Morning and evening prayers, grace before and after meals, the family rosary, the saying of a short prayer each time the striking clock marks the passage of another hour nearer eternity, the reverential making of the Sign of the Cross, the

inculcation of respect for the crucifix and other religious objects--all these are practices which should be encouraged in the religious formation of the child.

The child must know God. There is a vast difference between 'knowing about God' and 'knowing God.'... God must become as real to him as his own father or mother. God must not remain an abstraction. If He does, He will not be loved; and if He is not loved, then all the child's knowledge about Him will be sterile. Where love is, there too is service. 'If you love me, keep my Commandments.' That is Christ's test and it must be applied to the child. He should be brought to see God's Commandments and precepts as guideposts which give an unerring direction to his steps."

The bishops go on to exhort parents to teach their children the life of Christ. They are to encourage their sons and daughters to imitate Christ, especially in His obedience, patience, thoughtfulness of others, and His spirit of unselfish giving.

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

During the coming week, check your own home and find out from two or three of your friends which of the following religious practices and articles are in their homes: meal prayers... evening prayers together... picture or statue of Sacred Heart... crucifix... holy water... sick-call outfit... family Communion... celebration of baptismal days... Catholic calendar... Catholic books... Catholic papers... Catholic magazines... family spiritual celebration of Christmas... of Easter... of Corpus Christi... of Pentecost.

Which of the above religious practices and articles do your friends consider important?

Do they think that any of the above religious articles and practices are out of place in the modern family?

How often do the members of your friends' families talk about God at the dinner table?

If there is lack of interest about the above spiritual articles and practices and conversation in their homes, which of the following are the reasons that influence your young friends: human respect? lack of interest in the supernatural? complete absorption in sports or radio or television and material things in this world? the constant seeking of recreation away from home? lack of knowledge about the supernatural? lack of ability to introduce such topics in the family conversation? any other reason?

How many of their families prepare for Sunday Mass by going through the missal together on Saturday night?

Do your young friends understand why the Church places much emphasis on the liturgical cycle and the connection of the liturgy and Mass with family life?

How many of your young friends have read at least a part of Pope Pius XII's encyclical on the liturgy, Mediator Dei?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(First read the explanation of this step on page 7.)

What type of propaganda campaign can you sponsor to help Mary make God and Christ the center of the homes of your young friends? How can you help make religious practices and articles practical in their modern homes?

III. Mary, Saints, Angels in the Home

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

Mary, the Mother of God, is extremely important in the home. Through her intercession each member of the family obtains the life of grace, which is a terrific share in God's own life. The natural mother of a home is the mother of the human life only. Mary is the mother of the supernatural life in the home. Hence, your Queen Mother Mary has a right to be in the center of your home.

St. Joseph, Mary's partner in the family that sheltered Christ, is also Mary's partner in protecting your family, which is the tiniest social unit of the Mystical Body of Christ. Pope Pius IX placed the entire Catholic Church in the keeping of St. Joseph when on December 8, 1870, he declared him Patron of the Universal Church. As such, St. Joseph also has the duty of watching over your family.

Each member of your family has a guardian angel. A guardian angel has only one job in this world, and that is to watch over the person put under his care. Angels have tremendous power. For example, one angel could easily in a few moments wipe out an entire Communist army. This power he puts at the service of the human person he is watching over. You and your family then should daily call on the service of the powerful angels commissioned by God to be at your service.

In heaven you will enjoy the companionship of many friends. Among these you already have some special friends. Why not let statues and pictures of these angels and saints about the home remind you frequently of them?

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

During the coming week, check your own home and find out from two or three of your friends about their homes to see in which of the following ways Mary and the saints and angels of heaven are remembered and honored: family Rosary...consecration to Immaculate Heart...picture of Blessed Virgin Mary...of St. Joseph...of Guardian Angel...or statue of Mary...of St. Joseph...home shrine of Blessed Virgin Mary...celebration of feast days of members of family...celebration of baptismal days...

Which of the above religious practices and articles do your friends consider important?

Do they think that any of the above religious practices and articles are out of place in the modern family? If so, why?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(First read the explanation of this step on page 7.)

What can you do to see that Mary and the saints and angels have their rightful place in the home of your young friends?

What kind of propaganda campaign can you conduct?

IV. Parents in the Home

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

A home without parental authority is like a chicken with its head cut off. The parents are the head of the family organization and have the authority and responsibility to lead. The children are rank-and-file members of the family and have the responsibility to follow.

On October 26, 1941, Pope Pius XII clearly described parental leadership:

The mind of the child as it comes forth from its mother's womb is a page upon which nothing is written. From hour to hour as it passes on its way from the cradle to the tomb its eyes and other senses...will write upon that page the images and ideas of the things among which it lives....

Train the minds of your children. Do not give them wrong ideas or wrong reasons for things. Whatever their questions may be, do not answer them with evasions or untrue statements which their minds rarely accept....

Train the character of your children. Correct their faults, encourage and cultivate their good qualities and coordinate them with that stability which will make for resolution in after-life. Your children...will learn in time to see...the

interpreter of another and higher will, the will of God. . . .

Train their hearts. . . . What deep and rich potentialities for love, goodness, and devotion lie dormant in the heart of a child! You. . . must awaken them, foster them, direct them, raise them up. . . to Jesus, and to Mary, their heavenly Mother. . . .

In their 1950 statement "The Child: Citizen of Two Worlds," the bishops of the United States stress the obligation of parents to supervise the recreation of their children.

Many unsanitary influences are at work in modern society which must not be allowed free play upon the personality of a growing child. Parents should carefully regulate the company and the hours which their child keeps. They should not treat him as an adult. He needs to be warned against, even forbidden, certain associations. Particularly during adolescence, this is extremely important. A vigilant watch is to be kept over the type of entertainment in which he indulges, the motion pictures he attends, the books he reads, the radio and television programs to which he is exposed in the home.

God gives parents a share in His authority. Therefore, whatever commands they give within the range of their authority are the commands of God.

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

Do your young friends have Christ's attitude toward the authority of parents?

Do they obey because by so doing they obey God?

Do your young friends argue with their parents about the following: their allowance...their working part-time...family car...not bringing their friends home...making noise and disrupting home when friends come...clothes...smoking...homework...extracurriculars...school grades...work about the home...spending recreation time with family...using telephone...radio or television programs?

If there are arguments, what is the reason for them?

Do your young friends have confidence in their parents? Do they consult their parents and respect their opinions about (1) DATES, that is, frequency, companions, places, curfew, etc.; (2) SCHOOL, that is, informing parents about homework, school activities, getting along with teachers, extracurriculars, etc.; (3) READING, that is, novels, magazines, comic books, other reading material?

If your young friends lack confidence in their parents, what are the reasons?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(First read the explanation of this step on page 7.)

How can you influence your teen-age companions to acquire greater respect for parental authority?

How can you help them develop more confidence in their parents? How can you encourage them to have frank discussions with their parents when special problems arise?

What will be the nature of your propaganda campaign to promote the above ideas?

V. Brothers and Sisters in the Home

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

Christ's words, "Amen I say to you, as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me" (Matt. 25:40), certainly applies to the way your young friends treat their brothers and sisters.

To help strangers and speak kindly to them is not difficult. But to overlook slighting words and actions on the part of those with whom you live day after day requires the courage and strength and nobility of the Heart of Christ. Charity really begins at home. The approval and condemnation that Christ gives in the Last Judgment scene will apply strongly to the way that members of a family act toward each other.

Brothers and sisters, especially as adults, allow matters of difference about money and other material trifles to tear apart the close relationship into which God has put them. To these Christ says (Matt. 5:23-24):

Therefore, if thou art offering thy gift at the altar and there rememberest that thy brother has anything against thee, leave thy gift before the altar and go first to be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

God has put parents and brothers and sisters in the same family unit because He wants them to be of continual help to each other. Their first responsibility is to each other.

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

During the coming week check the attitude of several of your young friends toward their brothers and sisters.

Do your young friends look upon their families as cells in the Mystical Body of Christ?

Are they convinced that whatever they do to their brothers and sisters they do to Christ Himself?

Do they show genuine interest and help their brothers and sisters with the following: their hobbies...their companions...their schoolwork...their extracurriculars...their future vocations...their dealings with their parents...their dates?

Do they argue with their brothers and sisters about using the telephone...using the car...their taste in music...clothes...TV or radio programs...sports? If so, why?

Have they hurt Christ in their brothers and sisters by being stubborn and loud in expressing their opinions? by taking offense quickly over petty things? by refusing to speak to them for a long time? by slashing their brothers and sisters with clever, biting words? by threatening to report them to dad or mother? by prying into the personal affairs of their brothers and sisters? by reading letters not addressed to them?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(First read the explanation of this step on page 7.)

How can you help your young friends treat their brothers and sisters as they would Christ Himself?

What kind of propaganda campaign will you conduct? Remember that this campaign is composed of prayer and sacrifice and actions as well as words.

VI. Home and Parish

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

In a talk to women of Italian Catholic Action, October 26, 1941, Pope Pius XII described the relation of home to parish in the following words:

... In this great work of the Christian education of your sons and daughters you will understand the training in the home, however wise, however thorough, is not enough. It needs to be supplemented and perfected by the powerful aid of religion. From the moment of Baptism the priest possesses the authority of a spiritual father and a pastor over your children. You must cooperate with him in teaching them those first rudiments of catechism and piety which are the only bases of a solid education and of which you, the earliest teachers of your children, ought to have a sufficient and sure knowledge. You cannot teach what you do not know yourselves. Teach them to love God, to love Christ, to love our Mother, the Church, and the pastors of the Church who are your guides. Love the catechism and teach your children to love it; it is the great handbook of the love and fear of God, of Christian wisdom and of eternal life.

Pius XI, in his encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth, states that God intends the harmony between the Church and the Christian family to be so great "that the

Church and the family may be said to constitute together one and the same temple of Christian education."

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

During the coming week check the home life of several of your young friends with regard to the following points.

How many know whether or not their families are registered at the parish rectory?

How many have never spoken to their pastors? If not, why not?

How many know whether or not their homes have been blessed by the priest?

Do your young friends know what organizations and activities in their parishes help their families? If not, why not?

How many of them take part in these organizations and activities?

Do they know that important activities regarding family life are going on in the diocese?

Do they know what charitable activities the diocese is sponsoring?

How many read the diocesan paper regularly?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(First read the explanation of this step on page 7.)

How can you help your friends see more clearly the need of cooperation between home and parish?

How can you help them want to participate in parish activities with their families?

What kind of propaganda campaign will you wage to help Mary promote such cooperation?

VII. Home and School

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

In his encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth, Pope Pius XI stated:

Since however the younger generations must be trained in the arts and sciences for the advantage and prosperity of civil society, and since the family of itself is unequal to this task, it was necessary to create that social institution, the school. . . . The school is by its very nature and institution subsidiary and complementary to the family and to the Church. It follows logically and necessarily that it must not be in opposition to, but in positive accord with, those other two elements, and form with them a perfect moral union, constituting one sanctuary of education, as it were, with the family and the Church.

The bishops of the United States in their 1950 statement stress the need of cooperation between the family and the school.

A close association between home and school should be maintained by parents and school authorities so as to facilitate an exchange of views and confidences regarding the child. In this way, home and school-life can be better integrated and there will be a reduction of those

conflicts which often are at work in his life, and which do not receive the understanding and attention they deserve.

The schools help the family. Authority in the school is an extension of that of the parents. Your parents therefore have the right to your confidence. They also have the obligation to cooperate with school authorities, and the right to receive cooperation from the same authorities.

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

During the coming week find out from several of your young friends whether they know they have an obligation of discussing school affairs with their parents?

Do they confide in their parents about school discipline, homework, extracurriculars, class affairs, other school activities?

Do they encourage their parents to take part in parents-teachers association?

What activities for parents does your school sponsor?

Do all students try to interest their parents in these activities? If not, why not?

Do they show an interest in the studies of their younger brothers and sisters?

Do they help them see the justice of disciplinary measures at school?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(First read the explanation of this step on page 7.)

How can you get your young friends to want to confide in their parents about school affairs?

Can parents be invited to school activities?

How can your young friends help their younger brothers and sisters with their school work?

What type of propaganda campaign will your Sodality group wage to make Christ's ideas dominate?

VIII. Home and Recreation

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

Friends are frequently made more quickly during the time of recreation than in any other way. Hence, recreation in the home is needed to keep up companionship between parents and brothers and sisters. The family that plays and prays together, is the family that stays together.

Good recreation and work together in the home is undoubtedly also the most effective way of learning how to use your leisure wisely when you become adults.

Recreating together develops a sense of wanting to be together. And wanting to be together is a must for your little cell in the Mystical Body of Christ.

Regarding television, for example, Pope Pius XII in a letter to the bishops of Italy (January 1, 1954) points out that television can destroy the air of purity and reserve which should pervade the home. Clergy and laity must act to make television not only morally irreproachable but also an instrument of Christian education.

However, despite the dangers of television, our Holy Father praises it for bringing recreation back into the family circle.

In recent times the cinema, sports, not to mention the dire necessities of daily work, have increasingly tended to keep members of the family

away from home, and thus the natural blossoming of domestic life has been upset. We must be glad, then, that television contributes efficaciously to reestablish the balance, by providing the whole family with an opportunity for honest diversion together, away from the dangers of bad company and places.

The praise that His Holiness gives wholesome television applies also to any form of reasonable work and recreation in the home that unites father, mother, brothers, and sisters in the family circle.

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

During the coming week check with several of your young friends to learn which of the following recreational activities take place in their homes.

Does the family watch television together?

Do they play such games as scrabble, cards, Twenty Questions?

Do they have family discussions about current topics?

Do they have family projects, such as Christmas tree trimmings or improvements about the house, helping to paint the storm windows, putting them up?

Are they usually at home for the entire family meal?

Do they have family picnics in their backyard or in the park?

Do they have a family night, that is a night once a week or once a month set aside when the family is together all evening?

Do they have parties for their young friends at their homes?

In giving such parties, do they show consideration in preparing and cleaning up?

As guests, do they show consideration for the parents and talk to them and treat them with respect and leave the place in order and always remember a "thank you"?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(First read the explanation of this step on page 7.)

What can you do to develop in your young friends a desire for recreation in the home?

What will make up your propaganda campaign to help Mary pull families together by means of family work and recreation?

IX. Home as an Organization

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

A family is not a haphazard grouping of people. God designs the family as a living unity. For example, your parents did not select you. God Himself chose your parents and your brothers and sisters and you. He forms the members of your family into an organism, in which all of you are so connected that whatever one does affects all the others.

Every family is an organization with (a) a common aim and purpose, (b) common leadership, (c) a common program.

a) God planned the family as an organism in which children come into the world and are to grow up to adulthood in natural life and in the life of sanctifying grace.

b) God appointed parents to lead this organization.

c) The common program for families is explained in detail in the various sections of this booklet. This part will stress the important element of cooperation and work in family life.

In their 1950 statement, the bishops of the United States stress the fact that work in the family is a means of growing in the life of grace.

It is the duty of parents to see to it that their child develops the deepest sense of responsibility; learning at the earliest possible period that

he is accountable to God for his thoughts, his words and his actions. He should be held in strict account for the performance of chores and tasks which are given to him by his parents. He must be made to see that each member of the family has a part to play in the service of God by carrying out an assigned role.

A non-Catholic authority on family life, Paul Popenoe, in an address at Santa Clara University, indicated how work at home is needed to develop natural abilities.

Young people need to be provided with more skills for marriage and family life. In earlier generations they learned these skills by growing up in a farm family.... Removal of the family from the farm to the city has deprived it very largely of its educational function in this respect as in others.... It is not easy in a city home or in an apartment house to find chores which will make the children feel that they are a part of the family enterprise and which will train them to establish and maintain their own family successfully when the time comes....

Not only should children be given as many jobs as possible, even though they may do them less efficiently than the parents themselves could, but they should take a large part in the economic activities of the family. Appropriate allowances from the time that they can count should lead to buying for the family, keeping the family accounts, and planning family expenditures through a family council or otherwise. Children should be encouraged to study tax bills and rental contracts, to read insurance policies (including the fine print) and reconcile bank statements....

Girls and boys alike need better training in domestic skills in the school as well as in the home....Boys get almost no practice in dealing with the simple mechanical adjustments and problems of upkeep which are a part of the normal home life.

Cooperation and work at home are a must for the close union that makes the family what it is, the smallest social organism in that larger organism, the Mystical Body of Christ.

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

During the coming week check with several of your young friends to see in what ways they cooperate in work and recreation about the home?

In which ways do they not cooperate?

Do they argue with their parents about giving up recreation outside of the home in order to help about the house?

Do they want to take orders from their parents?

Do they want to confide in their parents about their personal affairs?

Do they prefer to recreate at home rather than outside of the home?

How much time do they spend generally at home?

How much time do they generally spend in recreation outside of the home?

Which is more? Why?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(First read the explanation of this step on page 7.)

What can you do to help your friends want to spend more time with their families, cooperate about the home?

What kind of propaganda campaign will you sponsor to help Mary make their families excellent organizations?

X. Home and Neighborhood

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

A neighborhood is made up of many homes. Unless you and your family take up residence on a desert isle (something that God evidently does not want), your home must necessarily be surrounded by many other homes. God wants families to depend on each other.

Take a look at your neighborhood. You may think that the families just happen to live near each other and have no responsibility toward each other. Such is not the case. At the present time, God wills that you have your present neighbors. He wants your family to participate in the life of the neighborhood and to contribute to its social and spiritual development.

Pope Pius XI, in his encyclical on Reconstructing the Social Order, stresses the above facts.

Then only will true cooperation be possible for a single common good when the constituent parts of society deeply feel themselves members of one great family and children of the same Heavenly Father; nay, that they are one body in Christ but severally members one of another (Rom. 12:5) so that if one member suffers anything, all the members suffer with it (I Cor. 12:26).

Above all, friendship and service are to be outstanding in the dealings of your family with others in your neighborhood. Christian charity is to be the neighborhood theme song.

In a radio address to the United States in 1947, Pope Pius XII explained what this Christian charity is.

Charity is different from any other human love because it is the replica of Christ's love for man. 'A new commandment I give you, that you love one another; that as I have loved you, you also love one another.' That is charity....

And what did Christ love in man, except God? Not in the sense that He found God already in every man, but in the sense that He hoped through love to restore God to every man....

Charity means that you love each other thus with a view to bringing God more and more into the lives of each other so that, linked together as so many members by the spirit of Divine Love, you may cooperate in forming a body not unworthy of the Divine Head.

Families in a neighborhood have the God-given obligation to cooperate together in Christian charity so that, linked together by the spirit of Divine Love, they will make their section of the Mystical Body worthy of its head, Jesus Christ.

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

During the coming week check with a few of your young friends to see how interested they are in their neighborhoods.

Do your young friends think that their families may ignore some of the families in their neighborhoods? If so, why?

Do they know all of their immediate neighbors? If not, why not?

Do they make an effort to welcome new families into their neighborhood?

Do they quarrel with any of the families in their neighborhood? If so, why?

Are there any families in their neighborhoods that do not speak to each other?

If possible, do they take care of the children in the neighborhood by reading to them, by helping with simple hobbies, by taking them to the neighborhood playground, in other ways?

Do they know how many of their neighbors are Catholic and non-Catholic?

Do they know how many of the homes in their neighborhood have been consecrated to the Sacred Heart and Immaculate Heart?

How many neighborhoods have the block Rosary?

How many Catholic magazines and pamphlets are in the various homes in the neighborhood?

Is there any discrimination against minority groups in the neighborhoods? If so, why?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(First read the explanation of this step on page 7.)

What can you do to help your young friends take a deeper interest in the families in their neighborhoods?

How can you help them make their neighborhood a truly representative section of the Mystical Body of Christ?

What kind of propaganda campaign will you conduct to help Mary make neighborhoods truly Christlike?

XI. Home and Civic Society

STEP ONE: Mind of the Church.

Whether you like it or not, God created you in such a way that you cannot live here or reach the next life without the help of your fellow men.

God further ordained that in this life you and your fellow men must live in groups. The basic social unit is the family. This depends much on two others: a supernatural-life organism (the Church) and a natural-life organization (civic society).

The family has its own native rights which no civil power can take away or unduly limit.

The state and civic society has the obligation to provide what is necessary for good family life. The bishops of the United States in their 1949 statement, "The Christian Family," describe these necessities with striking clearness.

To exist in full effectiveness, family life must have permanence. This permanence depends chiefly upon the permanence of...the marriage of one man with one woman in divorceless union that is broken only by the death of one of the spouses....

Any marriage which looks to dissolution or divorce, even as a possibility, cannot give to children the security they need; cannot surround

children with the enduring atmosphere of home; cannot breathe into children the true spirit of family life.

Further, family life must have freedom. . . . The State must not therefore fail to provide opportunities for the adequate housing of families, for the requisite schooling of children, for the use of common benefits supplied through the taxing of citizens.

The family needs a just measure of economic security. When, in a wealthy and prospering nation, diligent and willing parents are forced to live in grinding poverty; when parents have no opportunity of owning their own home; when the aid of government is extended to those who raise crops or build machines but not to those who rear children, there exists a condition of inequity and even of injustice.

Social legislation and social action must concur to improve man's economic opportunity, to enable him to marry early, to free him from the peril of unnaturally limiting his family, and to afford him some certainty of sufficiently gainful employment and some assurance that death or accident will not reduce his dependents to the status of public charges.

Finally, the family needs religion. . . . The home must again become a shrine of fidelity, a place where God is the unseen host.

The family in its turn must help civic society.

The first obligation of the family to society is to make

itself the family it should be. Our bishops in their 1949 statement stressed the fact that "No nation can be greater than its families."

The family is also to take an active part, as far as it reasonably can, in civic life.

In his Christmas Message of 1948, Pope Pius XII emphasized that Catholics are to contribute their share to the good running of civic society:

A convinced Christian cannot confine himself within an easy and egotistical isolationism when he witnesses the needs and miseries of his brothers; when pleas for help come to him from those in economic distress; when he knows the aspirations of the working classes for more normal and just conditions of life; when he is aware of the abuses of the economic system which puts money above social obligations; when he is not ignorant of the mistakes of a stubborn nationalism which denies or spurns the common bonds linking the separate nations together, and imposing on each one of them many and varied duties toward the great family of nations.

Families have the same obligation as individuals of participating in the economic and political life of civic society.

STEP TWO: Make a Survey.

N.B. This section really contains two elements that should not be taken at the same time. The first one deals with the obligations of the state and civic society toward the family. The second treats of the duties of the family to society. Spend several weeks for survey and action on each of these.

A. Duties of State and Society to Family Life.

In their 1949 statement, the bishops of the United States state that "the world by countless acts and agencies moves steadily to disrupt family life and destroy the home."

They then list a number of these acts and agencies, which are given below. During the coming week bring each of these up in conversation with several of your young friends to learn how much they agree or disagree with these evils. Moreover, find one example of each in a daily newspaper, TV program, or movie.

1. The world approves and facilitates divorce as a cure for domestic ills.
2. It accepts multiple marriages which usually mean a hopeless entanglement of the infelicities of a plurality of broken homes.
3. It sponsors planned parenthood by use of unnatural and morally degrading means, thus infusing poison into the heart of family life by destroying in husband and wife the self-respect and mutual reverence on which alone is built enduring love and patient fidelity.
4. It is unconcerned, for the most part, about its manifest duty of removing the great difficulties that lie in the way of those who wish to marry and establish homes.
5. Its social legislation in point of suitable housing, decent material facilities, security in income and prospects, is slow, fumbling, and inadequate.

B. Duties of Family to Civic Society.

During the coming week check with several of your young friends to see whether or not their families have contributed their share to the good of civic society.

Before the last national election, in how many families did the adults intelligently discuss the merits of the various candidates?

Before the last state elections, how many of the adult members prepared intelligently for voting?

How many of your young friends know their national Senators and Congressional Representatives?

How many know their State senator and representative? If they do not know them, why not?

How many of their families have contact with labor unions (as members or otherwise)?

Are their views of unions favorable or unfavorable? Why?

In their families is there any discrimination against minority groups such as Negroes, Jews, others?

The Christian reconstruction of society demands a recognition of the dignity of work. This dignity must be learned in the home. How many of your young friends work about the home willingly? How many of them consider such work as a means of becoming more like Christ?

Do your young friends and their families know local ordinances such as local speed laws, parking rules, building codes?

Do they want to observe these civic regulations?

If they make light of these, why do they do so?

STEP THREE: Plan Action.

(See the note at the beginning of STEP TWO on page 43.)

A. (First read the explanation of this step on page 7.)

What can you do to make your young friends aware of the duties of the state and civic society to help family life?

What kind of propaganda campaign will you conduct?

B. (First read the explanation of this step on page 7.)

What can you do to help your young friends make their families more conscious of their serious obligation to participate in civic life?

In what shall your propaganda campaign consist?

Church Documents

Pope Pius XI:

Encyclical, Divini Illius Magistri, Christian Education of Youth (1929).

Encyclical, Casti Connubii, Christian Marriage (1930).

Encyclical, Quadragesimo Anno, Reconstruction of the Social Order (1931).

Pope Pius XII:

Allocution to Women of Catholic Action (October 26, 1941); printed under title, "Guiding Christ's Little Ones," Family Life Bureau, N.C.W.C., 1942; also in Clergy Review, 22 (March 1942), 132-38.

Radio Address to National Conference of Catholic Charities on "Christian Charity" (October 1947); Catholic Mind, December 1947, pp. 705-707.

Letter to Bishops of Italy on "Television: Its Public and Private Effects" (January 1, 1954); The Pope Speaks, First Quarter 1954, pp. 5-10.

Bishops of the United States:

1949 Statement of the Bishops of the United States, "The Christian Family"; N.C.W.C., Washington, D.C.

1950 Statement of the Bishops of the United States, "The Child: Citizen of Two Worlds"; N.C.W.C., Washington, D.C.

N.B. Simplified editions of the above three encyclicals of Pope Pius XI can be obtained from the Paulist Press. The encyclical on the Mystical Body of Christ, by Pope Pius XII, and several other encyclicals are also available in simplified form.

