Rally Day - 1970
Rolling Meadows, Illinois

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IN NOMINE JESU

I Peter 2: 2,3: "LIKE NEWBORN BABES, LONG FOR THE PURE SPIRITUAL MILK, THAT BY IT YOU MAY GROW UP TO SALVATION; FOR YOU HAVE TASTED THE KINDNESS OF THE LORD."

All of us, I am sure, are ready to do anything for our children. We will make any sacrifice - we will not count the cost, when their life or their welfare is at stake. When our children are infants we will get up at ALL HOURS of the night to FEED them, to LOVE them, to PAMPER them, to CHANGE their DIAPERS, to do almost ANYTHING to COMFORT and CONSOLE them. When they grow older we are just as much concerned. We continue to provide them with FOOD and CLOTHING, with SHELTER, WARMTH and LOVE. We give them TOYS and TRINKETS, we stop at nothing to provide for their HAPPINESS. Little girls have a unique way of twisting their daddys around their fingers. Likewise little boys have the ability of getting what they want from their mothers. Both little girls and little boys are the objects of their parents' affection. This is all according to God's own design. He "DRAWS THE SOLITARY INTO FAMILIES." He wants the members of the family to care and be concerned about each other. This is a part of His creative plan.

Sometimes however, we adults get our VALUES and our PRIORITIES mixed up. As in today's Gospel, we fail to give our children "THE ONE THING NEEDFUL"- That is, "TO SIT AT JESUS' FEET AND HEAR HIS WORD." While we are ready to give our children almost ANYTHING, to DO almost anything for them, to make every SACRIFICE on their behalf - somehow when it comes to Christian education, the most important thing, we take an entirely different attitude. Perhaps the recollection of our own Christian education in Sunday School, in Parochial School, or in Confirmation Class is so lacking in LUSTER and HAPPY memories, in JOY and REAL REVELANCE, MEANING that we do not see it for the important thing it is - Important for THIS life and the life that is to come. Perhaps we have given ourselves so completely into the service of the gods of MONEY, SUCCESS, and PLEASURE - that service to the LIVING GOD is no longer in the picture. At least, we consider other things more important -

both for OURSELVES and for our CHILDREN. Christian Education remains quite on the ~~sidelines~~ background - something you can TAKE or LEAVE. There is certainly very little HUNGERING or THIRSTING for it, otherwise our SUNDAY SCHOOL, SATURDAY SCHOOL, and BIBLE CLASSES would be JAMMED PACKED with both children and adults alike - CLAMORING to learn MORE of Jesus and His Word. This is NOT the case. How far SHORT we have fallen from the imperative of the Apostle "LIKE NEWBORN BABES, LONG FOR THE PURE SPIRITUAL MILK, THAT BY IT YOU MAY GROW UP TO SALVATION; FOR YOU HAVE TASTED THE KINDNESS OF THE LORD."

When the Board of Christian Education tried to enroll your children for Saturday School, they obtained only ~~92~~ 97 out of a possible 266. That leaves ~~174~~ 169 still CRYING for what the Apostle calls "THE PURE SPIRITAL MILK." The excuses for NOT COMING were given mostly by PARENTS - NOT BY THE CHILDREN. One father became quite irritated when he learned that his son would have to do a little homework for the 7th grade - and even suggested that perhaps his son might not want to come - - - "After all, who ever heard of HOMEWORK for a religious class..... Others wanted to know "Just what are the basic requirements for Confirmation - Just how long do they HAVE to go." Obviously they were not ready to bring their children unless it was ABSOLUTELY necessary. And you see how the whole thing is put into the context of a kind of legalism rather than the JOY and the EXCITEMENT and the THRILL that ought to be a part of people who "HAVE TASTED THE KINDNESS OF THE LORD" .....Most parents offered excuses like these "This is the ONLY day our children have to themselves - They need time to play - We don't want them to become soured on religion - Don't you think you'r over-doing this business of Christian education?"

OVER DOING IT !? Just look at the facts! For about 9 months of the year your child is in school receiving some 30 hours of instruction a week. If that same child attends Sunday School every Sunday, he only receives 52 hours of CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION in a WHOLE YEAR. Now add to that 2 hours of additional instruction in Saturday School for about 28 weeks, and

you still only come up with 108 hours of CHRISTIAN EDUCATION in a WHOLE YEAR. That is compared to better than 1,100 hours of education received each year in the public school.....Now suddenly we are OVER DOING this business of CHRISTIAN TRAININ and EDUCATION.

An infant wakes up in the middle of the night - perhaps for a 2 o'clock feeding. Can you imagi the mother going to that child and saying "Now Johnny, you must have this time for yourself. It's not important that you be fed right now. Why don't you go back to sleep?" I can't imagine any mother who is worth her salt, saying things like that. When the baby cries she gets up to feed him. The baby cries because he is hungry. He wants to be FED - and this is the illustratio which the Apostle uses to describe how God's people HUNGER and THIRST for HIS Word [redacted]s; "LIKE NEWBORN BABES, LONG FOR THE PURE SPIRITUAL MILK, THAT BY IT YOU MAY GROW UP TO SALVATION; FOR YOU HAVE TASTED THE KINDNESS OF THE LORD." .....I should like to know where this HUNGERING and THIRSTING and LONGING REALLY ARE!

You don't have to be psychic or have ESP [extra sensory perception] in order to discover where we have placed our PRIORITIES. Obviously it is NOT in CHRISTIAN GROWTH or TRAINING or EDUCATION. We all seem to want the BARE MINIMUMS - just enough to get us by - just enough to help us to squeak in.

I have 3 children, and I think they are pretty normal children, in spite of the fact that they are PK's, that is, "preacher's kids." They LAUGH and JOKE and PLAY. They QUARREL AND FIGHT - pretty much like normal children. All 3 go to a Parochial School and receive Christian training and education 5 days a week. All 3 go to Sunday School and Church EVERY Sunday and Saturday School EVERY Saturday. They go to Sunday School and Saturday School and worship - NOT because they are PUSHED or FORCED to do so - BUT RATHER

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because THEY WANT TO. I dare say that most of the time they are even excited about it. I can only hope and pray that they will ALWAYS feel that way. The point I am trying to make is that the attitude and the example of PARENTS have a great deal to do with the attitude and the behavior of CHILDREN. If God and Christ and Scripture and Worship are secondary for YOU, they will be secondary for your CHILDREN TOO!

How glad I am, however, that the Gospel of our Lord does it's own work - sometimes even in spite of parents. No one can tell me that young people do not respond to the Gospel. Many of them do not respond too well to their parents - but the Gospel is something else again - when it is told as the GOOD NEWS that it is - transforming and renewing life, giving all of us a new reason for being, a new power to live, a new direction to go!

Let me tell you that every Sunday School teacher and Bible Class teacher or Sat. School teacher has a HEART and SOUL for reaching PEOPLE with the GOSPEL - not only the young but also the old - not only the old but also the young - - - - People in all walks of life, for whom life will always be DULL, DREARY, DRAB DEAD until they come to know Him and the POWER of His RESURRECTION.

Christian education is not DULL, DRY, DREARY - but it is completely RELEVANT - it has to do with the VERY ESSENTIALS of our life. We ask questions like "What happens to me when I die"? Job asks this same question. "If a man die shall he live again?" We ask "Is Jesus really more than a great Man?" Our Lord Himself asks the same question. "What do you think of the Christ?" We ~~Who~~ asked "Who is God?" St. Paul asks "Who are You Lord?" We ask "What is the point of trying to live a Christian life?" Jeremiah asks "Why does the way of the wicked prosper? We ask "Why does life sometimes seem so horribly futile?" The Psalmist asks "Why are you cast down O my soul?" The questions arise from the rough and tumble of life - and it is in the rough and tumble of life that we discover how RIGHT the BIBLE'S ANSWERS are..... That is the reason for Christian Education. We confess that Christ is the answer.

thank you

Our world looks like 6 PARANOIACS, trying to get thru a revolving door. A cat chasing it's tail at least has something to chase. Let's stop chasing DELUSIONS and allowing ourselves to be chased by them. It's time - HIGH TIME - to GET WITH CHRIST and GO WITH HIM. It's TIME for all of us to heed the admonition of the Apostle, ADULTS and CHILDREN ALIKE: "LIKE NEWBORN BABES, LONG FOR THE PURE SPIRITUAL MILK, THAT BY IT YOU MAY GROW UP TO SALVATION; FOR YOU HAVE TASTED THE KINDNESS OF THE LORD."

Certainly we have TASTED this kindness of the Lord. We know that He DIED FOR ALL and HE LIVES FOR ALL - HE FORGIVES ALL and HE GIVES NEW LIFE to ALL who yield themselves to Him in the obedience of FAITH. We can never get enough of this Lord - not if we are Christian people. We keep right on longing for the "PURE SPIRITUAL MILK OF HIS WORD" - [redacted] We can never get enough of it! Amen!