

PASTORAL ON EDUCATION

JAMES EDWARD, by the grace of God and favor of the Apostolic See,
Bishop of Rochester

To the Faithful of the diocese,

My dear People:

Among the various responsibilities of our pastoral office there is none more serious than that of providing for the religious education of our children. The salvation of their souls is our personal concern, and it must be the primary concern of their parents also. We must realize that an early foundation in the teachings of Christ and in the practice of religion is the only basis upon which we can build a practical Christian life. We cannot help but notice among many a certain indifference to their responsibilities as parents and a regrettable disregard for the definite teaching of God's Church as enunciated both in Canon Law and in the writings of the Popes.

The law of the Church is definite and clear wherein it is stated that:

"Parents are under a grave obligation to see to the religious and moral education of their children, as well as to their physical and civic training, as far as they can, and moreover to provide for their temporal well being."
(Can. 1113)

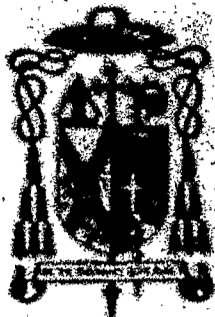
It should be noted especially that religious and moral training is given priority because religion and morals treat of the very purpose of man's existence and of the Christian way of life which is the only way that conforms to the express will of God.

While secular educators are often confused as to the end and purpose of education, the late illustrious Pontiff, Pope Pius XI, defined the aim and emphasized the importance of education in these significant words:

"Since education consists essentially in preparing man for what he must be and for what he must do here below, in order to attain the sublime end for which he was created, it is clear that there can be no true education which is not wholly directed to man's last end, and that in the present order of Providence, since God has revealed Himself to us in the Person of His Only Begotten Son, Who alone is 'the way, the truth and the life', there can be no ideally perfect education which is not Christian education."

Therefore, any system of education that withholds from the child knowledge of God and religious truth, denies the child full opportunity for earthly happiness and endangers his eternal salvation.

Despite this fact, children are sometimes sent to schools where religion has no part in the course, because their parents have been attracted unduly, and perhaps unconsciously, by material equipment and physical surroundings. This is a serious error. It should be quite evident that the building and equipment, important as they are, do not make a school. The teachers



and the subject-matter are the elements of supreme importance. As Pope Pius XI again pointed out:

"Perfect schools are the result not so much of good methods as of good teachers, teachers who are thoroughly prepared and well-grounded in the matter they have to teach; . . . who cherish a pure and holy love for the youths confided to them, because they love Jesus Christ and His Church."

If this then is the standard, Catholic schools are ideally perfect schools. Our teachers are prepared according to prevailing standards, they embrace their work as a holy vocation, and they love the pupils committed to their care from the highest motives.

There are parents too, who misled by the false spirit of the times, regard education solely from an economic standpoint, and are interested only in its immediate returns. They object that Catholic education is not sufficiently practical; that it does not offer sufficient technical training. It is precisely this concept of material prosperity that has led our country perilously close to ruin, just when we thought that we were reaching the peak of civilization.

Catholic education is concerned primarily with permanent and ultimate truths. It is ever insistent on imparting to its children the rich Christian social heritage which is their right. In the important and difficult task of building Christian character, of inculcating respect for the dignity of the person with all its implications, the Catholic school lays the foundation for true individual and social economic living. It is well for all to understand and appreciate that the teachings emphasized in Christian education rebound to the ultimate good of the individual, the family, and the nation, as well as to the glory of God. For only in preparing the child for eternal life can he be made a worthy citizen of human society.

Neither let any one be deceived by supposing that the religious and moral education of children is sufficiently attained and safeguarded by some religious instruction given by catechists on Sunday or on released time from public schools. No one, of course, will deny the value and necessity of such training. But such instruction, no matter how well imparted, can never be regarded as a substitute for thorough and complete Christian education. To quote again the words of Pope Pius XI:

"For the mere fact that a school gives some religious instruction (often extremely stunted) does not bring it into

accord with the rights of the Church and of the Christian family or make it a fit place for Catholic students. To be able to do this it is necessary that all the teaching and the whole organization of the school, and its teachers, syllabus and textbooks in every branch, be regulated by the Christian spirit, under the direction and maternal supervision of the Church; so that religion may be in very truth the foundation and crown of the youth's entire training; and this in every grade of school, not only the elementary, but the intermediate and the higher institutions of learning as well."

We find it difficult to understand how Catholic parents can reconcile their consciences with the practice of denying their children a religious education such as is available in our parish schools. It must be that they fail to realize that the selection of a school for their children is not left to their personal whim or preference. The law of the Church is definite and the right of the child is clear. Ample opportunities are still available in many schools for those who would apply. Unfortunately, the present national crisis makes it impossible to offer these facilities in a few places. These parishes are meeting the problem to the best of their ability. What gives us deep concern is the indifference of those who know that their local parish school has ample facilities and who yet do not hesitate to form their own consciences in this grave matter and deny their helpless children spiritual opportunities which they never can recapture.

With the opening of a new school term in September, and with the problem of selecting a high school or college for recent graduates now before many parents, it is important to give these thoughts serious consideration. The selection of the wrong school has worked havoc with young souls in the past, and is doing much spiritual harm in the present.

From the classroom of the Catholic school and college the insistent voice of Christ cries to the child, "Come unto Me." They assume an awful responsibility who block a child's path in his effort to answer that call. Sooner or later, Christ will demand to know why.

As the spiritual father of these children, we make this appeal on their behalf and in the hope that this letter may awaken a deep realization of the responsibility of parents for the religious education of the souls committed by Almighty God to their care.

With a sincere blessing, I am

Your devoted Shepherd in Christ

Given at Rochester,
Feast of the Sacred Heart, 1942

James E. Kearney
Bishop of Rochester

Msgr. Griffin Honored On 60th Anniversary

(Continued from Page 1)

Millen, O.F.M., representing St. Bonaventure's College and Seminary, of which the jubilarian is the oldest living alumnus; the Rev. Maurus Anthony Kennedy, O.F.M., the Rev. John C. Newcomb and the Rev. John Albert, assistant pastors at St. Mary's Church. Father Gervaise and Father Maurus Anthony are both former Corning boys, the former having been a member of St. Mary's Parish and the latter of St. Patrick's Parish.

The preacher for the occasion was Rev. Louis Edelman. His text was "I thought upon the days of old, and had in mind the eternal years." Father Edelman reviewed the many labors of the celebrant during his long career in the service of the parishes he had served, namely Cuba, Horseheads, Bath, Waverly, Corning. The speaker recalled the thousands of times Msgr. Griffin had preached the word of God; the thousands of visitations

to the sick; the countless number of baptisms; the marriages he had performed and many other ministrations.

At the wish of the jubilarian there was no public reception. However the priests of the community and vicinity were present at a dinner in his honor at the rectory Sunday afternoon which was further graced by the presence of the Most Rev. James E. Kearney, Bishop of Rochester, and the Rev. Lawrence E. Casey, vice chancellor of the diocese. Bishop Kearney felicitated Monsignor Griffin, who returned words of appreciation to the distinguished prelate and the other priests present.

Greetings, telegrams and a large number of floral tributes were received by Monsignor Griffin. Two vases, containing 60 roses each, were among the last named, one being from the Sodality and the other from the trustees, collectors and ushers of the Church.

Miss Josephine Griffin of Toledo O., a niece of Monsignor Griffin and Miss Elizabeth A. McNamara of Corning, a relative, were among those present at the Mass and the dinner. Miss Griffin spent the weekend with her uncle, returning to Toledo on Monday.

Urgent Plea For Nurses Indorsed By Bishop

An urgent appeal for nurses for the Army and Navy, as well as for the civilian hospitals is being given the support of His Excellency, Bishop Kearney in response to a letter

from Emily J. Hicks, R. N., executive secretary of the New York State Nurses Association.

The Nurses Association is seeking to bring home, through the various religious groups, to every responsible individual, the seriousness of the problem confronting all who desire good nursing care for the men in the service as well

Monsignor Griffin is in excellent health and active in many affairs of the parish. He has been a faithful and regular attendant at the weekly luncheon of the Catholic Men's Club and has an eager interest in all parish activities. He is a familiar sight any day walking the hill in the neighborhood of St. Mary's Church. Among his most particular friends are all the children of the hill.

The Bishop is heartily in accord with all effort that can be made to swell the numbers of well-qualified young women dedicated to the service of "Healing Hands." The need is apparent. The call for nurses should be heard by the young women who can qualify.

Use War Bonds For Church's Building Fund

HARRISONVILLE, Mo. — A building fund of war bonds and stamps is being established by the parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes Church here. It is announced by the Rev. Thomas J. Crowell, pastor.

The immediate purpose of the fund is to express the parishioners' patriotism and faith and trust in the United States government and to give each of them an opportunity to enter personally into the defense of the nation. The fund thus raised will be used, at a later date for the erection of a new and larger church.

- as for the sick at home. Clergy of all faiths are being asked to cooperate in the plan for this need for the following purposes:
1. To supply the Army and Navy with graduate nurses at the rate of more than a thousand a month, which means continued and increased enrollment of all eligible nurses in the First Reserve of the American Red Cross, the reserves from which nurses are drawn.
 2. To recruit 50,000 students to enter accredited schools of nursing this school year (1942-43).
 3. To bring all married, retired, or otherwise inactive nurses back to work for the duration of the war, thereby releasing active nurses for military duty.
 4. To train volunteers to become Nurse Aides to help in hospitals.