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Some Plain Words On Vacations.

Some years ago a student came from the train to this office after his Easter vacation set down his grip, and asked: "What can you do for a fellow who can't behave himself except when he's in school?" He was told to make a Novena for Perseverance; and the Bulletin for the next ten days gave him material for possible reflection. The series was mild, so nobody read the Bulletin for those days. To correct that situation the set was reprinted in a pamphlet provided with plenty of marginal space for notes, and given to English and Religion classes for annotation. That is the history of the pamphlet Perseverance.

The case of this student is neither isolated nor universal, but it is typical. Only twenty-eight per cent of the students answering the last Survey were able to answer No to the question, "Do you find vacations weakening spiritually?" This means that 72% of you need to give some solid attention to the holiday that lies ahead. Plain facing of facts now may save you and your parents some unforgettable heartaches.

Looking at the Survey again, we find the following typical attitudes towards vacation:

- A finds them helpful; he finds the presence more than the memory of his parents a deterrent to sin.
- B has an inspiring girl; the thought of sin is abhorrent when he is with her.
- C dreads going back to the gang of hard drinkers with whom he passed his free hours during high school years.
- D has found peace from temptation during periods of daily Communion and is now obsessed with the idea that temptation will return when daily Communion ends.
- E is infatuated with a girl who is anything but an inspiration to him (see p. 11, last line).
- F thinks he has a stored-up desire for worldly pleasure.
- G welcomes vacation as a test of character.

A and B are well off; God has been very good to them. They need only to be warned not to neglect God in the enjoyment of His gifts to them; Holy Week is a time of special graces and of reparation to God for the sins of others as well as our own. G needs a warning. He need not go looking for temptation with which to test his character; he can find enough tests in the temptations which pursue him. And he should not count too much on his own forces. What he has God has given him, and he must have prayer to see himself through to success.

C, D, E, and F need special treatment. They should realize, first of all, that there is a whole lot in making up one's mind. If they are really convinced that they want to avoid sin because it is an offense against a good God, their battle is half won. And if they will keep in mind that they are going home, the other half of the battle is about settled if home means to them what it should. Most students like fair play, love a square shooter. Is it square to your mother to neglect her, to disgrace her, to make the few days she looks forward to a period of debauch? A wrong mental attitude is a most fruitful source of sin.

C will never boss a job if he truckles to a bunch of half-soused paperweights, whether high school or collegiate; D's greatest trouble is auto-suggestion, and he can turn this to his favor by saying to himself that he has won his battle for all time; E needs to give his girl a break by telling her to go where glory waits her -- she may make a good wife for some one else, and he a good husband for some other girl, but their blind infatuation will steer them onto shoals in the cold, grey mists of matrimony; F is throwing away his college education if Notre Dame hasn't taught him where true pleasure lies -- he needs spring football practice.

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 Henry Asman's grandmother is ill. Four special intentions.