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RELIGION IN THE HOME

FOR THE *PRE-SCHOOL* CHILD

by
KATHERINE DELMONICO BYLES
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HINTS FOR
PARENTS
IN THE
TRAINING
OF CHILDREN



RELIGION IN THE HOME

Monthly Aids for the Parents of
Pre-School Children

By
KATHERINE DELMONICO BYLES



THE PAULIST PRESS
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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The idea of a series of little lessons or aids for parents was suggested by the eminent Paulist Father, Rev. Joseph McSorley, and grew out of his deep interest in Catholic education. He gave generously of his wisdom and advice throughout the formation of the booklets.

Thanks are due also to my own four children and to several thousand pupils, who, all unknown to themselves, have furnished me the happy experience of a life as mother and teacher which has enabled me to pass on these notes to other mothers.

K. D. B.

Nihil Obstat:

ARTHUR J. SCANLAN, S.T.D., *Censor Librorum.*

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FOREWORD

PURPOSE

This series of monthly aids or lessons is designed primarily for the parent in the home, where all religious instruction should begin. More and more, parents are coming to realize their duty to obey the words of the Holy Father, expressed in his encyclical *On the Christian Education of Youth* (December 31, 1929), when he clearly states:

"The family, therefore, holds directly from the Creator the mission and hence the right to educate its children—a right inalienable because inseparably joined to a strict obligation, a right anterior to any right whatsoever either of civil society or of the State, and therefore a right inviolable by any power on earth."

Nations and rulers show a growing recognition of the fact that the character of the future man or woman is largely formed by the training received in childhood and youth. Since this training is the duty of the parent, it is hoped that many mothers and fathers may be glad to hear of some definite, practical, and well-tested ways of cultivating right moral and religious habits in the family.

The purpose of the lessons is to show parents how they may guide their children to put into practice the teachings of the Faith, to show them how they may live a Catholic life. In other words, the aim is to help parents realize that Christ said, "I am the Way and the Life," as well as "the Truth."

PLAN

Two booklets have been written, one for the parents of children of pre-school age, and a second for the parents of elementary school children. Each booklet consists of twelve chapters, one for each month, this division having been undertaken in order to make use of the rich liturgical material of the ecclesiastical year.

CONTENTS

The contents are in no sense elaborate or exhaustive. A general knowledge of the Catholic religion on the part of



the parent is taken for granted, and, in the case of the elementary school booklet, it is assumed that the children are receiving at least some formal instruction in Christian Doctrine in a Catholic school or a Catholic vacation school or a Sunday school.

Among over 200 topics treated are: How to teach children to pray; How to control tantrums; How to teach obedience, truthfulness, purity; How to discover practical ways of teaching children to love God; How to teach religion through pictures; How to tell religious stories; How to teach the life and ways of Christ in the family; How to teach about saints; How to follow the liturgical year at home in a way attractive to children; How to control use of radio in home; How to supervise movie-going; How to co-operate with Church and school; How to select good books.

AIMS

Briefly then, *Religion in the Home* aims to do the following:

1. To stress constantly the importance of the home to the child.
2. To teach the necessity of creating a supernatural atmosphere in the home.
3. To impress upon parents the necessity for regular prayer, attendance at Mass, and reception of the sacraments.
4. To give practical instruction in home pedagogy.
5. To cite the experience of wise parents in training their children to practice fundamental virtues, like obedience, purity, truthfulness.
6. To tie up home life with the liturgical season.
7. To introduce various plans and devices which help to impress children—such things as a family altar, holy pictures, religious dramas, games, books, songs, hymns.
8. To suggest each month one or two books suitable for the age indicated.
9. To suggest each month one virtue for parents to practice themselves.

JANUARY

REMINDER FOR THE YEAR

We learn to pray by praying.

AIM

To make a home so Catholic in atmosphere that the baby will have the chance of noticing holy things just as early as he notices his mother and his rattle. Why not give the Baby Lord Jesus the honor of being among the first impressions made on the infant mind?

PRACTICE FOR THE MONTH

This month teach the morning offering, one of your own, or one like the following, composed by Father Hugh Benson:

My God, I offer up to Thee
My soul and heart, Thine own to be;
And all I do or hear or say
And all my work and play.

If the child is too young for this, have him say:

My God, I give You myself and my day.

Or you may prefer to say, "Whose baby are you?" and teach the child to answer, "God's."

Have a picture of the Infant Jesus or a Madonna on the wall beside your child's crib or cot—not above the head of the bed, where the child cannot see it, but within reach of his glance. Every morning when you go to the bed, look at the picture and say, "Good morning, Jesus," and then say the morning offering.

STORY OF THE MONTH

One baby a year and a half old learned to throw a kiss to Baby Jesus and to say His Name. She would pull herself up by the bars of her crib, wave her tiny hand at the picture, and say, "Morning, Jesus."

There is a difference of opinion as to just when babies commence to notice things; but if you do begin to teach the baby a little too soon, what possible harm can be done? A reverent attitude whenever you yourself say the Holy Name will make an impression very early. And if, by one year, most babies can say, "Da-Da," "Pussy," and such words, they can also learn the name "Jesus," although they will probably say "De-su" ("D" is easy to sound).

VISITS TO CHURCH

Take your child for a visit to church twice this month, once on New Year's Day for another look at the Christmas crib, and again on Epiphany, January 6, and say with him,

Jesus, my God,
I adore You and I love You.

If the child is old enough to observe—some are at one year—point out the tabernacle and the figures in the crib. Always speak with a tone of reverence so that the baby senses that the church and things in church are sacred.

LESSON

Get a good strong scrapbook—looseleaf or any kind you like—and a pot of paste. Let the child paste in one holy picture a month—this month a picture of the Three Wise Men. Tell the story of the Wise Men who came from far-off lands to look for the Baby King. Show how the Wise Kings believed they would find the newborn Saviour. Show that they loved God and so trusted Him to show them the way. If you explain this you will have given the child the first idea of the great virtues of faith, hope and charity. If the child is old enough, read the story of the Wise Men from the New Testament (St. Matthew, Chapter 2).

SOMETHING TO DO

If you have had a Crib on display for Christmas, let the child, if old enough to use scissors, cut out some figures of kings and camels from Christmas cards and set them up.

They can be made to stand by bracing them against toy blocks, as children do with paper dolls. Some parents buy handsome Crib sets; but cutouts of any kind are dear to a child's heart, if he has made them himself.

GOOD-NIGHT PRAYER

Children too young for night prayers should say a word to God before sleep. After the little one is in bed, tell him to close his eyes, cross his arms, and say:

Mother of God,
Keep me safe in your arms
All the night long.

Do this every night, just as you also say the morning offering every morning.

VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

Keep smiling! Since children learn most from imitation, be as you wish your child to be, gentle and smiling. No matter how exasperating things are, try to smile on and speak softly.

PEDAGOGY FOR PARENTS

Here is a principle emphasized by experienced educators and teachers: one small act repeated faithfully is imprinted on the mind. Repetition is all-important.

"Day by day" and "A little at a time" are our mottoes. If you want to learn a language, you master a few expressions a day and keep using them. To learn to play the piano, you practice faithfully with a few new scales and a few new keys added gradually.

One obstacle that keeps us from progressing is the thought of the whole task to be undertaken. We already have too much to do. We think we can do no more. But really most people who accomplish things do so because they go along slowly and steadily, never yielding to the temptation to give up.

The child who is taught something ten minutes a day for

eight days will retain the knowledge far better than one taught forty minutes a day for two days.

During this month try to apply that principle of education. Do a little experimenting. If your child is old enough to learn "Three Little Pigs," or any such rhyme, see whether you cannot teach him the morning offering by saying with him every morning for five days the first line of

"My God, I offer up to Thee"; (see page five).

For the next seven days, say the first *two* lines,

For the next ten days, say the first *three* lines,

For the next eight days, say the *four* lines;

On the thirty-first day you will have finished.

And from then until he is old enough for a more grown-up offering, the child knows what to say the moment he opens his eyes. You will have actually accomplished one great deed, you will have trained your child to link his little life to God.

BOOK FOR THE MONTH

*A Child's Rule of Life*¹ is a small paper-covered book describing in rhyme the day of a child of four or five from the moment he opens his eyes until he falls asleep at night. On each page there is a lifelike picture of the kind that children love.

HYMN FOR THE MONTH

Family singing is an excellent habit and this month we suggest that you learn *We Three Kings of Orient Are*,² that well-known old carol found in a collection of Christmas carols.

¹ *A Child's Rule of Life*, by Robert Hugh Benson. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 55 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$.45.

² *Old Christmas Carols*, edited by S. Archer Gibson, 1st Set (No. 4374). New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 3 East 43rd Street. Price, \$.12. Or *Singalong Carols* for Christmastide. New York: Paull-Pioneer Music Corp., 1657 Broadway. Price, \$.08.

FEBRUARY

REMINDER FOR THE YEAR

We learn to pray by praying.

REVIEW

The parents of children up to three or four years are reminded of the following:

1. Be regular in saying the child's morning offering with him.
2. Make remarks about "Dear Lord Jesus," always with a reverent look and manner.
3. Recite a little "good-night prayer" before sleep. If the baby is asleep as you put him down, murmur it anyhow, to form the habit in yourself.
4. Remember that if you are living consciously in God's presence, you will after a while convey that consciousness to your little one.

NEWS FROM OTHER PARENTS

Among the Connecticut group of parents (a group sponsored by the Parent Educator Committee), "there was a general consensus of opinion that the child should be made aware of God's existence at a very early age, but views as to how that introduction should take place varied a great deal. One father maintained that the folding of the hands—the oldest symbol of adoration in the Church—should be the first step in teaching prayer. A majority of the mothers felt that the Sign of the Cross should precede anything else, one mother averring that she had begun to train her baby in the motions as soon as she brought him home from the hospital, so that by the time he was able to 'pat-a-cake' he could also automatically bless himself. Others felt that if the mother made the Sign of the Cross and uttered ejaculations over the child's crib at bedtime, he would begin at an early age to imitate her."

PRACTICE OF THE MONTH—GRACE

For children from the age of three, say Grace carefully before meals:

“Bless, dear Jesus, the food which You give me, and please give some to all the children in the world.”

After meals, say:

“Thank You, Jesus, for the good food You have given me.”

Children love forms. So you must say the Grace with great care and reverence, and with folded hands. In teaching these little prayers, recall the value of learning a little every day.

VISITS TO CHURCHES

February has many beautiful feasts. On February 2nd comes the Purification (Candlemas Day). Have a blessed candle and light it for a few minutes on this day. Tell the story of the beautiful Mother Mary going to the Temple to offer thanks to God for having sent her the Infant Jesus. (Read the Gospel by St. Luke, Chapter 2, verses 22-39.)

February 3rd is the Feast of St. Blaise who will care for throats and tonsils and adenoids and help us to decide wisely what to do about them.

The Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes comes on February 11th. Parents may well take little children to pray before our Lady's altar and ask her to keep them well, even though they cannot go to the shrine at Lourdes where so many sick people are miraculously cured.

LESSON OF THE MONTH

God's care for us is the subject for February. Last month we were reminded that the Wise Men showed great faith, and loved God, and trusted Him. This month we receive proof that we should trust God, because He cares for us in

so many ways. He allows St. Blaise to bless our throats. Once He let St. Agatha (February 5th) save the people of Catania from an eruption of the volcano, Mount Etna. He sent His mother to Lourdes in the nineteenth century,—when religion was weakened by the attacks of unbelievers,—to work miracles, to cure people and to strengthen their faith. As each feast comes, tell the story of the day, stress the point that we must trust God, and say,

“All things work together for good
Unto those that love God.”

THINGS TO DO

SCRAPBOOKS

For the scrapbook, pictures of any of the feasts mentioned can easily be obtained from Catholic stores or magazines. There are wonderful pictures of the Purification painted by great masters. One by Giotto shows the Baby Jesus holding out His arms to His mother in most lifelike fashion.

From a five-cent catalogue of University Prints ¹ you may select pictures priced at one and one-half cents each. A few of these may be obtained in color at four cents each.

Ars Sacra ² also has good pictures. Thomas Nelson & Sons ³ has several series of fine colored pictures.

A HOME ALTAR

Every home should have an altar by the time the child is three years old. A grocery box, low enough for wee tots, may be used.

Let the little one take care of it, with the help of the mother, or of an older child. Have on it a little statue of the Blessed Mother and two vases or glasses for flowers. The value of such a little shrine is nowadays often overlooked. In some homes a niche can be found and used for this purpose. In a very handsome apartment in New York City's fashionable East Side, one of our mothers recently was pleasantly surprised to see a niche containing a lovely statue of our Blessed Lady and before it a votive lamp burning. The

daughter of the home, a young college girl, attended to the lamp, kept the wicks fresh, etc.

The effect of an altar in the home is beautifully described in a book, *The Education of Catholic Girls*, by Mother Janet Erskine Stuart, who says:

"An altar or a nursery shrine . . . gives a tone of joy and heavenliness that go down into the soul and take root there to grow into something lasting and beautiful. There are flowers to be brought, and lights, and small processions, and evening recollection with quietness of devotion, with the realization of the 'great cloud of witnesses' who are around to make play safe and holy, and there is through it all the gracious call to things higher, to be strong, to be unselfish, to be self-controlled, to be worthy of these protectors and friends in heaven."

Mother Stuart's mention of the "cloud of witnesses" reminds us that at an early age the child should be told about the angels and saints that are with us in spirit when we pray. (In October and November we shall say more on this topic.)

PEDAGOGY FOR PARENTS

Children of three easily learn to carry things without breaking them; so you should allow them to help in small ways every day. A low altar gives the child a good chance to take care of things by himself. If the altar is too high, of course, there will be accidents.

VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

Trust in God. Recall that the virtue of hope means an expectation of receiving from God all we need to make progress to Heaven. If you give all you have to God, He gives you all that you need.

BOOK FOR THE MONTH

I Belong to God,⁴ by Mother Lillian Clark, is a charming book, with fascinating illustrations. It tells children how true it is that they are God's own children. All mothers

should read the book and retell it or read it to their children, as the little ones become old enough. Mother Clark is a nun in the Cenacle, a convent which brings thousands of women and girls together for retreats each year.

HYMN FOR THE MONTH

Since in this month we have both the Feast of the Purification and the Feast of Lourdes, we ought to have the family singing a hymn to our Blessed Lady. You may choose one from any hymn book you have. The *Hymn of the Lourdes Pilgrims*⁵ with its chorus made famous by the chanting of the pilgrims at Lourdes is suitable for this month.

¹ The University Prints, Newton, Mass. Catalogue, \$.05.

² Ars Sacra, 15 Barclay Street, New York City.

³ Thomas Nelson & Sons, 385 Madison Avenue, New York City.

⁴ *I Belong to God*, by Mother Lillian Clark. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 55 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$1.50.

⁵ *The Catholic Church Hymnal* (edited by Tozer). Hymn No. 95. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.50.

MARCH

REMINDER FOR THE YEAR

We learn to pray by praying.

REVIEW

Parents of babies up to three or four are reminded of the morning offering, the prayer before sleep, grace before and after meals.

Be absolutely regular with these prayers.

Remember that habits formed in babyhood last through life.

NEWS FROM OTHER PARENTS

As an indication that very young children, if well trained, are aware of God, we tell the following story. Peter, aged three, was standing with his father one evening at sunset. The father was silent; and his face and attitude showed that the glory in the sky made him think of God. However, he said nothing. He felt a tiny tug at his hand and, looking down, saw Peter gazing straight ahead. . . . "God just went into His house," said Peter.

PRACTICE OF THE MONTH

As the Feast of the Annunciation falls in March, it is good to begin to teach the Hail Mary this month. The learning of such a long prayer may well occupy March, April, and May. Show the child a statue of the Blessed Mother or a picture; and tell him that one day a beautiful angel came and spoke to that lovely lady and said "Hail, full of grace." Encourage the child to say after you several times, "Hail Mary, full of grace." On succeeding days of the month tell the same story; and, from time to time, add a few more words of the prayer until you have finished:

The Lord is with thee,
Blessed art thou amongst women,
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

The first part of the Hail Mary has four lines; and there are 31 days in which to teach them. Follow the plan of taking a certain number of days for each line.

LESSON OF THE MONTH

Most mothers want to tell the story of the Annunciation and the Visitation in detail, but some feel shy about putting Bible stories into their own words. The best plan seems to be as follows:

Read to yourself carefully the story as told in the Bible (Gospel by St. Luke, Chapter 1, verses 26-56). Then, if you like, read it again as told more fully in a Bible history, or a book of Bible stories.

After that, either read the story aloud to the child and answer his questions about it in your own words; or tell the story in your own words at once, and see how easy it is to do this.

STORY TELLING IN GENERAL—PEDAGOGY

For mothers and fathers who are puzzled about story telling, the following suggestions are added:

Every story, every book, every play that ever was written has three parts to it,—setting, character, and plot. The place, the surroundings, the general tone and spirit are called the setting. The characters are the people who speak and act. The acts which they perform make up the plot.

When you tell a story about bears or fairies, you always use these three items:—place, people, actions.

To tell a religious story, read it first and figure out for yourself the place, the people, the actions. In the case of the Annunciation, tell about the tiny town with small, stone houses. (Parents with plenty of time can find much detail in books like Abbé Fouard's *Life of Christ*, which can often

be found in the Public Library.) Explain that this story happened long ago when America was only a big forest.

Next tell about the best young girl that was ever born into this world; tell of her mother and father, good St. Ann and St. Joachim.

Tell how every Jewish girl of those days had a hope that, when she grew up, she might be the mother of the promised Saviour and Redeemer. Mary did not really expect that honor, because she was very humble. But,—and this is *the great event* of the story,—God chose her out of all the young girls in the world to be the mother of His Son, our Lord and Saviour. You may make the coming of the angel very exciting, if you use your imagination.

You can make the story seem personal to the child, by pretending that some little boys and girls of Nazareth are passing by the house of the best and loveliest young girl in the town. Through the window they see her kneeling, her face shining with love and joy as she looks up toward heaven. Then tell why she looks that way—because a bright angel from heaven, God's own messenger, the Angel Gabriel, has just said to her, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee."

Explain that these words mean that she will have a Baby, the Lord Jesus, the Saviour of the world.

Chapter II of your story tells of the Visitation, and explains the third and fourth lines of the Hail Mary, when St. Elizabeth greeted her young cousin, our Blessed Lady, with the words:

"Blessed art thou amongst women,
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb (Jesus)."

THINGS TO DO

A LITTLE PLAY

If the family, at Christmas time, had anything like a little house for a stable of Bethlehem, it can be used for the house

of Mary; otherwise any cardboard box will do. The children can furnish it with the furniture of a doll's house, putting a little chair near the door or window through which the Angel can come in. A child will love to take a paper doll angel, let him fly through the window and say, "Hail, full of grace," to the little statue of the Blessed Mother, standing by the chair.

The Visitation can also be acted out.

PICTURES

There is a vast amount of material for this month. Everybody loves Fra Angelico's "Annunciation." That and a picture of St. Joseph should be added to the scrapbook.

VISITS TO CHURCH

On March 19th, the Feast of St. Joseph, try to take the little one to church and show him the statue of St. Joseph holding the Infant Jesus. On March 25th, the Annunciation, of course you will go to church and show the baby the flowers and lights around our Lady's statue.

VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

Again this month parents should think a great deal about trusting God. The Blessed Virgin did not hesitate one second to accept the message of the angel that she was to become the mother of God, although she realized by her answer (St. Luke, Chapter 1, verses 29, 30, 38) the suffering that was entailed. Parents should recall that, young though she was, our Blessed Mother had apparently mastered the virtue of trust, said by some to be the most difficult of all. Remember that this means that we must accept God's will and trust Him to take care of us no matter what happens.

BOOK FOR THE MONTH

The Hail Mary,¹ a child's pamphlet, explains in simple terms the meaning of the prayer.

HYMNS FOR THE MONTH

Two splendid hymns in honor of the Blessed Virgin are *Ave Maria*² and *Ave Maria, Thou Virgin and Mother*.³

It is not expected that a family should have more than one hymn book. Several are mentioned in various sections of this pamphlet, as one may be used more than another in a given section of the country.

¹ *The Hail Mary*, by Rev. Daniel M. Dougherty. New York: The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street. Price, \$.10.

² *St. Gregory's Hymnal*, Singers' Edition. Hymn No. 220a. Philadelphia: The St. Gregory Guild, 1705 Rittenhouse Street. Price, \$2.00.

³ *Catholic Church Hymnal* (edited by A. Edmonds Tozer). Hymn No. 98. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.75.

APRIL

REMINDER FOR THE YEAR

We learn to pray by praying.

REVIEW

If the parent has been faithful in the regular recitation of the morning offering, good-night prayer, grace, and the first half of the Hail Mary, the child by now has made a very good start on the knowledge of the words of prayers.

DEVOUT ATTITUDE

However, parents must remember from the very earliest years that a child should never "gabble" prayers. The only way in which to avoid this habit and to instill the right religious spirit into a child, is for the mother always to say the prayer with the most reverent attitude possible. She may not always kneel; but she can fold her hands perhaps, and she can show in her face the unmistakable look of one who is in communion with God.

Prayer is, as we must remember, a lifting up of mind and will to God. "Aware of God, looking at Him with the eyes of my soul, I reach towards Him to converse with Him, to give Him what I have, to identify my will with His." Any parent who, in this spirit, says the words of the baby prayers with her child, will after more or less time, convey to the infant mind that mother and he are doing something that is altogether different from their other occupations.

PRACTICE OF THE MONTH

MORNING AND NIGHT PRAYERS

Continue teaching the first half of the Hail Mary, according to the plan and method explained in the March and January sections. We shall leave the second part of the prayer for May. By the time the baby is two, it is best to have him

kneel down with mother for regular morning and night prayers, besides saying the morning offering in his crib and the prayer before sleep.

Morning and evening prayers are easy to make up. For the morning, we suggest little sayings like the following:

“Dear Jesus, I love You and adore You.”

“Thank You for loving me.”

“I want to be good today.”

“Bless mother, father, friends.”

In the evening:

“Thank You, Jesus, for a happy day.”

“Have I been a good boy or girl?”

“Dear Jesus, bless me and mother and father, etc.”

After the Hail Mary has been learned, it can be added to the personal prayers morning and evening. Later, the Our Father also.

NEWS FROM OTHER PARENTS

One mother reports that when her baby boy was three, she began to make, with him, a personal prayer book of home-made prayers of love and thanksgiving. She wrote them down in a notebook, and the child illustrated them with pictures on the page opposite the prayer. For instance, when the rain stopped and the sun shone brightly, mother and baby went to the window and said, “Thank You, dear Jesus, for the sun. Dear Jesus, I love You.” Then the baby made what he called a “sun.” The mother said that she had always written the words in very large plain letters and that by the time the baby was four he had said the words in that book so often that he could read them.

LESSON—THE RESURRECTION

The great lesson to teach this month is that of the Resurrection. The child will naturally be excited about Easter anyway; and parents can take advantage of all the festivities (flowers, “bunnies,” Easter eggs) to impress upon him that

this is a time of great joy. Our Lord died; but, because He was God, He could do what nobody else could do,—He arose from the dead. For the Resurrection story, read St. Matthew, Chapter 27, verses 57-66, and Chapter 28, verses 1-20; and also St. John, Chapter 20, verses 1-20.

In telling the story of the Resurrection, the parent should emphasize more and more, as the child grows older, the very great significance of the Resurrection. This event is one of the great proofs of Christianity, it being of course the greatest miracle of all. Be sure to tell the children that the soldiers were there as sentries, because in later years as girls and boys they will learn that this is a fact of historical importance.

VISITS—ASH WEDNESDAY AND HOLY THURSDAY

If the church is not too far, mothers will want to go to church every day in Holy Week; and if they choose a good hour there is no reason why the little ones should not go along. On Ash Wednesday, even very small children are greatly thrilled by the receiving of the ashes and they can be told that it is to remind them that they will die some day. On Holy Thursday, possibly even the toddlers can be in the procession of little ones scattering rose petals before the Blessed Sacrament, when It is being carried from the altar to the repository. At any rate, the repository, with all its beauty, is a wonderful sight to children; and the mother can teach an unforgettable lesson about our Lord, Whom we wish especially to honor on this night before He dies.

THINGS TO DO

Pictures of the Resurrection will of course be added to the scrapbook; and, for those who want them, there is the whole series of the Passion. If a nice picture of the Resurrection has been hung above the altar, the children will love to place flowers around it, as they have seen the flowers in church at the repository.

VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

Joy. Every Christian should cultivate the habit of being joyous. Joy is good for both body and soul. Get into the spirit of "Alleluia."

PEDAGOGY FOR PARENTS

In all our teaching of small children, we must remember that it is our business to present new ideas to them. If we want them to have good ideas, we have to introduce them. How did the baby learn to know the "pussy"? He heard his mother say "pussy" to the little animal. By the age of one year, he knows many objects and people. Does he know God, Blessed Lady, some saints, church? That depends upon whether we have presented them to him. One idea at a time enters his mind, *as we present it*. The responsibility is ours.

We parents should sit down with a pencil and paper some evening when all is quiet and write down a few questions and answers:

Q. What do I need for my job?

A. Thought, time, sense of responsibility, patience.

Q. What do I want my child to know about first?

A. God, Blessed Mother, Infant Jesus, Church, a few Saints, obedience, etc.

Write down also one or two things that you are going to teach your children *within one week*, and one or two things that you are going to do with them.

Having taken thought, resolve to take a little time each day to make sure that you are living up to your plan. Have a sense of responsibility about this sacred duty; and use patience with the children when you put your plan to work.

We are very busy in the physical care of our children, in housework, cooking, farmwork,—in all the hundred things that other people forget about. That is all true. But then parents have to be saints. They cannot escape their vocation. No matter how worn out and overworked, they still

must think about the training of the souls of their precious children.

BOOKS FOR THE MONTH

One Small House of Nazareth,¹ the life of Christ as a child, is very appealing like all the works of "Lamplighter" (the pen-name of a Holy Child nun who has spent many years in Rome teaching the little children of English parents who live there).

*A Little More Joy*² is an excellent pamphlet for parents, appropriate this month.

HYMN FOR THE MONTH

*Regina Coeli Laetare*³ is a magnificent Easter hymn, with its ringing Alleluias expressing our Lady's joy over her Son's Resurrection.

FOR FIRST COMMUNION CHILDREN

Special activities for children preparing for First Communion will not be included in these pages this year. However, we do ask every parent of these little ones to try to secure the set of six First Communion Booklets prepared by Mother Bolton. They cost ten cents apiece and can be ordered from St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N. J. They give a marvelous preparation for the reception of the Blessed Sacrament, and show children what to think about and how to act and live in the blessed months of getting ready for Jesus.

¹ *One Small House of Nazareth*, by Lamplighter. London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, Ltd., 28 Orchard Street, W. Price, \$1.25. Obtainable in New York, from Benziger Bros., 26 Park Place.

² *A Little More Joy*. New York: The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street. Price, \$.05.

³ *St. Gregory Hymnal*, Singers' Edition. Hymn No. 204. Philadelphia: The St. Gregory Guild, 1705 Rittenhouse Street. Price, \$2.00.

MAY

REMINDER FOR THE YEAR

We learn to pray by praying.

REVIEW

Prayers to be said daily:—

Morning Offering.

Good-night prayer.

Grace.

First half of Hail Mary.

Home-made morning and night prayers.

PRACTICE OF THE MONTH

This month will be a good month in which to complete the Hail Mary, as there will of course be a statue of the Blessed Mother on the home altar, and all kinds of devotion to her will be practiced.

So,—according to our regular system,—say with the child for several days the one line, “Holy Mary, Mother of God”; and after seven or eight days, add the second line, “Pray for us sinners now”; and again, after seven or eight days, the third line, “And at the hour of our death.”

Once the child knows the complete Hail Mary, have him say it for regular night prayers. If he does not know it, go over all that was written in the sections for January and March, and keep on teaching.

NEWS FROM OTHER PARENTS

Little Patty was in the hospital about to have her tonsils removed. The nurse had taken her up to the operating room and she was lying on the table. In came the doctor with his big smile, “Now, my little lady, I’m going to put you to sleep.” “Oh,” said Patty, “if I’m going to sleep, I must first say my prayers.” She pulled herself up, knelt on the table, blessed herself and in a clear voice said her prayers.

The doctor that night said his own prayers for the first time in twenty years.

VISITS TO THE CHURCH

On your walks this month, of course, you will often stop in the church to say a few Hail Marys; and on these occasions you should let the child do his own talking to the Blessed Mother.

THINGS TO DO

On the altar in the house, have a small vase before the statue of our Lady. Let the child have charge of it, changing the water each day and putting in one fresh flower as often as possible. Let him say a few lines of the Hail Mary as he arranges the flower.

ARRANGE ALTAR

If the child is old enough, you should, of course, let him take down the statue every day or so, hold it in his hand, tidy the altar and arrange it as prettily as he can. If the child is a girl, it will please her to wear a blue bow for the month of May. If a boy, a little medal of our Lady, or a small blue bow on the lapel of his suit, will help him to be aware that this is a very special month devoted to the mother of the Baby Jesus.

Parents and any child old enough should say the Rosary, or at least one decade, before the Lady altar. Start this on May 1st; and make the day a big day. Have ice cream or cake. Do something to celebrate our own dear Blessed Lady's May Day.

MAY DAY

In Catholic Europe, May Day was originally a day for joy and parties in honor of our Mother Mary. (Read Tennyson's "The May Queen.") Today May Day is a Communist anniversary! We Catholics should make it a point to celebrate the day for its original meaning. Go to Mass or Benediction. Have a party.

A GROTTTO

If parents are lucky enough to live in the country, it is a very lovely idea to make a little grotto in the garden and to get a statue of our Lady for it, or, if that is impossible, a picture. A large grotto, such as a father might build, is a thing that some families may plan for and work at, over a long space of time; but any children who once get the idea of the grotto, may make little tiny grottoes out of pebbles stuck into plasticine which can be easily molded into the shape of a sheltering grotto. They can also mold a little statue, very roughly of course—unless they are fortunate enough to have a little tiny statue. They will love all this.

SCRAPBOOK

In the month of May several pictures of the Blessed Mother should be added to the scrapbook. Any sort of picture can be used here, except those of the Nativity, which should be saved for Christmas.

CROWNING OF MARY

On May 31st, try your best to have a little feast and a "Crowning of Mary." Nearly everyone can get a few flowers or leaves to make a little crown. The smallest child should be shown how to walk up solemnly and crown the statue of our Lady, either on the house altar or in the garden grotto. Meantime, the rest of the family should sing a hymn of the month of May. (See—Hymns for the Month.)

VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

Trust in our Lady. Parents will find that in all their troubles, when their children are sick and things go wrong, recourse to the Blessed Mother brings relief. She does certainly always seem ready to prove herself the mother of all children.

PEDAGOGY

Remember that a cheerful attitude is good for body and soul. It is hard to smile when we are tired out, but so wonderfully has the Lord formed us that the smile, because of the spirit

that makes it, produces a change in the nervous system, so that the poor tired body begins to feel better.

If we can combine the cheerful attitude with a short nap or rest period during the day, then indeed do we begin a good work in ourselves.

The combination of the smile, brought on by the will power of the soul, and the relaxation of the tired body, gives new strength to body and soul.

SINGING TO THE BABY

Some mothers may be surprised at our insistence on hymns even for babies. One story must suffice. One of our committee began when her baby was nine months old to hold him on her knee every evening and to sing to him two songs, a nursery song and "Tantum Ergo." The baby loved them and after a few months began to make singing sounds along with her. He is at the moment of writing fifteen months and so we cannot yet announce the final results, but he does like singing.

BOOKS FOR THE MONTH

A Life of Christ for Children,¹ in five chapters (each covering an important part of our Lord's life), makes a satisfactory book for mothers to read aloud to little ones or to use as a basis for telling stories about Jesus. There are several very fine illustrations.

Parents who want to read a large life of Christ, to inform themselves, so that as the baby grows older, they will be able to instruct him more and more fully, would do well to get for their own use *The Life of Christ* by Father Isidore O'Brien.²

HYMNS FOR THE MONTH

Our hymn recommendations are, of course, for parents themselves in the early years, but from four to six certainly children can learn to sing what their parents teach them. Assuredly parents would be more cheerful if they did a little singing themselves.

For May suppose we try a couple of popular hymns:

*On This Day, O Beautiful Mother
Tis the Month of Our Mother*

The grand *Magnificat* of our Mother certainly should be recited if not sung by parents themselves in May. The English can be read in the Gospel of St. Luke, Chapter 1, verses 46-55. The music will be found in the Catholic Youth's Hymn Book (page 169, with Latin words).

¹ *A Life of Christ for Children*. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 55 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$1.50.

² *The Life of Christ*, by Father Isidore O'Brien. Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, Franciscan Monastery. Price, \$1.00.

³ *Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*, by the Christian Brothers. Nos. 51 and 52. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.25.

JUNE

REMINDER FOR THE YEAR

We learn to pray by praying.

REVIEW

Prayers to be said daily:—

Morning Offering.

Good-night prayers.

Grace at meals.

Hail Mary—both parts.

Home-made morning and night prayers.

PRACTICE OF THE MONTH—SIGN OF THE CROSS

We shall not learn any new prayers this month, but will give everybody a chance to catch up.

The making of the Sign of the Cross, however, we must attend to carefully. We have not mentioned this before, thinking it just as well to leave it to the mothers to observe whether the little ones have imitated them in blessing themselves.

The only easy way to teach the Sign of the Cross is to have the baby imitate you. If you face him, he will go wrong. Stand alongside of him, a little slanting, so that he can watch your hand when it moves to the left shoulder.

In the name of the Father	(right hand to forehead)
and of the Son	(right hand to chest)
and of the Holy	(right hand to left shoulder)
Ghost	(right hand to right shoulder)
Amen.	(both hands clasped).

GOD BLESS THE BABY

In the February section we spoke of the custom of mothers who make the Sign of the Cross over the baby in the crib and say "God bless the baby." Thus early is the idea of the cross associated with God and His blessing.

The Trinity is obviously too difficult to attempt to explain to children of three. If they ask questions, a word or so will suffice.

"*God in Heaven,—the Son, Jesus Who came on earth,—and the Holy Ghost, the name of His Spirit of Love.*"

NEWS FROM OTHER PARENTS

The report of one Discussion Group says: "All the parents felt that emphasis must be placed on love. Once the child feels the love of God in his own life, and sees the necessity of loving others in order to keep God's love, many things can be accomplished. . . .

"It is most important that God be made a part of the child's life at an early age. The child should understand that God is a Friend to Whom he can turn at any time, and that prayer is conversation with this Friend. If in addition to speaking, the child also cultivates the habit of listening carefully, he may find that the conversation is not one-sided and that he often hears an answer in his heart."

VISITS TO CHURCH

Corpus Christi usually comes in June (occasionally in May). No child should miss the procession; and parents should try to have the little ones march in it as young as possible. The idea of marching with Jesus is very appealing.

The Feast of the Sacred Heart comes on the ninth day after Corpus Christi. Plan to make a visit. Even with tiny children, try to convey the idea that dear Jesus is there on the altar. Say several times, "Dear Jesus, I love You. I love You with all my heart." Do not ask for anything; just keep expressing love.

LESSON OF LOVE

In this beautiful month, parents should try, on every one of the thirty days, to do something to bring out the lesson of love. A book of Bible stories will give plenty of ideas. God loves us every minute and we should love Him every minute by loving our friends. Once when a little girl—the

Ruler's daughter—was sick and died, our Lord brought her to life again, because He loved her mother and father and they loved Him.

Let the smallest child perform an act of kindness for love. Even the baby can give crumbs to the birdies, or throw grain to the chickens, or give milk to the kitten. And in the case of the four and five year olds, if you tell them to look for chances of doing good things for love, they will find them.

THINGS TO DO

HOME-MADE PRAYER BOOK

This is the month of love, the love of the Heart of Jesus for us. Perhaps, if you did not start the "Love and Thanksgiving Prayer Book" in April, you will do so this month. It is a big step forward in the spiritual life, when you form in the child the habit of turning to God with loving thank for all good things.

Write in the home-made prayer book (a notebook) in large letters: "Thank You, dear Jesus, for ——." "I love You, dear Jesus." Let the child choose what he loves best. He will probably say "Mother." A snapshot of Mother might then be pasted on the opposite page. It is good to have mother and father, too, in the prayer book and thus associated in the child's mind with God.

ALTAR

Replace the picture of our Lady on the altar by a picture of our Lord alone. Let the child bring Him a flower if you can. Add a little red decoration, perhaps a red cloth to hang across the front of the altar. Children of four or five can cut out paper flowers to bring to Jesus.

SCRAPBOOK

Emphasize daily the things to show love. Of course, add a picture of our Lord showing the Sacred Heart, to the scrapbook.

PEDAGOGY—DEALING WITH TANTRUMS

Some parents feel that they are so bothered by their children's crying and tantrums that they cannot get around to starting the good things recommended in these pages. The first thing to do is to get the child into proper physical and mental condition.

(There are two booklets on child care which contain the essentials about food, sleep and general physical habits. See footnote one on the following page.) If your child does not live a regular life and eat and sleep properly, he will probably cry and nag and cause much trouble and have tantrums. But if he has been well trained in the fundamentals of proper living, and yet has a bad habit of tantrums, you have to tackle the problem directly, at once.

RULES

Bear in mind the following:

1. A little child kicks and screams because he thinks,—or perhaps because he knows from experience,—that in order to avoid a scene you will give in to him and let him have what he wants. You must prove to him that this is a mistaken idea of his. You are not going to give in.
2. Do not get angry. Do not slap.
3. Say firmly, "No; when you stop screaming I will speak to you." Then leave the child alone in a safe room. Or, if he must be in the room with you, do not notice him. Keep busy with something or other.
4. After a while, say quietly, "Little Jesus does not like screaming and kicking. He loves you and He does not want you to do that."
5. Stop. Keep quiet. Be patient.
6. If the child slows down at times, waits to see if you will give in, and then starts up again, do not worry. He is showing that he begins to understand. Ignore him. Finally he will yield. He may fall asleep.

7. Two or three performances like this will end the bad habit and establish a good one.

8. Remember: Be gentle; but be firm and consistent. Remain very calm and silent.

VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

Parents might make a special effort to take five minutes off occasionally in which to sit down quietly and do nothing at all but relax, thinking how good God is and sending up to Him a wordless prayer of love.

BOOK FOR THE MONTH

*The Child on His Knees*² is a collection of prayers in rhyme, expressing the sentiments of very young children. They were made for her children by one mother, a mother who happened to be gifted as a poet. She generously shares them with all other mothers and children.

HYMNS FOR THE MONTH

*To Jesus' Heart All Burning*³ is an appropriate song this month. For Corpus Christi, let us sing *Jesus My Lord, My God, My All*³ and *O Jesus Christ, Remember*.³

The Benediction hymns, *O Salutaris Hostia*³ and *Tantum Ergo*³ ought to be part of the repertory of every family. Father, mother, aunt, or someone else should learn them and sing them at prayers before the June altar.

¹ *Infant Care* (\$.10) and *A Child From One to Six* (\$.15) can be obtained from: Children's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington, D. C.

² *The Child on His Knees*, by Mary Dixon Thayer. New York: The Macmillan Co., 60 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$.90.

³ *The St. Gregory Hymnal*, Singers' Edition. Nos. 61, 53, 55, 226a, 242a. Philadelphia: The St. Gregory Guild, 1705 Rittenhouse Street. Price, \$2.00.

JULY

REMINDER FOR THE YEAR

We learn to pray by praying.

REVIEW

Prayers to be said daily: —

Morning Offering.

Good-night prayers.

Grace at meals.

Hail Mary.

Home-made morning and night prayers.

Love and "Thank You" prayers.

VISITS TO CHURCH

On July 2nd, the Visitation, mother should try to take the little one to church to visit Jesus and Blessed Lady.

LESSON—THE VISITATION

1. Tell the story of the Visitation, connecting it with the **Annunciation**. Read over the **March** section which treats these subjects in some detail and also review the hints on story-telling.
2. If the child is four years old, emphasize our Lady's kindness—telling how she walks miles over the hills to go to see her Cousin Elizabeth who needs her. Speak about kindness to relatives and friends, and if possible take the child on a visit of kindness to an invalid or a cripple. Explain that you are copying Blessed Lady.
3. Say the *Magnificat* at prayer time before the altar. The words can be found in the New Testament, St. Luke, Chapter I, verses 46 to 55.

THINGS TO DO

If your child plays with other little ones, or if you have three of your own, arrange a play about the Visitation. Our Lady, St. Joseph and St. Elizabeth are the actors, and the children can make up the story of a long, hard journey and a pleasant visit. When St. Elizabeth greets Mary, our Lady breaks into song, the wonderful *Magnificat*.

VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

Seeing God in nature. If parents go out into the woods and fields or to the seashore, they should keep reminding themselves and telling the little one that all these lovely places are made by God for us because He loves us. When you pick a wild flower, say, "What a pretty flower! Dear Jesus made it for us."

NEWS FROM OTHER PARENTS

A father tells us that his baby of three years had a holy picture showing an altar, with an open tabernacle and our Lord standing on the altar steps holding up a Sacred Host. The mother had pointed out the altar, the figure of Jesus and the Host. Several weeks later the father took the child to church to make a visit on a Sunday afternoon. As they went up the middle aisle the little one started to run, pointing to the altar and calling, "Jesus, Jesus, come out to me."

PEDAGOGY

CHRISTIAN USE OF PICTURES

Since we are continually mentioning pictures, it may be well to consider fully their use.¹

From the earliest days of Christianity art was used to help teach the Faith. The museums of Europe and all the old churches and cathedrals are full of the works produced from the early days down to the sixteenth century. (After the Protestant revolt, in some places great Catholic art was destroyed; in others it suffered a set-back.) Because paint-

ings on canvas or those frescoed onto the walls of churches did not always retain their original bright colors (often being ruined by dampness), in some places the pictures were made in mosaic, a process in which a design is created by fitting many, many tiny pieces of marble together. The stained-glass windows of the Middle Ages were pictures in glass, set up into the walls to teach religion to the people. And indeed the cathedrals of Europe we might call pictures in stone, carved all over as they were with scenes from the life of Christ and the Old Testament. The greatest artists spent their lives producing paintings, frescoes, mosaics, windows, and buildings which are still so beautiful that modern people are struck dumb with wonder when they see them.

In the superb cathedral of Monreale, near Palermo, Sicily, you can see spread out before you mosaics covering every inch of the wall space, showing the history of religion from Adam and Eve down through the life of Christ.

POPULARITY OF PICTURE-TEACHING

The educational value of the picture is enormous. Of that there can be no doubt. Today the magazine makers and the movie producers know how to teach every sort of lesson by pictures, some good lessons, but often, alas! evil lessons.

Shall we Catholic parents lag behind and fail to make use of such a powerful means of instruction? Shall we not introduce our own beloved children to that world of religion and beauty revealed in the thousands of Catholic masterpieces created through the centuries?

The careful study of even one of the great religious works of art can give a child an impression which it would take many words to produce. And such an impression remains in the memory to be recalled even in later years.

Prints, copies of great pictures, can be obtained from several firms which specialize in these reproductions. Names of three picture-publishers mentioned in the February section are repeated in footnote two on page 38.

STUDYING THE PICTURE

Young children, from two years up, enjoy looking at pictures and naming every person and object in sight. Train the little one to pick out the important person first, usually our Lord. Then ask, "What is dear Lord Jesus doing?" The answer will, of course, depend upon the child's age. You can then tell the story of the picture, following the suggestions on story-telling given in the March section. If the child is interested, let him go on to pick out details. Some young children will notice even tiny flowers in the grass. Let us, then, try to have at least one picture suitable to the month. Use it on the family altar. And let the child paste it in his scrapbook.

AVOID ORDINARY AND UGLY PICTURES

Pay no attention to those who want only pictures of flowers or fruit or sailboats hanging on the wall. The most cultured, the best educated, have in their homes copies of the great religious masterpieces. The wealthy outbid one another to buy the originals, sometimes paying a half million dollars for one picture.

During the nineteenth century there were printed many inartistic religious pictures, some of which are still on sale. Try to avoid them. Have your children get their religious impressions from the great beautiful pictures that generations have loved. It is sad indeed that sometimes children associate religious ideas with ugly or commonplace pictures. Fortunately there is growing up today a new school of artists, who are creating religious pictures in a modern style, which is also very fine art.

BOOKS FOR THE MONTH

*Perez the Mouse*³ is a very small book all about a little boy king and how he learns that he must be big brother to the poor. The story is a Spanish fairy-tale.

For the parents desirous of studying the subject of education in the home, we recommend a very solid volume based on experimental psychology,—*Parent and Child*.⁴

HYMN FOR THE MONTH

The *Magnificat* should be sung, if possible, during this month of the Visitation. It is to be found with Latin words in the *Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*⁵ and the *St. Gregory Hymnal*.⁶

¹ In the August section for parents of Elementary school children we take up this matter also.

² University Prints, Newton, Mass. Catalogue 5c. *Ars Sacra*, 15 Barclay Street, New York, N. Y. Thomas Nelson & Sons, 385 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y.

³ *Perez the Mouse*, by Padre Louis Coloma and Lady Moreton. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. Price \$.85.

⁴ *Your Child's World*, by Edgar Schmiedeler, O.S.B., S.T.L., Ph.D. New York: The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street, New York. Price, \$.35.

⁵ *Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*, by the Christian Brothers. Page 169 New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.25

⁶ *St. Gregory Hymnal*. Singers' Edition. No. 216. Philadelphia: St. Gregory Guild, 1705 Rittenhouse Street. Price, \$2.00.

AUGUST

REMINDER FOR THE YEAR

We learn to pray by praying.

REVIEW

Prayers to be said daily:—

Grace at meals.

Hail Mary.

Love and "Thank You" prayers.

Morning Offering.

Good-night prayers.

ACTS OF FAITH, HOPE, LOVE

At any time after three years a simple form of the Acts can be learned. The ideas and the sentiments of the Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity can be introduced with the love and "Thank You" prayers which mother and baby have, we trust, been making up. Tiny children do not, of course, know the meaning of the words "believe" and "hope," but they may be taught to say, "Dear Jesus, I know You are God," as an Act of Faith. For the Act of Hope, children may say, "Dear Jesus, I know You will take care of me and some day lead me to Heaven." Acts of Love they have been composing right along in the love and "Thank You" prayers. By four years, it is wise, however, to put the Acts into formal words to be memorized. Very simple Acts may be used. The shorter the form the parent can devise, the better. We suggest:

"Dear Lord Jesus, I believe in Thee."

"Dear Lord Jesus, I hope in Thee."

"Dear Lord Jesus, I love Thee."

At five it is advisable to begin to teach the Acts as found in the Catechism; but, if the child finds these difficult, he may continue with short simple ones until he goes to school.

VISITS TO CHURCH

August 15th being a holyday of obligation, parents will go to Mass. Since it is summer time, it may be possible to let a child of three or four go along with you. But, if not to Mass, do try to take the little one for a visit in the afternoon. Kneel before Blessed Lady's statue and say with your baby short prayers, like:

"Dear Blessed Mother, I love you. Please take care of me. You are so good and you loved little Jesus so much! Please love me too."

THINGS TO DO

We all are happy on this day of the Assumption which celebrates the reward that was given to our Blessed Mother for her perfect life. As we think of her entrance into heaven, we want to rejoice with her. How shall we let the little ones have an extra happy day in her honor?

- (1) Say a little prayer to Blessed Lady as you call the child in the morning.
- (2) Bring out the blue ribbons and bows.
- (3) Let the little one decorate the altar. It should be easy to gather flowers in August. Perhaps you can have a daisy chain.
- (4) At some time of the day,—at evening prayer if the baby is two or more,—kneel before the altar and say the Hail Mary very carefully. If the child is old enough to have learned the prayer, have him say it himself. Explain that this prayer makes Blessed Mother happy, because it reminds her of the wonderful visit of the Angel telling her she was to be the Mother of God.
- (5) For the scrapbook you must try to get a picture of the Assumption.

LESSON OF THE MONTH

The story of the Assumption gives the parent a chance to go over and connect together all the little bits of knowledge that the child has learned about Christ and His Mother.

Recall how our Blessed Lady was chosen at the time of the Annunciation to be the Mother of God. Go over the pictures of her with the Infant Jesus, and all those the child is familiar with, which show Christ as Boy or Man. Then explain that our Lady suffered much when Jesus died on the Cross, and that she lived after Him for a long time. When she died, her Son took her to Heaven where she was united with Him amid great rejoicing. "Mary is taken up into Heaven, the Angels rejoice, and bless God with songs of praise," are words said at Vespers on this day.

Explain how our Blessed Lady is now Queen of Heaven and always close to her Divine Son, so that she can easily tell Him about little children on earth who pray to her and need her care and protection. If the child is as much as four he can understand why his Blessed Mother cares for him. He knows how his own dear mother on earth loves him, and so he can see that Mary, being a mother, knows how to love little children.

DEDICATION TO OUR LADY

The custom of dedicating babies and young children to our Blessed Lady is a beautiful one, and children take great pride in being able to say that they are "dedicated." Some parents dress their children in blue and white up to seven years to remind them that they are given to the care of our Lady. Blue clothes are often not practicable; but some outward token should be used. A medal of our Lady is a good substitute.

PEDAGOGY—GENERAL REVIEW

In all dealings with children, parents should realize that one of the chief aims of education is the training of the will. It is not enough to give the child intellectual knowledge; you must train his will to act in the right way upon that knowledge. Training the will involves training the child to do,—to act himself, of his own volition. In the case of small children, will-training begins best by training in good habits. If you have laid down family rules, rules of conduct, and have consistently and gently enforced them, you will have

made for your child a foundation of good habits which will tend to make him use his will in a right way in other matters. A child trained, *without force*, in orderly and obedient habits will usually, when he has a chance to act of his own accord, behave in an orderly and obedient way.

Therefore, in the early years :

- (1) Make "Consistency" your watchword ;
- (2) Make the child regular in personal habits, that is, accustom him to a regular regime in eating, sleeping, playing, dressing and all the mechanics of life ;
- (3) Say the prayers at the same time in the same reverent manner every day ;
- (4) Insist gently, not forcibly, on the regular performance of small actions ;
- (5) Apply this policy of regularity and consistency in the teaching of the virtues.

VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

All through the summer time, observe and think of the wonderful works of God in nature, and cultivate the habit of saying prayers of thanksgiving and praise to Him. We so often neglect to do more than ask favors from God, forgetting that the first Commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, with thy whole strength, and with thy whole mind."

BOOK FOR THE MONTH

The sooner children are introduced to the company of the saints, the better. Saints are very charming and fascinating people ; and the children will take to copying them if they hear stories about them told in language suited to young intelligence. *Six O'Clock Saints*¹ is a delightful book of saints for the young. Mother may read several stories in one week, or read about the same saint every day for a week, telling the story herself after the first day. Children love repetition, as every mother knows who has heard the refrain, "Tell it again."

HYMN FOR THE MONTH

The hymn for the month should be the *Magnificat*, the hymn of the glory of the Mother of God. You will find it in *The Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*.² For the English words read the New Testament, St. Luke, Chapter 1, verses 46-55.

¹ *Six O'Clock Saints*, by Joan Windham. New York: Sheed & Ward, 63 Fifth Avenue. Price, \$1.25.

² *The Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*, by the Christian Brothers. Page 169. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.25.

SEPTEMBER

REMINDER FOR THE YEAR

We learn to pray by praying.

REVIEW

The tiny baby watches mother say the Morning Offering. And as he grows, he learns evening prayer, grace, the "Hail Mary," little home-made prayers, the Acts of Faith; Hope and Love, until by the age of four he should be able to learn the "Our Father." Most four-year-olds can repeat nursery rhymes, and there is no reason why they cannot, by careful teaching, have learned the "Our Father" by the fifth birthday. So, when the baby is four, begin.

PRACTICE

The parents, by consulting the section for March, will see it was suggested that in teaching the "Hail Mary," they should have a little box house in which the child acts out the Annunciation with a statue of our Lady and a cardboard angel. By this plan, the little one could understand that the "Hail Mary" is based on an angel's words to God's future mother.

The "Our Father" cannot be so easily represented. A story will probably suffice. Show the child a picture of Jesus with His Apostles if you can find one. Tell how they asked our Lord to teach them how to pray, and how He answered: "Our Father, Who art in Heaven." That one line will do for a start. Explain about God in Heaven for several days at prayer time, and say very reverently the one first line. As soon as the child knows it, give him one more line. Do not worry if it takes a long time to finish, perhaps three months. Each day repeat your little tale of how the Apostles asked Jesus how to pray and what He told them. Children are not bored by repetition.

VISITS TO CHURCH

September 8th, the birthday of our Blessed Lady.

September 21st, St. Matthew, Apostle. Tell the child St

Matthew was one of those Apostles to whom our Lord taught the "Our Father."

September 28th, St. Wenceslas, Martyr, Patron of Hungary, Poland and Bohemia.

LESSON—SAINTS AND STORIES

Last month we recommended the purchase of stories of saints to be read and told to young children. Fortunately for us of the twentieth century, many saints' lives are being written in a bright attractive style, and the saints, the heroes and heroines of the Church, are becoming family characters in many a household. Mothers of babies today should realize their good fortune and make use of these attractive books.

MORAL HELP FROM BOOKS

You may preach to a child about honesty, truthfulness, politeness, or any other virtue; but he will practice it much more readily if he has heard a story about children who are truthful, honest, polite and good. A moment's thought reminds us that of course children copy others and learn by imitation. They always want to be like the children in the books. So be sure that you make careful choice of all the books your little one has read to him.

So important is this matter of imitation that parents might be interested to know that the American Indians realized that the best way to make a boy brave and a great chieftain was to tell him stories about older boys who had done brave deeds and endured great hardships. An old Indian chief told an American explorer that he became the leader of his people because once on the march, when the whole tribe was moving to fresh pastures, he had overheard some older people talking about a certain youth who had proved himself to be a very swift runner and a fearless hunter. He said that from the moment of that conversation he had become a different boy and had never stopped trying to copy the heroic example of the older youth.

If even the Indians made use of the desire to imitate which is in all children, why should not we find books with good models for our own little ones?

The Pro Parvulis Book Club¹ (Pro Parvulis means "For the Little Ones") will send book lists to inquiring parents.

HOW TO USE A BOOK

The plan as sketched in the March section is for the parent to read or tell the story. Every mother should aim to have a set time for this occupation. The best hour is usually around 4:30 or 5:00 o'clock, when the children come in from the fresh air, just before their supper. Fifteen minutes or a half-hour is plenty of time and will not interfere with supper and bed.

Telling stories at bedtime, after supper, is not a sensible plan, because the children, instead of yielding to sleepiness and going off to bed quietly, have their little brains stimulated and often lie awake thinking of the stories.

THINGS TO DO

On September 8th, the altar should be especially decorated for our Lady. Flowers, natural or made by the children, should be brought to her. Let them sing a hymn if possible. And remember blue hair ribbons or a blue dress for tiny girls and a blue armband for boy knights of our Lady. We always give birthday presents and what shall we give our Blessed Mother? Some acts of love. We may write a prayer in our personal prayer book, a prayer saying, "I love you and thank you for your care." Draw a picture of her or color one that you cut out. And in the scrapbook paste a picture of our Lady as a child.

ACTING ST. WENCESLAS' STORY

St. Wenceslas' story lends itself to acting. If there are several children in the family, or if you can bring in two little friends, St. Wenceslas, the beggar, and the page are three characters which appeal to small folk. In snowy weather, the good deed of King Wenceslas can be acted out of doors, when the children are bundled up to play in the snow. It is hard to imagine a child whose heart will not be stirred with pity for the poor, after having seen the good king and the page start off in the bitter weather to the beggar man's hovel.

PEDAGOGY—TRUTHFULNESS AND COURAGE

In the early years, the foundations of the virtues of truth and courage must be laid. The approach is twofold:

1. Through example. Stories of truthful, honest children set up models whom admiring youngsters will certainly follow. The lives of saints serve this purpose. St. Agnes answers the truth, at the cost of life. All the martyrs teach the same lesson and show extraordinary courage.

2. Through direct teaching. When the occasion arises, perhaps at four-and-a-half or five years, the parent should explain directly that children of God tell the truth.

As a matter of fact little ones brought up in a loving atmosphere, where the spirit of the Lord Jesus is ever present, are not likely to be untruthful.

CAUSE OF UNTRUTHFULNESS

If a baby is slapped for breaking a cup or knocking over something precious, the foundation for fear and lying has been laid. Never punish a child for an accident. He did not intend to drop the cup or knock over the lamp. If you blame him for what he did not mean to do, you lead him to try to deceive you. Next time you find a broken cup, you will say: "Did baby break the cup?" and he will say, "No." Blame yourself and start on the difficult task of undoing the wrong you have done. You must say very clearly, "Mother knows you did not mean to do it." Kiss him and say, "We can easily get another cup."

MAKE-UP STORIES

Many imaginative children make up stories of great things which they talk about as if they were true. Do not imply that such things are lies. On that score, most of our literature is lies. The baby is "making up" a story. Call it "make believe" and let the distinction be clear between make-believe stories and real life.

NEWS FROM OTHER PARENTS

One mother reports a story of a little girl, one of a large family, who was inclined to go by herself to play, once in a

while. She had two imaginary playmates, Christopher and Neddie, with whom she played games and carried on long conversations. Her talk about her make-believe companions was harmless as long as she played with her brothers and sisters and did not become a little solitary.

VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

On September 15th occurs the Feast of the Seven Sorrows of Our Lady. Parents, who must always suffer, would do well to cultivate the practice of accepting the will of God always, in everything, as our Mother did each time the sword of sorrow pierced her heart.

BOOK FOR THE MONTH

The Lord's Prayer,² illustrated, is a large handsome book with brilliantly colored pictures, suggesting the meaning of the words of the prayer. Quite small children (of two-and-a-half years) will love the pictures, even though they may not understand or know the prayer until they are four or five.

*The Our Father*³ is an excellent pamphlet for a child.

HYMNS OF THE MONTH

All hymns to our Lady are suitable this month. You can find them in your hymn book.

The lovely carol *Good King Wenceslas*⁴ has a rhythm which children love, the carol that begins:

"Good King Wenceslas looked out
On the feast of Stephen
When the snow lay round about
Deep and crisp and even."

¹ Pro Parvulis Book Club, Empire State Building, New York City.

² *The Lord's Prayer*, illustrated by Ingri and Edgar D'Aulaire. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 14 West 49th Street. Price, \$1.75.

³ *The Our Father*, by Rev. Daniel M. Dougherty. New York: The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street. Price, \$.10.

⁴ *Christmastide* (A Collection of Carols). New York: Paul-Pioneer Music Corporation, 1657 Broadway. Price, \$.50. Sixteen well-known Christmas carols are obtainable in a "Singalong" sheet for \$.08 from the same company.

OCTOBER

REMINDER FOR THE YEAR

We learn to pray by praying.

REVIEW

Prayers to be said daily:—

Morning Offering.

Evening prayer.

Grace.

Hail Mary.

Love and "Thank You" prayers.

Acts of Faith, Hope and Love.

PRACTICE

Continue with the teaching of the "Our Father" as outlined in September.

LESSON—ANGELS

Back in February when we quoted Mother Stuart's words about altars in the home, we promised to consider later "the cloud of witnesses" which she mentions as being present when we pray. Some of these witnesses are angels, invisible beings who are here ready to guard and guide us. Little children invariably love their Guardian Angels. The tiny child made aware of a protecting companion feels happy and secure at his play.

All month stress the care angels take of us. Say often the prayer that children love:

Angel of God, my guardian dear,
To whom His love commits me here,
Ever this day be at my side,
To light and guard,
To rule and guide. Amen.

Tell the children that it is because God loves them so much that He sends an Angel to watch over them. Talking about the Guardian Angel a little every day, and of his presence, leads naturally to telling how God Himself is always here.

STORY OF MONTH

A Study Group reports: "Perhaps the person who contributed most to this discussion was a woman who had been born in the north of Ireland and consequently knew what it meant to struggle for her Faith. For her the presence of God is so real that her method of teaching her children has been spontaneous, the children learning to take God for granted as 'a Friend Who is always here.' When her husband leaves for work each morning, she says to him, 'God bless you and keep you safe until we meet again.' When the children leave the house, even if it be to play in the yard, she always says, 'God bless you!' . . . Nearly all the members stressed the importance of referring to the Guardian Angel in teaching the presence of God. They felt that in this way they could more clearly explain God's love and ever-present care for His children. Some were of the opinion that most children sense God's presence all about them, while others inclined to the belief that such a realization came only as a result of certain spiritual experiences. It was felt that a child might first become aware of God as a Person, in a vague way, about the same time that he becomes conscious of the personalities of different members of the family. From then on, his understanding increases in proportion to the religious attitude common in the home."

VISITS

October 2nd, Feast of Guardian Angels.

October 7th, Holy Rosary.

October 24th, St. Raphael, Archangel.

THINGS TO DO

With three such feasts as these, there is plenty for little hands to do to impress upon little minds the ever-watchful care of God through His Angels and Our Lady of the Rosary. The place of honor on the altar should be given to our Lady's statue or picture, and for this month the child may hang a rosary round it. Angels, cardboard cut-outs, or dolls with cardboard wings sewed on to them may kneel or hover near the altar. Every day at some time the little

ones should kneel and say reverently one "Hail Mary" and make up little conversation prayers to the Angels.

If the baby has no rosary, try to get him one,—an inexpensive one the loss of which will not be a calamity. It may be best to keep it in a pretty box on the altar.

A picture of the Angels by Fra Angelico would be loveiy for the scrapbook. And for the personal prayer book, write, "I thank You, dear Lord, for Your love in sending me my Guardian Angel." The child can draw wings on the opposite page and color them.

VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

Thinking with the children so much about the heavenly spirits and about the goodness of God in protecting us should help parents to deepen the habit of recalling the presence of God in their souls. It is a good plan to try to murmur an act of love to God every time we start a new task. And since the number of separate tasks a mother begins in a day is unbelievably large, it would soon come about that mothers would be turning to God very often. In this way the heavy burden of many a mother's day would be lightened and her life turned from drudgery to happiness.

PEDAGOGY—WATCHWORDS

Parents will recall that in August we gave some general suggestions on the subject of training children, and mentioned *consistency* as a watchword. If we add to that, *regularity*, *firmness*, *patience*, *gentleness*, and *the habit of encouraging the child to be good for the sake of his dear Lord Jesus*, we really have a fairly complete method of child training at our command.

We can attempt the teaching of various virtues by keeping in mind these watchwords, and using one or another as the occasion requires.

HONESTY

We have not heretofore spoken of honesty. It may seem unnecessary to talk of training pre-school children in such a virtue, but if we realize that virtues are good habits, we shall see that no good habit can be started too early.

Occasions arise for making beginnings when small children, from two to six, play together. One will take another's toy and often try to carry it off. Gently but firmly the mother must say,

"Give back Donald Duck," or "Give back the dolly."

And of course the instant the little fingers relax their grasp on the toy, reward the child with praise. Tell him that little Jesus is pleased.

Mothers must be careful to be scrupulously honest themselves, in order not to give bad example.

CARFARES

Sooner or later there comes the question of paying carfares for children. In some places fare is required after four. Mothers who show their children how to slip under the turnstile after they have reached the age for paying fare, are teaching dishonesty.

Another crude form of dishonesty is practiced by the mother who pays one fare, but takes two seats, one for herself and one for her baby of two or three, when the car is crowded and tired people are standing. Some mothers fear to crease their skirts by holding the little one on their knees. The mean dishonesty of this sort of behavior penetrates the infant mind and makes a beginning of the habit of taking what you want whether you have paid for it or not.

BOOK FOR THE MONTH

Parents interested in the subject of how to teach their children will find profitable instruction in a book called *Child Psychology and Religion*.¹

HYMN FOR THE MONTH

In October of course the hymn is *Dear Angel Ever at My Side*.²

¹ *Child Psychology and Religion*, by a teacher of those who teach religion. New York: P. J. Kenedy & Son, 12 Barclay Street. Price, \$.60.

² *The Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*, by the Christian Brothers. No. 111. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$.25.

NOVEMBER

REMINDER FOR THE YEAR

We learn to pray by praying.

REVIEW

Prayers to be said daily:—

Morning Offering.

Evening prayer.

Grace.

Hail Mary.

Love and "Thank You" prayers.

Acts of Faith, Hope and Love.

PRACTICE

Continue with the teaching of the "Our Father."

LESSON—ALL SAINTS AND SOULS IN PURGATORY

In October we recalled that when we gather round the family altar there is present "the cloud of witnesses" mentioned by Mother Stuart, and among these witnesses there must be angels. This month we realize that not only are there angels present, but saints, and that perhaps among these saints there are some of our own relatives and friends who, though not canonized, are included among "All Saints."

It is a simple matter to explain to the children the meaning of All Saints' Day. And they will see that it is another day of rejoicing because so many people loved God well enough to become saints after they died. Be sure to make it a day of festivity. It is a good idea to get out pictures of some saints and also photographs of deceased relatives and say that *maybe* these also are saints of God.

From that "maybe" you can explain that some who didn't love God quite enough are kept waiting to be with Him, and that if we pray for them they can go faster to God. After

the age of three, the word "Purgatory" may be taught as the name of the place where they wait to be made perfect for Heaven.

THINGS TO DO

Of course the lesson about saints leads straight to the altar. Kneel down and say little prayers to the saints you know (namesakes, for instance) and then ask God to let the relatives go quickly to Him from Purgatory. It would be good to find out how many saints the children know, and to say a word of greeting to each on this, their general feast day. And then, of course, name all the dear dead relatives.

A prayer in the personal prayer book would be appropriate,—“Thank You for the saints.”

And remember a picture of saints for the scrapbook.

CEMETERY

If the weather is fine, children of four and five can be taken to the cemetery. They usually take great interest and like to see the trees and the grass and the tombstones and figures of Angels. The first trip to the cemetery offers a splendid opportunity to explain that the body waits in the grave, but that the soul is, we hope, with God in Heaven or waiting in Purgatory.

Have the child kneel beside the grave and ask God to take quickly out of Purgatory any relative who is still waiting there to become perfect.

VISITS TO CHURCH

All Saints,—November 1st.

All Souls,—November 2nd.

Thanksgiving Day. On Thanksgiving Day parents should emphasize the meaning of the day, and not let the feasting occupy all the thoughts of the family.

After Mass, if possible, it is a wise plan for the family to write out a list of all that they have to be thankful for. We should make two columns,—one for spiritual and im-

material blessings, and the other for business success and material blessings.

The tiny child will soon understand the plan and can be started off with a list of some of his own blessings. Trust him to enlarge on the list!

VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

Remembering the dead. If parents make a point of praying for their departed relatives, children are impressed.

PEDAGOGY—OBEDIENCE

In the remarks on tantrums in June, we touched on the essentials involved in teaching virtues to young children, and last month we listed some pedagogical watchwords to keep in mind.

Remembering these, let us work out some suggestions with regard to teaching the virtue of obedience.

First of all, let us realize that the time to teach begins at birth. Training in regular habits,—eating because mother offers food at a certain time,—sleeping because mother puts baby into the crib, says the good-night prayer and walks away,—all these early habits are giving the infant the custom of conforming to discipline, which is obedience of a kind.

As the child grows out of babyhood, this habit must be developed into conscious obedience, which means that the child obeys not simply from habit, but because he knows that he must obey and finally because he wishes to obey because he loves God and God has told him to obey his father and mother.

GRADUAL TRAINING

All this cannot be learned in a day, but it can and must be learned *day by day*.

The wise parent makes few rules, gives few commands, but

insists upon their being carried out. A properly trained child of two has the beginning of the notion of obedience. Parents must seize the chances as they appear to teach obedience definitely. Suppose Mother says: "Baby, pick up the ball."

Baby laughs or pokes the ball further away.

Mother says: "No, bring the ball." Mother looks grave.

Baby brings the ball. Mother smiles, says "Good baby," kisses him and makes him feel happy.

Suppose that after two attempts baby does not bring the ball. What then? You may take the ball, put it into baby's hands and go through the motion of his giving it to you. Then bestow smile and kisses.

With a child of two it is usually foolish to fight a long battle the first time. Some mischievous tots think you are playing a game with them. It is better to distract them, push the ball out of sight, and do something different. In a few weeks try again. Do not make an issue of the incident. But make sure that after two or three trials you win. A smiling command will usually produce the ball. It must be clear that you are in authority.

RELIGIOUS MOTIVE

By the age of three or four, you can make a habit of saying, "Jesus loves obedient children. He always did quickly what Blessed Lady and St. Joseph told Him." If you persist in suggesting such a motive, you will find that by four or five the child will make the connection between obeying mother and doing so because he wants to copy Jesus.

It is really beautiful to see how little children respond to the idea of copying little Jesus. They love to be like Him, provided, of course, they have been taught to love Him. And most encouraging of all, as the little ones grow up to be big girls and boys, they will often retain the ideal of copying Jesus, even though they never speak about it.

BOOK FOR THE MONTH

*A Child's Grace*¹ is a large picture book of photographs showing many good things a child has to be thankful for:—birds, home, clothes, toys, father's and mother's love.

HYMNS FOR THE MONTH

*Te Deum Laudamus*² is the greatest hymn of thanksgiving and praise. *Holy God We Praise Thy Name*² is also a stirring song suitable for November.

¹ *A Child's Grace*, by Ernest Claxton, photographs by Harold Burdekin. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 300 Fourth Avenue. Price, \$1.50.

² *Catholic Youth's Hymn Book*, by the Christian Brothers. Nos. 198 and 128. New York: J. Fischer & Bro., 119 West 40th Street. Price, \$1.25; and *St. Gregory Hymnal*, Singers' Edition. Nos. 264 and 39. Philadelphia: St. Gregory Guild, 1705 Rittenhouse Street. Price, \$2.00.

DECEMBER

REMINDER FOR THE YEAR

We learn to pray by praying.

REVIEW

Prayers to be said daily:—

Morning Offering.

Evening prayer.

Grace.

Hail Mary.

Love and "Thank You" prayers

Acts of Faith, Hope and Love.

PRACTICE

Complete the "Our Father," if possible.

LESSON

The story of Christmas will occupy the whole month, a month of joy. The household looks forward to and plans for the birthday of Jesus, Who is going to show us how much He loves us. God is going to come from Heaven as a little Baby. The whole Christmas story can be told over and over with the help of a good picture book or a series of pictures. Make a habit of stressing the word "love" so that your child will grasp the fact forgotten by the world today that Christ came on earth out of love for us.

THINGS TO DO

Christmas suggests many plans for keeping little fingers busy.

THE CRIB

The child will love to make a crib for himself, even if the family buys a regular crib set. A cardboard box makes a perfect stable. Straw or crushed paper help the scene.

And the statue of our Lady from the altar can be put into the stable. Make a tiny straw bed and leave it empty until Christmas morning. Then lay in it a tiny Christ Child. Baby dolls are easy to get for a few cents in the 5 and 10 cent store. If you can cut out or make shepherds, lambs, ox and ass, so much the better, but the essentials are the Mother and Baby.

THE SCRAPBOOK

For the scrapbook get a picture to be pasted in, a Nativity by a great master: Fra Angelico, Correggio, Botticelli, or Da Vinci.

THE PRAYER BOOK

The prayer book must be remembered, too, with the words, "Thank You, dear Lord, for the love that brought You from Heaven to me."

THE CHRISTMAS PLAY

No Christmastide is complete without a play or tableau. If the baby is alone in the family, of course, one small child cannot act a play, and on Christmas Day little friends do not come to visit. But if the pre-school child has brothers and sisters of six or seven who play with him, they can all have a lovely play of the Nativity. We have in these pages often mentioned the acting of home plays,—a practice which is becoming more and more general. Children love to act religion. Do we not often see little boys pretending to be the priest at the altar? It is our business to help the children to act out many religious subjects. And if we give just a little thought to the matter, we shall find that the labor involved is very slight. Once given a start and shown how to proceed, little children get on wonderfully well. Anything elaborate is, of course, not desired. To start the play:

1. Read aloud a story from the life of Christ or from the Bible, or from the life of a saint. Or, better, tell the story.

2. If the children want to, and have time, let them dress up. Couch covers and bed spreads make fine flowing robes.
3. Choose parts and then tell the children to make up their own conversation. The most important remarks in the Gospel story ought to be memorized, especially the actual words spoken by our Blessed Lady or an Angel or our Lord. The giving of a play does all sorts of good things for a child besides just teaching him the particular story. He learns to work with others, to fit himself in, to await his turn—all good moral habits.

PEDAGOGY—SORROW FOR SIN

In ending this pamphlet for the year, we think that we should say a few words on the subject of sin.

In all the suggestions we have made on such matters as truthfulness, overcoming tantrums, honesty, obedience, we have made the point that we try to train the child to be good because he loves his dear Lord Jesus. Such is the highest motive.

When the child misbehaves, we try to make him yield for Jesus' sake, and every time he conquers himself for Jesus' sake, he has really experienced a little of what we call sorrow for sin.

By the time a child is five years old, this sorrow for having acted in a way that our Lord would not like, or for having failed to "copy Jesus," can be expressed in an Act of Contrition.

Seize upon some occasion when the child has been naughty and is feeling sorry, and have him say after you, "Dear Lord, I am very sorry for having displeased You. I will try to be a better child." Repeat this on occasion, and the little one will soon realize that he must ask pardon for naughty deeds.

Even before the age of five, from three up, parents can often have the child say even simpler words, like, "Dear Jesus, I am sorry; I will be good." The habit of repentance can begin quite early.

VIRTUE FOR PARENTS

This is the month for practicing the virtue of hope. Believing that God loves us so much that He sends His Son to us in the form of a Baby, we naturally hope in Him. This means that we trust Him, no matter what troubles and sorrows come to us.

BOOKS FOR THE MONTH

There are many Christmas books, so many that parents will want to look at them in the stores and select one themselves. Insist on a book that has to do with the birth of Christ and that has religious pictures. There are many so-called Christmas books which really have nothing to do with Christmas, except that they have been given a fancy holiday "jacket."

Parents who have not been able to secure the books mentioned month by month will, we hope, get some of them for Christmas gifts.

My Parents, Home, My A B C, My Talents, My School, make up a set of pamphlets for very little children. The set of five would make a useful and attractive gift, as each booklet contains several child-pictures.¹

HYMNS FOR THE MONTH

Adeste Fideles

Come All Ye Faithful

Dear Little One, How Sweet Thou Art

Angels We Have Heard on High

are a few of the hymns every Catholic family should be singing at Christmas time. Look them up, or any others you like, in your hymn book.

MUSIC AND SONG

One of the happiest experiences of parents and children is to sing together. Even babies respond to music. What it is we do not know, but there is something in music which affects the nervous system and makes people happy or sad

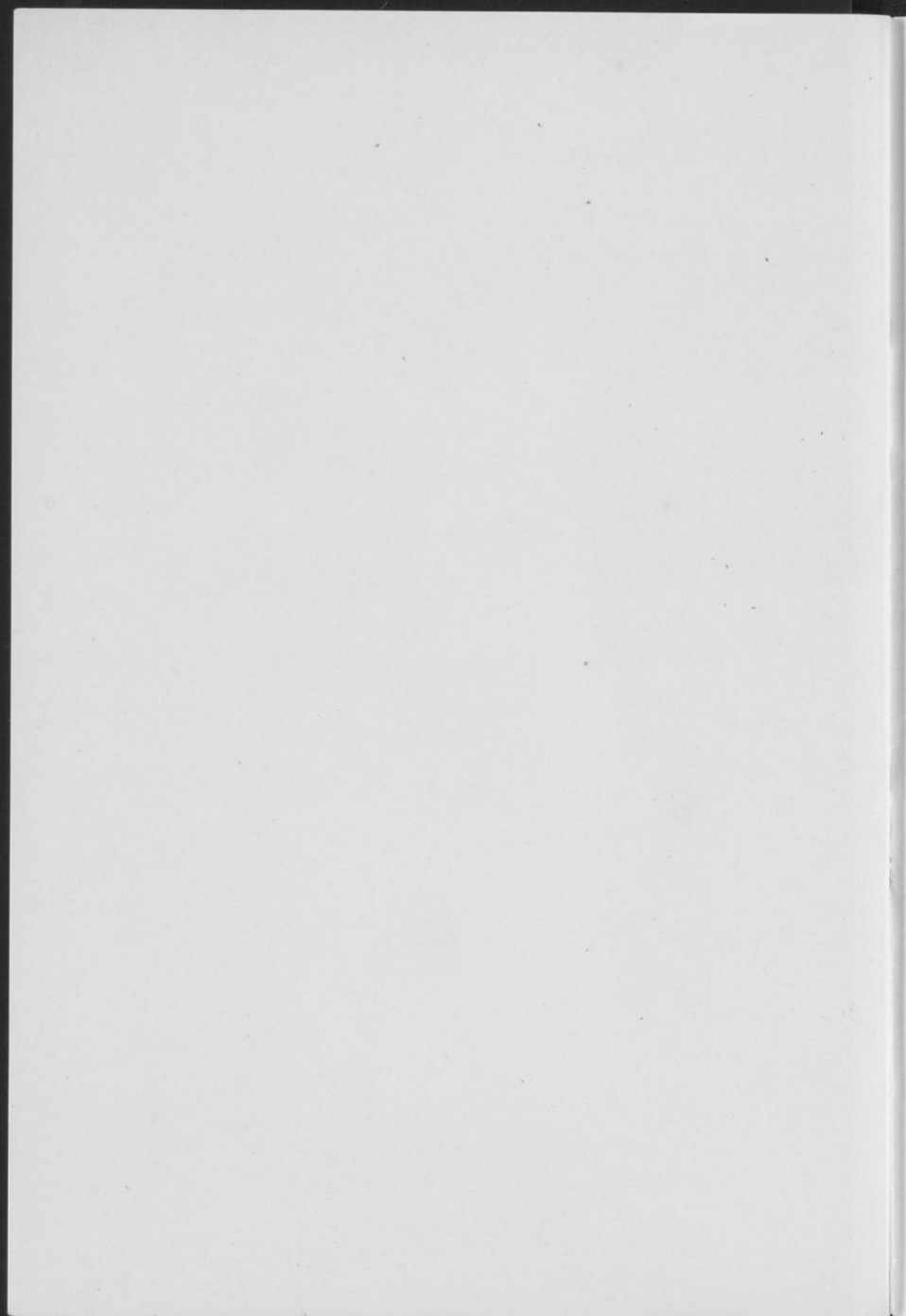
or calm. A child who is irritable can "snap out" of his bad humor if he can be made to sing or even to listen to a song. Music in the home is a very great benefit also because it is something in which the whole family can take part. Hymns which the whole family sings not only make for good religious feeling, but make the children feel themselves one of a solid family group. Indeed, hymns sung in childhood are remembered in old age, long after most things are forgotten.

SPECIAL REMINDER

Christmas is the birthday of the Son of God, a religious feast. Do not exhaust yourself over presents and cooking so that you lose the beauty of the day.

¹ *My Parents, Home, My A B C, My Talents, My School*, by Marcella Conrad. New York: The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street. Price, 85c for the set.







PAULIST MINIATURE BOOKS

The Miniature Question Box

Father Conway, the great mission priest of the Paulist Fathers, answers directly the intellectual and moral difficulties of inquirers, widens their field of study, and presents replies to questions selected out of a total of 250,000 received during a period of some fifty years.

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