

**MARRIAGE AND
PARENTHOOD; THE
CATHOLIC IDEAL**

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Marriage and Parenthood; The Catholic Ideal by Thomas J. Gerrard

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THOMAS J. GERRARD

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MARRIAGE AND PARENTHOOD

The Catholic Ideal

BY THE

REV. THOMAS J. GERRARD

AUTHOR OF

"CORDS OF ADAM," "THE WAYFARER'S VISION," ETC.

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Archbishop of New York

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NOTE TO REVISED EDITION

I BEG to express my grateful acknowledgments to the large number of clergy, medical men, and parents who have so kindly favored me with most valuable criticisms and suggestions. And I desire to make special mention of Surgeon-General Maunsell, C.B., who as President of the Guild of Sts. Luke, Cosmas, and Damian, has been able to secure for me such a wealth of expert opinion. Here and there I have been unable to follow even a very weighty authority, not, however, because I set my own judgment against it, but because it appears to me to be outweighed by a consensus of equally grave authorities. Some few ideas, too, I have decided to omit as pertaining rather to another book which I have in preparation on the attitude of the Church towards the Eugenic movement.

THE AUTHOR.

Marriage and Parenthood

The Catholic Ideal



INTRODUCTION

A MAN thinks he is very clever if he can make an aëroplane. Thóusands of other men think he is a genius if he can fly over the Alps, even though at the end of the journey he break his neck. But these are paltry trifles compared with the work of training a soul for the kingdom of God. Such a task needs the genius of the Catholic Church.

Amongst her many helps for this purpose not the least important is the Sacrament of marriage. The ideal which she holds before the world and the power which she gives for the realizing of such ideal stand out as the chief hope for the salvation of modern society. On every side we see influences at work which tend to break up the family and consequently to break up society. The increase of divorce, the falling off in the birth-rate, the spread of the white slave traffic, — these

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are a few of the more obvious symptoms which follow upon a low ideal of the marriage bond.

That there is something wrong is admitted on all hands, as is proved by the attempts to mend matters. The Divorce Commission at present sitting in London is an evidence of such unrest. The formation of the Eugenics Education Society is another. In these movements, however, the Catholic student detects a lack of the knowledge of foundation principles. Most of the remedies proposed are a tinkering with the symptom rather than a treatment of the root cause.

Here and there, however, the value of the Catholic ideal asserts itself. Thus, for instance, in the evidence before the Divorce Commission, Sir John Bigham, then President of the Divorce Court, said: "My experience shows me that members of the Roman Catholic Church seldom come to our court, and I attribute that fact to the great influence of their priesthood, and to the respect which is inculcated amongst Roman Catholics for the marriage vow."

Another witness, Dr. Glynn Whittle, of Liverpool, bore magnificent testimony to the fidelity of the Catholic poor. Speaking as he did in favor of divorce, there was a double weight in his words. He said he had questioned countless poor
