

Dec. 1, 1924.

The Novena.

Seven hundred and fifty is a poor start for a Novena in honor of the Immaculate Conception. Those who failed to start yesterday or today can start tomorrow morning and continue their Communions for two days after the Feast.

The Natural Law on Impurity.

(Since the mystery proposed for our consideration in the feast of the Immaculate Conception is the holy purity of the Blessed Virgin, and the principal intention of the Novena is the grace of purity, it may not be amiss to lay down some practical considerations on this virtue and its opposite vice in anticipation of the feast.)

The world has some strange, preposterous notions regarding the vice of impurity, and the prevalence of these notions at the present time, particularly in fiction, tends to confuse the minds of good Catholic boys and girls, and in the wake of confusion too often comes corruption. The following considerations on the natural law will help to dispel confusion where it exists, and will confirm the solid instruction received at home.

## I.

God could have created all people at the same time, or He could have made their bodies, in the order of their appearance on this earth, a matter of special creation as He does their souls. But God made man in His own image and likeness, and while this likeness lies chiefly in the soul, the body partakes of it in various ways, not the least of which is the share in His own creative power which God has given man in his ability to reproduce his kind.

## II.

It is God's desire to people heaven with saints, and yet He makes that desire depend upon the free will of a man and a woman. Marriage is much more than a union between a man and a woman; it is a partnership with God; and those who attempt to cheat God out of the souls He desires from their union are doomed to a disastrous reckoning, which comes frequently even in this life. Rase suicide is the attempt to cheat God by enjoying physical pleasure in marriage without assuming any of its responsibilities; it is more degrading even than self-abuse because it makes a mockery of the noble offices of husband and wife, or father and mother, and proposes a life-partnership in lust.

## III.

What we call passion, or impure pleasure, is an appetite instilled in man by God as an incentive to the preservation of the race. The bringing of children into the world has many serious consequences. He who assumes the responsibility for the life of a child, assumes the obligation of the spiritual and temporal education of that child; he must place it in a position to make a living and save its soul. That is why marriage must be a permanent union. If people in general were to look forward to the burdens which marriage entails, many of them---we do not know how many, but certainly a great many---would not assume the obligation, and God's plan for peopleing the earth would fail, if there were not a strong present incentive to the act of generation. The present incentive is what we call passion., or impure physical pleasure.

## IV.

It follows that passion is not wrong in itself, as a means to an end when the end is lawful; namely, in marriage. And it follows just as surely that if it were lawful to assume this pleasure as an end in itself, and not as a means to a lawful end, God's plan would be frustrated. Consequently, the wilfull stimulation of passion, whether

by thought, word, desire, look or action, must be forbidden under pain of mortal sin, and the sin is intensified according to the degree in which God's plan is defeated.

Masses.

The senior engineers have requested the 6:30 Mass in the basement chapel tomorrow for the repose of the soul of Robert Parnell's mother. The football team requests your attendance Wednesday morning at 6:20 in the church at a Mass sung in thanksgiving.

John F. O'Hara, C.S.C.,  
Prefect of Religion.