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Friday, December 8, 1916.

Patronal Feast.

Today (Friday) is celebrated the feast of the Immaculate Conception, the patronal feast of the Catholic Church in the United States.
What a privilege is ours, to be placed under the patronage of the Immaculate Mother of God! Is it any wonder that the Catholic Church in this country has flourished and grown apace? Never has it been said that the Blessed Mother has failed her children or that her Divine Son has refused to harken to her requests. As a mark of the importance of this patronal feast in the United States it has pleased the Holy Father to grant a special dispensation whereby we are freed from fast and abstinence to-day and are permitted the use of fresh meat, although the feast fell on Friday. Probably, many of the Catholics in Rochester and all over the country were unable to overcome their habitual observance of the Friday fast and abstained as usual. But those who cared to avail themselves of the dispensation and were permitted to make the day a real feast day.

Advent.

Last Sunday marked the beginning of Advent, the season set apart by Holy Mother Church as a season of prayer and fasting in preparation for the great feasting of Christmas, the day on which we commemorate the fulfillment of the promise made centuries before, that a Messiah would be sent to save His people from that curse of mortal sin laid upon our first parents in the Garden of Eden.
In more ways than one, the Church has legislated well both for our physical as well as our spiritual needs. Hence, the short season of abstinence at the beginning of the holiday season is a splendid hygienic precaution, just as the Lenten fast at the close or the middle of a strenuous social season is a bodily as well as a spiritual aid, if carried out in the spirit laid down by the Church.
In order to realize the full benefit of the season of Advent it is necessary that we observe it according to the laws of the Church. Prayer and fasting are enjoined and we should do both. We will profit by such action in a spiritual way. And, it is needless to observe, that with the hustle and bustle of the present day we do not give as much time as we should or as we would like to our soul's needs. Hence when special seasons like Advent or Lent come, a little extra effort should be made in order that the full benefit of the season is derived.

What is education good for that does not educate the soul? Measured by this standard, of what use is much of the so-called "higher education?"

Higher Education.

Very truly says "St. Mary's Chimes":—
Higher education seems to indicate merely elaborate and unpractical post-graduate work. The Catholic teacher finds in the child a subject for higher education, and in the little catechism the complete text. The existence of God, the immorality of the soul, the "why, the whence, and the whither" of life are matters of daily consideration; and the simple parochial school is animated by the very soul of education, which is the education of the soul. What can the most Utopian or extension courses accomplish or ever propose beyond that Higher education, if it would be true to itself, must discard all relations with the ingenious experiments of the day and identify itself with Catholic teaching, when indeed it will come into a heritage which has for its beginning and end the Source of Knowledge, Himself.

Encouraging.

One of the things which foreign-igners have-tweeted "Americans about has been that we have not been able to stop lynchings in the South although we find fault with atrocities committed by the bel-ligerents in the European war and also perpetrated upon the Jews, Armenians and other oppressed people.
There is no doubt that the Southern whites, at least a large portion thereof, have never set their faces sternly against lynchings of negroes. They take the position that only stern and summary measures are the remedy for crimes of a certain nature. However, lynching does not seem efficacious as a preventive of these. Certainly, we are in no position to criticize when we ourselves are at fault.
It is an encouraging sign to note that Governor Manning, of South Carolina, has taken a firm stand against lynching and is to insist that this crime be punished just the same as murder or manslaughter committed without the provocation cited as an excuse for lynching. Recently, a negro was lynched in that state for quarreling with a white store-keeper over a bill. To be sure, it is reported that the Governor's stand is suggested, not so much as because of a detestation of lynching as because negroes are leaving the state and a shortage of labor may result if this is not checked.
Be that as it may, if lynching be frowned upon in the South, sent to save His people from that curse of mortal sin laid upon our first parents in the Garden of Eden.
Those chaps who tried to corner eggs and turkeys bit off more than they were able to chew, to use a slang phrase.
Was this a case where you forgot you could eat meat on Friday? That is the excuse most careless Catholics give when they are caught eating meat on Friday:—"I forgot what day it was."
Some recent events give color to the suspicion that some business men are taking literally this advice which appeared on the cover of a recent issue of the "Modern Merchant and Grocery World." "Consumers are being educated to-day by a variety of conditions to pay good prices for everything they buy. The retail merchant who doesn't take advantage of that had better drop out. Never again will he have such a chance."
Writing in the "New Century", W. S. Lilly says:—"Born of a woman" is the true account of the modern home, with its refined and elevating influences. That is the characteristic specially marked off the Christian family from the other families of the earth. It is founded on woman, not on man.

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