

Dec. 8, 1924.

Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

The Protection of Holy Purity.

Purity is sometimes called the angelic virtue. This is a misnomer. It is not an angelic virtue, but a manly virtue. Angels have no bodies, and they were never the victims of temptations against purity. As long as we have bodies, and, as an old missionary once put it, until half an hour after death, we are subject to temptation, and we may fall. The chief means at our disposal for the preservation of holy purity are the following:

1. The Sacraments;
2. Prayer;
3. Good counsel;
4. Humility;
5. Charity;
6. Zeal;
7. Custody of the imagination and senses;
8. Insistent bodily mortification;
9. Self-respect and a good mother.

We will consider these in order, in groups of three:

Group One.

The grace of God is essential to this endless battle. By ourselves we can do nothing; with grace we can do everything. The chief means of grace are the Sacraments and prayer. Daily Communion not only preserves chastity, it restores it when lost (see the pamphlet of student experiences with frequent Communion). Prayer, especially to the Blessed Virgin, has wrought marvels in every age and clime. Good counsel is absolutely necessary; doubts must be cleared up when they exist; mistaken impressions must be corrected; indiscreet zeal must be tempered with the wisdom of your elders. Ask advice. Don't try to be your own doctor.

Group Two.

These three virtues offer a clever flank attack on the devil. Pride kills the operation of grace in the soul, but humility establishes the kingdom of God in your heart. The best corrective of pride is a fall, and God may permit you to fall in order to bring you back to your senses if you forget your dependence upon Him.--- Charity and zeal, or the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, take up your time, thus killing idleness, and take your mind off your troubles by centering it on the other fellow's troubles. They have a magic touch in dispelling morbid thoughts. They make you the kind of Christian that people like to live with.

Group Three.

The senses are the outposts through which the enemy advances, while the imagination and the appetites are the inner servants of your being. When the will commands the citadel cannot be taken unawares; when the will sleeps on the job, the sentinels shoot dice with the servants and traffic with the enemy. If one remembers that he has a good mother, he will keep up his self-respect; and self-respect makes it impossible for you to do what is unworthy of you. Thrash your body if it needs it. Be frugal and watchful: don't be the slave of bed or table. Guard your eyes and ears and touch, or these senses will burn with you for all eternity.

To Summarize:

Dedicate your purity today to the Immaculate Mother of God. Sensitize your conscience so that it recognizes and dreads the approach of sin. "Chastize your body and keep it under subjection." Be humble, sober, pious, kind, frugal, thoughtful. "Use here below iron and fire" and God will spare you for eternity.